

Council Minutes April 3, 2024 Grace United Church

Executive:		Attendance
Chair	Marion Staples	Present
Vice-Chair	Tory Walko	Present
Past Chair	Leslie Veldman	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	Present
Congregational Care & Growth (CC&G)	Bev Walkling	Absent
Finance	Paul Cooper	Present
Region Rep	Marilyn Barros	Absent
Outreach	Paul Cooper	
Ministry & Personnel (M&P)	John Cooke	Absent
Planning	Jim Wicks	Present
Property	John Cooke	Absent
Proclamation and Special Events	Bev Walkling	
Trustees	Pete Melanson	Present
Worship	John Baxter	Present

The Meeting was held in person and via Zoom with 12 participants, as per adjournment and began at 7:00 pm. There was a quorum.

1. **Devotion** – Jim Wicks on behalf of Planning
2. **Approval of Agenda**
MOTION: to approve the agenda. [Chris Cooke/ Leslie Veldman] – Carried
3. **Approval of Minutes**
MOTION: to approve the Council meeting minutes from March 6, 2024. [Pete Melanson/Paul Cooper] – Carried.
4. **Business Arising from the Minutes**
 - a. Ad hoc Search Committee update to Council on search for an office administrator and disbanding of Ad hoc committee. Council believes the tasks of the Ad hoc Search committee are completed. **Motion: to disband the Ad hoc Search Committee with Council’s thanks [John Baxter / Jim Wicks] - Carried**
 - b. Update on Northern Secondary School emergency plan. A letter was received from Northern Collegiate Vice-Principal, Marty Passmore, providing details of the emergency evacuation plan to bring 500-800 students to Grace United Church in the event of an emergency evacuation of the school. The letter and plan from Northern Collegiate is included as an appendix to these minutes. **Motion: to accept the Northern Collegiate Evacuation Proposal [Leslie Veldman / Chris Cooke] – Carried**
 - c. Proposed Public Health Policy. Discussion and committee reports are postponed until May meeting of Council.

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- d. List of duties of Treasurer and Assistant Treasurer. Finance committee is reviewing Treasurer role description from previous 2009 version. More to be presented to Council in May.
- e. Status of filling Treasurer and Assistant Treasurer 2024/25 positions. Council will discuss at its meeting in May once the role descriptions are in place.
- f. Council requested an update on Grace funds at SCF and how the process works:
 - Value of funds as of April 2023 was \$67,465.53 (year-end 2022 market value)
 - Does not include High Park bequest for L4L program.
 - Amount of eligible annual withdrawal is communicated by SCF to Grace.
 - Funds are re-invested if there are no specific requests made.Total Grace funds consist of a number of separate 'sub-funds':
 - based on source of funds invested at SCF.
 - approximate values (\$K) are as follows; Gwen Hopper (34.5), Ken Plumley (11.5), Tom Murray (10), General Fund (10.5) and Tom & Donna Moore (1).
 - Finance Committee provides direction with input from key stakeholders.Considerations for Grace Council:
 - Submit ideas for potential fund projects.
 - Do we continue to manage as 'special funds' with associated criteria?

5. Correspondence
None

6. New Business

- a. Does the church have a policy around sales of items before and following church in the Narthex? In general, dollar sales have not been allowed before and after worship services. Worship Committee governs activities in the narthex space before and after worship services. Worship Committee will discuss practices around sales following the worship service.
- b. Region is offering a webinar: Are you a Vulnerable Community of Faith? <https://arwrcucc.us20.list-manage.com/track/click?u=ee15470ca4eab124ea964929b&id=ad070a4c8c&e=6611b72851> April 17 7:00pm-8:30 pm sponsored by Regional Council. The webinar addresses the signs of declining finances and volunteer resources in a community of faith. Members of council are encouraged to attend and engage in a discussion.
- c. Mission and Service Fund (M&S) status. Planning had a discussion around changing the messaging around M&S. Planning and Outreach and Finance committees will coordinate an approach to messaging about contributions to M&S. The role that M&S plays is poorly understood by many members of the community. A report on progress will be presented to Council at the May meeting.
- d. Area churches collaborated in March 2020 to put on a concert at Central United. There is interest from 3 United churches in the community to hold another concert. June 7, 2025 is a proposed date. June 10, 2025 is the 100th anniversary of the United Church of Canada.

7. Pastoral Team Reports and Teaching

- a. Pat
I will be on Study Leave Apr 22 – May 5 and Holidays May 6 - June 2.
During that time, I will be:
 - attending the Antler River Watershed Region Meeting from May 24-26
 - writing a resource for congregational ministry as part of my culminating Resonance project.

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- leading a regional workshop on Children’s Time at a training event for Lay License Worship Leaders.
- Engaging in a discussion about starting book clubs.

b. Kenji

- Lent and Holy week story sharing was a positive experience from the congregation and those who shared their stories. Thank you to those who shared their stories.
- Working with Outreach committee on homelessness and unhoused people in our community. A group book study is proposed around the book “When We Walk By”. More information on the book study will be announced soon.
- Preparing for a move closer to Sarnia at the end of April.

8. Ad hoc committee reports

- a. Investment Policy – a policy has been in place for 2 cycles following its acceptance. Council will consider in May whether to disband the Ad hoc committee.

Paul Cooper

- b. Short Term Deficit Reduction

Paul Cooper

9. Key Ministry Committee Reports

a. Worship

- Music: The committee is considering a proposal from the Proclamation Gospel Quartet to play at Grace. Details are still to be determined and it is not clear whether the proposal is for music during a worship service or whether they are considering a concert. In the event that it is a concert, the committee has given tentative approval for use of the sanctuary.
- Kenji and Marque were investigating a grant to establish a jazz ensemble, but they have learned that the grant is not being given this year.
- Public Health Policy and Respiratory Illness Safety Plan: The committee discussed the documents within the context of their origin during the COVID-19 pandemic, and as a document that outlines actions for future respiratory outbreaks, if one was to occur.

