



## WHAT'S GOING ON AT GRACE: FEBRUARY NEWSLETTER



GROWING AS A CHURCH FAMILY AS WE PREPARE  
FOR LENT

### *Ministers' Message: The Significance of Growing Deeper as a Church Family*

February is often a month where Calgary gets cold weather. These cold days are a good time for telling stories. Stories are a way of sharing hope, inspiration, warmth, relationship, laughter, and lessons.

I like to think about all the stories being shared at Grace throughout the week. Here are a few examples:

- On Sundays, stories about God's love and grace are shared through in-person and online worship services.
- After worship services at Grace, friends share stories from the week over cups of coffee and cookies.
- On Mondays, neighbours and newcomers use stories to help practice conversational English.
- On Thursdays, stories of hope and newness are shared in check-ins with folks coming to pick up food or to choir practice.

Of course, there are stories shared in meetings and other gatherings happening at other times in the week at Grace too. Grace really is a place where stories are shared. The story Grace is telling as a church and community of faith is about how we are walking and growing together in faith. It is encouraging that Grace's story is being shared in ways that people are connecting and joining in.

The Apostle Paul in Colossians writes, *"So in the same way you welcomed the Chosen One, Creator Sets Free (Jesus), continue to walk with him on this road of life. Let your roots grow deep into the Chosen One and then your faith will grow strong and your steps will become firm on this path that you have learned to follow, always giving thanks to the Great Spirit."* Colossians 2: 6-7 First Nations Version: An Indigenous Translation of the New Testament

Later this month, the season of Lent begins. Lent is a time to let our roots grow deep into the Chosen One through reflection, prayer, and spiritual practice as a way of growing strong, firming up our step on the path we are learning to follow and giving thanks to God.

The days of February may have cold temperatures but may you be blessed with the warmth found in shared stories of God's goodness shared here at Grace and in our life together. We are entering into a season where we are called to grow in the promise and possibility God offers. We are invited to share stories rooting us in how God is calling us on the path of loving others by sharing how God in grace is transforming life!

Check out the opportunities shared in the following pages for how to connect with the story of how we are walking and growing in faith together!

Blessings,

- The Rev. Jake Van Pernis, The Rev. Christian Persaud, and The Rev. Maren Mclean Persaud (Rev. Maren is on parental leave until April 2023)

## 2022 STATISTICS SNAPSHOT



### Time, Talent and Treasure



**Time:** 180 volunteers gave 21,200 hours (2,825 work days; 10.2 positions)



**Talent:** 280 roles filled (up from 230 roles in 2021)



**Treasure:**

- Giving Trends: More people giving; people giving more
- Rental Trends: 2022 2x rentals than in 2021: \$30,000 more than budgeted

### Worship Attendance



**In-Person Attendance:** Fall and January

- Approximately 130 people/service



**Online Attendance:** 2022 average

- Average 94 views/week; watch time: 13+ minutes
- Approximately 22% livestream; 78% watch recording

### Use of Facilities and Operations Resources



**Number of activities, meetings & events** (in-person & online; congregation & community)

- September: 98; October: 101; November: 110; December: 98

### Online Engagement: Growing Grace's Community 2022



Grace's online congregation and community has 2,229 users across the website and social media. This audience grew approximately 28% in 2022.

- Who is the online congregation & community: It is a mix of congregation members and those who encounter Grace on a smartphone or computer.
- 955 users visited the website (50,180 views); 60% new; 40% returning
- How do people find Grace online: Grace is found by new people who are browsing Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, YouTube or Google. They see Grace when friends & family click, like & share social posts, we target them through online ads (Advent, Lent, Worship, Choir & special events Pancake Party, Christmas Music Concert, Open MIC, etc.)
- On social media, Grace appeared 229,000 times, reaching 66,000 users - 10% engaged - a level considered 'healthy'
- Grace has 1,907 emails (emails are collected through online registration): 58% open Grace emails (the industry average is 15%)

## Congregation Story: 2022 Snapshot Growing Deeper in Service, Giving & Action

In 2022, and particularly in the fall, Grace worked to reconnect as a congregational church family and with the community - as the pandemic restrictions eased and life began to return (somewhat) to normal. The 2022 Statistics Snapshot shares some of the trends in major areas in 2022 and as we forge ahead in 2023. Thank you to everyone who shared their stats! Further financial details and numbers will be shared in the year-end financial report and the April Report to Congregation and Community.

