



It's the year of our Lord

# 2025

**Have you set long-term financial goals that lead to contentment?**

Learn how in the article by **David Van Berkel**, Financial Planner, on pg. 4-5.

Check out our exciting offer for new Christian Credit Union Wealth members on pg. 6.

RRSP Deadline: **March 3, 2025**

*I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus. (Philippians 3:14)*

## In This Issue:

- CEO Update
- New Calgary Branch
- Celebrating 25 years  
- John Veldkamp, CEO
- New & Returning Board Members
- Youth Banking Program
- Profit Sharing

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# CEO Update

by John Veldkamp

As you can see on the facing page, I have recently completed 25 years at our Credit Union. It has truly been a privilege to serve so many new and existing members and work alongside so many talented people over the years. Throughout that time there have been many seasons of change with both joys and sorrows. Through it all, the most important lesson I am still learning is to put my complete dependence on God and His plan.

One of the ways that God has blessed us is that we have been able to record a profit for each of the past 25 years and this year has been no exception. Our total assets at our fiscal year end on October 31st were \$269 million and we added another 383 new members in the past year. In addition to the assets on our balance sheet, our wealth management team manages over \$100 million in mutual funds on behalf of our members. On top of all this, we paid just over \$450,000 in profit sharing to our members. We are blessed indeed! We will provide a more detailed report on our performance at our Annual General Meeting on March 6, 2025, the Lord willing.

You can see in this newsletter that we will have a change on our Board. In March 2025, **Eric Nederlof** will complete his term. Eric has been an important contributor on our Board and during the past year he has served as our Governance Committee Convenor. He will be missed and we wish him all the best. At the same time we are excited to welcome a very



qualified replacement in **Monica Loewen**. Monica has deep experience with both governance and non-profits and will have a head start as she is currently serving as an appointed member to our Governance Committee. We are also thankful to welcome **Henry VanSteenbergen** back to our Board for another term. Henry provides dedicated leadership as our Board Chair and we are happy that he is willing to continue donating his time and expertise in service to our members.

As you think about the trials and triumphs ahead of you in 2025, I encourage you to depend on our Heavenly Father through it all. God loved us so much that He sent His son Jesus Christ to die for our sins and He encourages us with the words of Proverbs 3:5-6:

*Trust in the Lord with all your heart  
and lean not on our own understanding;  
in all your ways submit to Him,  
and He will make your paths straight.*

Soli Deo Gloria.

## New Calgary Branch

We are excited to announce that the new Calgary branch will officially open in January. The official opening date will be communicated to all members by email. Stop by, say hello, and check out our new space!

**Address:**

925 Na'a Drive SW  
Calgary, AB T3H 6A4  
Ample parking is provided.

**Hours of Operation:**

Monday to Friday,  
9:30am to 4:30pm.

**1.877.426.0506 | [www.christiancu.ca](http://www.christiancu.ca)**

**Stay tuned for details about our Grand Opening on April 24, 2025!**





# John Veldkamp

## Chief Executive Officer

*Celebrating*  
**25**  
*years*

John Veldkamp began his current career at Christian Credit Union, in November of 1999. He worked in the loans department under the tutelage of Peter Lindhout, and eventually moved up the ranks, until he was hired to replace Peter as CEO, beginning on July 1, 2008. He and the staff at Christian CU have undergone a variety of challenges over those 25 years. From the sub prime crisis in 2008, to the challenges of both very low interest rates which lower the margins available to achieve profits, to higher interest rates, which ordinarily raise profits, but pose a hardship on members, John and the Christian CU have experienced it all.

Christian CU's expertise. John is also highly regarded in the Credit Union system, where he currently serves as Chair of Alberta Central, the body which oversees the collaboration of the 12 different Alberta Credit Unions. This has helped Christian CU in knowing what is going on behind the scenes in the big picture in the Alberta financial services sector. John who is a lawyer by education, has spent most of his adult working life at Christian CU and we have been blessed to have him on staff. Join the Board in congratulating John on his efforts and accomplishments throughout these last 25 years. Thank you, John, for your leadership.

