

Council Minutes March 1, 2023 Grace United Church

Executive:		Attendance
Chair	Leslie Veldman	Present
Vice-Chair	vacant	
Past Chair	Al Shaw	Present
Secretary	Cecily Chiles	Present
Treasurer	Wayne Pease	Absent
Ministry	Kenji Marui	Present
	Pat Morrison	Present

Committee Representatives:		Attendance
AOTS	vacant	
Christian Development	Shirley Willis	Present
Communications	Christopher Cooke	Absent
Congregational Care & Growth (CC&G)	Bev Walkling	Present
Finance	Paul Cooper	Present
Region Rep	Kenji Marui	attendance noted Ministry
Outreach	Paul Cooper	attendance noted Finance
Ministry & Personnel (M&P)	John Cooke	Present
Planning	Jim Wicks	Present
Property	John Cooke	attendance noted M&P
Proclamation and Special Events	Bev Walkling	attendance noted CC&G
Trustees	Pete Melanson	Absent
Worship	John Baxter	Present
Financial Review	Gord Walkling	Present

The Meeting was held in person and via Zoom with 12 participants, as per adjournment and began at 7:05 pm. There was a quorum.

1. Devotion

John Baxter on behalf of Worship

2. Approval of Agenda

MOTION: to approve the agenda.

[John Cooke/Al Shaw]- Carried

3. Approval of Minutes

MOTION: to approve the Council meeting minutes from January 11, 2023.

[Jim Wicks/ John Cooke] – Carried

4. Business Arising from the Minutes

- a. Financial Review – Gord Walkling presented the report of the Financial Review team.
Motion: to receive the Financial Review Report with thanks to Gord Walkling and Laura Black for their service. [John Cooke / Jim Wicks] - Carried. The Financial Review team found the books to be in order and approves the accuracy and integrity that the financial team exercised in supporting this aspect of Grace’s governance structure in 2022. Thank you to members of the Finance committee for their excellent work. Gord highlighted some of the changes in financial handling from the previous year. Paper copies of Financial Review reports for each year are stored in the fire-proof cabinets in the Flower room.
- b. Lambton County United Churches Round Table Discussion – Paul Cooper attended. 18 people attended. Intent was to find ways that we can work together. An update on the discussion is expected in April. Clergy from many of the participating churches were unaware of the gathering.
- c. Move money out of Canada Day Fund (\$800). **Motion: To forward money from the Canada Day fund to Saint Clair United Church [Bev Walkling / Al Shaw] - Carried**

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- d. Review current Safety Plan (rev. 18). John Cooke reported changes to COVID messaging on Lambton Public Health website. Public health guidance is vague.

A framework for discussing this issue at committees was proposed: if the Safety Plan was revised to remove the requirement of “wear masks while singing”:

- 1) what concerns would you have, if any?
- 2) what action could we take to mitigate those concerns?

Note: “I agree or disagree” is not a helpful response as it only continues the stalemate.

People may have different responses depending on their personal situation or their role in the worship service.

The hope is that in addressing these questions, Council can identify the best actions to mitigate most or all concerns, even if that turns out to be leaving the “masks while singing” requirement in place.

Some concerns were heard:

- Concern/fear that I will contract the virus
- Concern/fear that if I contract the virus, I will suffer significant illness due to my personal vulnerabilities.
- Concern that we are somehow not inclusive of, perhaps, a small group, that prefer to be masked.
- Concern that many people seem to have abandoned mask use even in large group settings. Is that what we can expect at worship services?

No changes to the Safety Plan were proposed. The discussion will continue at Council with the proposed framework using the 2 questions above.

5. Correspondence

Kenji received emails from Fairwinds staff, residents, and their family members, thanking Grace for the gathering held at Grace Feb. 18. Fairwinds staff is open to partner in future events to keep their community together while people are displaced. Kenji offered Grace’s support, to help maintain community ties within Fairwinds.

6. New Business

- a. Election of Treasurer, search for Vice-chair, regional rep. vacancies on slate of elected officers. **Motion: to elect Wayne Pease to the position of Treasurer for the term March 2023 until the Annual Congregational Meeting in 2024 [Al Shaw/Jim Wicks]. – Carried**

Al Shaw as past chair will lead nominations for vice-chair and regional reps. A Nominating committee is in place and Al Shaw is the chair of this committee.

