

Repurposed for a Purpose:

Cochrane Street United Church and the founding of Cochrane Centre

By: Rev. Miriam A. Bowlby



Introduction:

The first time I took part in closing a church was shortly after I arrived at Newtown Lumsden Pastoral Charge in 2001. I was newly ordained and when I arrived no one was happy with the new worship schedule which is not surprising when you are juggling the needs of six congregations. During the process of working out a new schedule, the folks at the United Church in Cape Freels decided it was time for them to close. The volunteers were tired. We called the meeting to vote on closing the church and about 50 people showed up! None of them came to church and none of them wanted the building to close. They were all angry that the church members wanted to close the building because they were losing the only place in the community they could play darts. It was the only community building in Cape Freels.

The next steps involved consulting with both the wider community and the higher courts of the church. In the end, the church was closed and the building was sold to the local service district for \$1 so the building would remain a community space. A special service was held to close the church community. A friend of mine once described the closing of a church building as a funeral with all mourners and no family and friends to support the mourners.

Since 2001 the United Church of Canada has closed an average of 50 churches per year (UCCan Statistician, Susan Jackson). In the future, more churches will be closing. While closing might be the best solution for the church community, it may not be the best solution for the community it serves. Social enterprise offers a way for churches to continue doing good work in a community even if they are no longer a worshipping community. In a webinar on Churches and Social Enterprise, Shaun Loney said, "Empty church buildings are a solution disguised as a problem."

The development of Cochrane Centre by Cochrane Street United Church is one example of how the church provided a solution not only for the congregation but for the community. The following pages tell the story of how Cochrane Street found its new vision and a way to repurpose the building. While the history of the church began in the late 1800s, I begin in 2011, when I began serving as the minister for Cochrane Street United Church.

Rev. Miriam A. Bowlby

A Note of Thanks

This project would not be possible without the assistance of Linda Bowden who is our church archivist. The historical information is all drawn from the information produced by our archives. In addition, Linda provided me with the files of the minutes of Cochrane Street United Church. This was invaluable when it came to forming a comprehensive timeline. Thank you, Linda.

A big thank you to Robert Young who photographed significant moments along the journey of development. Many of the pictures in the document, notably the group photographs at special services.

Thank you to the members of Cochrane Street United Church who asked good questions, who dared to try something new and different, and who live their faith each day.

The History of Cochrane Street United Church

The Early Days



The history of Cochrane Street United Church stretches back to 1878 when it began as a Sunday School. In 1880, the church leaders laid the cornerstone on the current site and began construction on the first building located at 81 Cochrane Street. The new Methodist Church, a wooden Gothic structure, was dedicated on May 14, 1882. The church gathered for worship and other activities until tragedy struck on January 18, 1914, when the original building was destroyed by fire. That very night the trustees met and decided to re-build. Work began on the new building on May 15, 1915, and the cornerstone for the new structure was laid on June 29th, 1915.

Current Building



It is remarkable that in the midst of World War I such a large structure was built. The proceeds from the insurance and fundraising by the congregation made it possible to pay the \$89,000.73 dollars it cost to construct the building. The renowned Canadian architects Ross and MacDonald, whose building designs include structures such as Union Station and Maple Leaf Gardens in Toronto and The Royal York Hotel, parts of McGill University and Eaton's in Montreal, designed the current building. The exterior envelope of the building was constructed using local labour and materials. Construction was completed by February 1916 and the first service was held on Easter Sunday (April 23, 1916). The church was dedicated on June 18, 1916, and named, "Cochrane Street Methodist Centennial Church in honour of the 100th anniversary of Methodism in St. John's. The structure is unique in the landscape of St. John's with its Mediterranean appearance and Byzantine dome.

The People

In the 100-plus years since Cochrane Street United Church was built, there have been countless, weddings, baptisms and funerals held in the sanctuary. Youth Groups, Sunday Schools, couples' clubs, women's groups, men's groups and others have met in the hall. One member once described the congregation as consisting of fur coats and fishermen. This reflected the community around them with prominent St. John's families such as the Ayres, Crosbies, and Herders along with people living in the battery all calling Cochrane Street their church home.

There is a long history of outreach at Cochrane Street. Stella Burry, the United Church Deaconess whose work led to the establishment of both Stella's Circle and the Community Sector Council, was a member. Through her encouragement, many members provided support for the poor with both their time and money. Many congregation members tell stories about receiving a phone call to ask them to drive Stella to wherever she needed to go. No was not an option. The congregation at one point owned two houses that were used to care for people with

mental health challenges. The third floor of Cochrane Street was home to Bridges to Hope for many years. Outreach programs such as Bags to School, Deal of a Meal and BBQ in the Park were started by members who wished to support the wider community. Other groups raised both money and awareness for other organizations such as the Alzheimer Society of Newfoundland and Labrador. The Sunday school raised money for Choices for Youth and Street Reach.

At one point the congregation was large enough to sustain a building that spans an entire city block, but over a period of years the ability to raise the funds necessary to maintain such a large structure diminished. In 2011, the congregation had roughly 200 members on its list, with church attendance of anywhere from 80 – 100, several groups and a small Sunday School. The main sources of revenue were donations from members, rental revenue from Happy Times Day Care and concert rentals.

Several plans and ideas have been floated using underutilized space on the third floor and hall. Vision 100 in 2011 proposed transforming the building into a studio space for artists and musicians. An earlier idea, sometime in the 1980s was to build housing in the rear part of the building. Neither of the projects got off the ground but, in many ways, provided the foundation for what is to come.

Should We Stay, Sell or Go?

Between 2011 and 2015, the financial challenges increased. The congregation cashed in all investments and endowment funds. Some of the restoration funds were used for a fire alarm system, a new roof and install a lift to move from the sanctuary level to the hall level. The remaining funds were used to maintain general operations. At various points, the church was on cash on delivery for oil and there was always an extensive list of outstanding payables. Appendix A gives you a financial picture of the challenges faced during that time by the congregation.

The church council was aware that as a congregation could not sustain such a large building with the existing membership and revenue. The Executive Secretary of Newfoundland and Labrador Conference, The Rev. Faith March-MacCuish met with the church council on April 24, 2013. She outlined several options for the congregation and suggested that they have a meeting with the congregation that was realistic, gave no false promises and ensured the sharing of information along the way. The council worked with George Parsons, outreach coordinator at George Street United Church to plan what was called “Situational Analysis: An Honest and Open Reality Check.” The package sent to the congregation in preparation for the meeting included current financial information including the fact that there was \$40,000 owed to North Atlantic, information about the repairs needed on the building and the cost of maintenance, and information on the land lease.

The goal was to have the congregation decide on the future of the building whether they would sell, amalgamate or explore other options. In the end, they chose none of these. Three task groups were established: finance, infrastructure and membership. Each of these groups has a clear job description and reports directly to the church council. Many congregation members said that the last thing they wanted to see was the church turned into condos.

