

Rondebosch United Church



Annual Reports
for 2023

Paul Klee

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Dear Fellow Members and Friends!

Our Annual Church Meeting will be held on Sunday 17th March 2024 at 11h00 in our church hall.

New deacons are to be elected at the meeting. If you would like to nominate someone for either of these offices, please send your nomination via email to the minister (rpsteiner@icloud.com) and confirm that your nominee is willing stand for election.

I. AGENDA OF THE AGM MEETING

- 1. Prayer (including Thanksgiving for the Faithful Departed in 2023)



Brian Davison



Shirley Janes



Gavin Lloyd

- 2. Apologies

3. Minutes of the last Church Meeting

4. Reports

- 4.1 General Reports (to be received)
- 4.2 Report of Church Council Secretary (to be adopted)
- 4.3 Report of Treasurer (to be adopted)

5. Election of Office-bearers:

5.1 Church Treasurer

Jono Child is standing to be re-elected.

5.2 Church Council Secretary

Russell Davies is resigning. A new secretary will have to be nominated and appointed by our Church Council.

5.3 Deacons

Resignations: Russell Davies and Rowen Ravera

Deacons who completed their second term and are stepping down:

Annette Newmarch

Deacons who will continue to serve:

- Kume Muloiwa (going into second year of first term)
- Heidi Segal (going into third year of first term)
- Helen Shaw (going into third year of first term)
- Henry du Plessis (going into first year of second term)
- Sue Smith (going into first year of second term)
- Beryl Botman (going into third year of second term)
- Aristide Akimana (going into third year of second term)

Nominations of new deacons:

Cheryl Hewson, Fiona McLennan, and Rev Glynis Goyns have accepted their nomination and will stand for election.

5.4 Property Steward

Jacques Matthee is standing to be re-elected

5.5 UCCSA Peninsular Regional Council Commissioners

5.6 UPCS Presbytery of the Western Cape Commissioners

6. Other business

7. Closure

II. MEMBERSHIP REPORT AND BAPTISMS

BAPTISMS (2)

MEMBERS RECEIVED (10)

By special resolution (5)

By baptism (0)

By confirmation (5)

By transfer (0)

MEMBERS LOST (3)

By moving away (0)

In memoriam (3)

ROLL BOOK AT THE END OF 2023

New members received: 10

Members lost: 3

Total of Church Members: 323

III. CHURCH OFFICE HOLDERS

Church Minister (Robert Steiner)

The ministry of our church continues to rely on the generous support of so many volunteers. The written reports show their ongoing commitment and dedication. Please know how deeply grateful I am to be working together with such beautiful people. Our church is truly built with “living stones”. And to gather with you around our table for Holy Communion is always such a joy.

A special thanks to Vulisango Mtshikwana and Susan Davies for making sure that our sanctuary and hall are such a welcoming and hospitable space on a Sunday morning.

And a big thank you to Russell Davies for leading us so graciously as Church Council Secretary. Due to other commitments Russell will be stepping down from Council.

I am looking forward to see where our visioning process with David Manne will take us in 2024.



Church Council Secretary (Russell Davies)

Deacons

Russell Davies (chair), Beryl Botman, Annette Newmarch, Heidi Segal, Helen Shaw, Aristide Akimana, Henry du Plessis and Sue Smith all continued from 2022. Kumedzani Muloiwa and Rowan Ravera joined as deacons in April 2023, but Rowan had to stand aside later in the year due to other commitments. Annette Newmarch has now completed her six year term and Russell Davies will not continue in 2024. We will therefore have space for three new deacons in 2023. We will also need to appoint a new Church Council Secretary.

Focus Areas

We met monthly on Monday evenings, monitoring key aspects of church life – including community building, finance, property and worship. We were guided by our key strategic priorities as developed last year:-

- **Young adults** – how can we offer more intentional & holistic support? How can our workshop and social activities work better for youth?
- **Children’s ministry.** How can we strengthen this?
- **Play.** How can we create more playful spaces?
- **Increased connectivity/building community.** How can we more intentionally encourage and resource people to build social connections?
- **Social justice within.** Are we acting justly even within our own church community?
- **Small groups.** How can we further develop this ministry? Fixed term groups? Diverse topics? Recreation?
- **Music.** How can we diversify our music? Marimbas? Different singers? More Xhosa chants?
- **Support groups.** Can we establish workshops and create spaces for mutual support addressing issues of genuine need? Eg. Supporting friends, partners or family members with serious illness? Dealing with grief? Dealing with depression/anxiety? Parenting? Social media pressures?
- **Creative use of spaces.** Is there room to try different ideas? We already now use the garden.

