

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

The Meeting was held in person and via Zoom with 15 participants and began at 7:05 pm. There was a quorum.

1. Devotion: Regional Council

A devotion on the theme of Epiphany and the true story of Jesus the light and poem by Richard Wagamese:

All that we are is story. From the moment we are born to the time we continue on our spirit journey, we are involved in the creation of the story of our time here. It is what we arrive with. It is all we leave behind.

We are not the things we accumulate. We are not the things we deem important.

We are story. All of us. What comes to matter then is the creation of the best possible story we can while we’re here; you, me, us, together.

When we can do that and we take the time to share those stories with each other, we get bigger inside, we see each other, we recognize our kinship, we change the world, one story at a time.

2. Approval of Agenda

MOTION: to approve the agenda. [Bryce McGarvey / Joanna Catterson] – Carried

3. Approval of Minutes

MOTION: to approve the Council meeting minutes December 3, 2025 [Joanna Catterson / Marion Staples] – Carried.

4. Business Arising from the Minutes

A. Committees were reminded that their reports for the Annual Report should be sent to Kathy in the office as soon as possible.

5. Correspondence

The church received an anonymous Christmas greeting card and letter similar to those received by other United churches in the region.

7. New Business

None

8. Pastoral Team Reports and Teaching

Kenji Marui's report

- Continuing to note new and sustained attendance on Sunday mornings
- Jazz Worship services continue to be well-supported, in attendance and offering, surplus in the Inspiration Fund +\$900
- Planning for shared worship services and gatherings with St. Lukes and Dunlop Central United Churches for PIE Day, Ash Wednesday and Good Friday
- Letter of support for Indwell stalled during Advent/Christmas, will hope to have something out shortly, particularly in recognition of John Barnfield's passing earlier this week
- Working through the process of sabbatical approvals and coverage
- Nominations Committee of United Church asked if would stay on for a 2nd term as Coordinator of Business for General Council 46 (2028) spoke to my M&P representative who's given support and a motion will be going to the General Council Executive's February meeting

A. Pat Morrison

- My work with the Tri-Region group responsible for updating the position description for the Tri-Region staff person responsible for First-Third ministries (ministry with children, teens, and young adults) has concluded and I've been asked to now serve on the Search Team for that position.
- The next Price of Admission for Men has moved to February 7. I will be putting out an invitation for donors to cover the cost of the catered meal at Peg Dawkin's house.

9. Governance and Support Committee Reports

A) Finance

- Issued operating budget update for the end of November.
- Started the process for the 2026 Budget. One meeting was held with the council subcommittee.
- A second meeting will be scheduled when the year-end 2025 operating budget data is available.
- Presented preliminary budget data and received feedback from council members.
- Distributed givings envelopes.

Discussion:

1. Agenda item for the next meeting, to break down the details of the Region assessment calculation.
2. With Givings being relatively flat over the past few years, Grace was able to benefit from an increase in rental fees and interest from Legacy Fund.
3. Jim Wicks presented a chart illustrating where the big expenditures are and how givings have not kept up with costs and with inflation. See the chart attached to the end of these minutes.
4. A suggestion was made regarding PAR automatic withdrawals. It's easy for people signed up on PAR to forget to increase contributions annually. The suggestion was to remind people that adjustments to PAR can be made by contacting the office.

