

Council Minutes April 2, 2025 Grace United Church

Executive:		Attendance
Chair	Tory Walko	
Vice-Chair	Daniella D’Andrea	
Past Chair	Marion Staples	
Secretary	Cecily Chiles	
Treasurer	Wayne Pease	Absent
Ministry	Kenji Marui Pat Morrison	

Committee Representatives:		Attendance
AOTS		
Christian Development	Shirley Willis	
Communications	Christopher Cooke	Absent
Congregational Care & Growth (CC&G)	Bev Walkling	
Finance	Paul Cooper	
Region Rep	Marilyn Barros	
Outreach	Paul Cooper	
Ministry & Personnel (M&P)	Laura Black/John Cooke	
Planning	Jim Wicks	Absent
Property	John Cooke	
Proclamation and Special Events	Bev Walkling	
Trustees	Bruce Davies	
Worship	Bryce McGarvey	

The Meeting was held in person and via Zoom with 14 participants and began at 7:00 pm. There was a quorum.

1. Devotion

John Cooke on behalf of Property, full text included here at Council’s request.

We talk frequently about stewardship as time, talent and treasure. For the Property Committee, finding people to share their time and talent in the committee’s work can be a challenge. We are blessed today with several contributors for committee work, small repairs, improvements and bigger projects. We can always use more volunteers, if only for ensuring the future for our mission.

Recently UCC, formed a Property Network to sponsor discussion amongst Property Committee members about common issues and opportunities. A webinar and discussion focused on recruiting leaders and volunteers for Property tasks. The presenters offered a, perhaps, more effective way to motivate others to say YES!

I found some of their suggestions refreshing and maybe a good example of applying Resonance principles, even though the R word wasn’t mentioned. So, I am sharing a few of the bullet points with you tonight.

Want to motivate people?

- Choose your language
- Less about commitment and challenge
- More about compassion and community

Use the Inspire-Invite-Ask model

Link the ask to inspiration elements such as

- How does our work fit with our mission as a church/Committee
- Speak to the person’s heart and interests
- Share stories about how we get things done

Invite folks in a way that is individual and personal

Offer thanks with intentional and sincere gratitude

Overall, it’s more about relationships and less on tasks

If you are inspired to learn more, the recorded webinar and slide presentation are available on Chyurchx. (Church’s Property Team – The Stewardship of Time: How to ask, the Power of Gratitude).

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Prayer – Dear Lord, thank you for the grace you have given us. Help us to speak words of grace and mercy. Encourage us to reach out to others with inspiration and stories about our mission and the important work we do. Open our minds and hearts to the time and talents that new members and volunteers offer so that we can inspire them to take a larger role. Amen.

2. Approval of Agenda

MOTION: to approve the agenda with the addition of 2 items. [John Cooke / Bryce McGarvey] – Carried

3. Reading of Scripture, reflection on the theme *Seeds of Curiosity*

Reading from John 4: 4-26

Reflecting on the questions: Where can we find the living water? How do we ask for a drink? What is revealed to each of us as we receive this?

4. Approval of Minutes

MOTION: to approve the Council meeting minutes from March 5, 2025 [Marion Staples / Paul Cooper] – Carried.

5. Business Arising from the Minutes

None

6. Correspondence

None

7. New Business

- Scott Woods Concert. Paul Cooper advised of a request that came this week for Grace to host a concert by Scott Woods on Saturday December 20. Concert organizers are requesting the Sanctuary all day on Saturday December 20. The concert is a fundraiser for St. Joseph's Hospice. Request asks that the rental fee be waived. Any fee for custodial staff would be covered.

Discussion: This concert takes place during advent. Consult with the sanctuary Guild about re-setting the sanctuary for Sunday worship the next morning. The request will be forwarded to the sponsoring committee, Worship and Outreach committees.