The task groups met and updated the congregation. The finance group explored ways to increase revenue and decrease expenses. Cost cutting measures were taken and there was an attempt to raise revenue by increasing those using the facility. The biggest financial cost outside of salary was the cost of fuel. In the winter of 2014, the congregation decided to worship in the hall to reduce the cost of heating the building. As Appendix A demonstrates, there was not a significant enough increase in revenue to sustain the current building let alone embark on major building repairs.

The infrastructure group worked to find the cost of various required repairs. The roof was one project that was accomplished using designated restoration funds and one group, Time Out for Women, disbanded and their funds were used to pay for the roof. You will note in appendix A both high revenue and high expenditures in 2015. This relates to the roof. The group found it challenging to get realistic cost estimates to repair the building.

The membership team attempted various activities to increase membership. These included postcards outlining events placed in the pews for people attending concerts, hosting Christmas carol sing-a-longs, movie nights and games nights. They had moderate success.

By 2014, the church council knew that they had to try something completely different. In June 2014 the church council decided to send out a Request for Expressions of Interest to a variety of community groups in the hopes of having a partner who would work with the congregation to use the space in a new way. On June 26th, there was a Town Hall meeting, and anyone who was interested could learn about the building and get a tour.

While nothing directly came out of the REOI or the Town Hall, there was one developer who attended and let the church council leadership know that Newfoundland and Labrador Housing Corporation (NLHC) was seeking applications to build supportive housing.

One of the lessons learned during this period is that while the members had a vested interest in saving a building, no one wants to just save a building. It was only when the church started talking about doing something for the community, that doors started opening.

At a meeting of the church council on September 6th, 2014, the church council approved a new vision and agreed to make an application to NLHC for funding to build supportive housing. This recommendation is brought to the congregation on September 7th and was approved by the congregation on September 15th, 2014 along with making an application to Newfoundland and Labrador Housing to build 10 units of supportive housing.

The new vision adopted by the congregation is as follows:

“In order to maintain and sustain the building into the future, both the sanctuary and the annex, the vision for a new ministry includes

- Place for our congregation to worship and continue to provide outreach
- Place in the sanctuary for music and performance – that utilizes the wonderful acoustics and maintains the organ
- A place that supports the local arts community

- A place for outreach that provides supportive housing
A true community centre.”

On November 24th the congregation approved the recommendation of the church council to establish an Incorporated Ministry of The United Church of Canada to operate the entire facility.

So It Begins – Cochrane Community Outreach and Performance Centre

On January 18th, the congregation met and approved the first slate of officers for the newly incorporated ministry. On January 26th, 2016 the incorporation papers were filed with the province. The newly formed board of directors held its first meeting on February 5, 2015. David Tucker was the first chair. In February and March, CCOPC received approval for funding from the city of St. John's and Newfoundland and Labrador Housing. During the next month, many hours of work were put into the business plan and working with the architects. In the fall of 2015, the RFP for construction was issued and both the church council and CCOPC board made arrangements for what would happen with items that needed to be stored and the congregation during construction. In October 2015, the congregation decided to transfer the land lease to CCOPC. By December, Magna Contracting was awarded the conditional construction contract.

On December 24th, Christmas Eve, Cochrane Street United Church held its last worship service at Cochrane Street United Church. Rev. Miriam Bowlby presided and Patricia Young took her place on the organ bench.

Church on the Move

On January 3rd, 2016 the congregation started holding worship their worship services at St. John's Seventh-day Adventist Church. This time of being on the road was marked by the generosity of neighbours. The congregation at St. John's Seventh-day Adventist Church opened their doors in hospitality for worship. Meeting space was provided by a variety of organizations: St. Thomas' Anglican Church, Key Assets and Gower Street United Church. Rev. Miriam had office hours at St. Thomas'. In addition, the men's club and bridge club held their meetings at St. Thomas'. Gower Street gave us space for choir practice and fundraising events. Gower Street also photocopied our bulletins each week. It was challenging to have no fixed address, but the congregation managed to stay together.

100th Anniversary Celebration:

During the construction phase, the celebration of the 100th Anniversary of the building took place. Over the course of the weekend, there was the official launch of Cochrane Community Outreach and Performance Centre, a celebration dinner held at St. Thomas' Anglican Church and a 100th Anniversary worship service on Sunday morning with guest preacher The Rev. Faith March-MacCuish. The 100th Anniversary service was held in the sanctuary with the organ enclosed in plastic. A group of dedicated volunteers cleaned the sanctuary to make it usable for the service.

Re-entry – Welcome Home to Cochrane Centre

On April 16, 2017, Easter Sunday, Cochrane Street United Church returned to worship in the sanctuary at Cochrane Centre. 101 years earlier the congregation also returned to worship on

Easter Sunday in the newly constructed building. The city of St. John's had not granted occupancy for the annex part of the building so there was no access to the kitchen facilities. In October, when the occupancy permit was granted that the congregation resumed full activity.

Detailed Project TimeLine

2008 - 2011:

Letters from the City of St. John's regarding mandatory upgrades including items such as sprinkles for the sanctuary, making the roof impervious to water, electrical work, and fire separation doors. There were just under 100 items that had to be addressed.

April 12, 2012: Meeting with City

Meeting with Deputy Mayor and other city of St. John's officials to discuss a way forward for Cochrane Street United Church.

November 18, 2012: Congregational Meeting

A congregational meeting was held to give an overview to the congregation of "required repairs, city requirements, and the resulting financial challenges for the congregation." (Annual Report, 2012 Minutes) At the meeting three options were presented for the congregation to consider: Raising the funds needed to repair the building, amalgamating, or rebuilding in a new location.

April 24, 2013: Church Council Meeting

Rev. Faith March-MacCuish, Executive Secretary of Newfoundland and Labrador Conference (now First Dawn Eastern Edge Region) met with the council about what would happen if the congregation decided to sell the building, seeks a community partner to transform the building in some way or amalgamate with another congregation.

June 26, 2013: Church Council Meeting

Rev. Roger Janes, Stewardship Minister for Newfoundland and Labrador gave a presentation to the council after reviewing our financial situation.

September 13 - 14, 2013: Congregational Workshop

Situational Analysis: Reality Check. Three working groups were established: Membership, Finance and Infrastructure. These working groups reported to the church council to help chart a path forward.

March 25, 2014: Church Council Meeting

The chair of the church council circulated strategic alternatives document outlining options for the congregation. It says in the minutes, "the congregation has done a good job of 'treading water' in a facility it can't afford, and that the council will eventually have to make a recommendation to the congregation." The options included: stay as we are; close and cease to function; sale of the building and establish a new ministry or move to a new church; sale of the rear of the church building and pursue the option to use the building for church and church related activities from the new owners; continue to own the church property and seek partnerships with community groups to enable the financial viability required to keep the building open.

April 13, 2014: Church Council Meeting

The following motion was made to address the church's current financial problems: attempt to secure a loan for \$25,000, develop a plan for staff reduction, advise staff that the church is looking at its staffing options, and meet with East District to discuss options, including potential for financial support and/or loans."

