Annual Congregational Meeting Minutes

Grace Gospel Church February 01, 2026

Following a chili cookoff lunch, the meeting was opened with prayer by Phillip Osborne, Chair of the Board of Elders at 12:45pm.

Meeting called to order by Chairman Phillip Osborne

1. Approval of Agenda

MOTION to approve the agenda as presented. Moved Mark Ridgway. Seconded by, Ian Lesurf, Carried.

2. Approval of Minutes of the June 01, 2025 Congregational Meetings

MOTION to approve the Minutes of the June 01, 2025 Congregational Meetings Moved by Tom Webster. Seconded by Jim Stuart, Carried.

3. Board of Directors Report: Lawrence McGinn, Chairman

- Lawrence explained that the purpose of the Board of Directors is to provide oversight of the church's financial matters and to ensure compliance with CRA requirements.
- He expressed gratitude to the staff, Elder Board, and Deacons for their diligence and faithfulness in carrying out their respective roles at Grace Gospel Church.
- Lawrence also noted that the church's financial position is very healthy and thanked the Board of Directors for their unity, collaboration, and dedication to making wise decisions in the best interest of the church.

4. Receive the 2025 Financial Report: Alisha Kowalski, Treasurer

Alisha reviewed the 2025 year-end financial report and provided an overview of the church's financial position. She explained the purpose of the various church funds and noted the following:

- The GST/HST rebate was higher than usual due to expenses related to the bathroom project completed in 2025.
- Total donations across all funds for the year amounted to $763,000, with regular offerings exceeding the approved budget by nearly $70,000. The remaining balance in the Designated Fund reflects funds that were allocated and used in January 2026 toward upcoming youth retreats.
- The Special Missions Fund was used to support several initiatives, including Missions Conference expenses totaling $12,000, Melanie Goode and friends' mission trip to Egypt, as well as other smaller one-time mission donations approved by the Elders. Capital Fund expenditures primarily relate to the bathroom renovation project.
- $10,500 was temporarily borrowed from the General Reserve Fund during the year; however, the fund was fully replenished to its usual balance of $35,000 in early January 2026. One-time gifts and other income included interest income,

proceeds from ticketed events, and designated donations to specific ministries to help offset related costs.
- Rental income was slightly under budget due to a tenant changeover, and the garage is no longer included for tenant use.
- Reviewed areas where expenses exceeded budget, noting that many of these overages were offset by one-time gifts.
- Property expenses were higher than budgeted due to several required safety-related upgrades and repairs, including elevator inspections and repairs, a fire panel upgrade, installation of a video intercom, fire extinguishers, exit lights, and smoke detector updates.
- Parsonage expenses also exceeded budget due to unplanned repairs necessary to prepare the manse for new tenants.
- Overall, total revenue exceeded budget by $81,000, while total expenses were over budget by nearly $51,000, resulting in a net surplus of approximately $30,000, compared to the budgeted excess of $488 at year end.

MOTION to receive the 2025 financial report. Moved by Susan Cousineau, Seconded by Elaine Korody, Carried.

5. Approve the 2026 Budget: Alisha Kowalski, Treasurer

Financial committee members were Trevor Hartwick (chair), Patty LeSurf, Don Stauffer, Bruce Miller, Martin Goode.

Alisha explained the process for establishing a budget, noting that regular offerings help to plan where budget numbers can realistically be set.

- The proposed budget includes an increase to the offerings budget, representing a 5.2% increase over the 2025 budget, while still remaining below the actual offerings received in 2025. The 2026 offerings budget is 5.6% higher than the 2024 budget, the last year in which the church undertook a significant capital campaign.
- Rental income is based on the current lease agreement of $2,300 per month.
- Payroll reflects a 3% across-the-board increase, along with additional amounts to account for staffing overlap resulting from personnel changes in January.
- The Family Ministries budget shows a decrease compared to 2025, as the church has moved to hosting a drama production every two years, with no production planned for 2026.
- The Worship & AV budget increase reflects planned upgrades to the LAN and Wi-Fi, improvements to the gymnasium audio system for overflow use, and necessary hardware replacements such as microphone stands.
- Other ministry budgets remain generally consistent with 2025 levels, with adjustments for normal growth-related costs. It was noted that many overages in this category are typically offset by additional income, such as ticket sales.
- Property expenses have been adjusted to more closely align with actual recurring costs observed in 2025.