Visioning Process

A major focus was to commission a revisioning process in 2023, catalysed by the availability of substantial legacy resources, but also by the need to upgrade certain aspects of the property and to undertake urgent and substantial organ repairs. David Manne, a church member and highly skilled and experienced facilitator of transformative processes agreed to design, lead and evaluate the process. It involved several briefing sessions with Council members and then three sessions with church attenders. Council will be collating and deliberating upon key findings with a view to giving more formal feedback to the broader church membership in due course. Our thanks go to David for availing his time and expertise in the midst of a very demanding work and travel schedule.

Council was also actively engaged with oversight of various property issues, notably the proposed changes to the front fence, which involved an application to the heritage commission, plans for the garden of remembrance, organ repairs and the upgrade of the

Facilities Manager's apartment. Our thanks go to Jacques Matthee for his tireless work in driving these projects, as well as Kathrin Krause and Julian Cooke. There was also oversight of the transition process towards the new finance leadership team in the light of Brian Davison's retirement as Treasurer.

My thanks go to all Council members for their dedication and to our Minister Robert Steiner for his unfailing grace and commitment!

Treasurer (Jono Child)

The meeting will have to approve the budget for 2024 and also decide on the percentage of salary increase.

Please see financial report for 2023 at the end of the document.

Office Administration (Kate Peart, Marie Iversen, and Robert Steiner)

Leases, Bookings, and Correspondence (Kate Peart)

RUC office administration is done virtually, as we do not have anyone working in the church office. Emails continue to be monitored on a daily basis. Accounts are forwarded to the Budget Team. Most emails concern community bookings for the sanctuary and/or hall. A standardised letter has been drawn up which is sent to all prospective users, and a new invoicing system has stream-lined the process. We have a number of regular tenants, and the total amount from rentals in 2023 was R434 980.00. The use of the facilities by tenants affects the hours that our Facility Manager works, and a very small role includes verifying this against the bookings made.

Data Base (Marie Iversen)

Please a gentle reminder, should you move house, change phone (home and cell); email; or your personal details change please let us know so that we can update our database. Please email Marie iversenmarie@yahoo.com or info@rondeboschunited.org

Website and Newsletter (Robert Steiner)

The website is maintained on a weekly basis, also to access our newsletter or the sermon scripts. Our weekly newsletter is sent out by latest Saturday evening.

Pledge Secretary (Marie Iversen)

Firstly I would like to thank all those (approx. 75 families/individuals) who contribute to RUC's Planned Giving as this makes it easier for the Finance Committee to plan ahead and budget wisely.

The confidentiality of those who contribute to PG is strictly maintained and we are aware of, and respect the fact, that circumstances can, and do change.

Whilst we are blessed with members of our congregation who freely give of their time and talents, we still have rising costs which include maintaining our level of ministry, essential building costs, keeping pace with inflation and rising utility bills.

So how can you help?

Speak to Robert or email me on iversenmarie@yahoo.com for further information on our PG. Should you decide to make a regular donation a unique number will be allocated to you which you will use when making a deposit into RUC's Bank Account.

Consider increasing your giving if possible.

Pray that we can meet our needs.

Leave a legacy in your will.

Offer your time and talents.

Warmest Marie

Property Steward (Jacques Matthee)

The following projects were completed during 2023:-

1. During March and April the office door to the Church building ,the window to the meeting room of the hall and the external stage room door, were replaced with aluminium items.

At the same time we renovated and painted the Northern face of the Hall building and the Southern face of the Church building. Which are essentially the areas where we replaced the opening items.

2. The Construction of the Caretaker's Flat.

During the months September, October and November, we supervised alterations for constructing an one bedroom flat for the use of the caretaker in the under utilised former projector rooms on the 1st floor of the Hall building.