June 9, 2014: Congregational Meeting

A meeting to discuss a possible Request for Proposal for the lease or redevelopment of the Annex building. No agreement was reached. It was agreed that there would be a meeting on June 16th

June 16, 2014: Congregational Meeting

Based on feedback from the previous meeting, the document now called Request for Expression of Interest was more general in nature. The congregation approved the REOI and a Town Hall meeting on the REOI.

June 26, 2014: Public Meeting

Town Hall Meeting

July – August 2014:

A small group met over the summer to examine supportive housing and determine if it was a feasible option for the congregation.

August 14, 2014: Church Council

Rev. Scott Parsons made a presentation about the United Church of Canada's Edge Program. This program can provide support as the church council decides on a way forward. There was an in-camera update with information gathered since the town hall meeting.

September 6, 2014: Church Council Meeting and Retreat

A motion was made to approve a new vision that would be brought to the congregation the following day and on September 14th. A congregational meeting would be held on September 15th to make a decision. The church council also approved making an application to NLHC for funding to build supportive housing.

September 7, 2014:

A congregational meeting was held to present the new vision to the congregation.

September 15, 2014:

A vote conducted by secret ballot carried to adopt the following new vision (yes – 40, no – 6, abstain – 1)

“In order to maintain and sustain the building into the future, both the sanctuary and the annex, the vision for a new ministry includes

- Place for our congregation to worship and continue to provide outreach

- Place in the sanctuary for music and performance – that utilizes the wonderful acoustics and maintains the organ
- A place that supports the local arts community
- A place for outreach that provides supportive housing

A true community centre.”

A second vote took place at the same meeting and approved submitting an application for affordable housing to Newfoundland and Labrador Housing Corporation. The motion carried (yes – 44, no – 2, abstain – 1)

September 22, 2014: Deadline to apply to NLHC
Cochrane Street United Church submitted an application to NLHC.

September 30, 2014: Church Council Meeting
Rev. Bill Bartlett made a presentation on how to become an Incorporated Ministry.

October 28, 2014: Church Council Meeting
There was a presentation on the by-laws for the incorporated ministry. Several members wanted to ensure the protection of Cochrane Street United Church’s interests. It says in the minutes, “It was agreed that there would be a memorandum of understanding between the congregation and incorporated ministry to clearly outline the role of each entity and to help protect the interests of the congregation. It was also agreed that additions will be made to article 11 in the draft incorporations document.”

November 13, 2015: Church Council Meeting
The council continued its work of reviewing both the by-laws and the MOU.

November 18, 2015: Church Council Meeting
The council agreed to hold an information session for the congregation on November 16 & 17. The church council approved setting up an incorporated ministry.

November 24, 2014:
The following motion was carried by secret ballot (yes – 32, no – 1) “That the congregation of Cochrane Street United Church approve the establishment of an incorporated ministry to manage and operate the Cochrane Street facility (including the church and annex).

A second motion carried (yes – 32, no – 1) “The congregation authorize the church council to enter into a memorandum of agreement with the Incorporated Ministry that outlines the relationship between the congregation and the incorporated ministry.”

January 18, 2015:
The congregation approves the legal name “Cochrane Community Outreach and Performance Centre.” The congregation approved the initial slate of officers for Cochrane Community Outreach and Performance Centre. They included: Dave Tucker, Jennifer Young, Jim Carscaden, Kerry Lynn Collins, John Perlin, Gail Thornhill, and Derek Osmond. Further names would be

approved by the church council with ratification provided at the next possible congregational meeting.

January 26th, 2015: Incorporated as a non-profit

February 5, 2015: Cochrane Community, Outreach and Performance Centre Meeting
The first meeting of the board of directors for Cochrane Community Outreach and Performance Centre took place.

February 23, 2015: Minister Jackman advised CCOPC of conditional approval for \$1.25 to build 10 units of supportive housing.

March 22, 2015: Fougere Mencheton Architects presents initial concept drawings

June 18, 2015: Congregational Meeting
The By-laws and Schedules for Cochrane Community Outreach and Performance Centre were approved subject to edits by the congregation. The MOU between CCOPC and Cochrane Street was discussed. There were several suggestions and changes. "motion to table documents with modifications and to circulate to the congregation. Motion to adopt document in subsequent meeting"

October 2: RFP for Construction project issued by CCOPC

October 18, 2015: Congregational Meeting
There was an update on the accomplishments of CCOPC to date including securing funding, initial concept drawings, and an overview of the CCOPC business plan. The congregation approved the transfer of the land lease with the following motion, "That the congregation approve whatever is necessary to transfer the land lease to Cochrane Community Outreach and Performance Centre."

November 10, 2015: Congregational Meeting
The congregation gathered to make decisions regarding how they would meet during construction. They approved several motions, the first being that "Wherever we go during construction & renovation, we move as a church family." It was then agreed that we would accept the offer of St. Thomas Vestry to use a room for office space and bookable space for meetings. Several options for worship were proposed, and the final decision was to worship as a congregation at the St. John's Seventh Day Adventist Church.

December 8, 2015: Magna Contracting was issued the conditional award for the construction contract

December 24, 2015: Last services held at Cochrane Street United Church

January 3, 2016: First service held at St. John's Seventh Day Adventist Church



January/ February 2016 Official Transfer of Cochrane Street Property to CCOPC



In this photograph: Susan Winsor (Trustee), David J. Tucker (Cochrane Centre Chair), Genevieve Dawson (lawyer), Jim Oakley (Trustee) and seated Rev. Faith March-MacCuish (Executive Secretary, Newfoundland and Labrador Conference)

January – February: Moving Time all items removed and/or sold. Archives moved to storage Unit



February 29, 2016: Construction Contract Signed



March – Demolition by Choices for Youth Begins



June 17, 2016: CCOPC official launch & Cochrane Street United Church 100th Anniversary Dinner



June 19, 2016: 100th Anniversary Service with guest preacher Rev. Faith March-MacCuish



July 2016: Construction begins



April 16, 2017, Easter Sunday: First Service back at CSUC after construction



October 2017: First Tenants Move – the UCW made quilts for each unit and the congregation had care packages for the arrival of the new tenants.



Best Practices and Guiding Principles

Several congregations asked once Cochrane Street United Church decided on a new vision to share our story with them. The Church of the Church Council and Cochrane Centre, David Tucker and Rev. Miriam Bowlby did a series of presentations. Included in these presentations is a series of Guiding Principles / Values. These are the list we used:

- Faith that God is at work in what we are doing
 - Not being afraid to take a leap of faith
- Inclusion
- No secrets
- Information Saturation
 - Repeating the same information in multiple formats
- Transparent Decision Making
 - At least one information session before a decision-making meeting
- Small Leadership Team
 - Keep the project on course
 - Believed in project
 - Instilled hope
 - Did research on the fly
- Tapping people on the shoulder
 - Excellent high caliber people involved
 - Diverse backgrounds

Not included on this list but essential. Prayer. Sometime in 2013, Rev. Miriam asked several members of the congregation to pray for the church council members who were working tirelessly on behalf of the congregation and making difficult decisions. Prayer was central to our journey and continues to be so to this day. The congregation just before "being on the road" for construction adopted a Prayer for Guidance. It is still used at the end of the church service every week to guide the congregation.

