

# Council Minutes June 7, 2023 Grace United Church

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| <b>Executive:</b> |                | <b>Attendance</b> |
|-------------------|----------------|-------------------|
| Chair             | Leslie Veldman | Absent            |
| Vice-Chair        | Marion Staples | Present           |
| Past Chair        | Al Shaw        | Absent            |
| Secretary         | Cecily Chiles  | Absent            |
| Treasurer         | Wayne Pease    | Absent            |
| Ministry          | Kenji Marui    | Present           |
|                   | Pat Morrison   | Present           |

| <b>Committee Representatives:</b>   |                   | <b>Attendance</b>         |
|-------------------------------------|-------------------|---------------------------|
| AOTS                                | vacant            |                           |
| Christian Development               | Shirley Willis    | Present                   |
| Communications                      | Christopher Cooke | Present                   |
| Congregational Care & Growth (CC&G) | Bev Walking       | 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 Walking       | attendance noted CC&G     |
| Trustees                            | Pete Melanson     | Absent                    |
| Worship                             | John Baxter       | Absent                    |

The Meeting was held in person and via Zoom with 9 participants, as per adjournment and began at 7:00 pm. There was a quorum.

1. **Devotion** – “God is for us” Congregational Care and Growth.

**2. Approval of Agenda**

**MOTION: to approve the agenda.**

**[Chris Cooke / Jim Wicks]- Carried**

**3. Approval of Minutes**

**MOTION: to approve the Council meeting minutes from May 3, 2023 as amended.**

Discussion: Amend Christian Development report to remove the dollar amount of the HRDC grant.

Amend discussion under Motion to revise the safety plan: *the personal choice to wear or not to wear a mask is fully supported by Council and the congregation*

**[ Paul Cooper / John Cooke] – Carried**

**4. Business Arising from the Minutes**

- a. Remit Education: Kenji made contact with Thérèse Samuel, regional staff with the portfolio for indigenous justice, who had presented a couple videos about the remit for an autonomous indigenous church council. These videos are being revised and tweaked and should be available for viewing by next week on the region’s YouTube channel. Thérèse is open to conducting an educational workshop for a group of congregational councils/boards and Kenji will approach Lambton County churches about an event for the fall.
- b. Review current Safety Plan (rev. 19). **Motion: to approve the Safety Plan (Rev. 19) as circulated with the agenda [Chris Cooke /Shirley Willis] – Carried.**
- c. Property Committee to update Council on HVAC filtration- see Property Committee Report below (under Item 10 of these minutes).

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- d. Worship Committee to update council on a plan to address the AV system used for virtual services. Deferred to a future meeting.

## 5. Correspondence

- a. Letter from Sienna Senior Living/Sabra Health Care re: Fairwinds community support.
- b. Letter from Nominations Committee of General Council of The United Church of Canada re: Kenji Marui appointed as Business Coordinator for 2025 United Church of Canada general meeting.

## 6. New Business

- a. Consider whether council executive be empowered to act on council's behalf until council meets again in October 2023. **MOTION: that Council executive be empowered to make decisions on Council's behalf starting with the adjournment of the June 7, 2023 meeting until the next regular meeting of Council in 2023. [Chris Cooke / Bev Walking ] – Carried.**

## 7. Pastoral Team Reports and Teaching

- a. **Pat's ministerial report**
  - While on holidays and study leave, I ran 8 discussion groups for grandparent and parent. Request for further. Also working with Daryl Wilson (Doreen Lacourse's daughter) to present to the Board of Education at PA Days and in grade 9/10 classrooms.
  - I have been invited to be part of RENDEZVOUS 2024 planning team.
  - As Alison's father passed on Monday and as a result of other complications, the Men's Weekend has been postponed.
- b. **Kenji's ministerial report**
  - Festival of Homiletics – wonderful speakers and sermons, made connections. Highlights included lectures about antisemitism in gospel preaching by a Jewish New Testament professor, hip-hop DJ approach to sermon preparation, and lessons the Hopepunk genre can give to the church.
  - Luther Seminary's graduation weekend followed the Festival and I attended their Baccalaureate Service where I got to meet in-person the preaching students of the learning lab I taught last spring. Relatedly, I'll be helping my professor again as a lab instructor this fall.
  - Relevance to Resonance – I have the seed of an idea from Lillian Daniel's first book about the role of testimony/sharing stories in congregational life, creating space for dialogue and connection will be in place when youth and young adults (that Pat's project works with) come seeking such
  - Hospital visits and other ongoing pastoral care concerns continue
  - Homelessness ministerial is regrouping; John Barnfield stepping into Fr. Dan Vere's role. A purpose/vision document has been drafted and is attached as a Appendix A, Sarnia Eccumenical Homelessness Working Group.
  - Looking forward to time away next month for a family wedding followed by a trip to Japan

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### 8. Ad hoc Committee Reports

