

# Council Minutes May 7, 2025 Grace United Church

| <b>Executive:</b> |                             | <b>Attendance</b> |
|-------------------|-----------------------------|-------------------|
| Chair             | Tory Walko                  |                   |
| Vice-Chair        | Daniella D'Andrea           |                   |
| Past Chair        | Marion Staples              | Absent            |
| Secretary         | Cecily Chiles               |                   |
| Treasurer         | Wayne Pease                 | Absent            |
| Ministry          | Kenji Marui<br>Pat Morrison | Absent            |

| <b>Committee Representatives:</b>   |                        | <b>Attendance</b> |
|-------------------------------------|------------------------|-------------------|
| 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 12 participants and began at 7:00 pm. There was a quorum.

**1. Devotion**

Bruce Davies on behalf of Trustees. Reflection on what it means to be a Trustee.

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

Reading from Acts 8: 26-40

Reflect on the questions: What kind of questions come up for us as we hear others speak about God's work?

In what ways do our efforts lead to curiosity about God's work?

How can a curiosity around the work that others do lead to a deeper understanding of what God is revealing to us?

**3. Approval of Agenda**

**MOTION: to approve the agenda. [John Cooke / Paul Cooper] – Carried**

Discussion Add notice about the June 7 celebration concert.

**4. Approval of Minutes**

**MOTION: to approve the Council meeting minutes April 2, 2025 [Bev Walkling / John Cooke] – Carried.**

**MOTION: to approve the Special email meeting minutes to welcoming new members, April 28, 2025 [Bryce McGarvey/ Bev Walkling] – Carried.**

**5. Business Arising from the Minutes**

None

**6. Correspondence**

Don Lockett: looking for photos for slide presentation, June 7, 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary concert. Bev going to look through the archival cabinets for photos.

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## 7. New Business

- None

## 8. Pastoral Team Reports and Teaching

### A. Kenji Marui's report

- Completed clergy boundaries refresher course and am restored to good standing
- Worked with Coordinating Committee on Violence against Women for a book launch event, April 23, modest turnout
- Continuing to support Vanessa Benoit's journey to diaconal ministry. Her placement at Guthrie Presbyterian in Alvinston is concluded, now applying to student supply vacancies in nearby United Church congregations
- "In the Spirit of Jazz" worship services concluded on Sunday with robust attendance. Freewill offering has covered costs of musicians' honoraria; reception costs have been generously donated. Look forward to resuming in the fall.

### B. Pat Morrison's report

- Pat is on leave.

## 9. Key Ministry Committee Reports

### A. Worship

- Grace Website Updates: Gord Walkling discussed logistics and details of the video preparation with Chris Cooke and Brian White. The overall intent is to have a 3 to 5 minute compilation with input from several members of the congregation. Gord and Tessa Hall will be contacting congregation members to gauge their interest and to give them an idea of the questions that they will be asked to address.
- Need for Zoom Services: The committee is evaluating the continuation of Zoom services for the weekly worship services. It was noted that Zoom services were initiated during Covid and that they served a valuable purpose for the congregation. However, Zoom attendance has fallen and there are often issues with the sound quality. The committee discussed whether there is an ongoing need for the Zoom connection or whether the You Tube video is adequate. There was additional discussion regarding other live on-line options that might be better suited to the current needs. Kenji said that he would ask those who do use the Zoom link about their thoughts, and also ask other ministers about their experience with other options. The committee will continue to discuss the topic at upcoming meetings.
- Music Ministry: Marque continues to work with music directors from other local United churches as they finalize the list of choirs and singers and the music selections for the 100th anniversary celebration. Additionally, Marque has been working with the organizers of the Lambton County Music Festival regarding logistic items.
- Planning for Kenji's 2025 Vacation and Study Leave: Pulpit supply ministers have been identified for all Sundays in June, July and August, when Kenji will be absent. The ministers were told that they can work with Kathy, Marque (or vacation-period music replacements), and members of the Worship Committee to facilitate their time at Grace. The list of ministers has been shared with M&P.