Through it all, our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, has watched over us and blessed us, the members, staff, and Board of Christian CU. John has ably led the staff, building up an executive team, which has mentored and trained our people to be able to serve our members. During this time, the Board and management have developed a strategic plan, which helps us to focus on the opportunity to provide financial services for Christians who agree with our core principals which follow scripture:

### 1. Spend less than you earn.

Prov. 10:4, Heb. 13:5

### 2. Give generously.

2 Cor. 8:1-15, Acts 20:35

### 3. Avoid the use of debt.

Prov. 22:7

### 4. Maintain an emergency fund.

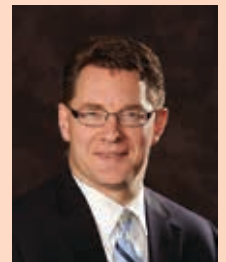
Prov. 6:6-8

### 5. Set long-term goals.

Phil. 3:14

John was instrumental in leading a focus on banking for non-profits and churches, which we believe is

On behalf of the Board,  
**Henry VanSteenbergen, Chair**





# Set Long-Term Financial Goals that Lead to Contentment

**David van Berkel, BBA, CFP®, CKA®, CPCA®**

Financial Planner - Christian Credit Union, Aviso Wealth

When it comes to financial planning, one of the most important yet often overlooked elements is the ability to set long-term goals and develop strategies to save for the future. Without a clear vision and a systematic approach, it's easy to drift through life without making intentional progress toward the financial security and success we want. Whether your goal is to retire comfortably, fund your children's education, or some other large ticket item, having a well-thought-out plan is the first step toward turning your aspirations into reality.

## Why Long-Term Goals Matter

Long-term goals provide direction, focus, and motivation for your financial decisions. They serve as the foundation for all your saving and investing efforts. Unlike short-term goals (e.g., saving for a vacation or a new gadget), long-term goals are typically far-reaching and require consistent effort over an extended period, often 10, 20, or even 30 years or more.

By setting long-term goals, you can:

1. **Stay focused** on what matters most to you.
2. **Align your financial decisions** (e.g., how much to save, where to invest) with your broader objectives.
3. **Track your progress** over time, adjusting when necessary.
4. **Ensure peace of mind**, knowing you have set forth a clear path.

## Step 1: Identify Your Long-Term Goals

The first step in any financial plan is to define what success looks like for you in the long term. This can include a wide range of personal and financial aspirations. Some common long-term goals include:

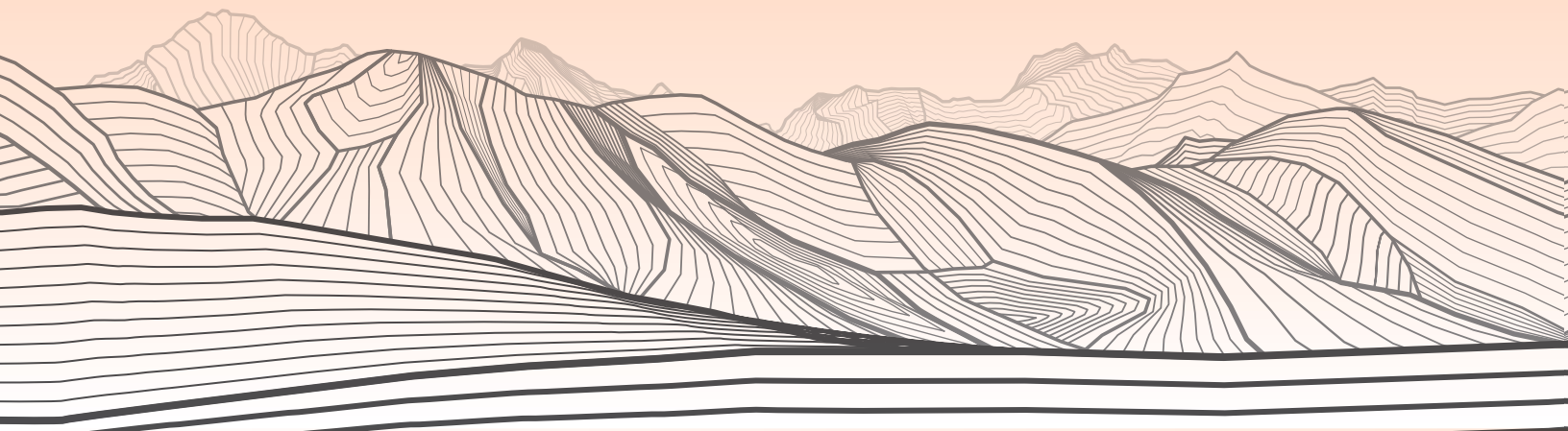
- **Homeownership:** Purchasing a home or paying off an existing mortgage.
- **Education Savings:** Funding higher education for yourself or your children.
- **Retirement Planning:** Ensuring you have enough saved to live comfortably in retirement.