Prayer for Guidance:

Holy God, Dreamer of dreams,

We offer Cochrane Street United Church to you. We are your people, this is your church. We come to you seeking your guidance, your purpose, your vision. Align our will with yours, so that we will be willing to do whatever it takes to carry out your plan. We ask you to break through in new ways in our church. Show us the great ministry you have in store for us. Help us dream your dreams. Pour out your Holy Spirit on us, giving us the vision, boldness, and confidence to do all that you call us to do. Amen.

Memories from Rev. Miriam Bowlby's Clergy, Cochrane Street United Church (2011 – 2022)

I started working at Cochrane Street United Church on January 1st, 2011. Sometime in the first few months, I opened a letter from the city of St. John's saying that the church had 15 days to do mandatory life safety upgrades or we would be shut down by the city. The list was 80+ items long and included some small projects and some as large as installing a sprinkler system. I remember thinking, "what have I done taking a position here?"

The council then began a process of working with the city to repair what could be repaired that was within the financial ability of the congregation.

Before I arrived, the church council was working on a redevelopment plan for Cochrane Street. At the Annual Congregation meeting, the council presented a plan called Vision 100 to convert that back part of the building into music studios that could be rented to musicians for rehearsal and teaching. The church would continue to generate revenue from concerts. At the meeting, 80% supported this new venture. Behind the scenes, there were many voices disagreeing with the project. While it received strong support at the official meeting, the dissenting voices made it challenging for a volunteer board to proceed.

The church continued to run a deficit and cashed in all its investments in order to continue daily operations. In 2013, the church council knew that between the required repairs and regular operating expenses, something had to change. In the fall of 2013, the council hosted a reality check proposing several options for the congregation. I remember thinking how well attending this meeting was. Out of this meeting, three task groups were established. An infrastructure group to look at the mandatory repairs, a finance group to examine church finances and a membership group to explore ways of increasing membership. The mandate of each of these groups was to explore options because no one wanted to close or sell. I remember one member saying, "The last thing I want to see is this building being turned into condos."

Over the next year, the teams continued to meet. Some repairs proceeded. The roof was replaced and a lift was installed to increase accessibility. The membership team tried many ventures to increase membership and the finance team cut costs as much as possible and tried various means to increase revenue. None of this was enough to change the reality that it was impossible for a small congregation to raise the significant funds needed to repair the building.

The winter of 2014 was windy, the cost of furnace oil was higher than ever and by March the church had spent \$60, 000 on fuel. At some point during the year, North Atlantic put us on cash on delivery. I remember attending meetings with North Atlantic to figure out how we could continue to both pay them and operate. I remember one night the church council was meeting in the "old choir room" and someone remarked that it was cold. So someone went to see if there was any oil in the tank. The daycare was coming the next morning. There was no money in the bank account to pay for oil. The men's club was meeting in the hall, so someone went to see if they could pay for the oil. A volunteer arrived at the North Atlantic offices first thing that morning with a check and someone else set up heaters in the daycare space. For the next several months there was constant anxiety about keeping oil in the tank so we could operate.

This was clearly not a sustainable way for a church to operate so something had to change. In the spring the church council decided to issue a request for expressions of interest to the arts community to partner with us in the redevelopment. They held a Town Hall meeting in June. Around 80 people attended and shared ideas.

I was on vacation and study leave for the town hall and most of July. When I returned in August, the chair of the church council, David Tucker, gave me an update on the open house and what was learned. I remember clearly his first words to me, "How do you feel about housing?" I didn't know what to say. NLHC was putting out a request for proposals to build supportive housing. For the month of August, a small group of us worked on what a possible proposal could look like and what it would mean for the congregation. One of the first questions we asked was if it was even possible to put 10 apartments on the third floor of the building. I remember meeting with our architect and hearing his amazement that not only could 10 apartments fit on the third floor, but they did not even have to move a single window. This was unheard of in a 100-year-old building. I felt that could only be God at work.

We also learned about housing needs in St. John's. Most of the time churches slow down in the summer months. Not this year. The church council met in August and by September had a plan ready to present to the congregation. They presented a new vision for the congregation to build housing, community space and performance space. It was agreed early on that information meetings and decision meetings would not happen on the same day. People needed to think about this type of change. Early in September 2014, the new vision was approved by a vast majority of the members attending the meeting. After the first meeting, I remember one of our choir members telling me she was so excited about the idea of helping people by building housing that she couldn't sleep.

By 2015, the congregation had established Cochrane Community Outreach and Performance Centre Inc., which received funding from NLHC and the city of St. John's and was preparing for construction. A community board of directors was set up to run the newly formed not for profit with the membership and support of Cochrane Street United Church forming the membership of the organization. The board was made up of both church and community members. This board now took over the process of securing the necessary grants and working out the project details.

The church made plans for being out of the building for worship for the next 6 months. The last service in the sanctuary was held on Christmas Eve 2015. In January the congregation began worshiping at The St. John's Seventh Day Adventist Church, I would work from home and home and hold regular office hours in a room at St. Thomas' Anglican Church and bulletins being photocopied at Gower Street United Church. With the congregation's 100th Anniversary approaching in June of 2016, plans were made to both launch Cochrane Centre and celebrate the 100th anniversary of being in the building. We received special permission to hold the launch of Cochrane Centre and the 100th Anniversary service in the sanctuary. It was a weekend of celebration. A group of volunteers cleaned the sanctuary. On the Friday CCOPC was officially launched with the Lieutenant Governor in attendance and that night the congregation held a celebration dinner at St. Thomas' Anglican Church. On Sunday morning we gathered for a worship service that honoured our past and we looked ahead to the future. The tag line for the 100th Anniversary was "Honouring the Past, Celebrating the Present, Dreaming for the Future."

The time “on the road” was a difficult time for the congregation. They longed to return to worship in the sanctuary but could not because construction took longer than anticipated. I also found it a challenge to be constantly working in different locations. My office was in my car and in my briefcase. We returned to worship at Cochrane Centre on Easter Sunday 2017 after almost one and half years on the road, I felt nothing but relief. In my mind we made it. But I forgot that sometimes coming home can be hard. The next step in the journey was getting used to the new space. While the sanctuary remained the same, everything else was new and different. It has taken the church the last couple of years to adjust to the new space and settle in. Now the journey continues, as Cochrane Street United Church figures out what its next vision will be to support the community.

This was a process filled with ups and downs, twists and turns. What sustained me through this process was the strong feeling that God was at work in this project and that we were living out our faith by providing people with safe affordable housing. It always seemed to me that every time there seemed to be no solution or an unsurmountable problem, something would change or shift and it was like the solution was right in front of us. The Holy Spirit was surely at work throughout this project.