**Stewardship: Time, Talent and Treasure in 2022**

## Time and Talent

As Grace re-opened and programs were re-started and new ones were initiated in 2022, the total number of individuals who volunteered at Grace increased to 180 from 167 in 2021. Some of these individuals were new volunteers at Grace and some were people who have been faithfully serving for years – we are so thankful for all their service!

- These 180 individuals gave an estimated 21,200 hours of time and talent in 2022
- This is an increase over the 2021 estimate of 17,400 hours
- The 2022 volunteer time and talent is equivalent to 2,825 work days - or 10.2 full time positions
- The total number of opportunities to serve has grown by 50, from a total of 230 roles in 2021, to 280 in 2022.

There are many ways to grow deeper in service in the ministries of Grace.

## Treasure

*(Year-end financials will be shared in the spring 2022 year-end financial report and in 2022 Report to Congregation and Community in April)*

- Revenues were up over 2021, and in some cases higher than budget. This is partly due to an increase in both the number of individuals/families contributing and the amount of the contribution.
- Rental revenues (both facility and parking lot rentals) have doubled over 2021 and are approximately \$30,000 greater than budgeted.

Grace is extremely grateful for your financial contributions. Thank you.

## Stewardship Overview Report: Work in 2022 and Work Planned for 2023

The Stewardship Committee shared a report on work completed in 2022 and work planned for 2023 with Session Liaisons and Committee Conveners at a Lunch N Learn on Sunday, January 29. Please find the report [here](#).

## Worship:

**Online and In-Person: Approximately 224 (approximately 130 in-person; an average of 94 views online per week with an average watch time of 13 minutes)**

- In-person attendance: In August, fall months and January the average in-person attendance is 130 people per service (this ranges from 130-150 and excludes Advent and Christmas when numbers are higher).
- Online worship participation was approximately 94 views/week with an average watch time of 13 minutes.

## Use of Facilities:

In the fall of 2022, Grace began reconnecting with the community as well as the congregation as the pandemic restrictions eased. The number of in-person and online activities and events hosted for the congregation and community, in-person and online, was:

- September: 98
- October: 101
- November: 110
- December: 98

## Online Connections and Growth of the Congregation and Community

Initially, word of Jesus spread by way of the Roman Road. Today, word spreads

digitally. In 2022, Grace content and profiles appeared to hundreds of thousands of people online, often through their phone, as they searched on Google, browsed Facebook, Instagram, or Twitter, viewed YouTube videos, or landed on our website and registered online - where they shared an email we use to stay in touch.

- Grace works to be open online 24/7
- Grace works to reach people where they are (often their phone - browsing Facebook, Instagram, Twitter or YouTube, searching on Google, or on email)
- Grace's online audience grew approximately 28% in 2022 - there are approximately 2,229 users on the website, social media and YouTube - where online worship appears
- In 2022, Grace appeared 229,000 times to 66,000 users on social media: 10% clicked, liked, commented, shared, or followed: This is considered a 'Healthy' level of engagement
- Grace reached 65% of the 66,000 users through online ads (Grace communications spent approximately \$1,300 in 2022; a breakdown of \$108/month)
- 955 users visited the website resulting in 50,180 views (an average of 137/day); 60% are new users (perhaps a new community contact who saw an online ad then signed up for the Pancake Party!); 40% are returning

### Can you help Grace grow online?

Donate your time and talent by following, liking, commenting and sharing social media posts. We reach more people when you do (without having to pay for ads!)

BUILDING COMMUNITY FOR NEWCOMERS  
THROUGH ENGLISH CLASSES:  
IMPACTS OF GRACE'S  
ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNER PROGRAM

[WWW.GRACECHURCHCALGARY.COM/ENGLISHCLASS/](http://WWW.GRACECHURCHCALGARY.COM/ENGLISHCLASS/)



Grace Presbyterian Church  
*Transforming lives through God's grace*



## Supporting Newcomers: Part One: The English Language Learners Program: Why Grace Runs English Classes and Builds Community

If you come down to Grace on any given Monday morning, you will find a team of



dedicated volunteer English teachers setting up classrooms, preparing lessons that help students practice English conversational English and settle in Canada, and greeting students whose English ranges from Beginner to Intermediate to Advanced.