- a. Investment Policy ad hoc committee – No report
- b. Short-term deficit reduction ad hoc committee:
  - Committee mandate is to develop a balanced budget for 2024
    - 2022 operating budget had a deficit of \$16K
    - 2023 approved budget had a deficit of \$24K which required using legacy fund interest and a reduced M&S commitment. Reserve fund will be at minimum by YE 2023
    - 2024 budget will require an improvement of about \$50K (cost reductions and/or revenue increase) with present assumptions

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- Council to be aware of the following steps required to avoid further M&S reductions and use of legacy fund principle to achieve balanced budget in 2024
  - increase revenues through additional special events (support from congregation required), a special appeal to congregation, revisit manse rental increase, revisit 'passing-the-plate', increase in building rental rates
  - reduce costs through lower UCC insurance cost option, utilizing 'Buy United" opportunities
  - other ideas welcomed
- Committee discussed current affordable and supportive housing initiative underway in Sarnia and Lambton County. More work is required to determine if there is an opportunity for Grace to participate

## 9. Key Ministry Committee Reports Ad hoc committee reports

### Worship

- Music Prop Storage: The Property Committee raised a concern about storage of music props (stands, stools and monitors) in the hallway behind the choir loft. The issue is that they impede passage to emergency exits. After Pat returned from his leave, Bryce spoke to him about the items and the concern. Pat indicated that he will talk to Marque about the items and which can be stored and which are non-functioning and should be discarded.
- Scheduling Matrix for Minister Absences: In order to ensure that all aspects of the weekly worship services are covered, Lori has prepared a draft matrix for Sundays when Kenji will be absent. Kenji said that he would take the matrix to the next staff meeting to discuss with Pat regarding days that he would be planning to lead the services before the committee begins to fill in the matrix with volunteers and pulpit supply.

John Baxter

### Christian Development

- There will be no grant for hiring summer students. Looking into alternatives for Friday night events throughout the summer.

Shirley Willis

### Congregational Care & Growth

- No report

### Proclamation and Special Events

- Card making event raised \$70 and was well received.

Bev Walking

### Outreach

- 89 pounds of food donated to the Inn of the Good Shepherd (IOGS) on food bank Sunday.
- Sponsored Circles dinner on May 9, 2023
- Enjoyed a break in the meal preparation in May to allow a corporate sponsor to participate.

Paul Cooper

## 10. Governance and Support Committee Reports

### Ministry & Personnel

- ADP System Admin back-up for John is Laura Black.
- Lori moved to summer hours and reduced salary on June 1.

John Cooke

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## Finance

Operating Cost Summary- YTD 2023 versus 2022 in \$K

|                | <u>2023</u> | <u>2022</u> | <u>Delta</u> |
|----------------|-------------|-------------|--------------|
| <b>Revenue</b> | 192.6       | 195.0       | -2.4         |
| <b>Costs</b>   | 181.0       | 172.1       | +8.9         |
| <b>Net</b>     | +11.6       | +22.9       |              |

- Givings lower by \$8.1K in 2023 offset by increased rental income (\$2K) and increased interest income (\$6.6K)
- Costs higher by \$8.9K in 2023 due to cost increases in property (\$3K), region assessment (\$1.5K) and staffing (\$4.3K).

Paul Cooper

## Planning

May Activities and Plans

- Paul Cooper discussed an initiative from a local group wanting to build affordable housing in Sarnia.
- Planning Committee will continue to discuss the housing initiative and whether partnering with this group fits with a vision for Grace United Church.

Greening of Grace – John Cooke presented activities by Property committee exploring ways that Grace can reduce its carbon emissions and other greening projects.

- Planning Committee is supportive of the work John Cooke and Property Committee are undertaking to find strategies to reduce carbon emissions at Grace.

Discussed the project proposal to paint the gym and install the Grace logo on the east wall.

- No projects competing so no scoring completed – Council to approve based on case from Communications
- Planning supports the plan to have the new logo on the gym wall.

Jim Wicks

## Communications

**Motion: That Grace United Church:**

1. **Hire Alvin Painting and Cleaning to paint the concrete block walls of the gym, based on their estimate of \$4125+HST.**
2. **Upon completion of painting / drying, install the new Grace logo in the middle of the east wall (Communications Committee to select installer)**
3. **Undertake a short fundraising campaign with the goal of raising \$5000 towards the cost of the project (any remaining costs to be covered by Communications Initiatives Fund).**

**[Chris Cooke / Jim Wicks] - Carried**

## **Communications Report:**

The committee has finished investigating the options to paint the gym wall prior to installing a logo. The painting scope is priming and 2 coats of latex paint of the concrete block in the gym: east wall, south wall (up the stairs to the corner) and west wall (up the beams to the ceiling). Three quotes were received:

1. \$4125 + HST from Alvin Painting and Cleaning
2. \$5700 + HST from Stark Painting Professionals
3. \$6000 + HST from Bigras Painting

All three are insured, provide high quality paint and quoted on the same scope.

The committee recommends proceeding with Alvin Painting and Cleaning as the lowest bidder.

