



# GRATITUDE REPORT 2022



Five Oaks

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Paris, ON N3L 3E3  
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[www.fiveoaks.on.ca](http://www.fiveoaks.on.ca)

# LETTER FROM THE E.D.

*Thank you for your continued support of Five Oaks Centre. We wouldn't be here without you.*

In October 2022, I had the privilege of co-organizing and attending a Racial Healing experience that brought together key leaders, members and partners to have an intentional community experience of deepening into how Five Oaks will live into our future as an Intercultural Retreat Centre. There were many key learnings that help to support our strategic direction for our programming and hosted groups, as well as continued and new community partnerships. There was a moment near the end of the retreat where as a group we offer a natural item into the creek as a release. I felt compelled to roll up my pants and wade into the cool chilled water. I experienced a strong connection to the water and the land.

2022 was a year, while rebounding from the global pandemic, that posed other challenges that impacted our

operations, yet despite these challenges have ended the year within the financial framework that was set out. There were significant increases in hosted groups and catering over 2020 and 2021, and increases in our programming. Our Acorn Adventure Day Camp was close to 100% sold out and our onsite partnerships ensured that Five Oaks was bustling during the summer months.

We are grateful for our community partnerships with Grand River Bookstore, Grand River Rafting, Brave Waves, GROWE Outdoor School, Rogers Ranch and others that continue to help Five Oaks find ways to share this sacred space with the wider community.

Near the end of last year, we began to dream of a program staffing partnership with three Regional Councils and are excited to have a new partnership and shared staffing. This will continue

to deepen and strengthen our partnership with the United Church of Canada. I am also excited that an action arising from the Strategic Plan is the creation of a Partner Relations Working Group which will bring together diverse voices to impact and advise partnerships and programs going forward.

In 2022, our property experienced some vital upgrades, including a new roof on the Main Building, an accessible washroom off of the New Hall, and thanks to a \$100,000 regional tourism grant, a two story dining and sitting deck was built off the main

building to increase and offer three season seating off our dining room, and offer an outdoor gathering space off the Upper Room. Window installments were completed in House on the Hill, Friendship House and in select spaces in the main building. A large portion of the boardwalk, including one bridge were replaced. We continue to upgrade the spaces with the environment and our guests in mind.

We look forward to welcoming you back, sharing in programming, retreat, community, volunteering and all that brings you to Five Oaks.

## Michael Shewburg

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

## Notice of AGM

The Annual General Meeting for the 2022 fiscal year will be held on Sunday June 4th, 2023 at 2:00pm. It will be hosted both in-person at Five Oaks and virtually over Zoom to support however you feel the most comfortable attending.

The meeting will be held from 2pm-4pm, followed by tours of the site. There will then be a fundraising dinner that begins at 5pm, which we would love for you to join us for.

Registration for our 2023 AGM is now live, visit [www.fiveoaks.on.ca/program-schedule](http://www.fiveoaks.on.ca/program-schedule)



# A MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD

We have been so grateful to co-chair the Five Oaks Board of Directors over the last year. We have been learning how to share the work of this position, the work of governance, the work of caring for our staff, the work of listening to members, the work of facilitating board meetings and committee participation. We have had the privilege of learning about the challenges our beloved Five Oaks has faced through the pandemic, through labour shortages, through shifts in people's comfort levels and attendance at in-person gatherings and retreats and the challenge we all face – What's Next.

This question prompts us to remember just how far we have come, not just through the pandemic, but back to 2017 when the future of this sacred meeting place was in question. The question of What's Next has been on the mind of all of us, a question that is paralleled daily in the going on of the world.

We know that places like Five Oaks are needed now more than ever. We need places of rest and renewal. We need places that challenge our learning, our bias, our way of being in the world. We need places like Five Oaks that have bold vision and strategy, that wrestle with the tough questions of the day. We are grateful that you keep coming back, with the question of what's next on your heart and soul.

We are grateful for our staff, who daily ensure that radical welcome and exemplary leadership are offered, above and beyond, in order that our Five Oaks continues. We are grateful to our Board of Directors that give immeasurable time and resources, skills and knowledge to ensure that programs and gathering on this land are possible. Lastly, we are grateful to all our supporters, your commitment is deep – your financial support, your time gift as volunteers and your deep belief in the vision of this place.