7. Pastoral Team Reports and Teaching

Kenji’s ministerial report

- Concert for Fairwinds last month, 212 people attended, was a very positive experience for all. Reaffirmed Grace is the community partner that we want to be.
- Putting his name forward as a candidate for Business Coordinator in at the 45th General Council meeting in 2025 to support the UCC moderator at national level.
- Speaking at Young Adults in Transition forum weekend in April.
- March 14, PIE Day, Public Intentional and Explicit. Gathering for pie, setting up a zoom call in Friendship room to connect to PIE day workshop by 2Spirit Anishinaabe artist Ozhawa Anung.
- Preparing for Lent, Easter events at Grace.

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Pat's ministerial report

- My sabbatical was focused on understanding the current mental health crisis plaguing our young people. I am initiating conversations with the congregation and into the community toward understanding how the issue of teen mental health intersects with our Grace families and beyond, to share what I've learned, and to discern if Grace might further serve as a solution to the unique challenges our young people face. I am convinced the problem is understandable and something of a solution is already among us. To begin this conversation here at Grace, a questionnaire has been designed to measure how the issue touches our households. Results from the survey will inform visioning and programming on the topic.
- I met with the leaders of the Resonance Project to share potential ideas for Grace's specific resonance project. I described the three Resonance Weekends already completed (and the fourth scheduled for June) and got the thumbs up. Further, I shared two additional ideas that relate specifically to teens that apply principles of resonance toward addressing adolescent mental health.

8. Ad hoc committee reports

Investment Policy ad hoc committee

No updates from this committee. Paul will connect with the group and decide whether they need to continue to meet.

Short-term deficit reduction ad hoc committee

Paul Cooper spoke to the group.

Deficit dilemma workshop, United Church of Canada. Link: [Deficit Dilemma Workshop Resources | Antler River Watershed Regional Council \(arwrucc.ca\)](#). It would be good if all of council would participate by watching this workshop.

9. Key Ministry Committee Reports

Worship

- Scott Woods Concert: The Alzheimer's Society requested the use of the sanctuary to host a fundraising concert that will feature the Scott Woods group. This is the first request for use of the sanctuary by an outside group since before the pandemic. The committee considered the requirements for the concert in terms of instruments and their positioning and whether there was a need for the use of the sound system. The committee approved the request and extended thanks to Lori for acting as the intermediary in the discussions with the Alzheimer's Society.
- Pyjama Sunday: Pat proposed that the committee approve "Pyjama Sunday" where parents could have a light breakfast in Room 1 and continue to wear their pyjamas during the service. The agreed that this activity was consistent with the inclusivity objectives of Grace and the offer has been extended more broadly to the congregation for anyone who was interested in participating.

John Baxter

Christian Development

- Pancake supper Tuesday February 21. \$480 profit
- Weekend Retreats were organized supported by CD committee, with CD leaders and group of parents. Shirley Willis

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Congregational Care & Growth

- Fellowship after worship service. Karen Cooke and Joyce Rawson are willing to work on coffee hour Sundays after worship. Funds are available to support this.
- Grief support. Committee identified need for widow care, given the number of recent deaths of men in the congregation.
- Considering hosting a seniors drop in.
- Working to get letters out to students away at university, letting them know that people at Grace are thinking of them.
- Planning for Easter flowers and marking significant birthdays.
- Baptism, Melissa McKay would like to be baptized at Grace United Church. **Motion: to approve the baptism of Melissa McKay pending her participation in the ministerial prep sessions [Bev Walkling / Al Shaw] – Carried, 1 abstention.**
Discussion: if she's unable to attend Sundays, what alternative times for baptism could be proposed?
Melissa will make arrangements to attend baptism during worship service. Service for Baptism has not been scheduled yet.

Bev Walkling

Proclamation and Special Events

- Pizza sale, orders will be received mid-February, for delivery March 26. Need people to share to publicize for the fundraiser to be successful.
- Exploring a fundraiser, selling pre-packaged soup mixes.
- Other Fundraiser ideas include: Dante club dinner, sit-down meal and art auction. Renting shredder, bring paper to shred for a donation. Garage sale, rummage sale; finding people to organize is a challenge.