## Step 2: Break Your Long-Term Goals into Manageable Milestones

Once you've identified your long-term goals, it's time to break them down into smaller, more achievable milestones. Long-term goals can feel overwhelming if you try to tackle them all at once, so dividing them into more manageable pieces makes the process less intimidating.

For example, if your goal is to retire with \$1 million by age 65, break it down into smaller steps:

- How much do you need to save each year to reach \$1 million, assuming an average return on investments?
- How many years do you have until retirement, and what would that mean for your monthly or annual savings target?



- What adjustments can you make to increase your savings rate (e.g., cutting expenses, increasing income)?

### Step 3: Develop a Savings and Investment Plan

The next step is to create a strategy for saving and investing that aligns with your long-term goals. Here's how you can go about it:

#### a) Set a Realistic Savings Rate

How much of your income can you realistically save each month? A common recommendation is to aim for saving between 10 and 20% of your income, but this will vary depending on your individual goals, lifestyle, and current financial obligations. If this feels like too much, start with a smaller percentage and gradually increase it as your income grows or your expenses decrease.

#### b) Automate Your Savings

One of the most effective ways to stay consistent with saving is to automate the process. Set up semi-monthly or monthly automatic transfers to a retirement account, savings account, or investment fund each month. This strategy helps to remove the temptation to spend the money you should be saving.

#### c) Invest for Growth

While saving is essential, investing is the key to growing your wealth over time. For long-term goals, investing in assets that have the potential for higher returns—such as stocks, bonds, and mutual funds—is essential. Over the long term, the compounding effect of investment returns can significantly increase your savings.

### Step 4: Monitor Your Progress and Adjust When Necessary

Achieving long-term financial goals requires persistence, but it also requires flexibility. Your goals, income, or expenses may change over time, so it's important to regularly review your plan and adjust as needed. Every year, take time to assess whether you're on track to meet your goals and make changes if necessary.

### Step 5: Protect Your Financial Future

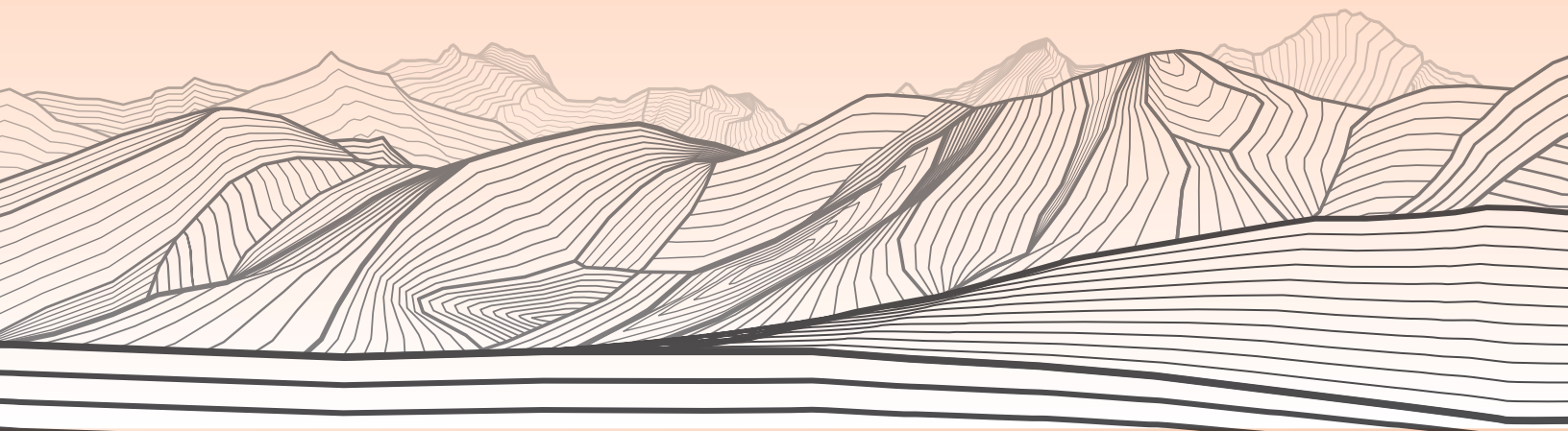
Along with saving and investing, it's crucial to protect your financial future through life, health, and disability insurance to safeguard against unforeseen events that could derail your financial plans.