This long, narrow space was cleverly designed by Julian Cooke into a very spacious one bedroomed apartment with an open plan kitchen/ living room.

Early in December Vuli proudly took ownership of this much more spacious apartment with its entrance staircase leading off the Gatley Road parking area.

3. Electrical Compliance Certificates have now been issued to all the various boards on the property.

4. All the gas installations are also now compliant.

5. For a number of years the Church property was regularly flooded from the higher lying ground of Bishop Prep School during storms. After lengthy correspondence, our neighbour has now upgraded their cut-off storm water trench which has adequately contained the storms during 2023.

Fundraising

Our two main fundraisers in 2023 were the RUC Carnival and the Brass Concert.



Both events were well attended and very successful. A big thank you to the organisers Kathrin Krause and Tina Steiner (Carnival), and Rowen Ravera (Brass Concert). Both events have been supported by a wonderful team of volunteers.

The Christmas Market was organised by Heidi Segal and raised funds for the Sanitary Products campaign.

IV. WORSHIP

Online Services

Our online services have continued throughout 2023. A big thank you to Aristide Akimana and Prince Makoko (on standby) for their commitment to edit and upload the services. The online services have been a special blessing for those who could not attend our in person services because of illness or reduced mobility.

Music and Worship (Willem Luitingh)

“Is anyone among you suffering? Let him pray. Is anyone cheerful? Let him sing praise.”
(James 5:13)

RUC had a very active music scene in 2023. We again created continuity in the music ministry, while having to deal with the new normal of load shedding.

The organist enjoyed the cooperation of many talented congregants, amplifying the wonderful engaging sermons which were presented by Robert and his colleagues throughout the year. The RUC Choir grew with a few members and is improving every year. The choir successfully performed at major church calendar events. I would like to take the opportunity to express my sincere gratitude to all the choir members for their unparalleled dedication and hard work.

Last year’s Carnival was an excellent event to showcase the talent in our midst.

A lot has been done to secure the repair of our organ, one of RUC’s biggest assets. My wholehearted appreciation goes to my fellow congregants for their constant dedication to improving the health of our Norman & Beard organ. Funds are secured and the process of digitalisation of the hugely dilapidated organ console is advancing.

V. PASTORAL

Birthdays (Marie Iversen)

Birthdays are for celebration and we love birthdays at RUC. So, if you are not getting a message from RUC it means we either don't have your birthday (don't need to send the year if you don't wish) or your cell phone or email address has changed. Please send updates to myself at iversenmarie@yahoo.com

"Because time itself is like a spiral, something special happens on your birthday each year. The same energy that God invested in you at birth is present once again". Enjoy, give thanks and celebrate!!!

Visitation Team (Robert Steiner)

Our visitation is made up of the following members: Annette Newmarch, Beryl Botman, Cheryl Hewson, Darroch Faught, Fiona McLennan, Glynis Goyns, Helen Shaw, Janet Giddy, Selina Palm, Joy Wanless. A big thank you to those committed to this pastoral ministry.

Please email me (rpsteiner@icloud.com) if you would like to join us and are able to commit to a visit once a month.

Red Cross Childrens Hospital (Robert Steiner)

I am delighted that Ingrid Matthee has recently joined this pastoral ministry. We are part of an interfaith team and visit the hospital once a week. We are presently looking for more volunteers. Please speak to me if you are interested in this ministry and would like to know more about it.

The Rondebosch Police Prayer Support Group (Robert Steiner)

I am leading the prayer meetings on the first Wednesday of every month at 8am at the police station. Jimmy Baigrie has joined our meetings in 2023. They are attended by staff members who share some of the challenges faced by the station. Our support of their important work in the community is much appreciated. Please feel free contact me if you would like to join us (rpsteiner@icloud.com).

Prayer Circle (Judy Cooke)

The Prayer Circle has had a very good year through its effective connecting mechanism of the WhatsApp group and monthly updating and prayer meetings, with our minister Robert giving us insightful reflections on our prayer journey at this time. We continue to have 8 members of the group, including Robert, and with one external member who refers requests she has received to us. Sadly, we said goodbye to one of our oldest members, who felt it was time for her to move on, but we were blessed with a newer member of our congregation joining us, and bringing fresh life to the group.