We are grateful to serve in this way, to walk on this pathway towards What's Next!

Sincerely,

**Maya Landell and Ruth Noble**

BOARD CO-CHAIRS

# 2022 HIGHLIGHTS

## Five Oaks Programs

IN 2022, FIVE OAKS OFFERED 42 PROGRAMMING OPPORTUNITIES THAT ARE ALIGNING WITH THE GOALS OF OUR STRATEGIC PLAN IN THE AREAS OF: REST AND RENEWAL, DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION AND ANTIRACISM AND OTHER RETREAT OPTIONS.

## Acorn Adventure Camp

THIS YEAR, CHILDREN AGES 5-12 PARTICIPATED IN DAILY FUN ACTIVITIES SUCH AS GAMES, CRAFTS, SWIMMING, RAFTING, CREEK STUDIES, NATURE SCIENCE, CAMPFIRE, HIKE, AND MORE. OUR ACORN ADVENTURE DAY CAMP SOLD OUT ALMOST EVERY AVAILABLE SPOT THIS SUMMER, WITH 456 CHILDREN ATTENDING OUR VARIOUS OFFERINGS OF ACORN ADVENTURE CAMP IN 2022.

## Community Partners

WE CONTINUED OUR PARTNERSHIPS THIS PAST SUMMER. BRAVE WAVES OFFERED SWIM INSTRUCTION FROM JUNE TO AUGUST IN THE FIVE OAKS POOL, WITH 9,910 LESSONS OFFERED IN THE POOL THIS SUMMER. GRAND RIVER RAFTING, ONE OF OUR LONG-TERM PARTNERS, CONTINUED OFFERING THEIR SHORTER TUBE RUN ON THE RIVER THAT SAW 10,402 PEOPLE USING FIVE OAKS AS AN ACCESS POINT.

## Two-Story Deck

THIS FALL WE COMPLETED THE ADDITION OF A TWO STORY DECK BEHIND THE MAIN BUILDING. THE CAPITAL ADDITION ALLOWS FOR 60 EXTRA SEATS FOR THREE SEASONS AND A BEAUTIFUL SECOND STORY GATHERING AREA OFF THE UPPER ROOM. THIS ADDITIONAL SPACE WILL HELP FIVE OAKS WITH DINING AND MEETING OPPORTUNITIES GOING FORWARD.

## Migrant Care

FIVE OAKS CONTINUED OUR IMPORTANT WORK IN SUPPORTING MIGRANT WORKERS WHO CONTRIBUTE TO ONTARIO'S AGRICULTURAL SECTOR. WE HOUSED 81 MEN OVER 85 DAYS FOR LONG-TERM CARE, AS THEY COMMUTED DAILY TO A LOCAL FARM.

# Program Highlights and Growth

In October, a small group gathered for the **Racial Healing Initiative**, a process designed for retreat centre leaders to engage in transformative racial equity work, for themselves, their centers, and their local communities.

Five Oaks staff, board members, leaders and partners deepened into this process through spiritual practice, community sharing, circle process, individual reflection over a 4 day in-person retreat. We are deeply grateful for the learnings and outcomes from this experience.



## 2021 Program Stats

**21** Five Oaks Programs

**236** Acorn Camp Participants

**750** Total Participants

## 2022 Program Stats

**42** Five Oaks Programs

**456** Acorn Camp Participants

**798** Total Participants



# A few words from our Settler Partner Program Director, Tanya Dyck Steinmann...

At the beginning of 2022, when the province was under lockdown and Public Health mandates, we offered three online programs: Journaling for Personal Growth with Peggy Guiler, Sister Water and the Sultan Len Desroches, and Step into Stories with Gail Fricker. In April, we celebrated our first in-person program with Heather Beamish who spent the week on-site, as Five Oaks' first Artist in Residence. On the weekend of September 30 (Orange Shirt Day), nineteen people from a variety of church traditions gathered around the Sacred Fire Pit at Five Oaks, to learn and reflect on the church's role in colonialism and residential schools. Registration for the next Seeking Transformation Retreat will be opening soon.