Bev Walkling

Outreach

- February meeting agenda included a celebration to thank the retiring members of the Outreach Committee - Edna Dent, Ruth Kreibich and Alice Minty. Many great memories including the start of Grace being involved with the IOGS starting in 1991 with the initial site on Cromwell Street.
- Feb 12 soup luncheon raised over \$3500 for Rayjon. Joanna is interested in setting up a regular coffee sales for Rayjon. Looking for an agreement in principle to sell, worship will discuss.
- Planning underway for March soup luncheon on the 19th or 26th. Beneficiary will be Literacy Lambton.
- Reminder of baby shower for Syrian family March 10 - all are invited.
- 80 clients served at February 22, 2023 Inn of the Good Shepherd meal. 60 pounds food was donated to the Inn on Foodbank Sunday.

Paul Cooper

10. Governance and Support Committee Reports:

Ministry & Personnel

- No report

John Cooke

Finance

- 2023 Budget approved at annual meeting.
- Completed financial section of United Church of Canada survey by deadline of February 28th.
- Assessing options to replace 2 counters/1 banker procedure for offering plates given current conditions.
- No issues with end of January operating budget. Will issue summary at the end of Q1 2023.

Paul Cooper

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Planning

Visioning

- Thank you for all the contributions to the information banners that were displayed at the last Soup Luncheon and also at the Pancake Supper. We will look for a place to display for a period of time somewhere in the church.
- Planning would like to encourage other committees to have a similar "Did You Know Minute" prior to worship to educate the congregation on what you do
 - If you need some help, contact me
- As mentioned previously, Planning would like to utilize the screen time prior to the worship service to display information about the various committee and governance of the church
 - Planning would do the first one and establish a basic format and would provide support for future committees by populating charts based on the committee's input
 - Planning will work with Worship and Communications to understand the requirements to make this happen
 - **Planning would like to gain Council's support to proceed**
- As a part of the first info item prior to Worship to publicize the support Planning can provide to anyone with an idea to progress
 - Recent examples:
 - Feb 18 Fairwinds Concert
 - Greening of Grace initiatives regarding HVAC and heat pumps
 - Proposals for the uses for the parcel of land
- Thank you to Pat for re-starting the Planning committee but is stepping back.

Jim Wicks

Communications

- The committee purchased a new projector for the Friendship Room. It is suitable for presentations or playing movies. The existing projector replaced an outdated/aging AV cart projector.
- The committee is once again filling a couple photo boards in the hallway outside the friendship room. Thank you to Marianne Nichols for putting the boards together and to Bev Walking for taking the photos.

Chris Cooke

Property

- High winds on Feb 10/23 resulted in damage to Chapel flashing and sanctuary soffit. Repairs will be scheduled in the spring.
- Biodiversity presentation by Mike Smalls Feb. 28 was well attended and well received.

John Cooke

Trustees

- No report
- Peter Melanson

AOTS

- No report

Region updates

- Regional council May 12/13 next regional meeting, in person and online. Stoneridge Best Western south of London.
 - Survey
- Kenji Marui

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11. Closing

- Next regular meeting April 5, 2023. 7 pm
- Closing prayer, Kenji.

12. Adjournment, Meeting closed at 8:56 pm

Motion to adjourn: [Al Shaw\ John Baxter] – Carried.

2023 Devotion Responsibility:	2023 Sunday Lock-up Responsibility:
JANUARY – Property	JANUARY – CD
FEBRUARY – Planning	FEBRUARY – CC&G
MARCH – Worship	MARCH – AOTS
APRIL – Trustees	APRIL – Communications
MAY – CD	MAY – Finance
JUNE – CC&G	JUNE – M&P
JULY - na	JULY – Outreach
AUGUST - na	AUGUST – Property
SEPTEMBER – na	SEPTEMBER – Planning
OCTOBER – AOTS	OCTOBER – Trustees
NOVEMBER – Communications	NOVEMBER – Worship
DECEMBER – Finance	DECEMBER – CD

Leslie Veldman, Council Chair

Cecily Chiles, Council Secretary