The established pattern of gathering in one of our group members' homes, with a welcome cup of tea to start, followed by sitting around our prayer candle which we light, to update and pray about people and situations as they have presented themselves to us, as well as ongoing concerns – and ending with our standing in a circle round our candle, saying the Grace together, with a final Shalom – has become a familiar pattern which we find sustaining and strengthening, and peace-bringing. We are richly blessed and give thanks for the dedication and commitment of our members to this ministry, its sustainability bolstered by the boundaries we have set around access for prayer requests to the WhatsApp group, as well as the maintenance of confidentiality, both important aspects of our functioning. With the joy and privilege of upholding prayers of heartbreak and prayers of joy, we rejoice in our Prayer Circle, and look forward to another year of praying, sharing and learning, of the sorrows and joys in our congregation and the wide and struggling world around us.

Table of Remembrance

It would be wonderful to have a new champion willing to set up the table of remembrance with the anniversaries and fotos (as available) for each month. At the moment our facility manager Vulisango is kindly filling the gap.

VI. MINISTRIES

Holy Circus and Youth (Robert Steiner)

A big thank you to Leigh, Lola, Aristide, and Amy for their commitment to the Holy Circus and the Youth in 2023. The children and young people love them and we have been truly blessed to have them as our Sunday School teachers.

Sadly Aristide had stepped down at the end of 2023. In a service at the end of the year we expressed our tremendous gratitude to Ari for 10 years of Holy Circus ministry. An extraordinary commitment. We will miss him there.

We have been fortunate to welcome Megan Kendall, Morgan Faught, and Hannah Rees as new teachers. Rev Glynis Goyns kindly joins us for our weekly meetings and has been a wonderful support as we brainstorm and craft our Sunday morning sessions for the children and youth.

Confirmation Class (Robert Steiner)

Short modules of 6 weeks each resumed in 2023. It is wonderful to work with a group of young people keen to explore and deepen their faith. Heidi Segal has assisted with some of the sessions.



The following participants were confirmed at our Pentecost service (from left to right)): Morgan Faught, Megan Kendall, Ora Levitt, Heather Kendall, and Daniel Rees.

RUC Young Adults – A Ministry of Accompaniment (Selina Palm)

2023 was a year of transition for many of our young adults – after COVID years had delayed or denied many hopes and dreams – we saw new plans emerging as well as new young adults joining our congregation. I have been privileged to accompany many of our young adults as they have journeyed into new beginnings, celebrated milestones, graduations, parenthood, rituals of baptism and marriage, work, and as they have also experienced losses, griefs, health concerns and many other challenges.

Walks on Sea Point promenade, picnics on the beach, dance floor encounters & conversations over food have all been ways in which I have continued to accompany young adults at RUC on their own journeys towards integration and connection in 2023, including of body & spirit.

Many others at RUC have also offered mentoring, skills development, emotional support and opportunities to individuals who have often been part of RUC since they were very small children. In return, many of our young adults continue to support and accompany each other and to contribute their talents, time and attention to our wider community. In

December at RUC we celebrated the wedding of Charissa Shay, who for years ran our youth marimba band to her wife Portia, and the relationships forged back then were visible and present there.



Star of the year young adults award goes to Aristide Akimana – for his ten years of service as a Holy Circus teacher as well as his regular work on RUC People and online sermons alongside his busy job in film production and directing. We continue to invite all our young adults to share their thoughts, ideas, questions, talents and challenges with us so that we grow together.

As some head off to new places – we think for example, of Tessa Harrison going to study architecture, Emily Shay to do creative writing and Leigh Nissan – heading to Thailand to teach English – we hope for new ways to stay connected in 2024.

Party, Pride, and Parenting ...



Guitar Ministry at U-Turn (Robert Steiner)

Weekly guitar sessions at U-Turn’s Powerhouse continued in 2023. The group attendance varied between 10 to 15 people. Some of the students made tremendous progress and were gifted with their own guitar.



Flower Ministry (Kathrin Krause)

RUC Flower Ministry
Report 2023



1. Introduction

The RUC Flower Ministry is a group of 15 volunteers, which organize and prepare the central flower arrangement for the Sunday service. Flowers are arranged throughout the year, except for Lent and Advent. A calendar/roster is circulated at the beginning of the year to inform the members of their duties. The roster organizer follows up with the respective volunteer during the week.