Paul Cooper

B) Trustees

No report

Joanna Catterson

C) Regional Council

- Event Here from the beginning, January – March 2026 London First United church, Dutton ON. Highlights from the Anter River Watershed Region e-newsletter:
Here from the Beginning is a ground-breaking exhibition of the history of The United Church of Canada from the perspective of Black people in our denomination. In its cross-country trip, the exhibition will be in our region from January-March, 2026.
Want more information? Take a minute to watch this video <https://youtu.be/ksubFuDyhWc>
Check out the website at www.herefromthebeginning.ca
London First UC (in the timeframe of Feb 25-March 4, exact date and time TBA).
Dutton/Dunwich - Pearce Williams Camp – (In the timeframe of March 4-March 11), exact date and time TBA
- Collective 2026 – Youth and Youth Leaders event in August - Pat
- Federal Bill C9 – Kenji informed Council on the position of the United Church of Canada on the so-called “Combating Hate Act”. The United Church of Canada has endorsed a public statement against the current Bill C-9. The letter states that the risks it poses to protest rights, labour rights, and public accountability are too serious and too far-reaching and requests that the Bill be withdrawn in its entirety.
- E-newsletter link: <https://arwrcucc.us20.list-manage.com/track/click?u=ee15470ca4eab124ea964929b&id=c2ffbdd59e&e=8325eff85f>

Marilyn Barros

D) Planning

No report

- At the upcoming meeting in January Planning will discuss re-adjusting its role, to be more in line with the description in the constitution.

Jim Wicks

E) Communications

- New brochures are close to completion.
- Thanks to Bev Walkling for her work on social media communication.
- Thanks to Marianne Nichols for keeping the photo boards refreshed.

Chris Cooke

F) M&P

Motion: to approve Kenji’s Sabbatical from August 1 to Oct 31, 2026 [Laura Black / Bev Walkling] - Carried

Laura Black

G) Property

- The Sanctuary soffit repair was completed in December. The contractor recommends additional work to stabilize the soffit which we will investigate in the spring.
- The floor machine batteries went dead on Dec 15 after the machine was inexplicably left in the “on” position for 2+ days. The machine will be back in service on Jan 12.
- Both Sanctuary Roof Top Units failed on Dec 20 (just in time for the Scott Woods Concert). One unit required a new venter assembly and, after repair, provided the heating capacity through the holidays. The 2nd unit required a new gas valve and was finally repaired this week.
- The Dec 26 ice storm caused considerable damage to trees in the back property. We are formulating clean-up plans and will engage the City to review the right-of-way.
- The Ainsworth 3-year HVAC maintenance agreement is due for renewal next month.

John Cooke

H) AOTS
No Report

10. Key Ministry Committee Reports

A. Outreach

- First soup luncheon in 2026 scheduled for January 18th. Donations received will support RAYJON.
- Next soup luncheon will be on March 8th which is also the date of the Annual Meeting. Donations received will support the Canadian Food Grains Bank and the Blue Water grow project.
- The December 24, 2025 Inn meal was well supported. We appreciate the help from the "out-of-towners".
- Grace was able to donate \$2500 to the Inn of the Good Shepherd thanks to generous donations from the congregation received in 2025.
- The Christmas Special Offering raised \$860 to support the Mission & Service fund of the United Church of Canada.

Paul Cooper

B. Christian Development

No Report
The committee is meeting next week.

Shirley Willis

C. Congregational Care and Growth

- Working on letters to students, interested in finding supporters for the endeavour. Donors to buy Tim Hortons cards and people to write letters.
- Received from Planning committee the information on hosting small group gatherings.

Bev Walking

D. Proclamation and Special Events

- Met after church last Sunday, 6 people attended including one new member.
- Guess Who's Coming To Dinner, Margaret Billings offered to co-ordinate an event this year. This is a great way to get to know people in the church.

Bev Walking

E. Worship

- The committee is working to secure ministerial coverage during Kenji's sabbatical and vacation.