Numerous smaller programs were successfully offered this year, and a large area of focus was the development of a nature-based diversity school group program at Five Oaks, that started with the creation of a new curriculum, Diversity in the Land and Each Other, written by Forest Educator Rebecca Seiling and Indigenous Consultant, Jan Sherman. As this program was being developed, North Ward School approached us to help them take their classrooms outdoors. It was wonderful to see the awe and sheer delight of 100 kindergarteners, 120 Grade 1-3 students and over 70 Grade 4-8 students each connecting to the land while applying math, science, social skills and so much more.

We ended the year with a community Winter Solstice fire circle. Knowledge Carriers, Suzie Miller and Ellie Josphe joined us to share wisdom and stories. Participants enjoyed a hot chili meal around the campfire, making mason jar lanterns, ending the evening with a lantern walk, welcoming light and setting intentions for the new year.

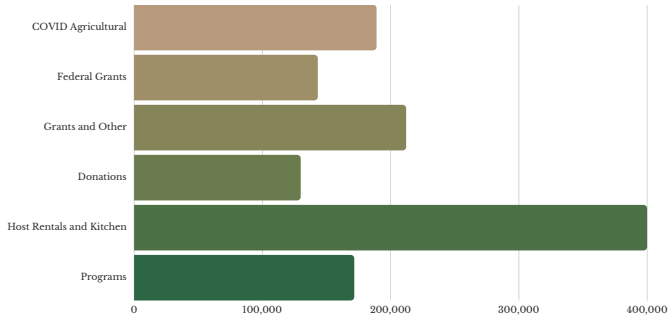
The Five Oaks Program Team is so grateful for an impactful year of visioning, relationship building and connection.



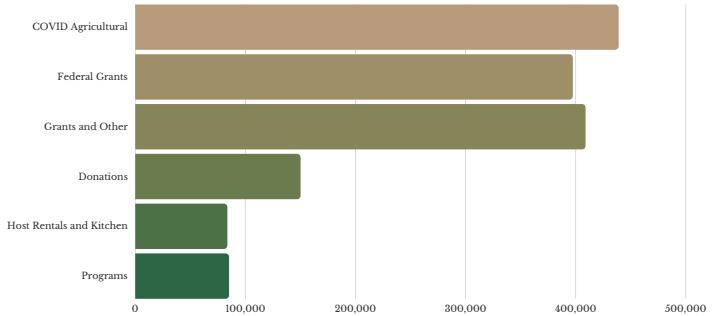
# 2022 FINANCIAL SUMMARY

2022  
2021  
2020

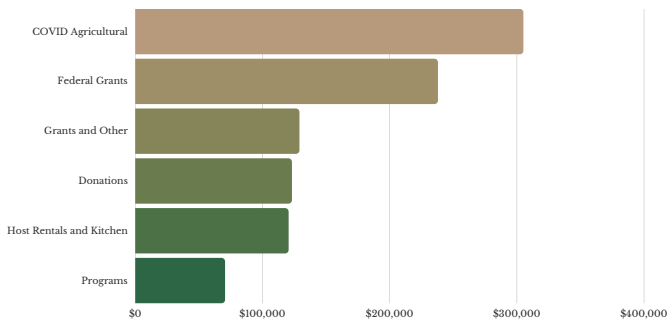
## OPERATING REVENUE



**\$1,244,128**



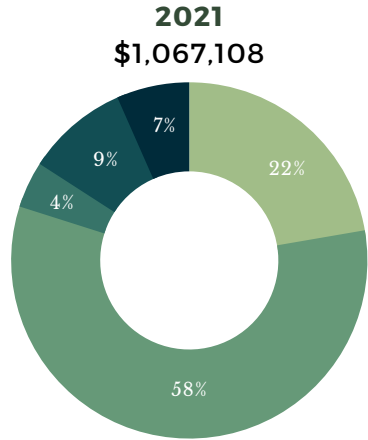
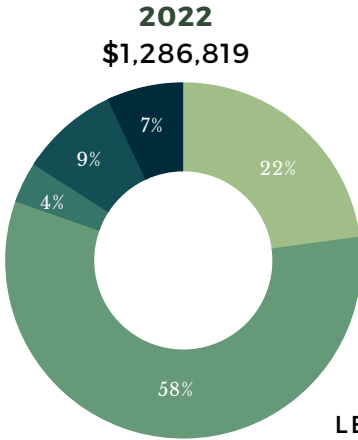
**\$1,351,877**



