



First United Church
Community Ministry Society
Annual Report 2013

Executive Director's Welcome

As we entered 2013, circumstances presented First United with a rare opportunity. Due to the practical need to shift our legal designation from that of a congregation to that of a registered society, we were asked, what would we like to be known as?

We made the choice to move forward with the name "First United Church Community Ministry Society", an admitted mouthful, but an important affirmation of our history and values. The Society dedicated itself to continue the tradition of "First Church" at Hastings and Gore, not only by retaining the word "Church" in our name, but by deepening our commitment to a ministry of pastoral care through the sharing of a faith as practised by The United Church of Canada, while including and celebrating the diversity of faith perspectives present in the Downtown Eastside.

As part of our new identity, we adopted a new logo, patterned after the design of our roof, and created a new website with a new look. On July 1, 2013 the newly incorporated Society assumed the operations of First United Church.

Inside our building, changes were afoot which further enhanced hospitality: we brightened up the old sanctuary lighting, created better separation between our shelter areas and drop-in space, added a sink to create a dedicated foot-care area, and generally made our space more inviting to the community at large.

On October 15, as part of Homelessness Action Week in Vancouver, we welcomed over 600 guests to our Open House to launch our new look, both inside and out, and as a way of confirming that First United Church was still very much a going concern in the Downtown Eastside.

At the community level, we involved ourselves in the important roundtable consultations associated with the city-sponsored Local Area Planning Process. The draft report setting the course of change for the Downtown Eastside over the next 10-30 years was issued at the end of the year, with final consultations and changes carrying over into 2014. The directions set in this Local Area Plan are extremely important for First United.

Concurrently, our Board of Directors approved and began a strategic planning initiative that would set our own course and direction for the next 5 years. The completion of that process and the adoption of the plan is part of the story for 2014.

This past twelve months was also about strengthening our partnerships with existing funders, donors and church congregations, while encouraging new relationships that will ensure the sustainability of our operation for years to come.

Clearly, this past 12 months carried on the process of stabilizing services, staffing, financial management and spiritual ministry that got underway in 2012. As we look ahead, we know we have a major challenge presented by an aging building. With renewed purpose and vigour we journey into the year ahead with a sense of confidence and hope.

- Stephen Gray

President's Welcome

2013 was an important year for First United, as it became a registered society governed by an elected board of directors. BC Conference of the United Church of Canada remained a strong and influential governing voice at First United, and we continued our fruitful relationship with local United Church congregations, as well as with other faith groups and community partners.

The year was marked with exciting new undertakings, such as our new seniors program and our much needed women's washroom accessibility renovations. Most of all, the year was characterized by a continuation of the quiet miracles that the staff, volunteers and community members of First United have facilitated for generations. Whether it's a paralegal triumph, new housing secured or self esteem regained, these humble successes exemplify the beauty of First United Church, and merit celebration.

On behalf of my fellow Board members, I applaud the hard work and commitment of all the staff and volunteers to First United and the Downtown Eastside.

- Stan Lanyon

2012-2013 Board of Directors

Stan Lanyon - Chair
Brian Thorpe - Vice President
Ariel Creighton - Secretary
Bob Burrows
Judy Echols
Mark Paetkau
Scott Griffin

Don Robertson
Paul Scipio
Marion Young
Stephen Gray - Non Voting
Sally McShane - Non Voting
Doug Goodwin - Non Voting



Highlights of 2013

*" Volunteering has been a rewarding learning experience. I feel **compassion** more than ever for people. If I can make them smile, that's great!"*

- Anthony, Volunteer

*" I love being with the people here, it fills my **heart**. Every day I feel **blessed**. No day is a bad day. It keeps me grounded and humble. Feeling that every day reminds me of why I'm here."*

- Jerri, Staff

Advocacy

- Advocates continued to provide ongoing advocacy services to individuals and also address, champion and create awareness of systemic social justice issues.
- Hosted a summer student, funded by the UBC Public Interest Law Program.
- 4378 files managed by our advocates.
- 6 workshops held on various topics such as the Residential Tenancy Branch, crisis supplements, navigating the welfare system, and more with a total of 89 attendees.
- As part of our ongoing Law Foundation funding agreement, began an Advocacy Legal Supervision relationship with Community Legal Assistance Society.

