

**Grace United Church
Official Board Meeting
Sunday January 22, 2023 12:00 pm**

Present: Brian Brooks, Linda Brooks, David Charles, Shirley Clark, Cliff Edwards, Angus Fergusson, Tammy Fergusson, Colleen Harding, Barb Jenkins, Vicki Leakey, Diane Nuttall, Cheryl O'Leary, Julie Price, Raymond Shea, Rev. Takouhi, Bruce Wilson, Marg Worth

Regrets: Susan Barwell, Christina Gordon, Diane Kirkby, Carolyn Scott, Eileen Thomson, Denise Wood

There was a quorum in attendance.

Opening prayer was led by Tammy Fergusson.

Opening Remarks: Chair, Brian Brooks, welcomed everyone to the meeting.

He noted that 2 donations have been received: a new freezer to replace the pie freezer that quit, and a new accessible sink for the washroom off the sanctuary.

Minutes of the previous meeting held on December 4, 2022

Bruce Wilson moved that these minutes be accepted. Seconded by Angus Fergusson. Carried.

Reports:

Session will advertise in the bulletin for more readers and usher volunteers.

Church pictures will be taken from May 24-27. Once the data base is complete, the Sharing and Caring Team is considering sending a survey monkey to inform everyone of these dates.

When Paul Harding and Christina Kaya are both away two Sundays in late February and early March, help will be needed in AV roles editing the Sunday service videos. Julie Price has volunteered.

The church insurance policy states that a member of the church must be present when there are community groups in the church.

Due to the high volume of community groups using the church building, the church needs a Rental Coordinator. Laurie Cadue and Barb Jenkins will write out a job description and advertise in the bulletin.

No personal information should be given out during church services since the services are sent out over the internet and on TV.

Susan Barwell is stepping down as Clerk of Session and Tammy Fergusson is taking over.

There are United Church crest pins available to everyone by donation.

There is discussion about Grace United Church forming community partnerships, e.g. with the 1000 Island Playhouse.

There is a Meet and Greet with Rev. Dr. Peter Bartlett to discuss plans to look at the future of Grace United e.g. possible uses for the Christian Education Wing.

Barb Jenkins moved that this report be accepted. Seconded by Tammy Fergusson.

Discussion centred around the wording that a "member" of the church must be present when there are community groups in the church. Not everyone associated with Grace Church is a member. Is it

possible to have a "representative" as opposed to a "member" present? Marg Worth will check the United Church manual and David Charles will check with Hub Insurance.

Motion carried.

Stewards met 5 times during 2022 and welcomed Cliff Edwards as a new member.

Fundraising resumed after Covid 19 restrictions eased. These events included: Mary's Merry Minstrels benefit concert to support the Ukrainian Refugee Group; "Sing a Song" concert performed by Paul Harding, Cliff Edwards, and Sheri Shenton; "Nunnys Bag" magic and musical show presented by Christina Kaya; and the Christmas Market on December 3rd, which raised approximately \$5,500 after expenses.

Fundsrip continues to raise funds for the Church.

"Pies for God's Sake" continues to provide substantial financial support.

Stewards continue to work with the committee revising the Grace Church handbook.

Donations were made to the Gananoque Food Bank, T.R. Leger Alternative School, and the Breakfast Clubs.

Sincere thanks were given to Laurie Cadue for her support to Stewards and to Rev. Takouhi for her spiritual leadership.

2023 will continue to present challenges for fundraising and outreach but Stewards will continue to work together to make great things happen at Grace United Church.

Vicki Leakey moved that this report be accepted. Seconded by Cliff Edwards. Carried.

Treasurer: In 2022 there were large increases in Maintenance and Capital Project expenses. This included AV expenses, new boiler, Pine Street door repairs, emergency lights, and organ repairs. Some of these costs were covered by grant money.

Vicki Leakey expressed thanks to the Maintenance Committee for keeping on top of everything and coordinating the repairs.

Stewards planned several fundraisers during 2022 with a substantial increase in funds raised.

Over the years the local mission fund has been known by a variety of names.

There was a deficit in 2022 of \$21,674. But with a bank balance of \$37,909 on December 31, 2021, the book balance as of December 31, 2022 was \$16,235.

Vicki Leakey moved that this report be accepted. Seconded by Linda Brooks. Carried.