Memories from the Congregation Members and Early Board Members

Jean Brown & Lloyd Brown Congregation Members Jean Brown Past Chair of the Board

The reality for the congregation at Cochrane Street by the early 70s was that the congregation was too small to finance the huge structure that we had inherited. We had two options: do nothing and become bankrupt in which case the United Church of Canada would decide what happened to the property; or make decisions ourselves to repurpose the property to enable it to serve the local community. Looking back, a highlight for us is what the congregation decided. A phrase heard in the many discussions was we needed to give the property “back to the community.” We were aware of the church property was in an excellent location to attract developers of high-end condominiums, and there were those who saw us moving in that direction. However, the majority of the congregation voted for a more faith-based approach, and wanted to give it back to the community by providing badly needed affordable housing. Years earlier, Phyllis Seymour, Director of Emmanuel House located next door, had confided to Jean: “Every time I look at the large fellowship hall at the back of the church, I see affordable apartments for those who require it”.

It was time to make it happen! Jean was a member of the church council at the time, and most of the congregation, including the Council, were overwhelmed by the demands of such an enormous project. Luckily, we had church members who were not. The business insights of Dave Tucker, in particular, come to mind. Dave assured the board and the majority of the

congregation that this project could be achieved and there were government grants that could help us. Volunteers were found and led by Dave we launched into business plans and proposal writing (new skills and thinking for most of us). There were moments of tension, there were people who left the congregation, and there were those who argued passionately that it could not be done. Luckily, we had obtained funding for and hired an excellent architect who drew up building plans to create 10 single housekeeping units in the space (and added five more later). The church volunteers met with the local community residents, the City Council and various sub-committees to learn about zoning regulations and other requirements. Our business leaders met with Banks and government departments, located sources of funding and made applications. It was amazing to see it come to reality.

A second highlight was to see how the congregations pulled together during the construction of the apartments. It required faith, vision, courage and major flexibility. At the beginning of the construction, new infrastructure required that the whole property (the sanctuary and the fellowship hall at the back) be closed to the public. It was too dangerous and all services were disrupted. So how did we continue to be the church? The adaptability of the congregation and the help of other churches made it possible. Weddings and funerals were moved to nearby churches who offered their help. We formed a relationship with the local Seventh Day Adventist Church allowing us to hold church services there on Sundays. Office space and space for committee meetings were provided by the nearby St. Thomas Anglican church. I often thought of the courage and flexibility of our minister, as she never complained but carried on with her ministry under extremely difficult circumstances.

The very creation of the Cochrane Street Centre revealed a faith community who had the courage to be led by the Spirit to help the needy. An inspiring achievement indeed!

Eric Coombs
Cochrane Centre Board Member – Treasurer

- 2015 Dec 10 – letter of support from UC Conference for a \$500,000 loan with the bank
- Cost overruns and shortage of funding was the biggest issue. The architects' estimates were too low and there were unexpected surprises in renovating an old building. This resulted in many sleepless nights and a lot of work looking for money and dealing with potential lenders. Preparing business plans etc. took a lot of time.
- 2017-Feb 27 -Approval of Congregation Development Fund Loan \$500,000. This solved our cash flow problems. UCC and the national office group were fabulous. Unfortunately, there was an additional \$200,000 in unexpected costs that had to be funded by the NL Conference.
- Early 2017 when CRA denied our \$160,000 HST rebate for 2016! Then determined that we could claim 100% of the HST of \$330,000 as if the units were a business. Then when the units were finished, we had a deemed disposition at fair market value and had to self-assess at that time and pay 15% HST! Then claim rebate application for 50%. So we received \$330,000 but I had to set aside half for the future tax bill!

- Meeting new people and participating with an outstanding group of people on the Board made it all worthwhile though! I particularly appreciated the support of the other board members and the congregation when difficult decisions had to be made.
- 2018-Dec – Signing management agreement with First Light. – this agreement saved the organization. While capital money was hard to find, operational money was even more difficult. And the number of units was not large enough to achieve any economies of scale.

**Cheryl Sullivan Critch
Congregation Member
Past Secretary of Church Council
Past Cochrane Centre Board Member**

Town Hall Discussion to Create An Arts, Music, Performance and/ or Community Space

Please join us for this initial conversation on creating an arts, music, performance and/ or community space in St. John's on June 26, 2014 at 8:00. All ideas concepts and visions welcome. Hosted by Cochrane Street United Church

Time: 8:00

Location: Cochrane Street United Church
81 Cochrane Street

*(*Excerpt taken from a Town Hall announcement)*

When the congregation first began to consider the future of the Cochrane Street United Church building, one of the first priorities identified was the importance of maintaining the congregation's commitment to community outreach, and to musical performance. These ideas remained the focus as church members began to contemplate ways to share the building in service to the community. At that time financial issues were a constant concern for the church council, and it became clear it was time for the congregation to boldly consider its future direction. I remember how remarkably quickly ideas and meetings started to come together. While there was a lot of hesitation and uncertainty there was also a new found hope, and determination to both give back to the community and to remain as a congregation in the building. After exploring many options the idea of supportive housing, along with providing community space came together. Recognizing the opportunity, the congregation moved quickly through many meetings, visioning sessions, and frank discussions. In the end, it was a leap of faith by the congregation that led to the establishment of Cochrane Centre. There were many challenges, and over time Cochrane Centre sought new partners to support the work of the organization. In the early days, we never could have anticipated that a partnership with First Light would eventually help stabilize the church and the organization, while at the same time staying true to the mission as identified by the congregation in the very beginning.

Oliver Dingwell
Director of Music 2013 – 2016

Preparing:

- unstable financial position, I remember vividly the day that all staff were let go besides myself and the Minister
- uncertainty on being paid, several times pay was delayed because of aforementioned financial situation
- the general feeling in the congregation that something had to be done
- the excessive cost of the oil bill
- being cut off from the oil company
- congregational morale low
- looming uncertainty, dark cloud, what would the future hold?

Visioning:

- low engagement at the first few visioning meetings, but momentum grew
- excitement for possibilities
- I remember a contentious congregational meeting where certain members opposed the project, citing the loss of space, in particular for children and youth - a small group of members were upset, but the majority was very focused on the project and how it would help the congregation live out its mission
- there was lots of talk about Cochrane returning to one of its core outreach engagements with the community around music, performance, and culture - lots of talk about how this fit with the congregational mission
- excitement about the possibility of "Concerts under the Dome" returning, greater use of space as a performance venue, a place for people both sacred and secular to have shared use over a building that holds great importance to the city
- the concern of loss of space, but the realization that most spaces were under unutilized
- began asking the question: how can this space better serve the community
- talk about how CSUC would still "own" building technically - it would be an incorporated ministry of the congregation, with the congregation essentially paying rent to itself, but with the Incorporated Ministry being able to take on its own new life - congregation members would be members of CCOPC, could come to AGM, etc.