Hospitality

- Served Thanksgiving dinner for 375 people and Christmas dinner for 300 people.
- Started a program where we invite folks leaving the shelter to come back and have dinner with us for 30 days while they settle into their new settings.
- Engaged in kitchen volunteer appreciation events, including a trip to Nat Bailey Stadium.
- Hosted Seniors community kitchen, a small baking program and helped community members to celebrate rituals like birthdays and memorials.
- Served as weekly host for The Downtown Neighbourhood House Smoothie program.
- Welcomed 31 new Sandwichmakers and Meal Providers in 2013.
- Served 150-200 people during every community dinner and lunch.
- Provided an average of 2500 nutritious meals each week.
- Worked with local businesses and distributors to make creative use of donated foods.

Shelter

- Our 60 bed shelter runs at near capacity year round, offering 40 beds for men and 20 beds for women. Day sleeping is available for women, and for men with medical needs.
- Sheltered 1138 men and 824 women. 24% of men, 16% of women were over 55 years old.
- Worked with BC Housing Carnegie Homelessness Outreach, Atira, Battered Women Support Services, and other partners to coordinate support for shelter residents.
- Partnered with the Greater Vancouver Shelter Strategy, Vancouver Coastal Health and Shelter Net BC to connect shelter residents with primary health services.
- Served as site for annual Vancouver Homeless count.
- Provided Christmas stockings, seasonal meals and gifts for shelter residents.
- Worked with the Thrift Store to provide sheets, blankets, towels, and small house wares to residents exiting the shelter once they secure housing.

Community Engagement

- As part of Homelessness Action Week, hosted an Open House, where over 600 people visited to learn more about First United Church and its programs.
- Advocates shared resources at Summer Connect and Fall Connect events.
- Went to Deep Cove for annual picnic in partnership with Mount Seymour United Church.
- Hosted workshops for Heart of the City festival.
- Welcomed students from VCC, Douglas College, UBC School of Social Work, BCIT School of Nursing as well as a social work intern from Switzerland.
- Participated in Truth and Reconciliation activities, including organizing Aboriginal Awareness training for DTES front line workers.

Programs

- Started a 3 day/week seniors program, which included a community kitchen partnership with the Downtown Eastside Neighborhood House.
- Traveled to Camp Fircom for three retreats, including two men's trips and one for families.
- Renewed the Secret Santa program for families living in First United Social Housing.
- 300 or more people visited Reception each day for mail pick up, toiletries, towels, use of the long distance phone, and other services.
- Distributed thousands of harm reduction packages to keep drug users safer.
- Volunteers helped complete more than 3,500 tax returns for low income people. That is approximately 10% of the regional total for the CRA volunteer program.
- Began weekly music program with Rudolf Penner, bringing joyful tunes to the Church.
- 4220 people enjoyed footcare, including 2906 men and 1314 women.
- Gave 393 haircuts.
- Provided funding for emergency travel and funerals and distributed 1200 bags of groceries through a discrete emergency food program.
- Hosted seasonal VCHA Flu clinics and Hepatitis C clinics in a partnership with Vancouver Centre for Infectious Diseases.
- Continued the bi-weekly Dentistry Clinic in partnership with UBC School of Dentistry.
- Established new men's group, computer time, and tea time trivia programs.
- Continued women's group, karaoke, yoga, art time, movies, healing touch and our monthly partnership with Beauty Night.
- Extended hours of thrift store supervisor, thanks to increasing revenues.

Building

- Renovated the women's washroom to be fully accessible for people in wheelchairs.
- Completed engineering reports for the roof, envelope, mechanical, electrical systems, enriching the long term planning for building and development.
- Renovated the chapel and sanctuary and repainted the gym.
- Conducted BC Hydro and Fortis BC assessments to contribute to energy efficiency.

Development

- Welcomed 568 new first time donors, for a total of 3497 active donors.
- Conducted our first crowd funding campaign, after receiving training from The Tye.
- Benefited from the Duke Ellington Concert, thanks to our friends at St. Andrew's-Wesley.