8. Pastoral Team Reports and Teaching

A. Kenji Marui's report

- Kenji is working to complete required continuing education for ministry personnel.
- General Council executive meetings, work is ongoing. Meeting is in August 2025.
- A successful PIE Day was held at Grace and co-hosted with St. Luke's UC. Attendance exceeded expectations and the programming was entertaining, informative and brought our congregations together. Freewill offering covered expenses and provided a small amount for Affirming activities in both congregations.
- Jazz Worship continues to be well attended, and freewill offering continues to cover all honorarium costs. The next Jazz Worship is scheduled for Sunday May 4, with a Star Wars Theme.
- Season of Lent, during worship services people are invited to share stories.
- Executive Director at Women's Interval home is still searching for a building site. City Council has failed to approve a new location for their planned transitional housing project. There may be an opportunity to consider Grace property. Trustees submitted a report to Council in Oct. 2024, reporting on issues of zoning, process to sever and other information related to a potential transfer of Grace property. Trustee report can be found on the Grace website with Council Minutes 2024-10-09.
- Kenji is pastoral charge supervisor for Walpole Island UC. Working with the congregation members on the process to seek a new minister.
- Kenji's 5 year anniversary at Grace is coming up at the end of this year and will be eligible for a 3 month sabbatical. Discussions will be held with M&P.

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B. Pat Morrison's report

- I'm meeting with the Sunday sound tech group again to address issues and do further training.
- This week is focused on preparations for this Sunday's Confirmation service, including working with Kari Rent and Molly Eagleson who will be sharing personal experiences from the confirmation experience.
- I continue my work with the UCC national 'Collective' team attending initial on-site planning meetings at Brock University.
- Christian Development Committee continues its work, discerning what is revealed in responses from bell ritual participants. We are hearing confession of a sense of 'belonging' and so we are considering it as a potential watchword.
- I have applied for a research project similar to the Resonance project that builds on same body of work from Charles Taylor, Hartmut Rosa, and Byung Chul Han. The project runs out of Calvin Institute in Grand Rapids, Michigan and the format is a one-week intensive that brings together ministry practitioners from across North America. What I'm excited about is having access to talking partners who have read the material and are engaged in wrestling with how it informs the practice of ministry.

9. **Key Ministry Committee Reports**

A. Worship

- Grace Website Updates: Discussion continued regarding the website update request, particularly regarding video clips of congregation members talking about why they attend Grace. The committee discussed names of people that they thought might be good candidates to ask about their willingness to participate. The list was compiled and distributed to committee members. Gord suggested that a sub-group of the committee could arrange to meet with Chris Cooke and Brian White to discuss some details of the format and the details of how to prepare people for the video sessions.
- Request for Use of Sanctuary: The committee received two requests for sanctuary usage. The first, from the Embers (formerly Sparks) was approved for them to practice singing for an upcoming event. The second request for the choral music festival was also approved, but the committee was not supportive of their request to move the piano from its usual location to the chancel. Marque was made aware of the concerns with the proposed move and will discuss with the festival contact person.
- Music Ministry: Upcoming highlights include the Starlight Singers (junior choir) being scheduled for Palm Sunday (April 13). Additionally, Marque has met with Carol Ritchie (music director at Dunlop-Central) and Cliff Pedersen (member at Dunlop-Central) to discuss the 100th anniversary of the United Church of Canada. The anniversary concert will be held on Saturday, June 7th at 7:30pm at Grace United Church. There will be 2 anthems sung by a mass choir comprised of the Dunlop-Central and Grace choirs. St. Luke's Choir and London Road West United choirs may be joining. Each of the choirs will sing separate anthems and there will be solo and group performances from each of the churches.
- Planning for Kenji's 2025 Vacation and Study Leave: Kenji requested that the committee assume responsibility for arranging pulpit supply for Sundays when he will be absent. A list of recent pulpit supply preachers was given to Bryce and he will lead the search. Pat indicated to Kenji that he is available to preach on some Sundays if pulpit supply can't be secured. Once the pulpit supply has been established, the names will be given to M&P to manage travel expenses and remuneration.