[Read More](#)



## CHURCH BUSINESS:

### MAJOR MONTHLY CONGREGATIONAL ANNOUNCEMENTS, DECISIONS AND UPDATES

#### Monthly Fall Financial Update

Please find :

- Financial updates for [October](#) and [November](#) 2022.
- The [Financial Budget for 2023](#) along with the [Narrative Budget](#). The budget was approved at the Sunday, November 27 2022 Congregational Meeting.

#### **Preliminary Observations/Trends Related to December 31, 2022 Year-End**

The numbers that are provided are subject to change as accounts are finalized for year-end. The intent of the information is to assist in providing an overview of the trends and results for 2022.

- Expenditures for 2022 are approximately \$440,000 less than budgeted and \$300,000 less than the expenditures in 2021.
- The preliminary loss from operations is \$180,000. The operating loss that was forecast/budgeted was \$616,000.
- Information for the fourth quarter for the PCC Investment will not be available until late February. At the end of September (Q3) there was an unrealized loss of \$224,000. In other words, the value of our investment with PCC, based on the stock market valuation had declined by \$224,000. There was also a realized loss in the investment of \$35,000 based on the investment managers selling off some of the shares in the mutual fund.
- Revenues were up over 2021, and in some cases higher than budget. This is

partly due to an increase in both the number of individuals/families contributing and the amount of the contribution.

- Rental revenues (both facility and parking lot rentals) have doubled over 2021 and are approximately \$30,000 greater than budgeted.

\*Find financial reports on the [Giving and Financials website page \(monthly, periodic, and annual financial reports, as well as Report to Congregation and Community with financial snapshots\)](#).

## Lead Minister Search Committee Update

Many thanks for your continued support and for your prayers. The Lead Minister Search Committee is continuing to receive applications and work with candidates of interest on their discernment. We will be advertising in United Church and PCUSA publications this spring as we feel we need to keep encouraging applications until we have had a preach for the call and successful congregational vote. The process is slow but we continue to believe God is leading us to the minister God is calling for us.

Sincerely,

Janet Hyde (Co-convener), Clark Hanna (Co-convener), Flora Stephenson, Jennifer Lee, Elizabeth Cressman, Jan Dewar, Greg Retzer

## Session Highlights: (Session meets monthly)

At its regular meeting on January 9, the Session:

- opened with reflection on Matthew 2:1-20, the season of Epiphany and revelation, recognizing that in every journey to revelation, there will be detours, wrong turns and opportunities to be better
- expressed gratitude for the sense that the congregation is largely reconnecting and engaging. There are still many pastoral needs
- discussed key trends and 2022 results reported by Amy Dunn Moscoso, Grace's Communications Specialist. These will be shared with the congregation in the upcoming newsletter, including the data on on-line worship viewers (average 94 per week) and website viewers (average 137 per day)
- approved updates to the Roll, which now stands at 389 professing members and 161 adult adherents, for a total of 550 adults
- agreed to a process starting in February to consider opportunities for innovations and improvements regarding how we use our resources to effect our ministries consistent with our Mission and Values
- approved the Workplan for the Ad Hoc Stewardship Committee, which will encourage gratitude and generosity with time, talent and treasure in support of our ministries
- received an update from the Lead Minister Search Committee and various correspondence
- closed with prayer

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**4 Month Calendar:  
Activities, Events & Opportunities**



Valentine's

## BELTLINE OPEN MIC NIGHT at Grace

Calling all performers: Poets, writers, drummers, musicians, dancers and more... sign up to perform!