Initial process (pre-move out)

- strong and stable leadership from Dave Tucker as dual-chair, the congregation will never fully know the labour of love that he put in
- concern over organ raised again, creative visioning about how to do ministry "in exile" out of the building, what would that look like?
- Beginning to feel the excitement in this new chapter
- moving items out of the building, storing music, storing hymn books, getting ready for the move

Out of building:

- concern about Casavant organ and how it would be protected during renovations

- Minister's office at St. Thomas', Music Director and Choir at Gower Street, Church at SDA on Aldershot, Messy Church at Sobeys, certain church groups at Sobeys on various occasions
- felt at times like "wandering through the wilderness," yet a sense of promised land coming
- sense of pride at what the congregation was doing
- long-haul
- continued financial stress at this time
- happiness when the congregation returned for the 100th anniversary service, I think that was a turning point for some in the congregation, to see that something was happening to the building, that new life and possibilities were being formed

Return to building and summer of 2017:

- great excitement and pride at the return to the building, "everyone gets a tour"
- congregation so proud
- reclaimed use of some items - doors, hardwood floor, remember the reclaimed wood sale in 2017 with Jordan
- spirit of Cochrane Street kept in the building through the creative ways things had been utilized
- confusion from the wider community about what had happened to the building, many seemed to think the congregation had closed, sold the building, or even that the building would be demolished - not sure what could've been done more than what was done in this regard though, PR was quite good, clear interviews, good articles written, but for whatever reason, there was a disconnect with some people
- relief at the ease of financial burden

Stephen Jewczyk
Chair of the Church Council

What do you remember about the early stages of planning for Cochrane Centre?

I remember that at the early stages of planning for Cochrane Centre there was a significant number of congregational meetings to discuss the project and to get direction on how the project was to proceed. I was called upon to chair the congregational meetings and there as at least 6 in one year. Many times, little notice of the meetings was given and little information circulated to the congregation members prior to the meeting. This resulted in a lot of anxiety by members of the congregation as they were trying to get a grasp on determining their future as a congregation and what future part they would play in this project. Throughout the proponents of the project were pushing the congregation to make decisions quickly as time was running out to financially manage and maintain the property and decisions had to be made quickly to move the project forward. The congregational meetings tended to be tense and emotional with an array of opinions and views about proceeding with the project or how to proceed with the project. The proponents of the project were steadfast in their resolve to pursue a vision for the congregation which allow them to continue to worship in the building while having the financial ability to maintain the property being removed from the congregation and eventually passed over to a community board. All knew that something imaginative had to be done to continue the presence of the

church in the community. The creation of Cochrane Centre was and still is a bold and visionary approach by the congregation in its creation of an Incorporated Ministry in creating affordable and supportive housing, establishing a community performance space, expanding community service and outreach and continuing as a worship space for the congregation.

As the project got underway, there was a pivotal decision to keep the congregation together even while we could not use the building while it was under renovation. The decision was to continue our worship services as a congregation at the Seventh Day Adventist Church. This decision ensured that the congregation stayed together as a community and when we did return to the sanctuary at Cochrane Centre on Easter Sunday, April 16, 2017, we had maintained our core of congregation members that stayed with the church and many of which continue to worship as part of the Cochrane Street United Church family.

What events/moments stand out?

Returning to Cochrane Street United Church for the Easter Service on Sunday, April 16, 2017.

June Knight & Sandra Rowe Congregation Members

- One memorable experience during the transition period was meeting to empty the longtime music room situated in the church hall. Thousands of copies of music used by choir directors and their choirs had to be sorted and packed for removal.
- This was a nostalgic time for the current choir who adjusted to practices being held at Gower Street United Church in preparation for Sunday services at the Seventh Day Adventist
- The last spooky Halloween fundraising event sponsored by the Sunday School will be remembered as its best. By utilizing the many rooms in the church hall, the incredibly scary presentations of sound and sight were unforgettable. The final scene was created in the darkened sanctuary with special effects to complete the experience for the audience.
- Early in the construction of the apartments and the kitchen, members of the church were invited to take a tour and observe the progress being made. However, when taken on another tour, it was a pleasurable experience, as the kitchen was state of the art and the apartments were beautifully decorated. In each was a quilt made by the UCW members of our church and they were indeed a nice touch. Also, one of the apartments was designed for a handicapped individual and was in memory of Lois Ryan, a beloved member of our congregation.
- The celebration of Easter on Sunday, April 16, 2017, was very special. We returned to our Cochrane Street Building on the 101st anniversary of the first service which was held on Easter Sunday, April 23, 1916. It was a joyous event in so many ways, as we were back in our church home.

Fred Martin
Cochrane Centre Community Board Member

I don't recall many specific events or moments. Most important for me was the dedication and devotion of all those involved in the work. Also, the sense of true love and respect for those we were helping.

Heather McMaster
Congregation Member

I have desperately tried to remember any moments that stood out for me about the early stages of planning for Cochrane Centre. I suppose the main one would be a certain amount of excitement that we were finally doing something. The leadership of the Board working everything out with all those nit-picking details filled me with admiration and the knowledge that that was never going to be my fort ! The miracle of finding that all the windows were in the right places when it came to designing rooms and the miracle of having another church (faith) community offer their facility where we could worship altogether and not lose contact with one another. I remember the awe of actually having a parking lot while we attended the 7th Day Adventist Church and the joy of worshipping in a space that was just the right size for our congregation. Returning to Cochrane Street at Easter seemed to be just the right thing to do – a rebirth for the church.

I remember bombarding Dave Tucker with questions about the project and its progress and his quiet assurance that 'it will be alright, Heather' and so it is. It may not have turned out the way many of us thought it would, but we have accomplished something special and as Martha Stewart says – that is a good thing!

POEM by Heather McMaster
November 2016

Our dreams we are dreaming on God we are leaning
while seeking His guidance, His purpose and plan.
A church in transition, a change in our vision
has shown us, in truth, that together we can –
We can make the choices, to join all our voices
and build a new vision and dream a new dream
with prayer and persistence, we're going the distance.
A challenge accepted is follow God's scheme.

Our footsteps may falter yet we will not alter
the path we have chosen, the future we see
to help one another and care for each other
in prayer and in worship that binds you and me.
We strive through our sorrow and reach for tomorrow
to build a new family, to build a new home.

Our church in the future will stand as the centre
with grace and with guidance. We are not alone.

**David Molyneux,
Past Chair, Cochrane St. United Board of Management**

By the time I became Chair of the board, all the heavy lifting for the formation of Cochrane Centre had been done by the previous Chair of the board. Dave Tucker had done the best job possible to bring the congregation on side, but as he was moving to a leadership role in Cochrane Centre, and all the details had not been worked out, there was still the potential to derail the Centre if a more traditional board was elected. So, given my wife was Treasurer for the congregation at the time, and was also involved with Cochrane Centre, I felt it was important to step up.

I had been involved with congregational leadership before, including Chair of the Board for two previous terms. From this position, it was clear to see that congregation was not sustainable for much longer with the old model of funding. Expenses were increasing and revenues were at best stable, and at worst declining. Membership was aging and did not have the energy for large fundraising projects, and the amount of money to be raised was enormous. We had a huge and expensive building that we were not really using, and it seemed to be a missed opportunity for outreach projects.

The big opportunity arrived when the provincial government substantially increased the amount of funding for supportive housing. This meant that it was possible to add 10 supportive housing units on the top floor of the rear annex. The initial funding also included a commercial grade community kitchen and meeting space on the middle floor. The idea was not new, and in fact, a previous minister has tried very hard to do this, but the amount of money required was too ambitious at the time.

