

## Aurora United Church



Good morning. My name is Paula Hanna, and my husband, David and I have been coming to AUC since we moved to Aurora in 1982.

I love this church for the community connections it has given me over the many years I have been a member. It began with Mother's Morning Out, every Thursday morning. My younger daughter, Jennifer, had just been born and I decided to meet other mothers in town. When you entered, the children were taken to the Social Hall to play, and mothers were shown to the Founders Room where they had the opportunity to relax and have an adult conversation without interruptions. I made many new friends there.

My older daughter, Christine, started Sunday School and I was soon helping out by teaching most Sunday mornings. My daughters were both confirmed at AUC, and now three of my grandchildren have also been confirmed here.

After I went back to work, I joined the UCW, in the Grace group. There I found a wonderful sisterhood which has been a support in my life for over 30 years. I have had the privilege of visiting a few of our older members and retirement residences through work with the Pastoral Care Committee.

I also found community here through helping with Vacation Bible Camp and Rise and Shine Breakfast as well as participating in Lenten Studies, Movie Nights, and Book Club -all begun and lead by our ministers, Rev. Lorraine and Rev. Andy.

Sunday morning Coffee Time is always a good time to catch up with friends. When we have something to celebrate and there is cake it is even better.

I have been the UCW representative on the AUC Council since before the fire. I know the tireless work that has been done by the EDGE Property Committee, the Trustees, and the Council. Many challenges have been worked through and surmounted.

This photo was taken on the day of the fire. It shows the sun shining through an upstairs window of the church façade, the only part left as the fire was going out. It has always been a symbol of hope for me- a sign that God was with us, and we would rebuild. We would rise again from the ashes. The picture was on one of our bulletins a few weeks later. I cut it out and it has been hanging on the bulletin board in my office for the last ten years.

I felt the same feeling of hope as I watched the north steeple being dropped and welded into place a few weeks ago.

Unfortunately, the insurance funds we counted on to build our new church will not stretch as far as we had hoped because of increased construction costs. That's why we're running our "Rising from the Ashes" fund raising campaign. David and I chose to make our donation on April 11<sup>th</sup>, the ten-year anniversary of the fire. I did an e-transfer, putting "Rising from the Ashes" and my PAR number in the memo box. It was quick and easy. You can also send a cheque to the church or use a Rising from the Ashes envelope to go on the offering plate. I hope you'll give this some consideration as we build a church building and a new feeling of community within the town of Aurora.

Please come up and have a closer look at this photo after the service.

Thank you.