After each Sunday service, the flowers are given by Susan Davies to members of the church who have a birthday or anniversary.

Vases of different shapes and sizes are kept in a store room in the hall.

2. Volunteers

In January 2023 the flower ministry started with 14 volunteers.

For 2024 we were able to recruit 3 new members and 2 members discontinued their service.

The flower arranger has the following duties.

- Source and buy flower material;
- Organize access to the church;
- Prepare the arrangement.

All volunteers pay themselves for their flowers unless the arrangement is sponsored by somebody else.

3. Sponsors

Sponsors are church members, who pay for the arrangement done by a flower arranger in memory of a loved one.

In 2023 we had 5 sponsors.

4. Communication

The group communicates through WhatsApp and shares ideas, arrangements and other flower-related information.

5. Calendars

Schedule for RUC Flowers in 2023

January		February		March	
1	Christine Rodseth	5	Cheryl Hewson	6	Lent
8	Kathrin Krause	12	Michelle Kendall	12	Lent
15	Michelle Kendall	19	Shirley Janes/ Tessa Kennedy	19	Lent
22	Fiona McLennan	26	Lent	26	Lent
29	Louise Cull				

April		May		June	
2	Palm Sunday/ Christine Rodseth	7	Michelle Kendall	4	Lynne DeBoer
9	Easter/ Kathrin Krause	14	Christine Rodseth	11	Christine Rodseth
16	Sue Smith/ Vulisango Mtshikwana	21	Moira Irlam	18	Moira Irlam
23	Michelle Kendall	28	Sue Smith	25	Kathrin Krause
30	Hellen Hutchinson/ Christine Rodseth				

July		August		September	
2	Rodgers/ Tessa Kennedy	6	Vicky Falls / Susan Davies	3	Sharon George
9	Cheryl Hewson	13	Margret Reid/ Vulisango Mtshikwana	12	Christine Rodseth
16	Michelle Kendall	20	Geraldine McPherson	17	Geraldine McPherson
23	Lynne DeBoer	27		24	Susan Smith/ Susan Davies
30	Louise Cull				

October		November		December	
1	Tessa Kennedy	6	Lynne DeBoer	3	1.Advent/ Kathrin Krause
8	Moira Irlam	13	Shirley Janes/ Louise Cull	10	2.Advent
15		20	Fiona McLennan	17	3.Advent
22	Kathrin Krause	27	Cheryl Hewson	24	4.Advent
29	Sue Smith			25	Christmas
				31	

Schedule for RUC Flowers in 2024

January		February		March	
7	Christine Rodseth	4	Michele Kendall	3	Lent
14	Karin Anne Schmidt	11	Tessa Kennedy	10	Lent
21	Kathrin Krause	18	Lent	17	Lent
28	Cheryl Hewson	25	Lent	24	Lent
				31	Easter

April		May		June	
7	Christine Rodseth	5	Michele Kendall	2	Lynne de Boer
14	Sue Smith/ Vulisango Mtshikwana	12	Christine Rodseth	9	Fiona McLennan
21	Ingrid Mathee	19	Moira Irlam	16	Moira Irlam
28	Kathrin Krause	26	Vicky Falls/ Susan Davies	23	
				30	Kathrin Krause

July		August		September	
7	Rodgers/ Tessa Kennedy	4		1	Ingrid Mathee
14	Michele Kendall	11	Margret Reid/ Vulisango Mtshikwana	8	Christine Rodseth
21	Lynne de Boer	18	Fiona McLennan	15	Louise Cull
28	Cheryl Hewson	25	Louise Cull	22	Natalie Duff
				29	Sue Smith/ Susan Davies

October		November		December	
6	Tessa Kennedy	3	Natalie Duff	1	1.Advent/ Krause
13	Moira Irlam	10	Lynne de Boer	8	2.Advent
20	Vicky Falls/ Susan Davies	17	Cheryl Hewson	15	3.Advent
27	Sue Smith	24	Fiona McLennan	22	4.Advent
				25	Christmas

6. Activities

The group met twice during the year, for a flower workshop in October where Belinda Soboil demonstrated different arrangements.