Sign up at [www.GraceChurchCalgary.com/events/](http://www.GraceChurchCalgary.com/events/)  
**FRIDAY, February 10, 7:00 PM - 9:00 PM, FREE, FAMILY-FRIENDLY**  
Grace Presbyterian Church, 1009 15 Ave SW

## SHROVE TUESDAY PANCAKE PARTY

FEBRUARY 21, 2022 AT 5:30 PM - 7:00 PM

GRACE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, 1009 15 AVE SW

ONLINE REGISTRATION REQUIRED: [WWW.GRACECHURCHCALGARY.COM/EVENTS/](http://WWW.GRACECHURCHCALGARY.COM/EVENTS/)



*Preaching Grace 2023 Presents:*  
**Resilience, Hope and Healing**  
with Dr. Joni Sancken



“As we climb out of the pandemic...we wonder: How are we different from how we were? What must we change in ourselves and our churches?”

Joni provides Christians - clergy and lay - the most helpful, healing words we can give ourselves and our friends amid the challenges of our present moment.  
- The Rev. Dr. Willimon



**SAVE THE DATE!** Registration opening soon - details to come at [www.GraceChurchCalgary.com](http://www.GraceChurchCalgary.com)  
Friday, May 5, 7:00 -- 8:30 pm: **FREE Public Lecture: All Our Grievs to Bear: Building Resilience**  
Saturday, May 6, 9:30 am- 2:30 pm: **PAID Workshop & Lunch:**  
• Morning: *Scriptural Resources for Trauma*; Afternoon: *Compassion Fatigue*  
Sunday, May 7, *Worship Guest Preacher*

Committee planning is underway for the winter. Below please find activities with

tentative dates, times - more details to come as they are approved and submitted.

### February: Lent

- Wednesdays: Bible Study & Grief Group 10am-12:30 pm
- Sunday, February 5: Presbyterian World Service and Development Day (PWS&D)
  - Grace Youth 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday Lunch after Worship
- Friday, February 10: Valentine's Day OPEN MIC NIGHT: [Register acts here](#) (if you want to come, no need to sign up)
- Sunday, February 19: Transfiguration Sunday
- Monday, February 20: Family Day
- Tuesday, February 21: Shrove Tuesday
  - [Register online for the 5:50-7:00 pm Pancake Party here](#)
- Wednesday, February 22: Noon Ash Wednesday Service in the Chapel
- Sunday, February 26: World Day of Prayer
  - Worship: Introduction of a painting about prayer by Nathan Meguinis, an Indigenous artist from Tsuut'ina, near Calgary
  - Fellowship Time: Bannock and Saskatoon berry tea

### March: Lent

- Wednesdays: Bible Study & Grief Group 10am-12:30pm
- Sunday, March 5: First Sunday in Lent
  - Grace Youth 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday Lunch after Worship
- Sunday, March 12: 2nd Sunday in Lent
- Sunday, March 19: 3rd Sunday in Lent
- Sunday, March 26: 4th Sunday in Lent

### April: Holy Week and Easter

- Wednesdays: Bible Study & Grief Group 10am-12:30pm
- Sunday, April 2, Palm Sunday
- Thursday, April 6, Maundy Thursday
- Friday, April 7, Good Friday
- Saturday, April 8, Easter Saturday
- Sunday, April 9, Easter Sunday

### May:

- Wednesdays: Bible Study & Grief Group 10am-12:30pm
- Friday, May 5: Preaching Grace FREE Public Lecture with the Rev. Dr. Joni Sancken All Our Grievs to Bear: Building Resilience (Register at [www.GraceChurchCalgary.com/events/](http://www.GraceChurchCalgary.com/events/))
- Saturday, May 6: Preaching Grace PAID Workshop and Lunch with the Rev. Dr. Joni Sancken - Morning: Words of Hope: Scriptural Resources for Trauma; Afternoon: Compassion Fatigue [www.GraceChurchCalgary.com/events/](http://www.GraceChurchCalgary.com/events/)
- Sunday, May 7: Worship Sermon by the Rev. Dr. Joni Sancken, Preaching Grace
- Thursday, May 18 Ascension Day
- Sunday, May 21 Healing and Reconciliation Sunday

**Worship: In-Person and Online**

**Donate Online**

**Visit our**





## Feedback

Our goal is to create value with this newsletter, so it's helpful to know what you think. Send your feedback to [communications@gracecalgary.org](mailto:communications@gracecalgary.org). We may not always be able to incorporate suggestions, but we'll do what we can to respond to interest and need.

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