Spirituality

- Continued tradition of weekday Spiritual focus, as well as weekly Sprit Circle.
- The Listening Ministry was created to offer a way for community members to seek counsel and share sorrows without judgement.
- A Prayer Chain sends out prayer requests from the community via anonymous email.
- Reverend Sally conducted outreach with Downtown Eastside faith groups, spoke at United Church congregations around BC, and oversaw multiple memorials and weddings.
- Two Aboriginal facilitators were hired and started cultural programs, including a weekly Talking Circle, smudge, drum making and regular bannock making.

Governance

- In July 2013, First United Church became an incorporated society and assumed the new name of "First United Church Community Ministry Society".
- The Church is now accountable to BC Conference of the United Church of Canada.

Statement of Financial Position

As at December 31, 2013

Complete financial statements, audited by Ernst & Young LLP, and from which this summary is extracted, are available upon request.

Assets	2013	2012
Cash	173,207	303,766
Investments	1,394,027	1,243,585
Accounts receivable and other current assets	108,049	126,529
Total current assets	1,675,283	1,673,880
Property and equipment	60,945	59,698
Total Assets	1,736,228	1,733,578
Liabilities		
Accounts payable and accrued liabilities	154,260	104,007
Deferred contributions	130,825	100,000
Total Current Liabilities	285,085	204,007
Administered funds	82,954	88,199
Total Liabilities & Administered Funds	368,039	292,206
Net Assets		
Internally restricted for property and equipment fund	60,945	59,698
Unrestricted fund	557,244	631,674
Internally restricted funds	750,000	750,000
Total Net Assets	1,368,189	1,441,372
Total	1,736,228	1,733,578