Motion: Moved by Vicki Leakey that a third account called the Benevolent Fund be added to the 2024 envelopes for local mission givings. Seconded by Bruce Wilson. Carried.

Trustees: Trustee funds are used to balance the budget.

As the markets go down so does the Trustees fund. However, in January 2023 the markets have started to rebound.

During 2022 the Trustee funds decreased by 25%, a combination of funds that were transferred to the Operating Budget and the declining markets.

\$570,000 from the Connor estate is locked in and only the interest can be used.

At the current rate of transfers to the Operating Budget there is only enough funds for the next two years. We would like to remove the cap on these estate funds so that they are accessible. We first need to approach the estate executors to see if they are agreeable.

We need to find a way to increase income while decreasing expenses. At the upcoming Congregational Meeting we will inform members of the situation and ask for ideas to move forward. The insurance premium has decreased from \$15,000 to \$12,000 with the new policy. An appraisal had to be done for the new policy. This showed that the church would sell for \$1,000,000, but the cost to rebuild would be \$7,000,000.

Angus Fergusson moved that this report be accepted. Seconded by Vicki Leakey. Carried.

Ministry and Personnel: Annual feedback sessions are being held with each staff member by the full M&P Committee.

Guidance on confidentiality of church staff salary information under the Ontario Privacy Act is currently under review by Whit Strong (Regional Minister for Pastoral Relations) and the Executive Committee.

Rev. Takouhi will be on vacation from February 13 – 19, 2023. Tammy Fergusson will lead worship on February 19. Rev. Lynne Gardiner will cover pastoral emergencies.

Paul Harding will be on vacation February 23 – March 5 and October 2 – 30. Doug Gifford will replace Paul during both vacation times.

M&P Committee held a New Year's staff luncheon on January 6, 2023 at the Old English Pub.

David Charles moved that this report be accepted. Seconded by Angus Fergusson. Carried.

Maintenance: There are warranties on the capital expense items.

The Maintenance Committee continue with monthly reviews.

Brian Brooks moved that this report be accepted. Seconded by Shirley Clark. Carried.

UCW now has 15 members.

During 2022, members attended area meetings, Quin-Mo-Lac camping weekend and the Fall Rally. 40 handmade Christmas cards were sent to shut-ins.

A Christmas lunch and gift exchange was held on December 12th at the Curling Club.

Linda Brooks moved that this report be accepted. Seconded by Marg Worth. Carried.

New Business:

Grace Church Handbook: The handbook is composed of two parts. The first part outlines what we do and will change very little. The second part is how we do it and will continually change.

A draft copy of the handbook is available.

Adherents can be part of a committee, but cannot serve as chair or vice chair.

Since the motion passed earlier in the meeting that local missions will be known as the Benevolent Fund, this will be changed in the handbook.

The final draft of the handbook will be available at the Congregational Meeting.

Nominating Committee continues to look for nominees for committees. There is a limited supply of people available.

Date of Next Meeting: Sunday March 26th 2023 after church

Minister's Musings/Benediction

Motion to adjourn: Colleen Harding

Grace United Church
Annual Congregational Meeting
Sunday February 12, 2023
Immediately following morning worship service

Present: Michele Denis, Maryfil Hunter, Diane Nuttall, Liz Dennison, Chuck Galway, Bev Gibbs, Catherine Mills, Colleen Harding, Cheryl O'Leary, Barb Jenkins, Marg Worth, Shirley Clark, Denise Wood, Tammy Fergusson, Tony Maroni, Bruce Wilson, Doreen Wilson, Joan Shaw, Dianna Grier, Rhea Roantree, Murray Roantree, Vicki Leakey, Linda Brooks, Rev. Takouhi, Brian Brooks, Paul Harding

The meeting was called to order by Marg Worth.

Opening prayer was led by Rev. Takouhi. She remembered those who passed away in 2022.

Acting chair and secretary: Motion by Marg Worth to appoint Brian Brooks as acting chair and Diane Nuttall as acting secretary for the meeting. There were no nominations from the floor.

Opening remarks: Brian Brooks welcomed all to the meeting.

Minutes of previous Annual Congregational Meeting: February 27, 2022

Linda Brooks moved that the minutes be accepted. Seconded by Bruce Wilson. Carried.

Trustees Report: The changes in the financial markets are reflected in the losses in the value of the TD Trust Fund.

