

|                                   |  |         |
|-----------------------------------|--|---------|
| Tory Walko                        | Chair  | Present |
| Daniella D’Andrea                 | Vice-Chair   | Present |
| Marion Staples                    | Past Chair   | Present |
| Cecily Chiles                     | Secretary  | Absent  |
| Paul Cooper                       | Treasurer<br>Finance Committee Representative<br>Outreach Committee Representative | Present |
| Kenji Marui                       | Ministry   | Present |
| Pat Morrison                      | Ministry   | Absent  |
| <b>Committee Representatives:</b> |  |         |
| Marilyn Barros                    | Region Rep   | Present |
| Christopher Cooke                 | Communications   | Absent  |
| John Cooke                        | Ministry & Personnel (M&P)<br>Property   | Present |
| Bruce Davies                      | Trustees   | Present |
| Neil Holloway                     | Trustees   | Present |
| Bryce McGarvey                    | Worship  | Present |
| Jim Wicks                         | Planning   | Present |
| Bev Walkling                      | Congregational Care & Growth (CC&G)<br>Proclamation and Special Events             | Present |
| Shirley Willis                    | Christian Development  | Present |

The Meeting was held in person and via Zoom with 13 participants and began at 7:00 pm. There was a quorum.

1. **Devotion:** Christian Development  
The theme of the devotion was Advent, a Special Time. We were encouraged to lean into peace and to pass that peace along to others this Christmas season
2. **Reading of Scripture, reflection on the theme *Seeds of Curiosity***  
Scripture reflection John 4:34-38 with the theme being “The Past is the Presence” where we were encouraged to look toward the past for the presence. Small group fellowship brings people together reaping the benefit of service and a connection of going forward. Grace goes out into the community touches people. Bev and Kenji are examples of this.
3. **Approval of Agenda**  
**MOTION: to approve the amended agenda. [Bryce McGarvey / Daniella D’Andrea] – Carried**  
Discussion: Finance and Outreach reports to follow Trustees report
4. **Approval of Minutes**  
**MOTION: to approve the Council meeting minutes November 5, 2025 [John Cooke / Jim Wicks] – Carried.**
5. **Business Arising from the Minutes**
  - A. Date for Annual Congregational Meeting  
**Motion: That the Annual Congregation Meeting be scheduled for Sunday March 8, 2026 [John Cooke / Bryce McGarvey ] - Carried**  
Discussion:
6. **Correspondence**  
None
7. **New Business**  
None

**8. Pastoral Team Reports and Teaching**A. Kenji Marui's report

- Noting a number of new people in worship: some referred by friends, some just checking us out - but they've been coming back!
- Pastoral care: journeying with a palliative care situation after a MAID situation and finding both experiences to be powerful and holy, this Sunday features a memorial liturgy for those connected to Grace who've passed away in the past year.
- Increase in requests for benevolence help.
- Jazz worship - no sense of numbers or finances at this point, but one year later, the services have become their own ministry.
- Planning with sabbatical - mapping out who needs to be notified when, but planning for July 3 - November 21 to be away (July for holidays, August to October for sabbatical, November for Study Leave) - with one week of holidays to be set for this winter.
- Letter being circulated to other congregations for their endorsement of Indwell supportive housing projects coming to Sarnia.

B. Pat Morrison – no report.

**9. Governance and Support Committee Reports**A. Trustees

The Trustees met on Wed. Nov. 19 to discuss the following items:

- 1) Receive a delegation from Women's Interval Home (WIH).
- 2) Decide on insurance from quotes provided.
- 3) Discuss insurance requirements for third-party rentals and snow removal contractor with John Cooke on behalf of Property Committee.
- 4) Review investment plan for Legacy Fund as submitted by Paul Cooper on behalf of the Finance Committee.

**Insurance**

This year, the Trustees put out a request for quotes for insurance and received three proposals. Our current provider is Ecclesiastical. We also received quotes from Wynward and UCC Protect. After consideration, we decided to continue with Ecclesiastical, as recommended by our broker. It was several thousand dollars less expensive than UCC Protect and provided more comprehensive coverage than Wynward.

During this exercise, it became evident that the need for insurance coverage for third-party renters was non-negotiable and required by all 3 insurers. Therefore, we propose an amendment to the Rental Policy that all third-party rentals must have insurance naming Grace United as an additional insured.

***Motion: That the Rental Policy be amended to require all third-party renters to have insurance naming Grace United as an additional insured. [Bruce Davies / Neil Holloway ] - Carried***

The Rental Policy will be amended to require all third-party renters by next renewal date to have insurance naming Grace United as an additional insured.

**Investment Plan**

The Trustees discussed and approved the investment plan for the Legacy Fund as submitted by Paul Cooper on behalf of the Finance Committee.

***Motion: that Council move to an in camera meeting at 7:27pm [Neil Holloway / Jim Wicks ] - Carried***  
Regular meeting resumed at 8:23 pm

Neil Holloway, Bruce Davies

A. Outreach

- Next soup luncheon scheduled for January 18, 2026. Beneficiary will be RayJon.
- After that, the next soup luncheon will be on March 08 with the Annual Meeting.

Paul Cooper

B. Finance

- Renewed Legacy Fund GIC's following agreement with trustees.
- Reviewed preliminary (Rev 0) 2026 budget data. A council sub-committee will meet during week of December 8th or 15th to make adjustments.
- Target is to have a proposal ready for council approval on January 7, 2026.