Bryce McGarvey

11. Reflection and Closing Prayer

Reflection on Devotion. Council members were invited to share their reflections,

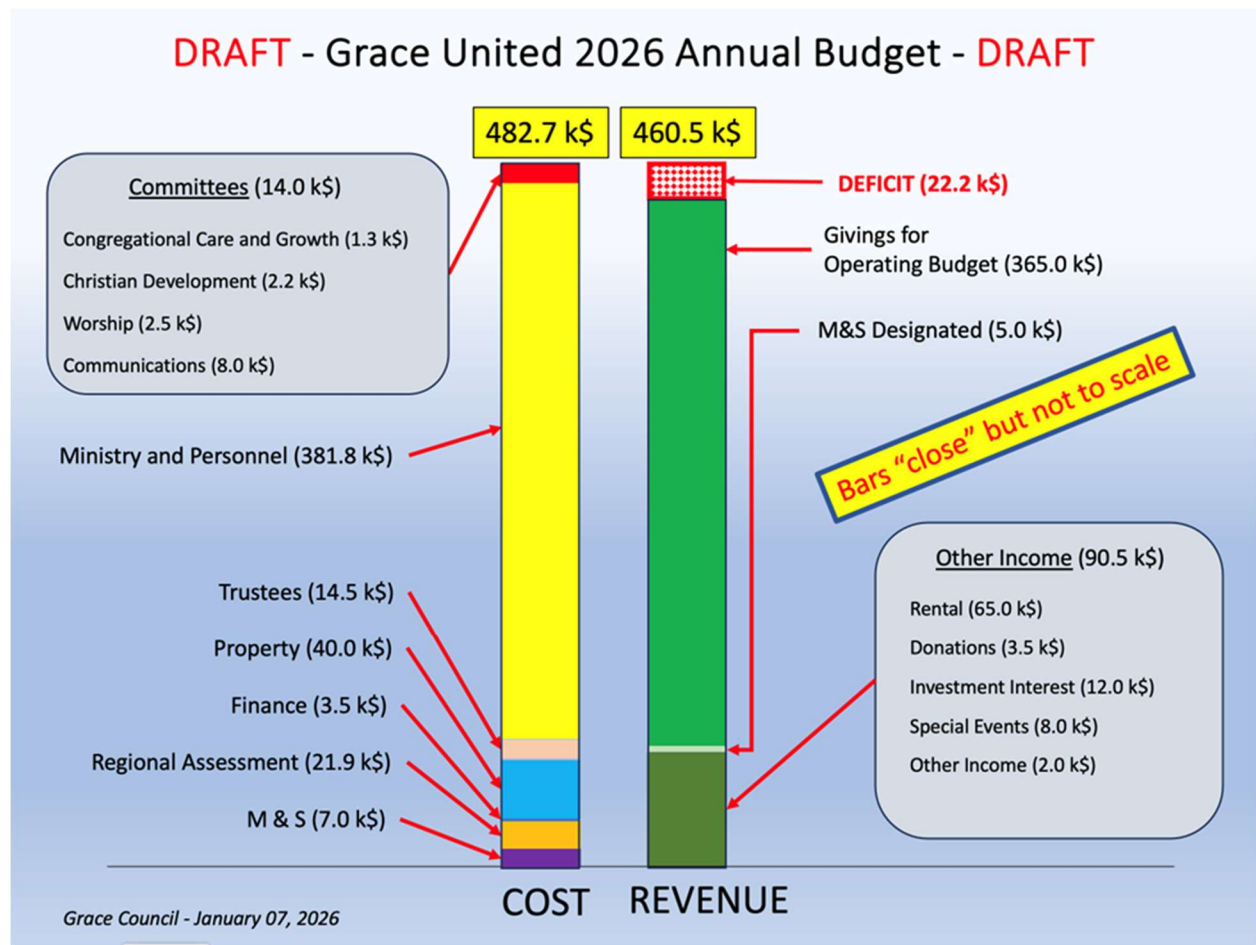
Meeting closed at 8:30 pm.
Pat led a closing prayer

Next Regular Council Meeting: Wednesday February 4, 2026.

Daniella D'Andrea, Vice Chair

Cecily Chiles, Council Secretary

DRAFT - Grace United 2026 Annual Budget - DRAFT



2025-2026 Sunday Lock-up Responsibility		
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
2025-2026 Devotional at Council Meetings		
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