

## **BOARD OF DEACON'S REPORT**

Looking back at 2021, it's clear that we continued to operate under COVID-19 protocols; in fact, for the first eight months, those protocols governed almost everything we did... or didn't do. The "Out of the Cold" and "Wednesday Drop-In" programmes, for example, were still on hiatus. In-person services did not resume until September, when we started with outdoor services in the parking lot. We returned indoors when the weather was too cold or wet, and we're thankful that Pastor David and the worship team then offered both online and in-person worship to meet the needs of all the church family.

There were other matters, such as ensuring that the church's building was in full compliance with the fire code. Juri Parnoja undertook a leadership role in this task, resulting in the installation of new fire doors, procedural changes such as keeping doors closed, and, much later, after many obstacles, came confirmation that we were fully compliant with fire regulations. As part of our compliance, we appointed Judy Hardy as our Fire Marshall. The Deacons' Board thanks Juri for his tremendous effort in this undertaking as, at some points, it seemed to be a task that would never be done! Thanks also to Dan for the time and care he took in painting the new doors.

We regretfully accepted Juri's resignation from the Board in September; he was kind enough to leave us a prioritized list of items requiring our attention regarding the care and upkeep of the premises. Those individuals and families for whom Juri was responsible were reassigned to other Deacons.

Throughout all our endeavours, the Board was mindful of the need to be careful with the disbursement of the church's funds; to this end, the role of the Office Manager was reviewed with a view to changing it, in the future, to a part-time role. Additionally, we regretfully declined an invitation to join in with other churches in their efforts to sponsor refugee families. We reviewed our rental agreements to ensure not only compliance with COVID protocols but also that we were renting to groups whose purposes and goals were in alignment with our own. We also reviewed the CRA rules regarding donations and congregant gifts flowing through Blythwood's books (CRA prefers that we not do that, by the way).

In the last four months of the year, we primarily dealt with the work of the Planning Committee; that committee had kept the membership informed throughout the year and, in the fall, organize a series of information meetings for the congregation to be better informed about their options for our future. The options were "Revitalize", "Merge with Sanctus", or "Other", with "Other" being

the congregation's choice. It was the goal of both the Planning Committee and the Deacons' Board to have the vote finalized by December 31<sup>st</sup> so that the members could enter the New Year with less uncertainty regarding the church's future. "Revitalize", a CBOQ programme, was the second choice, and Blythwood had applied to and been accepted for that programme by the end of the year. The Deacons' Board, in 2022, will delve further into the additional work required by the "Other" option.

2021 was a challenging year with some victories and some losses; more difficult were the losses of some of our church family, but we rejoice in having known them and in knowing that they are at home with our Lord.

We ask that you uphold us in prayers as we go forward in 2022, as we continue to deal with questions about Blythwood's future, day-to-day operations, and the complexities and consequences brought about by the pandemic. At the writing of this report, there are positions to be filled; we need a member or members to form the House Committee as Jennifer, the Office Manager, is now acting as the House Committee. The Nominating Committee is also actively searching for a new deacon as we're below the required numbers; we earnestly ask that you pray about these and other roles or just any way in which you feel that you can serve. *"And whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as unto the Lord, and not unto men."* Col 3:23.

In His Service,

Ethan Hurlburt  
Lenore Nordlund  
Judy Palmer  
Cathie Salter