- Parsonage expenses are higher due to the expectation of increased property taxes now that the home is no longer occupied by pastoral staff, as well as anticipated repairs and upgrades.
- Costs related to the AGC Partnership and conference are expected to be minimal this year, as the conference will be held locally in Beamsville.
- Missionary support includes a $2,000 increase to support Tony Schaapman, along with $4,200 allocated for a special missions project.
- As the Motel Minustry is concluding, funds previously allocated there have been reallocated to the Special Project line for future determination by the Missions Committee.
    - Excess funds from the Motel Ministry will continue to be used to support the residual ministry work.
- Office expenses reflect the implementation of the new Planning Center software and include $1,500 allocated for potential legal or professional fees related to the continued formalization of administrative documentation.
- The General Fund excess from 2025 has been allocated to replenish the General Reserve Fund, which was completed in January, and to contribute an additional $5,000 to the Capital Fund.
- The Capital Renewal Campaign includes $15,000 designated toward replenishing the Capital Fund rather than a specific project, resulting in a projected total capital expenditure of $60,000.
- Overall, total expenses are budgeted to be 7.4% higher than the 2025 budget, while still remaining below actual 2025 expenditures. The budget projects a break-even year, with an anticipated year-end General Fund balance of $54,050 to carry forward into 2027. Given increased ministry activity, the church typically maintains a General Fund balance of approximately $40,000 to manage monthly fluctuations, in addition to the $35,000 General Reserve Fund if required.

*A question was raised regarding whether the church should consider incorporation. It was noted that there may be cost-base benefits to incorporation; however, the church is currently well insured despite not being incorporated.

MOTION to approve the 2026 budget. Moved by Anthony Maracle. Seconded by Jett Desjardins, Carried.

6. Vote Re. Pastoral Appointment: Patrick Bartley as volunteer “Associate Pastor at Large.”

- The Associate Pastor at Large is a volunteer position and is accountable to the Lead Pastor and the Board of Elders.
- A Pastor at Large is a retired pastor who is not assigned to a specific ministry portfolio and is available to serve as needed in temporary or special ministry assignments.
- Patrick Bartley will serve in ministry opportunities both external to Grace Gospel Church and in support of GGC ministries as needed. These opportunities may include weddings, funerals, celebrations, pulpit supply, and other pastoral duties.

- Pat approached the Elder Board expressing his desire to continue in pastoral ministry and subsequently pursued ordination within the AGC. The Elders interviewed Pat and Val and recommended him to the AGC in September. Pat has since been approved for ordination, which is scheduled for March 8th.
- In accordance with church policy, a members-only paper ballot vote was conducted, requiring a two-thirds majority for approval. Ballots were collected and counted by Elaine Korody and Susan Cousineau.
- It was noted that this is not a paid position, and compensation is not being considered at this time.
- Pat shared that Grace Gospel Church is home for both him and Val, and expressed his desire to finish well and continue serving in ministry. He thanked the congregation for the opportunity to minister.

MOTION to approve Pastoral Appointment of Patrick Bartley as volunteer "Associate Pastor at Large". Moved by Kate Ball. Seconded by Trevor Hartwick, 57 members voted, 56 voted yes and 1 voted no, Carried.

MOTION to destroy ballots. Moved by Jett Desjardins. Seconded by Doreen Jones, Carried

7. Election of Elders:

MOTION to approve the election of Trevor Hartwick, Patrick Bartley; and director: John-Rock Bilodeau. Moved by Jim Stuart. Seconded by Jeff Korody, Carried.

8. Washroom Project Update: Pastor Bruce Miller

- Appreciation was expressed to Galo Romero for taking on this project, as he generously donated time and resources from his company to make the work possible.
- Gratitude was shared for God's provision throughout the project.
- Project-related "red tape" costs, including drawings and city visits, totaled $15,581.89. All required inspections were successfully cleared by both the fire and building inspectors.
- Actual construction costs amounted to $68,951.06, with $29,532.95 approved by the Board of Directors. No fundraising was required to complete the project. Total project cost of $84,532.95.