John Baxter

b. Christian Development

Re-starting programming that was in place before 2020. Welcoming new members on the committee and building community among families.

Shirley Willis

c. Congregational Care and Growth (CC&G) – No Report

d. Proclamation and Special Events – No Report

e. Outreach

1. Inn of the Good Shepherd - 118 pounds of food donated at Food Bank Sunday. 86 clients served at the Inn meal on March 27th.
2. \$1790 raised for Lambton Centre at the March 17, 2024 soup luncheon.
3. April 14, 2024 is the date for the next soup luncheon. Donations received will benefit the Brain Injury Association.
4. Planning for an evening meal for the Circles group in May. When the date is finalized, the congregation will be invited to participate.

Paul Cooper

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10. Governance and Support Committee Reports

a. Finance

- End of February operating budget data was reviewed - no significant surprises. A detailed report will be issued mid-April when Q1 data is available.
- UCC yearbook stats issued by March 05, 2024 dead-line.
- Plan is to complete the 2023 CRA submission (normally due by end of June) prior to Lori's retirement and use as a training event. Will also ensure admin finance related tasks are covered in the overlap.

Paul Cooper

b. M&P – No report

c. Property

- Reviewing plans for relining the parking lot – proposal deferred to May.
- Sanctuary carpet seams (several locations) were separating because the glue was drying out. Repairs completed by Hucker Floor Coverings.
- Repairing the window trim in Rm 6 & Rm 8 is ongoing.
- Revamping and renewing the Cathcart garden is ongoing.

John Cooke

d. Communications

- The committee is working with IPC to produce a new Photo Directory. Having a photo taken is free, and comes with a complimentary copy of the directory. However, folks can choose to take multiple poses and purchase a photo package from IPC at a reasonable price. Anyone who feels a connection to Grace, whether a member or not, is welcome to participate in the directory. Photo taking days are May 6-10th (afternoons/evenings) and May 11th (morning/afternoon). The committee would happily accept volunteers to:
 - Phone members to encourage registration,
 - Phone folks to remind them of their photo appointments,
 - Greet and orient folks as they arrive for their appointments.
- **Thank you to Al and Susan Shaw** for donating tee shirts sporting the new Grace logo. They look great! Well over 100 tee shirts have been distributed. Be sure to wear your shirt in public, and don't be afraid to explain what our community is all about.
- Marianne Nichols and Lori Armstrong added the photo of Kenji Marui to the minister photos above the chapel entrance.
- The new television cupboard for room 9 is almost ready for installation.
- A laptop lock was purchased to secure the volunteer laptop when left in the sanctuary.
- A new speaker was purchased for the portable projector cart. The new speaker is louder/easier to hear

Chris Cooke

e. Planning

Review of Proposed Public Health Policy

- Discussed the proposed policy for feedback to Gord Walkling and to Council. A report of the discussion was completed and forwarded to Gord and Council Chair and Secretary

Affordable Housing and Parcels of Land

- This topic continues to arise within the congregation and the public for how to address the parcels of land and the needs for affordable housing
- It was agreed that Grace needs a champion to be a focal point for this topic but first a framework for this needs to be generated first.
- **FOLLOW-UP:** Jim will arrange for him, Kenji and Tory to meet and to develop this framework in support of finding a champion for this effort

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Finding a place for all at Grace

- There was very positive feedback following the individual sharing of stories during worship as individuals could relate to these stories and feel Grace is a welcoming congregation.
- Emphasized that we need to continue to actively share our openness and accepting attitude to demonstrate our welcome.
- Planning will continue to be a group that will facilitate new initiatives and support community activities and events.

M&S Givings and Message to Congregation

- Agreed that the messaging needs to be improved around the role of M&S in the United Church and how Grace treats M&S budgeting and the mechanism for givings to M&S

FOLLOW-UP: Jim will follow up with Paul Cooper of Outreach regarding plans to clarify to the congregation the decision to reduce M&S to 2024 budget levels, how things have changed from the recent formula calculation, future plans for envelope designations (if any) and overall the role of M&S in the United Church. It was thought that the message was clear enough to those in attendance at the AGM, but the congregation at large needs more education.

Jim Wicks

f. Trustees

Working on finalizing the contract with Community Living for lease of the manse.

g. Regional Council

Meeting May 24-26, tri-regional meeting in Port Elgin. Pat will be ordained into the UCC on the Saturday afternoon, pending the decision at the congregational meeting April 7. The ordination service is open to the public and anyone in the congregation who would like to attend in Port Elgin is encouraged to do so.

h. AOTS

12. Adjournment and Closing Prayer

Meeting closed at 8:38 pm

Next Regular Meeting: May 1, 2024.

Marion Staples, Council Chair

Cecily Chiles, Council Secretary

<u>2024 Devotion Responsibility:</u>	<u>2024 Sunday Lock-up Responsibility:</u>
JANUARY – M&P	JANUARY – CC&G
FEBRUARY – Outreach	FEBRUARY – AOTS
MARCH – Property	MARCH – Communications
APRIL – Planning	APRIL – Finance
MAY – Trustees	MAY – M&P
JUNE – Worship	JUNE – Outreach
JULY - na	JULY – Property
AUGUST - na	AUGUST – Planning
SEPTEMBER – na	SEPTEMBER – Trustees
OCTOBER – CD	OCTOBER – Worship
NOVEMBER – CC&G	NOVEMBER – CD
DECEMBER – Communications	DECEMBER – CC&G