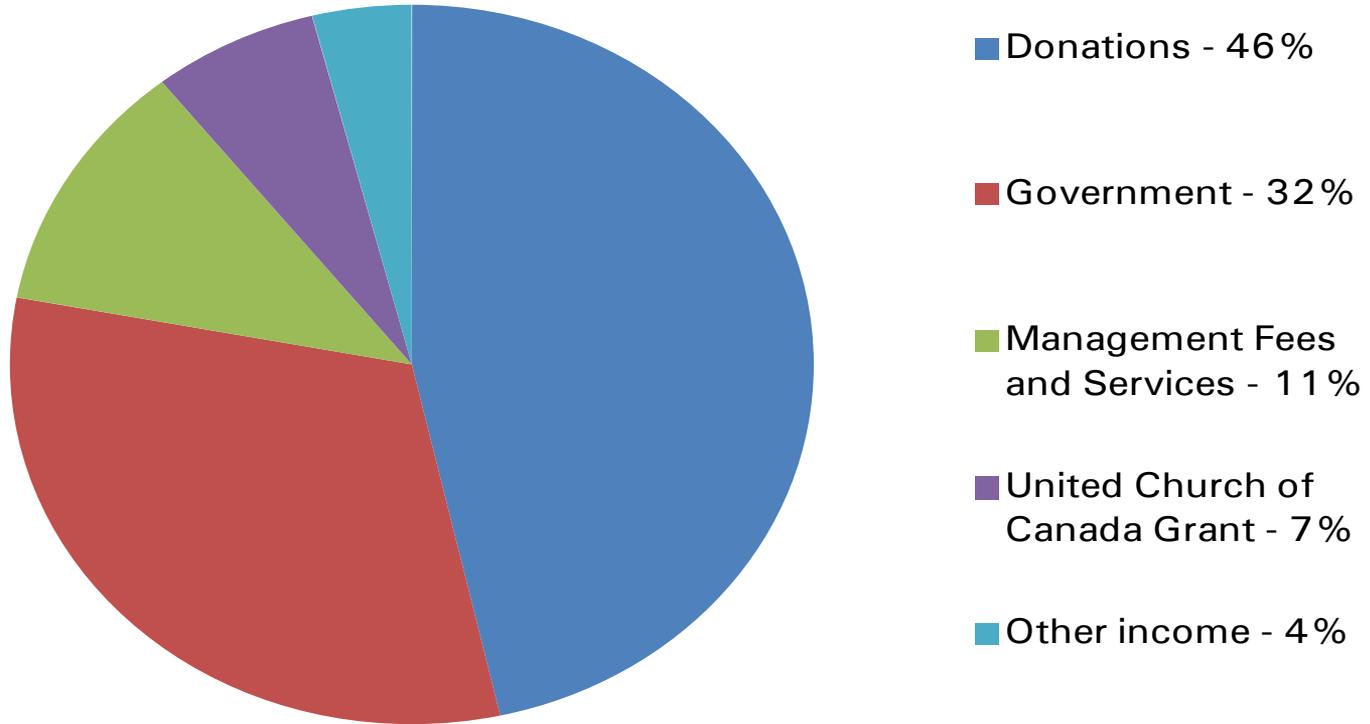
Statement of Operations

Year ended December 31, 2013

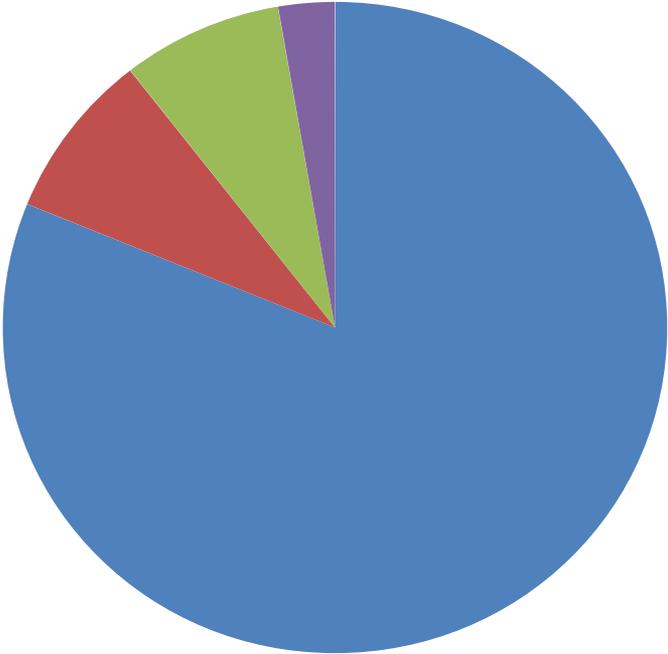
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Revenue	2013	2012
Government funding	995,993	1,921,803
Donations and fundraising	977,980	927,708
Foundations	407,984	431,597
Housing fees and salary recoveries	358,017	334,359
United Church of Canada mission support grants	210,837	192,754
Investment and other income	126,563	88,084
Special projects	81,239	14,710
Total	3,158,613	3,911,015
Expenses		
Salaries & benefits	2,471,725	2,932,365
Building operations, utilities & repairs	252,870	483,629
Office, fundraising & communication	233,440	265,182
Community service & support programs	150,920	187,480
Special projects	89,130	14,682
Amoritization	33,711	28,814
Total	3,231,796	3,912,152
Deficiency of revenue over expenses	(73,183)	(1,137)

Revenue Sources for 2013



Allocation of Expenses for 2013



■ Community Support and Programs - 81 %

■ Building Operations - 8 %

■ Office Fundraising and Communication - 8 %

■ Special Projects - 3 %



Thank you
to all the...

activists, advocates, artists, beauticians, chefs, coffee makers, comedians, concert promoters, community members, dancers, dogs, donors, drummers, elders, entrepreneurs, faith leaders, families, foot soakers, friends, karaoke stars, letter writers, listeners, partners, pianists, rabbits, runners, sandwich makers, secret santas, seniors, singers, sock collectors, staff, stocking stuffers, students, thinkers, volunteers, worshippers, yogis and everyone else whose time, energy and spirit come together to make hope possible at First United Church.



Inspired by the Christian Gospel which nurtures, empowers and liberates, First United Church is an inner-city ministry of The United Church of Canada.

Called by the Spirit to be part of the Downtown Eastside of Vancouver, this ministry:

Affirms the worth of individuals,
Empowers communities,
And works for social justice.



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