9. 2026 Capital Renewal Campaign presentation and approval: Pastor Martin Goode

- The project has already been approved, as it was included in the budget section. Full details of the project will be shared on February 21st.
- Several areas of the building that have not yet been updated, many dating back to the 1970s and 1980s, have been identified for renewal. Rather than launching a dozen individual projects, these smaller initiatives have been grouped together into one campaign.
- The upcoming event will provide an opportunity for both giving and pledging toward these projects.

- Planned upgrades include repainting the gymnasium; renovations to the youth room, including paint, flooring, and washrooms; updates to the bell tower and Grace lettering; and the installation of a new digital sign, which is being fully funded by a church member. Additional projects include new carpeting in the lower level, improvements to an emergency exit, new chairs for lower-level meeting rooms, and various décor and design upgrades throughout the building.

10. Appointment of Delegates to the AGC Regional Conference:

- The AGC Regional Conference will be held in Beamsville from May 26–28, 2026. No individuals indicated an interest in attending the conference as a delegate at this time.
- The church is permitted to appoint two delegates in addition to pastoral staff.
- While delegates are responsible for representing Grace Gospel Church in regional and national business matters, regional open sessions will be available, and all are welcome to attend those sessions.

MOTION for elders to appoint two members as delegates to the AGC Regional Conference. Moved by Lawrence McGinn. Seconded by Jim Ball, Carried.

11. Motel Ministry Closure: Lawrence McGinn

- The property owner has requested $800 per month in rent for the space, which had previously been donated. A one-year lease would be required. There has been no change in ownership, and no rationale was provided for the change in terms. A response was requested as soon as possible.
- Approval was given to continue use of the space through the end of the year, allowing the ministry to conclude with a Christmas dinner and the distribution of gifts.
- It was noted that the ministry budget has never been sufficient to cover rental costs at this level. An estimated $1,400–$1,500 will remain after year-end expenses; these funds will be held until March or April to allow time for any outstanding bills to be received. It was suggested that any remaining balance be allocated to missions.
- The ministry team of five expressed sadness regarding this development and shared that they are seeking God's guidance for next steps. Should new opportunities arise, any remaining funds would be allocated accordingly.

12. Other Business

- No other business was reported
- The floor was opened for comments and requests for clarification.
- A member noted the need for additional coat rack space during the winter season; this was received as a comment.
- It was shared that the property next door has been sold to a developer, this developer approached the church indicating plans to build affordable housing. The developer requested use of the main portion of Grace's property for the primary entrance to the housing; this request was denied by the church. There is

no current involvement from Grace Gospel Church in this project. The congregation is encouraged to pray that God's will would be done.

12. Pastor's Comments

- Pastor Martin expressed gratitude to Lawrence for his leadership of the Motel Ministry.
- He reflected on Matthew 16:15–19, noting that the first thing Jesus says about the church is that He will build His church.
- Pastor Martin shared that for over 90 years, God has faithfully blessed and sustained Grace Gospel Church, shaping it into a community of people who love, serve, and grow together. He emphasized the importance of being a church on mission, seeking discernment in what God calls the church to pursue and what it may be called to set aside.
- He expressed gratitude for being part of a church that is guided by the authority and structure of God's Word, and reminded the congregation that continued blessing comes through ongoing submission to God.
- Referencing recent votes on changes and new appointments, Pastor Martin acknowledged that staff and elders serve for seasons and will come and go, but affirmed that God remains faithful, continuing to protect and bless His church. He reminded the congregation that God has promised to preserve His church and encouraged all to remember that this is Christ's church.
- Pastor Martin concluded by emphasizing that both individually and collectively, our highest priority is submission to Christ, giving all glory to Him alone, as He continues His work in and through each of us.

Closing Song: Jesus, Firm Foundation led by Nathan Kowalski
Closing Prayer: Pastor Martin Goode

13. Adjournment: Meeting was adjourned at 2:10pm. Motion by Lawrence McGinn, Seconded by Herman Hunter. Carried.

Attendance: 63 members, 18 adherents.

Respectfully submitted,
Catherine Ball
Church Clerk