

## Caring Ministry Team 2021 Annual Report

The Caring Ministry Team consists of Rev. Bill Cantelon, Arnette Anderson, Margaret Bates, Jennifer Hastings, Jean Hazemi, Orma Paton (secretary), Ruth Schulz, Carol-Ann Staples, Joanne Thomas (chair), and Nancy Walker. Rev. Blyth Hughes is an affiliate member who provides pastoral care support to those in residential care. Rev. Cathy Victor withdrew from the committee mid-year due to commitments.

Although the Covid-19 pandemic has required the church to adapt in most aspects of work and worship, many committees, including the Caring Ministry, have remained active to continue the work of the church and the connectedness of the congregation. We have kept in contact with the Covid-19 Protocol Development Team so that we are working toward similar goals of supporting the congregation.

We are saddened by the number of church members or members of church families who have passed away since we were last able to gather together in worship. Our gratitude goes to Barb Waldner who has for some time, hosted family members who have been dealing with the loss of their adult children. This year, Caring has delivered seven prayer shawls that have been well received.

The team continues to connect with various members of the congregation, approximately 40 in total.

During the year, we had two Zoom conferences to seek advice and share information. In February, Dr. Tamara Goranson, clinical psychologist, spoke to our team about the effects of the pandemic restrictions on people, particularly seniors. She also shared strategies to maintain a sense of well-being. Kyla Morrison Morgan, health and wellness advocate at First Met United, spoke to our team in September about how she and others support their congregation. This conversation triggered an initiative to support those who are caring for loved ones with dementia.

At our October meeting, we considered possible talks and which ones can be delivered online and which are better offered when we can gather in person. We were excited to find a facilitator, Rev. Wilda Cottam, to offer a Dementia Caregiver Support Group monthly to our church members. This was to be launched in January 2022 but, with the Omicron variant being highly transmissible, may have to be postponed until small groups can gather safely at the church.

Throughout the years, Rev. Bill has been a source of ideas and strong support for the Caring committee and we will very much miss his presence at our meetings when he retires.

Our Caring Resource library in the Friendship Room has a selection of helpful resources (caregiver support, dealing with grief, guides for seniors, health, meditation and healing, etc.) that can be borrowed or browsed through.

Members of the Caring team are happy to support anyone who wishes to write their memoirs. The Life Stories binder at the back of the Sanctuary contains over 100 stories of our past and current church members.

*Respectfully submitted*

*Joanne Thomas, chair*