Bryce McGarvey

B. Christian Development

- Price Of Admission event, bringing men together across generations, took place in March. Looking to host more events for both men and women.
- Summer programmes: HRDC Grant (Human Resources Development Canada) is uncertain. If the grant is not available this year, CD may be looking for other sources for funding.
- Workshop with Blair Bertrand, co-author of "When Church Stops Working"; trying to find a date when he can attend.
- Discussing what a "Watch Word" might be for Grace. Belonging, keeps coming up.
- Confirmation classes, presentation by Tory Walko on understanding regulation skills.
- Sunday morning appreciation lunch on May 4 immediately following church, CD volunteer appreciation.

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- Still seeking comfortable chairs or loveseat for the library. Anyone who has furniture to donate may contact the office.

Shirley Willis

C. Congregational Care and Growth (CC&G)

- Baptisms Neveah Walko Kari Rent
- Molly Eagleson for confirmation
- **Motion: that Neveah Walko and Kari Rent be approved for baptism and Molly Eagleson be approved for confirmation [Bev Walkling / Bryce McGarvey] – Carried**
- Confirmation and Baptism celebration is April 6
- Pat Morrison joined the committee to discuss Resonance and the book “When Church Stops Working”
- Euchre afternoon on a Monday was well attended, and brought new people into the church. Booked again for April 28, the Monday after Easter.
- Coffee and Conversation: A new group is being formed at Grace, in support of seniors who are single. Living alone brings different challenges. Please join us in the Friendship Room on the second Friday of every month, 10:00-11:30. There will be coffee, conversation, support and friendship. Contact person for this event is Elaine Roach.
- Delivery of Easter flowers will happen the week leading up to Easter.

Bev Walkling

D. Proclamation and Special Events

- Pastafest order now! April 30. 4:30-6:30. \$15 per meal. Place order by April 24. Need volunteers to help on the day of pick-up.
- The committee is looking for volunteers to be involved in fundraising events.
- Fall Fair suggested date is October 18.

Bev Walkling

E. Outreach

- March 2nd soup luncheon for Canadian Food Grains Bank (Blue Water Growing Project) raised \$2100. Will be matched 4:1 by CIDA. Thanks to John Young for being the minute person.
- Inn of the Good Shepherd - 80 clients served at the March 26th meal, 97 pounds of food taken to the Inn.
- Donations received at the April 6 soup luncheon will support programs at Lambton Center.
- Planning to host a dinner for CIRCLES (date in May to be confirmed).

Paul Cooper

10. **Governance and Support Committee Reports**

A. Finance

- Submitted UCC stats report information. Awaiting feedback on any potential issues.
- Will issue a summary of data 'owners' to improve consistency of report in future years.
- Detailed operating budget data will be issued when first quarter 2025 data is available
- Included two attachments - funds summary and overview of 2024 actual and 2025 budget - for Council information.
- Constitutional change to Finance committee duties: Future business to add this constitutional amendment to the notifications of the February Annual Congregational Meeting 2026.
- Fee for Grace's Affirming congregation status (\$181) will be covered by Congregational Care and Growth committee budget.

Paul Cooper

B. M&P

- Curtis returned to work this week. Welcome back!
- M&P is working with Kathy Dodkin to assign her to the position of Office Administrator on an indefinite basis. Target date for completion of the contract is the end of April.

Laura Black

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C. Property

- Chapel spotlights replaced with LED and fans cleaned.
- Semi-annual HVAC inspections completed
- Found a 2" x 2" piece of soffit on the grass near the manse. Suspect it was snow-bound for several weeks. Reinstalled it above the Sanctuary northwest emergency door.
- North Roof Top Unit exchanger repair completed.
- AC Unit outside the sanctuary has been out of service for many years. The unit was decommissioned, removed and power supply isolated. The air handler is still in service for Sanctuary ventilation.
- Working with Kathy to revise the Rental Policy. 1st priority is to update the rates.
- Elections Canada will have 6 polls in the gym on April 28.
- Curtis returned to work April 1. We thank Pam Eagleson and Danny Knight for the coverage they provided.
- Leslie Veldman has joined the Property committee.
- Rental income to end of Feb 2025 \$19k compared to \$14k in 2024
- Scouting has returned to Grace, 4th Scouts group