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Property Committee endorses the scope and does not expect Alvin P&C approach to cause any damage to our gym floor. A rolling scaffold and brushes will be utilized (avoiding accidental overspray).

Planning Committee reviewed and endorsed the proposal on the basis that it's necessary to continue the branding efforts (i.e. logo installation) and there is nothing competing with the project currently.

The purple folders largely provided positive feedback from the congregation: 8 yes (will donate), 3 yes (not sure about donating) and 1 no (sounded expensive).

Rationale for not having a Grace team do the painting:

- This painting requires a lot of ladder work, which is tiresome, and creates too much risk for a volunteer crew.
- Concern about splattering paint on the new gym floor.
- The gym is used regularly, so completing the job quickly is important to avoid disruption to rentals.
- Once painting is complete, the Committee will continue with installation of a logo. The logo scope is for a signage contractor to produce and install a permanent, adhered/stick-on logo. To date, one quote has been received from Sure Signs for ~\$1000 + HST. Two more quotes will be sought before proceeding and the most appropriate contractor selected. Durability of the logo will be considered before proceeding.

Chris Cooke

## **Property**

- Sanctuary Roof Top HVAC filters – Filter elements are changed semi-annually as part of the preventative maintenance contract. The current annual contract cost is \$1,800. Filter elements are classified by the MERV rating (minimum efficiency reporting value), a system designed by ASHRAE. It measures the size of particles a filtration product can capture. As MERV increases, smaller particle sizes are captured more efficiently. Our current filters are rated MERV 10. MERV 13 filter elements could be installed which would increase removal efficiency for virus/bacteria carrying particles although filters should be changed quarterly. The additional cost would be \$752 per year. Similar issue for the Dais fan system although costs have not been determined yet.
- The sanctuary soffit and chapel flashing were repaired recently.
- North catch basin in the parking lot was found partially filled with concrete. Suspect a concrete truck was washed into it. Working to clear it.
- New hand soap dispensers were installed in the kitchens and bathrooms.
- Greening GRACEfully – David Murray & John Cooke met with Stephen Collette from Faith & the Common Good regarding the UCC grant process. Next steps still to be determined.

John Cooke

## **Trustees**

- No report

## **AOTS**

- No report. Ken Plumley Scholarship award – nominations close on June 11, 2023.

## **Region updates**

- Antler River Watershed Region's spring meeting (in-person/on-line hybrid format) occurred May 12-13. New President Rev. Cheryl Bolton was installed, I concluded my long tenure on the Executive, 3 new ministers ordained/commissioned/recognized, Save the Barn campaign for Mt Elgin Residential School site was introduced, keynote speakers about being a church in a world of "nones" and eco-theology for a world in crisis.
- Video record of the full meeting and Celebration of Ministry worship service available on the region's YouTube channel
- The Executive meets next week to receive the results of the evaluation of the regional council conducted at the start of this year

Kenji Marui

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## 11. Adjournment and closing prayer, Meeting closed at 9:10 pm

Motion to adjourn: [Paul Cooper / Chris Cooke ] – Carried.

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Leslie Veldman, Council Chair

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Cecily Chiles, Council Secretary

### **Special Meeting, Council Executive**

Immediately following the meeting on June 7, Council executive held a special meeting via email to discuss sending flowers or a memorial donation to the Morrison family, on the death of Allison’s father. Executive members agreed to spend \$50-\$70, the expected cost of flowers.

| <b><u>2023 Devotion Responsibility:</u></b> | <b><u>2023 Sunday Lock-up Responsibility:</u></b> |
|---|---|
| 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                                     |

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## Appendix A:

### Sarnia Ecumenical Homelessness Working Group

“...Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.’ Matthew 25:40

**Mission Statement:** We come, members of different faith communities to work together on a common goal, serving our neighbours as we seek to end homelessness in our community.

**Vision:** We envision a future where together, with God’s help we have reimagined what the gathering of God’s people is in this world and are actively engaged in the task of loving and serving our neighbours. Homelessness and affordable housing are issues we cannot ignore if we are to follow Jesus’ command to love our neighbours. All people in our community deserve access to safe, reliable, affordable housing.

### How will we accomplish this goal?

- We commit to working together to educate, vision, plan and prepare for our future together.
- We commit to raising funds and partnering with local agencies to create hubs of transitional housing opportunities throughout the city with connections to social services supports, health care workers and employment coordinators.
- We commit to advocating for the vulnerable within our Church communities to raise awareness.
- We commit to partnering with local agencies to help with and support the development of long term housing solutions. We intend to explore a partnership with CAS to assist them in their goal of providing transitional housing support to more individuals as they move out of the foster care system.

### Goals 2023-2024:

- By the end of 2024 have raised \$50 000 to support our initiative through events, fundraising initiatives and private donations.
- To have conducted 2 visioning workshops to begin the work of reimagining what the Gathering of God’s people is called to be in this world, today.
- Listening to community agencies and people at work with those most vulnerable in our community to gain a better understanding of what the needs are in our neighbourhood.
- The radical hospitality of Jesus will be displayed within our communities and city.