**\$985,047**



# OPERATING EXPENSES



## LEGEND

- Wages
- Host and Site
- Administrative
- Taxes, Insurance, and Utilities
- Programs

## 2022 CAPITAL INVESTMENTS \$ 343,000

\$91,500 additional investments were made in 2022



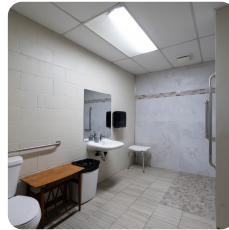
**\$115,000**

Two story deck, with a beautiful upper gathering space, funded by the Hamilton, Halton Brant Regional Tourism Authority, through Federal Development Canada.



**\$26,000**

A total of 18 windows were installed partially funded by a Greening Sacred Spaces Grant.



**\$16,500**

A complete retrofit of the New Hall Washroom, which is now fully accessible, partially funded by a New Horizons for Seniors Grant



**\$94,000**

Roof on the main building, partially funded by our Raise the Roof Walkathon.

# STRATEGIC PLAN

## At a Glance

### Vision

To cultivate an affirming, vibrant, and inclusive community where people of all backgrounds and traditions can gather on the land to live, work, learn, pray, play, heal, and act for justice.

### Mission

To offer renewing and transformative individual, group, and community experiences through meaningful reflection, deep connections, and joyful expression

### Values

- Radical Hospitality
- Diversity
- Environmental Stewardship
- Right Relations
- Social Justice

### Promise

- Principled Programming
- Sacred Space
- Partners for a Better Future

### Key Success Factors

- Authentic Relationships
- Compassionate Co-Creation
- Inclusive Governance
- Inspired Storytelling
- Experience Design Excellent



### Strategic Objectives

- Expanding Five Oaks' Community
- Extending Radical Hospitality
- Curating Transformative Experiences
- Revitalizing Key Spaces
- Pursuing Peace, Justice, and Equity



# DONATIONS

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

I wish to be added to the Five Oaks Newsletter

**DONATE ONLINE** [www.fiveoaks.on.ca/donate](http://www.fiveoaks.on.ca/donate)

## DONATE BY MAIL

I am enclosing a cheque

**OR**

Please charge my  Visa  Mastercard  Amex

Card #: \_\_\_\_\_

Expiry (mm/yyyy): \_\_\_\_\_

CSC (3 digit code): \_\_\_\_\_

I want to know more about **FAITH BONDS**

I want to know more about **Legacy Giving**

*Five Oaks will be a good steward of the personal information gathered. We do not sell, share or rent this information to a third party, and secure or destroy it accordingly to PIPEDA guidelines.*

## I wish to make a gift at the following level:

- CAD \$50
- CAD \$100
- CAD \$150
- CAD \$200
- CAD \$500
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

## I wish to make this gift recurring:

- Annual
- Semi-Annual
- Quarterly
- Monthly
- Weekly



# Thank You

Your generosity in 2022 made the difference and ensured that Five Oaks continues to be a place for the important work of embracing difference, radical hospitality, environmental stewardship, right relations and social justice. Without your gifts, your support both financial and through other means, none of what we have accomplished would be possible. Your continued gifting to Five Oaks ensures a future in 2023 and beyond.

Five Oaks is thankful to funders like you who shared financial gifts with the Centre including: The Brant Community Foundation, Erie Presbytery Mission and Development Council, The United Church of Canada, United Church Regional Councils and The United Church of Canada Foundation, KAIROS, Canada Summer Jobs, HHRBTA Federal Development Fund, The Ontario Trillium Foundation, Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy, and many generous individual donors, dedicated United Church congregations and United Church Womens Groups.

Designations of life insurance policies, such as the generous givings of Norma Joyce Combe, planned legacy giving, transfer of stocks, purchase of faith bonds, and participation in the monthly donor program all ensure that this sacred place continues. The many ways you offer physical support, on committees and working groups, service on the property and everything else makes a difference.

Five Oaks Centre  
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RETURN POSTAGE GUARANTEED  
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