John Cooke

D. Communications

- No Report

Chris Cooke

E. Planning

Real Connections with Real People Event

Through discussions in Planning and with Council it was recognized that Grace as a congregation is ready to more deeply embrace and embed the concepts emerging from the Resonance Project that Pat and Kenji have been working on these past years

- As a result, Planning will be hosting an event on **Thursday, May 15 from 7:00 to 9:00 p.m.** with the following basic (tentative/under development) structure
 - Invite to all Council and current Committee members
 - Snacks and refreshment will be provided
 - Between Pat and/or Kenji, an overview of the Resonance concepts will be shared to the whole assembled group
 - The full group will be divided into a number of smaller groups and will convene in separate areas ... likely via random assignment
 - A member of Planning (likely, but still being decided) would be the facilitator in each of the break-out groups
 - A series of "getting to know you better" questions will be prepared in advance for the small groups to share, but sharing only within one's non-pressured comfort level
 - Likely there will be a flip chart (too many engineers and teachers?) in each small group to capture thoughts that might be useful to share with the whole group
 - The "soak time" together will simply allow us all to get to know our faith community better and grow together
 - This small group sharing will take place for a fixed time and then the whole group will gather all together to close out with thoughts that emerged from the discussion, if any

The goal of this event is to simply learn more as a leadership group at Grace about Resonance plus provide an opportunity for us to get to know on a deeper level other individuals in our faith community while we gain a better appreciation what this Resonance stuff is all about.

Jim Wicks / Cecily Chiles

F. Trustees

- No report

Bruce Davies

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G. Regional Council

- Regional council changes - Lynne Allin, Minister of Congregational Support Commission - will retire June 1, 2025; Kevin Steeper, Pastoral Support Minister has accepted a charge in Eramosa effective April 1, 2025.
- Spring Regional Council mtg - May 30 and 31st at Grace
- 100 Words of Hope - submissions are added to a blog online
- Earth Week - April 20-27, April 22 Mother Earth Day Jubilee Prayer Service - hybrid model out of McDougal UC Calgary. 3-4 EDT
- Canoe trip for Indigenous and non-Indigenous youth - August 19-27 on Lake Temagami, ages 14-18
- Generosity Grows webinar - Monday, April 7 from 6:30-7:00 on zoom: 6 things to do right now to inspire generosity in your Community of Faith
- Other resources - voting, stewardship, 100th anniversary - link <https://mailchi.mp/united-church/arw-newsletter-march282025>
- Do we want to create a history of Grace to add to the 100th anniversary ARW booklet. Tory will follow up with Chris Cooke on the history and possible submission for the booklet.

Marilyn Barros

H. AOTS (As One That Serves)

- No report

11. **Reflection and Closing Prayer**

Reflection on scripture. Where can we find the living water? How do we ask for a drink when we need it? What is revealed to each of us as we receive this? Council members were invited to share their reflections.

Meeting closed at 8:35 pm.

Kenji led a closing prayer

Next Regular Council Meeting: Wednesday May 7, 2025.

Tory Walko, Council Chair

Cecily Chiles, Council Secretary

2025 Devotional Responsibility	2025 Sunday Lock-up Responsibility
January 2025 - Finance	January 2025 – Communications
February – M&P	February - Finance
March – Outreach	March – M&P
April - Property	April - Outreach
May – Trustees	May – Property
June – Planning	June – Planning
July – na	July – Trustees
August – na	August – Worship
September - na	September - CD
October – Worship	October – CC&G
November 2025 - Proclamation and Special Events	November 2025 - Communications
December 2025 - CD	December 2025 - Finance