At the end of 2022 the market value was \$796,639, which reflects the combination of declining markets and the \$120,000 that was transferred to the Operating Budget during 2022.

There is \$500,000 from the Conner estate. This money is locked in and only the interest can support the operating expenses of the church.

The insurance is now with the United Church of Canada which reduced the yearly premium from nearly \$15,000 to \$12,648.

Tammy Fergusson moved that this report be accepted. Seconded by Dianna Grier. Carried.

Treasurer's Report: Offerings for 2022 were \$81,000.

In addition, \$24,000 was given to international and local causes.

With expert assistance from Laurie Cadue, there is a small group working hard on fundraising.

During 2022 capital expenses totaled \$38,000. \$20,000 was received in grants from EOORC.

Vicki Leakey moved that this report be accepted. Seconded by Colleen Harding. Carried.

Ministries and Financial Report 2022:

Barb Jenkins moved that this report be accepted with minor adjustments. Seconded by Bruce Wilson. Carried.

Election of Officers: Members of the Nominating Committee were Tammy Fergusson, Linda Brooks, Denise Wood, and Marg Worth. It was a challenge to find volunteers for the various committees. The nominations were as follows:

Official Board (1 year term) returning members are: Chair Brian Brooks, Vice-chair Bruce Wilson, and Secretary Diane Nuttall.

There were no nominations from the floor.

Linda Brooks declared these three elected to the Official Board.

Session (3 year term) returning members are: Barb Jenkins, Marg Worth, Susan Barwell, Tammy Fergusson, Cheryl O'Leary, Diane Kirkby, Colleen Harding, and Julie Price.

Thanks were given to Ray Shea whose term has ended.

Nominated new member is Liz Dennison.

There were no nominations from the floor.

Linda Brooks declared Liz Dennison elected to Session.

Stewards (3 year term) returning members are Denise Wood, Shirley Clark, Christina Gordon, Diane Nuttall, Linda Brooks, and Vicki Leakey.

Thanks were given to Eileen Thomson whose term has ended.

Nominated new members are Cliff Edwards and David Charles.

There were no nominations from the floor.

Linda Brooks declared Cliff Edwards and David Charles elected to Stewards.

Ministry and Personnel returning members are Elaine Davidson and Pamela Shea.

Thanks were given to Nancy Abrams and David Charles whose terms have ended.

Denise Wood nominated Liz Dennison to Ministry and Personnel. Seconded by Shirley Clark. Carried.

There were no more nominations from the floor.

Linda Brooks declared Liz Dennison elected to Ministry and Personnel.

EOORC Church Representatives returning members are David Charles and Denise Wood.

Nominating Committee returning member is Denise Wood.

Thanks were given to Linda Brooks, Tammy Fergusson and Marg Worth whose terms have ended.

There were no nominations from the floor.

Handbook Committee are all returning: Marg Worth, Colleen Harding, Julie Price, and Nancy Abrams.

There are openings on all committees as well as Session and Stewards. If anyone would like to participate on one of them contact Brian Brooks.

Grace United Church Handbook should be updated every 4-5 years.

It consists of two parts: what we are supposed to be doing in relation to the United Church manual and how we do it at Grace Church.

There will be online access to it through the church's website.

Moved by Colleen Harding that we accept the Grace United Church Handbook dated January 12, 2023. Seconded by Cheryl O'Leary.

Discussion: The manual is subject to change. When changes are made, they must be approved by the Official Board before they are changed in the handbook.

Committees will review and update their own sections.

Motion carried.

New Business:

Conner endowment: Only the interest from this fund can be used for operating expenses. In the future it may become necessary to access some of these funds for operating expenses. Advice from EOORC is that the only recourse to access these funds is through the courts. Even if the estate trustees agree to unlocking the funds, it still must go through the courts. Since court proceedings to unlock these funds will take time, we should start now.

Motion by Paul Harding: Be it resolved that approval is hereby given to the Official Board Chair and Chair of Grace Trustees to spend a maximum of \$1,000.00. These funds to be utilized to seek legal advice with a view to acquiring an estimate regarding the approximate cost of obtaining court approval to utilize all or a portion of the \$500,000 held in trust from the Virginia Conner endowment. Seconded by Vicki Leakey.

Discussion: This can be contested by family members.

Any legal advice will be brought back to the congregation before any further action is taken.