### Final Thoughts

Setting long-term goals and saving for the future is a journey that requires patience, discipline, and strategic planning. The earlier you start, and the more consistent you are with your savings, the better positioned you'll be to achieve financial contentment.

Christian Credit Union promotes five Biblical principals to follow that support finding contentment with your finances. One of those, based on Philippians 3:14, is 'Set Long-term Goals'. Like Paul's use of a runner who focuses on the goal ahead of him as an analogy of the spiritual goal of being in heaven with the Lord, our pursuit of good financial goals is like that of the runner, so long as those goals are not idols or distractions to our faith. Rather, such goals lead to the contentment that the Lord wants us to have with what resources He has provided us.

Mutual funds and other securities are offered through Aviso Wealth, a division of Aviso Financial Inc.



# Grow Your Money

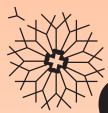
- and achieve your long-term financial goals -  
as a new Christian Credit Union Wealth member.

Earn up to **\$250**  
when you open an Aviso Wealth account.\*

## Our limited-time offer for new Christian Credit Union Wealth members:

- Open an account at Aviso Wealth through Christian CU with an initial deposit of at least \$100.
- Set up an automatic monthly contribution (i.e., deposit) for as little as \$25, for a minimum of three months.
- Earn a cash bonus (of up to \$250) and add it as a one-time bonus to your account based on the amount of your automatic monthly contribution.
- Offer applies to registered investment accounts (e.g. RRSP, TFSA, and FHSA).

**Contact our Wealth team to get this offer!**  
**1.877.426.0506 | [www.christiancu.ca](http://www.christiancu.ca)**



**Christian**  
CREDIT UNION



**aviso**  
wealth

*I press on toward the goal to  
win the prize for which God has  
called me heavenward in Christ  
Jesus. (Philippians 3:14)*

\*Limited time offer. Some conditions apply. Visit [www.christiancu.ca](http://www.christiancu.ca) for details.  
Mutual funds and other securities are offered through Aviso Wealth, a division of Aviso Financial Inc.

Trust.  
Loyalty.  
Honesty.

Sometimes you can get  
everything you need in  
one place.

Christian Credit Union has the values you  
expect and all the wealth management  
solutions you need, backed by Aviso Wealth.

Talk to us today.



The Power of Us®



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QTRADE

## Relentless goals require a platform that's all in.

Get up to \$2,000 from Qtrade Direct Investing® when you open a new online brokerage account by March 31, 2025, and transfer in at least \$5,000.\* The more you invest, the more you'll receive. Talk to us today or scan this QR code to learn more.



\* See full terms and conditions.

Online brokerage services are offered through Qtrade Direct Investing, a division of Aviso Financial Inc. 5% cash back on \$5,000 funding. Terms and conditions apply.

\*New clients get a sign-up bonus and free trades until April 30, 2025.

Qtrade and Qtrade Direct Investing are trade names or trademarks of Aviso Wealth Inc. and/or its affiliates.

# New & Returning Board Members

The Board nominated **Monica Loewen** and **Henry VanSteenbergen** to fill 2 vacancies and asked the membership to provide additional nominations. Since no additional nominations were provided, there is no need for an election and our Board members are appointed by acclamation. Monica will serve a 3-year term and Henry will serve a second consecutive 3-year term. Learn more about our Board members:



## Monica Loewen

### 1. Please tell us about yourself.

I have lived in Southern Alberta my entire life and have called Lethbridge home for the past 13 years. I have worked in a variety of non-profit and ministry positions, including as Executive Director at the Lethbridge Pregnancy Care Centre, Minister of Community Engagement at the Evangelical Free Church of Lethbridge, and currently as the Executive Director of the Society for Christian Education in Southern Alberta. I graduated from Briercrest Seminary in 2020 with a Master of Arts in Leadership & Management. My husband Terry owns and operates Quality Upholstery Restorations, focusing on custom vehicle upholstery.

