Fellowship Committee AGM Report May 2020

I would like to begin by giving thanks to Abba Father, for His eternal love, grace, and mercy, for His provisions and protection and above all else, His patience and guidance.
I revisited this past year with a sense of awe, our fellowship year was packed with more than normal number of corporate fellowship/social events. None of this can be accomplished without the faithful, willing, and joyful participation, cooperation of many teams of volunteers.
In September 2019, a more 'formal' Fellowship Committee was created, to share the responsibility of facilitating fellowship gatherings, *thank you* Ana Barahona, Cherie Kahn, Debra Fisher, Sylvia Hill, and Wendy Gingras for your willing service in this. Could not have done this without you all! I am grateful.
Let us go down the memory lane:
In **May** 2019 we assisted with the Faith Promise Dinner, we also celebrated Pastor Gary's 65th birthday with a big cake on Sunday after the service.
Diane Townsend put her sewing skills to work and converted some older rectangular tablecloths into squares so we can use them as toppers for the larger tablecloths. Thank you, Diana!
In June it was all hands-on deck for the *'BE THE CHURCH'* District Assembly:
Serving 120 delegates for the three days, breakfast, snacks, lunches & dinner ending with an all Church lunch on Sunday, we also celebrated DS Earl Wood's retirement and Pastor Heather Prendergast's ordination. This was accomplished by a team of over 40 volunteers, who provided home baked goods, did all the food preparations and serving; with the Core team being Assunta Storey, Debra Fisher, Cherie Kahn, Ana Barahona, Deirdre Corcoran, Helen Allan, Wendy Gingras and Larry Sainsbury, who worked together to formulate the plan with hundreds of food related items and being team leaders for each shift, and big *THANK YOU* TO Pastor Mary Ann Timmins who took charge of the Ordination tea with a fresh crew of volunteers, AND Kim Gerow who took on special diets without being asked! There were such great teamwork and fun, creating an atmosphere of humble hospitality, meeting the delegates' many and diverse dietary needs. We had a Thankyou BBQ in August at Spencer Castle for all the volunteers, we invited all who volunteered for this event, which was 85+ people, those who helped in different areas like photography, sound system, hospitality, car services, administration etc, over 40 attended.
July & August - time to slow down, but also to make sure that the tired kitchen is spiffy up for the fall - so a team of wonderful ladies gave it a good going over, thank you Carol, Helen, Deirdre and Sylvia!
September began with the Sunday school kick off picnic lunch, which was a resounding success, I have never seen so MANY people in the Fireside room after the service! It is also the beginning of another year for the Fellowship kitchen serving team for our greeting time after the Sunday Service, we re-arranged the Fireside room to accommodate the extraordinary traffic, adding a round table for those with mobility challenges. The larger number of people created a wonderful problem for the serving team, snacks and coffee just disappears soon as they are served.
Say hello to some of the most faithful people on this planet! Their skill in serving snacks and brewing coffee and tea at lightening speed is now legendary! Here are the names of the five teams: *Thank you* - Janet Simmonds, Doug & Shannon Edgar, Neil Perrigo & Elda McClanaghan; Colleen Roberts, Wendy Gingras, Jill Lunek & Jill Pavlis; Rick and Becky Tiede & Jill Wilson; Betty-Ann & Barry Rankin, George & Alice Schellenberg; Mindy & Sean Rathburn, with Olivia & Grace; thanks also to Jackie Atkins, Colleen Ball and Maisy Wickett for being the on call team. And If you are one of those who had to come in early on Sunday morning and appreciated that cup of hot

coffee all ready for you, you need to thank the Early Bird Coffee Team: Larry Sainsbury & Rob Soucie! In addition to our church family we also have the honour of serving Victoria's faith community, on Sep. 26 we played host to the city pastors annual Conclave, a day retreat; then we hosted Leading Influence's Dessert fundraiser for Pastor Heather Prendergast as she prepared to become the chaplain for the Alberta Legislative Assembly.

Decorating church for Thanksgiving was quickly done by some highly creative ladies.

On **October 12 & 13** we said goodbye to Pastor Gary and Cheryl Bennett, there were sadness but also much laughter and reminiscing, celebrating and thanking them for their many years of loving us; the Saturday reception was well attended as expected, we had 30 extraordinary volunteers behind the scene, preparing, serving and cleaning. Thank you all.

The next week saw us saying goodbye to Pastor Heather and Steve Prendergast, again, with much gratefulness we celebrated their new venture in Alberta with a scrumptious cake.

"There is so much love in the room" Nov.3rd was Soup Sunday, as we fellowship after the worship service; some one commented: "there is so much love in the room". We tasted nine different kinds of amazing homemade soups, accompanied by delicious homemade biscuits. *THANK YOU* - to the amazing kitchen team who overcame the inconvenience of no hot water as they faced a mountain of dirty soup bowls, you deserve a medal!

Last week in **November** a team decorated the church in preparation for the Advent season

We hosted a special Christmas luncheon for the Victoria Evangelical Pastors and Ministry Leaders Fellowship. Lori Philipchalk made beautiful centre pieces for all the tables, and the pastors got to take them home ... smiles all around.

December and the 4 weeks of Advent - **'Light'** is the theme. We purchased 10 more strings of light for the sanctuary, and 3 strings of fairy lights for the Fireside room. Chocolate Fountain flows ... Appetizers flew ... home baked goods entertained many little ones .... All the cheerful conversations were music to God's ears. And angels danced... *Happy Birthday Baby Jesus!*

January – all Christmas decorations were taken down and put away.

February 2, 2020 - we thought it is time to get together for soup again, plus egg salad make-your-own sandwiches, it was again very well attended.

February 15 our beloved staff and lead team decided to have their 'day-away' at church! So, the Fellowship committee got together and cook them a scrumptious breakfast, apparently, they were so full they skipped lunch.

On Feb. 23 we honour Mary Ann Timmins as she stepped down from her post as the Family and children's pastor, we celebrated with a variety of cakes. We appreciate and bless you Mary Ann!

Our last event was on **March 8**, when we assisted in hosting the Newcomers dessert party, and began making plans for Easter...

Then the most unimaginable thing happened on March 12:

Covid 19 - Church on lockdown, and we became an 'on-line' church.

This has been a very memorable year. In going through the notes and remembering fondly the many highlights, I continue to marvel at the joy of servanthood evident on so many, you made it fun to work in the kitchen, thank you! A special thank you to Sheri Eisenhuth as our staff liaison who tirelessly assisted us with our administrative requests and made sure that we stay on track with encouraging communication!

We pray that we will resume face to face fellowship safely very soon, in the meantime God bless everyone for their ingenuity in seeking ways of remaining connected.

Respectfully submitted, Kwok-Ying Jackson for the Fellowship Committee