Motion carried.

"Way Forward" with Rev. Dr. Peter Bartlett who is the Minister of Visioning with Communities of Faith. He will help us plan for future uses of Grace Church. There is a meeting scheduled with Rev. Bartlett on Wednesday February 22, 2023 at 1:00 pm.

Currently there are activities held in the church by community members. The church has third party insurance and a church member or adherent must be in the church when used by outside groups. We hope to have other groups using Grace Church. Because this would involve time scheduling and planning, the church needs a Rental Coordinator.

Another possible use of Grace Church is by another denomination.

We are looking for ideas for using spaces in the church that are currently not being fully used e.g. the Christian Education wing. If renovations would be needed for the use of this wing, there are grant funds available.

Barb Jenkins moved that this report be accepted. Seconded by Tammy Fergusson. Carried.

Amendment to the Adherent policy: Adherents of Grace United Church can vote at any general meeting or serve on committees as passed at the Official Board meeting on March 24, 2022. The only change with this amendment is that an adherent could also be Chairperson of a committee. If passed this amendment would have to be agreed upon by the Executive of EOORC.

Motion by Vicki Leakey: Pursuant to the 2023 version of the United Church of Canada Manual sections B.3.4, B.3.7 that the Grace United Church Community of Faith agrees that Adherents of Grace United Church may vote at any general meeting of the Community of Faith, may serve on any Committee of the Governing Body in capacity as a member of that Committee or as Chairperson of that Committee, and may vote at any Official Board meeting if they are elected to the Governing Body, subject to B.7.3 (exception) of the United Church Manual of 2023.

Seconded by Barb Jenkins. Carried.

Closing Remarks and Benediction were led by Rev. Takouhi.

Motion to Adjourn: Cheryl O'Leary

**Grace United Church
Special Congregational Meeting
Sunday March 12, 2023**

Immediately following morning worship service

Present: Colleen Harding, Murray Roantree, Dianna Grier, Rhea Roantree, Joan Shaw, Eileen Thomson, Merna Price, Beverly Gibbs, Tom Currie, Carol Currie, Chuck Galway, Betty Matthews, Mag Worth, Nancy Abrams, Tammy Fergusson, Angus Fergusson, Toni Maroni, Elaine Davidson, Doreen Wilson, Bruce Wilson, Eleanor Glenn, Linda Brooks, Barb Jenkins, Dave Charles, Mary Haussler, Paul Harding, Raymond Shea, Pamela Shea, Christina Gordon, Marilyn Belbin, Cheryl O'Leary, Choughik Demirdijian, Diane Nuttall, Brian Brooks, Veronica Shepherd, Catherine Mills, Carolyn Scott, Liz Dennison, Maryfil Hunter, Susan Barwell, Paul Scott, Vicki Leaky, rev. Takouhi.

Opening prayer was read by Rev. Takouhi

Opening remarks: Brian Brooks, Official Board Chair, noted that this was a Congregational Meeting and all members and adherents could vote on the motion.

Brian informed attendees of the details of the COGECO proposal for the use of Grace Church steeple tower for placement of up to six antennas. See attachment.

Discussion followed.

Motion: Be it resolved that the congregation of Grace United Church hereby approves the following:

- 1) That Grace United Church of Gananoque enter into a lease agreement with COGECO Cable for the installation and maintenance of a maximum of six antennas on the steeple of Grace United Church plus installation and maintenance of related antenna equipment.
- 2) Further – that prior to entering into such an agreement, the lease agreement is to be reviewed and approved by the following committee:
 1. Chair of the Official Board
 2. Church Treasurer
 3. Chair of Church Trustees
 4. Chair of Stewards Committee
 5. Chair of Session Committee

If so decided by the above committee, a lawyer will be employed to review the lease agreement and offer an opinion regarding the involvement of Grace Church in the agreement.

- 3) Further, when the content of the agreement is approved by the above noted committee, the Chair of the Official Board and the Church Treasurer will have authority to sign the lease agreement and bind the church accordingly.

Dated March 12, 2023.

Moved by Bruce Wilson. Seconded by Raymond Shea. Carried.

Next Meeting of the Official Board: Sunday March 26, 2023 immediately following morning worship service.

Closing prayer was led by Rev. Takouhi.

Motion to adjourn: Vicki Leakey