In early February 2024, the group made the flower arrangements for Lindsay Kennedy's memorial service.





7. Arrangements Easter 2023 – Lent 2024







For this report
Kathrin Krause
Flower roster organizer

Cape Town 19th February 2024

VII. EDUCATION, SPIRITUAL FORMATION, AND FELLOWSHIP

RUC People – Interviews (Russell Davies)

There are many who attend church at RUC but know very little about the people they worship alongside - yet we have a wonderfully rich resource of talented and committed people, full of fascinating experiences and perspectives. RUC People is an attempt to at least partially address that and build community with a series of video interviews, recorded, edited and uploaded by Aristide Akimana.

“Manna & Milo (Amy Irlam)

Our Bible Study group - affectionately known as "Manna & Milo", thanks to the consumption of a certain much-loved beverage at meetings - was born from a desire to connect with other young adults in the RUC community. Those of us who started the group wanted to use material to give our meetings structure, but keep the group open to visitors. We found the perfect material in the book "Manna and Mercy" by Daniel Erlander - a lovely illustrated narrative of the bible which lends itself equally well to those new to the bible and those who have grown up reading it. We are very happy to say that we have a group of "regulars" who are there almost every week, but are still open to anyone who wants to pop in. Needless to say, through much engaging discussion and plenty of laughter, we have grown not only in discipleship but also as good friends.

Study Group on Zoom (Robert Steiner)

The study group continued in 2022 and the meetings were held Thursday evenings on Zoom. The group varied between 5 and 10 participants. We covered a range of topics and enjoyed our weekly discussions.

Sermon Discussions on Zoom (Beryl Botman)

The Sermon Discussion Group has continued in the same vein as in 2023. In our fourth year of existence five members continue to meet on Tuesdays at 19:00. We are connected on the Zoom or Google Meet public platform for 40 minutes per session and once a month we meet at a member's home and additionally enjoy each other's hospitality.

We discussed the Sunday sermons following a structure which allows full participation. On most occasions all members log on and participate. Barring some connectivity issues we could maintain satisfactory completion of our discussions in the set time.

Because the weekly sermons are always of such a high standard, we found them all rich and enriching, challenging us with new and fresh theological insights with spiritual guidance. The discussions allow us to make spiritual, personal, social and environmental connections to guide our daily life.

Fresh perspectives and inputs from more members of the congregation are most welcome to join.

We thank God for each opportunity of conversation and reflection while learning to know one another a share in each other's lives.

With gratitude, Beryl Botman (Discussion facilitator)

Creation Care Group (Nicky Sasman)

Robert continues to provide a theological basis for our beliefs and actions through the liturgical calendar, particularly Lent, Season of Creation, Harvest Festival, and the popular St Francis Day multi-species service. This year we added sustainability ideas for Advent and Christmas, which will be built on in the year ahead.

Glynn Allard led a City Nature Challenge excursion to Rondebosch Common on 1 May to document fauna and flora, which is part of an international citizen-science project.

For the second year running, our congregation was invited to join St Thomas' church on 9 June on an awareness-raising walk with rangers in Newlands Forest to coincide with World Environment Day.

The Sustainable Supper was replaced by a Sustainable Lunch, which was a bring-and-share, with people sharing their vegetarian and vegan recipes. It took place at the beginning of the Season of Creation, on 3 September. There was lots of delicious food on offer. It was well-attended, and was seen as a lower cost, more accessible alternative to the Sustainable Supper.

Car Free Sunday took place on 12 November. This year people were asked to donate their savings from their alternative travel mode to the sanitary-products campaign of the church.

There is now a “RUC Hiking Group” whatsapp group which has undertaken 2 hikes on Table Mountain: this still needs to be more broadly promoted with the congregation.

Creation Care camp @ Phillipskop Mountain Reserve, Aug 2023

Three of us from RUC attended the first annual Creation Care camp @ Phillipskop Mountain Reserve near Stanford from 4-6 August 2023. We enjoyed communal worship and times of sharing, hiking the beautiful fynbos reserve, and participating in one of their monthly hacks of invasive vegetation. We learnt from our hosts Chris & Anna about the incredible botanic diversity of the reserve and their plans to create a local conservancy, and also about the global ministry of Christian Camping International and Climate Intercessors that they support.