Together we have six adult children and are very proud grandparents to our grandson Bennett and granddaughter Cierra. We enjoy spending time with them, as well as any sort of road trip that involves Terry on his motorcycle. Our home church is the Evangelical Free Church of Lethbridge, where we attend regularly and are involved in different areas.

### 2. Christian Credit Union's mission is to "encourage people to be faithful stewards of the financial resources God has given to them." What does that mean to you?

Having spent many years in fundraising, the language of stewarding is a familiar one. An important part of stewarding well is honouring the one who gave the gift in how the money is spent and the long-term effects of the spending, as well as using funds wisely with an eye to the future.

As Christians, we are called to honour God with our money, as well as with all the resources He has given us. This includes not spending beyond our means, borrowing and investing wisely, looking to the future. To me, it means living with the mindset of remembering that absolutely everything we have has been a gift and we need to live in thanksgiving and gratitude for that.

### 3. Why do you think it is important to offer Christians an opportunity to bank at a Christian financial organization?

Part of stewarding money well includes realizing the impact of how we handle our finances, including our banking practices. Being able to bank at a Christian organization that not only aligns with, but also supports my values, is very important to me. I take great encouragement knowing that profits earned by the institution are going to Christian ministries and organizations that I also support, giving them further opportunities for ministry. There is a peace of mind knowing that I am a part of something larger that is growing the impact of the Christian community, rather than potentially supporting organizations that run opposite of what I believe in.

### 4. How will your skills and life experiences make a positive contribution to the Christian Credit Union Board?

I have substantial knowledge in organizational leadership, specifically non-profit organizations. I have good experience and understanding of board governance, strategic planning and other important parts of serving on a board. As the head of an organization that partners with the Christian Credit Union, I will continue to be a strong advocate for continued support of all of our Christian ministry partners. I bring understanding and experience of the wider Christian church, having grown up in the Christian Reformed Church and then spending the majority of my adult life in the Evangelical Free Church.





## Henry VanSteenbergen

### 1. Please tell us about yourself.

I have been married to Marj for the last 44 years, and we have 5 adult children and 2 grandchildren. I am retired from the trucking industry, where I was a company owner and manager. I currently sit on the Board of Christian Credit Union, which I have served on for 15 years over different spans. My wife and I attend Crestwood Presbyterian Church where I am privileged to be called an elder for the last nine years. In the past I worked as a driver for Hope Mission on one of the rescue vans. The Lord has blessed my wife and I and our family greatly for all of our lives and we are honored to give back in the ways in which He calls us.

### 2. Christian Credit Union's mission is to "encourage people to be faithful stewards of the financial resources God has given to them." What does that mean to you?

I believe fully in the Christian CU's encouragement to its members, to be good stewards of the gifts which God gives us. We must remember that all we have first was given us by Him, so we are to use those gifts wisely, to serve God and our neighbors, and to build

up His kingdom here on earth. We should hang on to that wealth loosely, not trusting in our possessions for our life on earth.

### 3. Why do you think it is important to offer Christians an opportunity to bank at a Christian financial organization?

I believe that the Christian CU should also use part of its profits to benefit God's kingdom. I hope that Christians would see the benefits of banking with Christian CU, because it aligns with their worldview and helps them to manage their wealth to honor God.

### 4. How will your skills and life experiences make a positive contribution to the Christian Credit Union Board?

My background in business helps me to see that profit is not a bad thing, as long as it is not the overriding purpose for which we are in business. Any business, including Christian CU, needs to make a profit, in order to remain a functioning part of our society, but our Christian duty is to use that profit for the good of God's kingdom, and so that we can enjoy our life in Him. I also see my business background as good experience in helping others to avoid making costly mistakes.

## Annual General Meeting Thursday, March 6, 2025

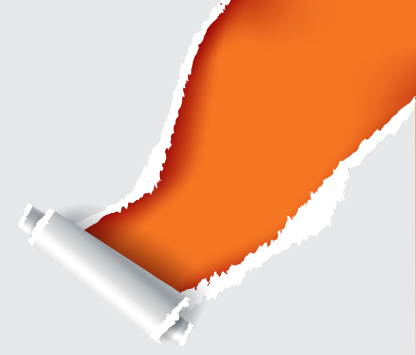
Christian Credit Union has been blessed with another profitable year and we want to show our appreciation for your business. Please join us as we celebrate the Lord's blessings in-person with food and fellowship! The event will be simulcast between the Edmonton and Lethbridge branches.