Paul Cooper

C. Regional Council

Suggestion to view the new Moderator's Advent message as well as the LGBTQ+ apology at the UCC Annual general meeting.

- *The Complicated Joy of Advent* <https://united-church.ca/news/moderators-advent-message-2025>
- Apology to 2S and LGBTQIA+ Communities <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fGyyOYaAYak>

Marilyn Barros

D. Planning

Planning identified earlier this year an opportunity to inject some education around the Resonance initiatives and planned and hosted an evening event inviting Council and Committee members.

Pat and Kenji share Resonance concepts followed by breakout groups to spend some quality soak time to deepen belonging within the church community

The event was successful prompting Planning to start planning for another event scheduled for January 2026 with a broader invitation and continue to provide "soak time" and gain deeper relationships within the church community.

In the most recent Planning Committee meeting, we came to the realization that these sorts of events are clearly worthwhile, but we also realized that future events of this nature are not within the mandate of the Planning Committee and our recent focus on this initiative left little room for the actual mandate of Planning. ☒ As a result, Planning is cancelling Planning-led events we identified at previous Council meetings that seek deeper belonging and are bringing it back to Council for guidance on whether to and, if so, who would take up the support of these events.

☒ We will meet again in January and refocus our Planning efforts to better align our work with the mandate contained within our Constitution

- o Visioning our future
- o Gather ideas to improve the church community
- o Provide forum for congregation and staff to exchange viewpoints
- o Forward-looking to carry out our vision
- o Address subjects brought forward by Council
- o Formal Stewardship initiatives
- o Review and rank project proposals

Jim Wicks

E. Communications

No report

F. M&P

Laura reminded Council that 2026 salaries will commence January 1, 2026. Should the increases be defeated at the annual meeting the salaries will be adjusted.

Laura Black

G. Property

- Boiler repair completed.
- We are still waiting for the contractor to complete repair of the Sanctuary soffit.
- Danny Knight was contracted to do the weekend sidewalk snow clearing for this winter season.
- Brian installed tracing cable and a controller on the Friendship Rm roof to mitigate snow/ice buildup.

John Cooke

H. AOTS

No Report

**10. Key Ministry Committee Reports**

B. Christian Development

No Report

Shirley Willis

C. Congregational Care and Growth

- No December Meeting
- Prayed for Kenji and McGinness family
- Worked on budget
- Hosted Volunteer Appreciation event in October
- Submitted Annual report
- Margaret Cameron has resigned
- The committee will discuss the idea of how to bring the congregation together in small groups so folks can meet people in a relaxed environment.

Bev Walking

D. Proclamation and Special Events

- Sold 20 poinsettias through Prails
- In January will be selling pizzas through Giresi's Pizza
- Possible Beatle Night in the future
- Would like to create a fund-raising team for the fall fair

Bev Walking

E. Worship

- Advent Planning: Kenji noted that he has planned to have members of the congregation participate in the candle lighting at each service in Advent. Additionally, the Quiet Christmas service will be incorporated into the 2nd Advent Sunday service, December 7. Pat will be leading the Christmas Eve service and Nick and Devon Laird will sing that evening.
- Kenji's 2026 Sabbatical: Kenji outlined the planned timing for his sabbatical, as well as his vacation and study leave. There was general discussion about the steps that need to be taken to secure a replacement, and there was agreement that trying to have someone make a longer-term coverage commitment would be better for the congregation. Bryce will review potential options from summer vacation coverage, and Kenji will do some checking regarding possible long-term options. Bryce McGarvey will work with M&P to develop a plan.

Bryce McGarvey

**11. Reflection and Closing Prayer**

Reflection on scripture. Council members were invited to share their reflections,  
 We were able share and respect others’ opinions while engaging leadership challenge  
 Clear about our scope as to opportunities, time, talent and resources  
 As a small group we were able to be coherent and experience soak time  
 Meeting closed at 9:17 pm.  
 Kenji led a closing prayer

**Next Regular Council Meeting: Wednesday January 7, 2026.**

Tory Walko, Council Chair

Cecily Chiles, Council Secretary

| <b>2025-2026 Sunday Lock-up Responsibility</b>  |           |                                 |
|---|-----------|---------------------------------|
| 2025  | October   | CC&G                            |
|   | November  | M&P                             |
|   | December  | Finance                         |
| 2026  | January   | Communications                  |
|   | February  | Outreach                        |
|   | March     | Property                        |
|   | April     | Planning                        |
|   | May       | Trustees                        |
|   | June      | Worship                         |
|   | July      | CD                              |
|   | August    | CC&G                            |
|   | September | M&P                             |
|   | October   | Finance                         |
|   | November  | Communications                  |
|   | December  | Outreach                        |
| <b>2025-2026 Devotional at Council Meetings</b> |           |                                 |
| 2025  | October   | Worship                         |
|   | November  | Proclamation and Special Events |
|   | December  | CD                              |
| 2026  | January   | Regional Council                |
|   | February  | Communications                  |
|   | March     | Finance                         |
|   | April     | M&P                             |
|   | May       | Outreach                        |
|   | June      | Trustees                        |
|   | July      | na                              |
|   | August    | na                              |
|   | September | na                              |
|   | October   | Planning                        |
|   | November  | CC&G                            |
|   | December  | Property                        |