It was an inspiring and refreshing weekend that will be repeated this year, from 2-4 August 2024 at Phillipskop .

Please contact James Irlam if you are interested to attend: JHirlam@gmail.com; 076 180 9972 (WhatsApp)

VIII. SOCIAL JUSTICE AND PARTNERSHIPS

SmilingOne (Prison Ministry)

Our partnership with Smiling One (www.SmilingOne.com) continued in 20223 and we remain committed to help with some of their petrol costs. A big thank you to those who have given regularly directly to them or to our Samaritan Partners Trust in order to help cover their travel expenses.

Outliers (Heidi Segal)

In 2023, Outliers supported 65 after-school programs by equipping tutors to teach and providing basic resources to support learning.

The consequences of lost teaching time due to the COVID-19 pandemic is a global crisis. In South Africa, this is amplified against a backdrop of already failing schools and poor learner outcomes. Our focus was therefore to extend the capacity of tutors from helping with homework to supporting curriculum recovery for learners to prevent school drop-out.

Tutors started out anxious about supporting curriculum recovery, but after participating in training sessions they moved from *“I am already overwhelmed just thinking about curriculum recovery”* to *“I feel confident that I can incorporate this well structured outline into my sessions.”*

A total of 93 tutors were equipped to support curriculum recovery across 20 after-school programs, reaching more than 2000 learners. All tutors were supported via an online chat group. Some were supported with in-person visits, where they shared their experiences in providing curriculum recovery in different settings and across different grades. There was an overwhelming sense of hope in being able to provide such support.

This is a paradigm shift in methodology. A whole new face to after-school programs. Tutor, PRECO, Belhar.

On behalf of the after-school programs affiliated with Outliers, and the 10000 children who benefited from the million rands worth of resources accessed through Rondebosch United Church hall, we say thank you.

Samaritan Partners Trust

Thanks to the generosity of many members and friends of the congregation the Samaritan Partners Trust was able to assist many people in need of food and rent money, or to help with study fees and medical expenses. The Trust also manages donations made to Thembi's Soup Kitchen in Langa and the Restitution in Education Initiative.

Masazane Soup Kitchen and Child Protection Project (Kate Laburn Peart)

A number of major changes occurred in the last 12 months, with the resignation of Judy Cooke as Chair, and the passing of our Treasurer, Brian Davison. At our AGM, Claudine Bill was appointed as our new Chair, and Jeanne Pienaar as our new Bookkeeper, with an existing Board member, Anthea Jacobs, assisting in the Treasurer portfolio. Judy continues as a Board member - our Board is made up of members from RUC and from Bethel Congregational Church in Paarl East. Our team of 6 volunteer 'gogos' also saw some changes in 2023. One member retired, and two were recruited, so there are now 7 cooking four days a week in school terms. In 2023, we served over 52,000 meals to children at Mbekweni Primary School. We continue to have good relations with the School. The Principal values our contribution and monitors our work, recommending which are the most needy children to receive our nutritious meals. This includes a class of children with special needs. At Christmas time, we assembled and delivered 180 parcels for children

identified by the team as being in need. The parcels, consisting of essential school stationery, some hygiene items and some sweets, were gratefully received. As we look at the year ahead, we are conscious of the need for repairs and maintenance to the container that has served us so well since 2015. We continue to be enormously grateful to the RUC community, who supports us so faithfully.

Thembi's Soup Kitchen in Langa (Judy Cooke)

The Langa Soup Kitchen operates in the Langa Flats, close to Bhunga Avenue, the main entrance to Langa, off the N2. It started operating in May 2020, when the Covid Lockdown was implemented, and has continued serving food twice a week to hungry children in Langa for the three years since then. Thembekile Nxesi, who initiated and leads the project, lives in the Langa Flats, and uses her kitchen to prepare and cook the food for the children, with two assistants, neighbours of hers, who help with the preparation and serving of the food, and receive a small monthly stipend for this. This system is working very well, with the local community recognizing the value of the soup kitchen for their children.