**Stay tuned for more details!**



# youth

## BANKING PROGRAM



## Has your child completed a Bible Bingo card?

Bible Bingo cards for youth in grades 1-3, 4-6, 7-9, or 10-12 are available from a participating school or a Christian Credit Union branch. Each card includes 8 Bible verses. Your child's goal is to memorize each verse over the duration of the school year (September to May). When the card is completed, signed off by a parent or volunteer and returned to Christian Credit Union, your child will receive a special bonus! The participating school with the highest percentage of completed cards will also get a reward!

**We are excited to announce that two new schools are offering the Youth Banking Program to their students. Welcome!**



### Lethbridge Christian School

Lethbridge Christian School exists to provide students from Kindergarten to Grade 8 with a Christ-centered education in an interdenominational setting, challenging them to lifelong excellence as they grow in knowledge and love, and in obedience to Jesus Christ.

[lcs.lethsd.ab.ca](http://lcs.lethsd.ab.ca)



### Harvest Baptist Academy

Harvest Baptist Academy is a distance learning and home education friendly Kindergarten to Grade 12 Christian Academy. They have been serving families throughout Alberta since 1997. They offer in-person, traditional home education, distance learning and shared responsibility programs.

[harvestbaptist.academy/our-school](http://harvestbaptist.academy/our-school)

*Start children off on the way they should go, and even when they are old they will not turn from it (Prov. 22:6).*

# Rewards for Saving Money

We encourage youth to meet their monthly savings goals by paying a bonus that is in addition to regular account interest. Participating schools earn a matching bonus and receive \$5.00 for every new account opened.

## The following bonuses were paid for the 2023-24 school year:

### Edmonton and Area

Covenant Canadian Reformed School	\$1,282.50
Edmonton Christian West School	\$462.00
Edmonton Christian High School	\$135.50
Parkland Immanuel Christian School	\$968.00

### Calgary

Calgary Christian School	\$367.50
Trinity Christian School	\$189.50
Tyndale Christian School	\$248.00

### Lethbridge and Area

Calvin Christian School	\$1,993.00
Coaldale Christian School	\$865.50
Immanuel Christian School	\$784.50
Providence Christian School	\$608.00

**Grand Total \$7,904.00**



For more details, please visit the Youth Banking Program page at [www.christiancu.ca](http://www.christiancu.ca) or talk to a volunteer at a participating school.

# Trinity Christian School Expansion

Trinity Christian School is a Christian Alternative Program within Palliser Regional Schools. The school exists as a partnership between Association for Christian Schooling in Calgary South (ACSCS) and Palliser Regional Schools to support parental choice for a faith-based public education.

*Trinity's mission is "to prepare God's children for a life of learning and service in His world. By the grace of God, in partnership with the Christian home and church, we will lead children to be the best they can be for God's glory."*

Trinity's journey began in 1993, when a group of Christian families acted on their vision for a new interdenominational Christian School in South Calgary. In 1996, the school purchased its current facility. Trinity has been blessed with a strong desire for Christian education and a growing student population, which is currently over 450 students. Over the years, they have added classrooms, storage space, office space, and a second gym to accommodate the growth. In Spring 2024 they began renovating and expanding their Junior High School building and the project is nearly complete!

Christian Credit Union is pleased to provide financing of \$3.5 million for the project and support Trinity Christian School in preparing God's children for a life of learning and service in His world.

**Learn more about Trinity Christian School at [www.tcskids.com](http://www.tcskids.com)**





# Hi5

Referral Program

For churches and non-profits



Sign up a friend for day-to-day banking\*  
and we'll donate

# \$50

to your church  
or non-profit

Visit our website to download the form  
and present it when opening the account.

\*Day-to-Day Banking is defined as one automatic payroll deposit or two automatic debits per month. Limited time offer. Some conditions apply. Your Church or non-profit must be a member of Christian Credit Union.



## \$453,231 Shared With Members

**We appreciate your business and one of the ways we give back to our members is through Profit Sharing.**

This year the Board was pleased to provide the following:

- 4.20% Dividends on common shares
- 2.5% Rebates on interest paid by members
- 2.5% Bonus on interest paid to members

Christian Credit Union is growing and we require capital to fund our growth. Therefore, this year, 100% of profit sharing was paid to your common share account.

**Thank you for being a member of Christian Credit Union!**