The challenge for my leadership was that the congregation was 'wandering in the wilderness' as we were displaced from our home church due to construction. Fortunately, worshippers at the Seventh Day Adventist Church allowed us to worship in their space on Sunday, while they continued their style of worship on Saturday. This was actually a good arrangement for a short period of time. We were also displaced from familiar surroundings for social and spiritual events besides worship, and we relied on the 'kindness of strangers' for this too. Our neighbours at St. Thomas's Anglican Church allowed us to use their space for social events and later provided some space for administration for the Congregation and Cochrane Centre. Gower St. United Church let us use their space for fundraising events.

What were the lessons learned?

Firstly congregations can be very reluctant to try new things. We value the familiar routines and spaces, but what if we cannot afford them?

Secondly, different styles of worship at different times is an excellent use of physical space. After all, we all profess to be Christians, but we choose to worship in different ways. So sharing

space is an excellent opportunity to maximize its use. Personally, I think Sunday morning is not the best time to worship. Why not a weekday evening or a time before work? But this will only work if we all agree to share and welcome people from all denominations to our spaces.

Thirdly, congregations that are willing to re-imagine the use of their space have the best chance of preserving it, even if the use is different from our traditions.

Fourthly, partner with others. In the end, transferring management of the physical space to First Light is perhaps the best possible outcome. If any group needs a space for their own spiritual and cultural activities, it is Canada's indigenous peoples. If we can only do a small thing to make up for the injustices of the past, then we must do it!

Finally, be brave! Do not be afraid of trying something different. Clearly what we were doing was not causing any interest, so the worst thing is you close anyway, but at least you died fighting. The best thing is we can create new and imaginative uses for the spaces we have inherited from our forefathers and mothers.

Jim Oakley
Congregation Member and Cochrane Centre Board Member

I recall the early meetings of the congregation to view the plans and proposals to use the church hall for housing and community space, the sanctuary for performance space and the excitement that we were fulfilling our mission to serve the community and use the resources of the church building. The success of the early meetings required leadership, and also the belief of the majority of the congregation members that this was the right thing to do, both for the church and the community.

I joined the Board of Cochrane Centre after the initial Board members were in place and the Board was already in operation. I was impressed by the dedication and support of all Board members but in particular, the Board members who were not members of the Cochrane Street congregation. Some of these Board members were from St. Thomas Anglican Church. The contribution of St. Thomas Church was significant. In addition to the volunteer work of the Board members, St. Thomas provided meeting and office space, and encouragement in many ways. The interdenominational cooperation in the development of Cochrane Centre was important.

I was privileged to view the construction project on occasion and experience the excitement of how the plans for the housing units were being fulfilled. The new units were a perfect fit for the existing building, and this just confirmed that Cochrane Centre was meant to be.

I was always impressed by the dedication of the staff members who served Cochrane Centre during the initial years and developed the models for the project that has been successful. As with any new venture, there were challenges to be met, but there was always a belief that the project would succeed.

John Perlin

Congregation Member and Cochrane Centre Board Member

I saw no future for the church unless we could resolve the finances of the congregation. The concept of housing seemed to be bought into even though some did not want to do housing. The meeting that stands out is the meeting the church decided to pass the church over to Cochrane Centre. There were supports from places like St. Thomas' for office space. Fred Martin and Derek Osmond, who are members of St. Thomas', were invaluable community board members. Rob Crosbie agreed to chair the capital campaign committee. Another important move was when First Light came to see the kitchen and offered to manage the facility. Once First Light came onto the scene it made the project feasible.

Charlie Pope

Congregation Member

I have only one item to tell you. In September, when the apartments were ready to be furnished. The Kiwanis Club of St. John's had a sum of money that needed to be allocated before the month's end. I made the suggestion that we could pay the cost of furnishing a room. It was thought to be ok but we only had 50% of the funds needed. I offered to make up the balance of 50%, and I would receive a receipt for income tax. It was agreed to proceed and the money was made available. It was then discovered that the furniture needed to be assembled. So Kiwanians, Sig Lenser, Doug Peters and I offered to do that. So Kiwanis Club not only paid to furnish one room 3 members assembled the furnishings for all 10. A very worthwhile community venture. I was very much in favour of the project from the start.

Dave Reeves

Congregation Member

Prior to 2014 the congregation of Cochrane Street United Church was having financial problems and looking for ways to keep their church building viable and maintain a spiritual and engaging congregation. A plan of applying for various grants to convert part of the building (the non-sanctuary portion) into small affordable single living accommodations was developed. One of my first memories was participating, as one of the congregational members, with others who represented the Architectural firm, a property surveyor and an engineer representing those who provided the grants. These meetings were always very informative and gave insight into how part of the building could be repurposed while keeping the spiritual aspects of the congregation. An important part of these changes was to maintain the acoustic qualities of the sanctuary, in particular, the valuable pipe organ and all of its auxiliary equipment. The social activities of the congregation are very important, and special attention was given to a new commercial kitchen and a general area which could be used for large groups. In doing all of this, special efforts were made to keep as much of the old wood as possible which acts as a reminder of the building's history.

The bond that grew between people, who are normally not associated with each other, was amazing to observe. Everyone had a vision for something great and tried their best to achieve the goals.

The project educated me in ways which were unexpected. I became more knowledgeable in the functioning of a congregation, the functioning of The United Church of Canada, and the many organizations that are striving to provide more affordable single living accommodations.

Another memory is how a seed of a thought grew in a person's mind on how to overcome a problem. How buy-in for this thought was achieved. How a plan was developed and achieved. Finally, seeing the fruits of the labour. One of my fruits was to attend church, after completion and seeing occupants of the accommodations at a church service and the social after.

I have several memories of congregational meetings to discuss the plan for converting part of the building. These meetings were always filled with mixed emotions. Some participants were glad that there was a viable option going forward, and some were concerned about how the long history of the congregation would be affected. Still, others were concerned about losing full control of the building. These were all litigable concerns, and all were addressed as the project advanced. Yes, there was change, but this change accommodated these concerns.

There is also a memory of how the scope of the project can change. The original plan was to have living accommodation on the upper level, and how this was expanded to have living accommodation on the lower level. This gave new challenges in how to accommodate the utility room and the blower room for the pipe organ. These challenges were overcome and resulted in full utilization of the non-sanctuary portion of the building.

Many memories come to mind, but the last one that sticks out is how the relatively small congregation of Cochrane Street United Church was able to achieve greatness. With help from many of the congregation and outside parties, the congregation was able to facilitate change to our church building by adding living accommodations and by working with an organization to manage the operations and upkeep of this updated multi-purpose building. The congregation now has a building that is used by much of the community, and yes, it is still our religious sanctuary.

David Tucker

Past Chair of Church Council and First Chair of Cochrane Centre Board

I remember being Chair of the CSUC Church Council and the First Chair of the Cochrane Centre Board of Directors at the same time; an untenable situation as it turned out.

Mostly I remember, now, challenges and obstacles which in the end did not deter the congregation of Church Street United Church from making the decisions that ultimately led to the creation of Cochrane Centre. This caused all of us to move out of our comfort zones. I remember as one door closed another always opened. Reverend Miriam reminded us, often, that what we were doing seemed to be divinely inspired. There were many examples of what we were doing seeming to be somehow preordained.