Bryce McGarvey

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## B. Christian Development

- HRDC Grant not received this year. Using Youth Initiative Fund to hire a Grace student and run campfires.
- Committee will meet to discuss nut and peanut allergy communication and review the policy.

Shirley Willis

## C. Congregational Care and Growth (CC&G)

- Making contact with congregation members: Personalized name tags are available to purchase in the church office.
- Grief support: Elaine Roach held the first meeting of the Senior Singles Group. In the Friendship Room on the second Friday of every month, 10:00-11:30.
- Delivered Easter flowers. McKellar's did a lovely job arranging the flowers and easter decorations. Delivery of flowers gives the opportunity for the people delivering to visit. Money came from the Benevolent fund for 28 vases.
- The committee recommended 4 new members to council: Tessa Hall, Daniella D'Andrea, Carolina Stock, Marianne Clift.

Bev Walkling

## D. Proclamation and Special Events

- Pastafest fundraiser, in partnership with the Dante Club, culminated with distribution of 86 delicious hot pasta meals on Wednesday April 30. Thank you, the people and groups who ordered meals, and those who helped with the event. \$561 was raised and will go to the General Fund.
- Looking for a volunteer to organize vendors for the Fall Fair.

Bev Walkling

## E. Outreach

- April 6, 2025 soup luncheon raised over \$1900 for Lambton Center. Thank you to all who supported this event.
- IOGS support - served 106 clients on April 23, 2025 and delivered 71 pounds of food after Food Bank Sunday on April 6th.
- Planning for a CIRCLES dinner - May date to be finalized.
- Gathering information on potential costs of kitchen upgrade.

Paul Cooper

## 10. **Governance and Support Committee Reports**

### A. Finance

- Working on 2024 CRA report (dead-line is June 30,2025)
- Q1 operating budget report issued. Main issue is shortfall of about \$20K in givings.
- Motion passed to increase bookkeeper compensation by \$20/month.
- Reviewed rental policy with John and Kathy
- Assistant Treasurer training continues.

Paul Cooper

### B. M&P

- Kathy Dodkin has signed a letter of agreement to continue as Office Administrator. The agreement, and the evaluation report that it was premised on, were filed in the church records fire-proof cabinets.

Laura Black

### C. Property

- Position Description for the Custodian was updated and approved by M&P.
- Room 1 north window caulked to prevent water/rain ingress.
- Saturday May 24 proposed date for hedge trimming and property clean-up, 2 hours 9 am to 11 am. Rain date: Sunday May 25, after worship 1 pm to 3 pm. This will have the church looking tidy for the Region meeting the weekend following.

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- The projects list can be made available to people who may wish to drop by for an hour and work on one of these projects at their convenience. – Contact Cecily
- The committee presented a proposal to revise the Rental Policy and rates.

**Motion: That Council approve the proposed rental rates effective Sept. 1, 2025 [John Cooke / Bryce McGarvey] - Carried**

Discussion: review of rental rates should be discussed annually.

John Cooke

D. Communications

- No Report

Chris Cooke

E. Planning

**Real Connections with Real People** Event Thursday May 15, 7:00-9:00 pm

- Next Thursday, join in an opportunity to gather and learn a bit more about Resonance. Get to know each other a little bit better.
- RSVP by Monday to Marion requested.
- 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.

Daniella D’Andrea

F. Trustees

- No report

Bruce Davies

G. Regional Council

- 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.
- Looking for assistance to serve food for the Regional meeting on Friday May 30 and Saturday May 31. Karen Cooke and Daphne Murray are organizing.

Marilyn Barros

H. AOTS (As One That Serves)

- No report

**11. Reflection and Closing Prayer**

Reflection on scripture. Council members were invited to share their reflections on the .

Meeting closed at 8:15 pm.

Kenji led a closing prayer

**Next Regular Council Meeting: Wednesday June 4, 2025.**

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Tory Walko, Council Chair

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Cecily Chiles, Council Secretary

| 2025 Devotional Responsibility | 2025 Sunday Lock-up Responsibility |
|--------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| January 2025 - Finance         | January 2025 – Communications      |
| February – M&P                 | February - Finance                 |

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|   |                                |
|---|--------------------------------|
| 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        |