During 2023, the numbers of children attending the soup kitchen increased to between 65 and 80 at each session. Thembekile meanwhile was reporting the worrying trend of increased unemployment and gangsterism in the community, with the rise in unemployment and the ever-increasing price of food. The Soup Kitchen's monthly budget of R5,500.00 increased by over R1,500.00 per month to R7000.00 by the end of the year. The Kitchen was able to provide the extra needed through the generous contributions of friends of Rondebosch United Church overseas, as well as individual members of the church, financially or in kind. Wonderful to report that overseas friends have provided sufficient funding to cover the whole of the 2024 year. And through this support, we have also been able to install a steel cupboard for storage of all the kitchen equipment, which has relieved the congested situation in Thembekile's kitchen.

It is a cause of enormous thankfulness for the generosity with which we are surrounded, that the Langa Soup Kitchen is providing regular, although not daily, feeding for children whose families can less and less afford to feed them adequately. The project is thus helping to instil hope and encouragement in the Langa community as a whole.

ADDENDUM: FINANCIAL REPORT (Jono Child)

Finance Report - Summary

- All numbers are prior to the audit where there may be some small changes
- We had a net income of R28k vs a projected budgeted loss of R10k
- This was due to us being R130k ahead due to increased giving
- Our Staff costs were R90k more than budget due to a mistake in the budget last year
- We completed some large maintenance projects this year which were not budgeted for but were required and paid for by the legacies.
- We also received R1.2m as a Legacy from the Van Breda's

- We still need to release R95k from the legacy to cover our expenses
- Overall our finances are healthy due to the large asset base we have

Finance Report

	Actual	Budget	Var
TURNOVER	1,947,255	1,823,600	163,255
Core Income	1,479,037	1,347,200	131,837
Fund Raising	30,198	66,000	3,798
Rental	438,020	410,400	27,620
COST OF TURNOVER	285,258	291,776	-6,518
Assessments	285,258	291,776	-6,518
GROSS PROFIT	1,661,997	1,531,824	169,773
Other Income	188,700	188,696	4
Legacy Release	188,700	188,696	4

Core giving was ahead of budget due to an increase in the number of individuals giving monthly.

We release R190k a year from the legacy to cover expenses, without this we would run at a loss. This year without the large maintenance costs, we would need to release R95k to break even, this is 2% of assets.

More below

Finance Report - Expenses

	Actual	Budget	Var
Expenses	1,823,109	1,730,865	344,108
Administration	167,151	119,064	48,087
Expense	4,025	50,000	-45,975
General		15,000	-15,000
Maintenance	243,395	187,200	308,059
Meeting costs	29,491	50,196	-20,705
Municipal	65,471	84,000	-18,529
Staff Costs	1,313,576	1,225,405	88,171

Our Staff costs are our major expense. This cost was higher than budget due to a mistake in the budget last year.

Maintenance costs does not include the flat refurbishment but was more than budget due to needed repairs for the first time in almost 20 years. The flat refurbishment is detailed below

Finance Report - Other

	Actual	Budget	Var
NET TRADING INCOME	27,588	-10,345	-174,331
Additional Revenue	1,274,479		
Legacy	1,234,879		
Organ	39,600		
Additional Expenses	416,718		
Legacy Assessment	164,854		
Flat Refurbishment	251,864		
TRADING INCOME	885,349		

Some one off income and expenses were received.

We received R1.2m in the van breda legacy and 40k for the Organ.

We also spend R250k refurbishing the flat

Finance Report - Assets and Projects

Assets	
Cash	417,014
Cash Call	127,048
Personal Trust: Money Market Accounts	1,835,000
Personal Trust: Investments	1,112,000
Personal Trust: Van Breda	1,340,000
Total Liquid Assets	4,831,062
Return on Assets needed to sustain	1.96%
Organ Expense	-450,000
Assets Post Organ	4,381,062
Return on Assets needed to sustain	2.16%

We have R4.83m worth of assets that will generate a return.

We are going to spend R450k on the Organ leaving us with R4.4m

We need this to generate a return to cover our expenses as we currently run at a loss of R90k without having these assets.

Additionally we have a large expense coming for the fence construction.

This asset base is vital for the longevity of RUC so we need to spend and invest wisely

Finance Report - Assets and Projects

Post the building of the fence I believe we as a church need to consider how we use our assets (legacies) in the most beneficial way to sustain our community and to give back in creative ways.