Innumerable meetings were held with the church council and congregation. There were also meetings with funding providers, architects, contractors, City Council, MPs, MHAs, city officials, provincial and federal government officials, bankers, lawyers and personnel at the provincial and national levels of the United Church of Canada. I also remember meeting with

well respected members of the business community who agreed to spearhead a Capital Fundraising campaign for us. Undoubtedly, there were meetings with many others that I have failed to list.

I remember numerous deadlines required by funding providers that we always met but not without a lot of hard work and determination by many.

My enduring memory is that we were able to transform an historic downtown church property, that almost certainly would have closed because the congregation was unable to pay an enormous \$60,000 annual fuel bill, into a home for 15 homeless and low-income residents and a vibrant community and indigenous performance and cultural centre.

**Norman Turner
Community Board Member**

What do you remember about the early stages of planning for Cochrane Centre?

I have a fairly unique perspective as the concept really germinated at a public meeting that the Church held to discuss the challenges they were having around their facilities problems, largely brought on by the high cost and challenges around heating.

At the time I was working for a property development company and was exploring the opportunities that might be available for our company. Although it was readily apparent that there were none, I was aware that the province and city were collaborating in making grant funding available for affordable housing.

I mentioned this after the meeting to Dave and passed my card along.

Subsequently, after I had left Republic Properties I was asked to help out with the planning of the housing and other construction elements. I participated on the board of the newly formed non profit and the building committee. At one point I stepped away from those duties as I was briefly employed as owner's rep for the new non profit representing them at the construction meetings and monitoring progress.

What events/moments stand out?

I mostly remember the excitement of bringing the project into existence and the cooperation and will that was shown by the various levels of the church, the congregation, the government and our bankers. I think I will mostly remember the "lightbulb" moment I shared with Dave after the public meeting when we realized that there might be something that could be brought about especially as the meeting was in and of itself not a great source of hope.

And anything else you would like to share

On a personal level, I found the whole experience transformational. It confirmed to me that I wanted to use my skills and experience for the greater good rather than commerce. It made me realize that there is significantly more to life than chasing material things and the artificial status that being a "high up" in a purely commercial enterprise brings. It also set me on a road to work

in the housing industry full time and hopefully make a difference to the most vulnerable in our society.

I will always be grateful for the way this project made me examine my personal values and for setting me on a different and more productive (in my mind at least) path.

**Evan Smith
Music Director**

- The first thing that comes to mind about Seventh Day Adventist is that beautiful baby grand. Shortly followed by having to lug a clumsy cardboard box filled with about 45 voices united up and down the steps every Sunday.
- Fond memories of choir rehearsals every week at Gower Street United.
- And even though I had never worked at Cochrane with the Church, getting back there on that first Easter Sunday felt like coming home.

**Patricia Young
Congregation Member and Former Organist**

LETTER WRITTEN BY Patricia Young

2008 December 28 9:30am Rehearse organ, BEBPOS and Choirs
 11:00am Service
 3:00pm Elyse White wedding

2008 December 29 Started to empty my office

2008 December 30 Finished emptying office – all my music and books

2008 December 31 Peter helped me complete emptying the office and we walked away from what had been our beloved "home" for 16 years

CSUC worshipped at Seventh Day Adventist church – how welcoming that congregation was to us.

Returning to Cochrane Street was quite a shock. No longer does our congregation “own” the building, but we are more like once-weekly visitors.

But how wonderful that at least fifteen people have found homes, which all the while are being made more beautiful – the gardens, the smoking shelter, the attractively furnished accessible apartments and lower full suites, the community areas, the companionship – and so much else. I personally have found it difficult that one doesn’t have easy access to the organ – though the organ is still less than only half of its true self, and will cost a fortune to be restored to its complete original magnificence.

People like Shelley Neville and Peter Halley who, following the Kiwanis Music Festivals each year, gave of their time for 2 full Saturday mornings preparing the talented young people to give a special Stars of the Festival Concert. Many of those young performers are now established artists in their own right – such as Jennie Press, concertmaster of the Vancouver Symphony Orchestra, to performers we see and hear in concert halls across Canada.

The national days, such as Welsh “St. David’s Concert”, the Irish “St. Patrick’s Day”, Mother’s Day and many other special events. Every Christmas we held “A Wreath of Carols” with choirs and performers from schools like Bishops Field, which brought many, many proud parents and grandparents to see their precious children perform. We had big events like the United church ordination day, the funeral for Premier Frank Moores, etc. The Handbell Choir played a carillon on the outside steps on several occasions. Christmas trees and carolling during Advent; Flower and plant and hotdog lunch sales; serving hot chocolate to the folks after the Santa Claus Parade, and in the summer we have served BBQ refreshments across the road in Bannerman Park.

The Financial Picture for Cochrane Street United Church 2011 to 2019

	2011	2012	2013	2014	*2015	2016	2017	2018	****2019
Total Revenue:	\$ 185,095	\$ 211,912	\$ 213,316	\$ 198,317	\$ 244,685	\$ 150,499	\$ 148,855	\$ 149,894	\$ 142,855
Total Expenses:	\$ 203,959	\$ 237,605	\$ 223,860	\$ 217,174	*326571	\$ 140,832	\$ 141,570	\$ 149,275	\$ 148,971
Surplus/deficit:	\$ (18,865)	\$ (25,693)	\$ (10,725)	\$ (18,857)	\$ (81,886)	\$ 9,667	\$ 7,345	\$ 339	\$ (6,116)
Cash:	\$ 20,168	\$ -	\$ 2,112	\$ (27,663)	\$ 37,202	\$ 28,737	\$ 28,479	\$ 23,478	\$ 14,654
Bank Indebtedness	\$ -	\$ 17,588	\$ 23,120	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Accounts Payable:	\$ 31,213	\$ 25,822	\$ 24,194	\$ 25,822	\$ 44,616	\$ 14,431	\$ 4,489	\$ 3,642	\$ 3,038
**Short Term Loan:	\$ 10,000	\$ 10,000	\$ 10,000	\$ 10,000	\$ 10,000	\$ 20,000	\$ 20,000	\$ 17,600	\$ 12,007
Deferred Revenue	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 5,000	\$ 5,000
***Donor Revenue:	\$ 132,173	\$ 130,925	\$ 123,651	\$ 132,173	\$ 169,566	\$ 138,451	\$ 141,737	\$ 152,162	\$ 150,776
Change in Donor Revenue	n/a	-0.94%	-5.56%	-0.94%	26%	-18%	2.37%	6.65%	-0.91%

*Revenue and Expenses in 2015 were both high. They received additional revenue for the roof and additional expenses to pay for the roof

**Scotiabank Loan from 2011 to 2015, East District loan after 2015

*** In 2018 & 2019, this amount includes donations made to our partner Cochrane Centre. 2018: 1\$2,025 to CC, 2019: \$17,802.

**** In 2019, Christmas Eve Services were cancelled due to snowstorm