



Reconnecting and Growing Deeper

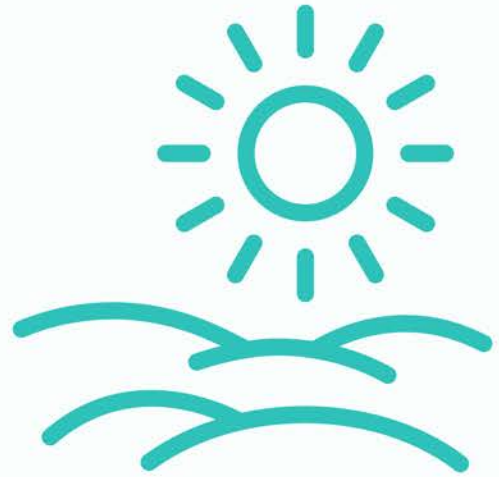
Report to Congregation and Community
2022 to April 2023



Grace Presbyterian Church
Transforming lives through God's grace

Our Values

Engagement, Belonging, Community,
Compassion, Service



Our Vision

Transforming Lives Through God's Grace

Our Mission

Inspired by the Holy Spirit, we grow disciples of Jesus Christ to love our neighbours and effect social change

Areas of Focus: 2022-2024 Session Strategic Plan

- Provide congregational care and support, encourage engagement
- Grow community collaboration and connection
- Nurture the evolving culture at Grace

In a spirit of respect and truth we honour and acknowledge that we live, work, play and worship on the traditional territories of the Blackfoot Confederacy (Siksika, Kainai, and Piikani), the Tsuut'ina, the Stoney Nakoda Nations (Bears paw, Chiniki, and Wesley), the Métis Nation (Region 3), and all people who make their homes in the Treaty 7 region of Southern Alberta.



Ministers

The Rev. Greg Smith
Interim Moderator

The Rev. Jake Van Pernis
Associate Minister, Engagement and Service

The Rev. Maren McLean Persaud
Associate Minister, Children and Youth

The Rev. Christian Persaud
Interim Pastoral Care Leader

Reconnection and Growth

God who supplies seed to the sower and bread for food will supply and multiply your seed for sowing and increase the harvest of your righteousness. - 2 Corinthians 9:10



2022 and into 2023: Years of reconnection and growth

The past year has been a time of reconnecting for us all – reconnecting with family, friends, work colleagues, and with our brothers and sisters in Christ here at Grace. Many Grace activities were resumed in 2022 and are hitting their stride as we enter 2023. These include in-person worship, and events such as Bible studies and Trunk 'N Treat. Live streaming of our worship services enables members of Grace who cannot attend in person to feel more part of worship.

All of this would not be possible without the almost 200 Grace volunteers, our dedicated ministers Rev. Jake Van Pernis, Rev. Maren McLean Persaud and Rev. Christian Persaud, guest ministers such as Rev. Sabino Diok, and your prayerful support. Please join me in giving thanks to God for blessing Grace so abundantly.

-Len Wolstenholme, Clerk of Session



Congregational Reconnection and Growth

In 2022, pandemic restrictions waned and great effort went into reconnecting in-person, as well as maintaining an online presence. The priority was intentional reconnection focusing on face to face interactions, fellowship and building relationships - while reflecting on changes at Grace as we forge ahead.

Reconnection in the church, committees, and congregation included:

- Reconnection at worship, fellowship, studies, and lunches
- A return to in-person Church School for Grace Kids and Youth
- In-person and online Lent, Easter, Advent and Christmas services
- Listening and sharing circles on multiple subjects
- Engaging on faith in a scientific world with the Rev. Dr. David Wilkinson at Preaching Grace
- Celebrating 60 years of Cake Bake
- Honouring those who passed away in a Service of Remembrance
- Expressing gratefulness for volunteers at a celebration lunch
- Marking the Chapel's 60th Anniversary and sharing memories
- Exploring new ways of connecting (after-worship walks)

When I began my parental leave, our children and youth ministries were still online or outdoors, and we learned so much. Now, the youngest in our midst are fully back to in-person gatherings and Grace Kids and Youth have been revisiting where they are headed. It is a time to build upon, reimagine and reinvigorate what has happened in the past so that the children at Grace continue to be transformed in the present. -Rev. Maren McLean Persaud

Congregation members express 'what Grace means to me'...



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Yesterday, Grace was my home family church where I worked and was deeply connected through so many and various avenues; Today, as Deacon of the Homebound visitors, Grace provides me an opportunity to serve; as an Elder I accompany my district on our faith's journeys together and most importantly Grace is my refuge where, in community, I praise My Lord and God who offers peace to still me, grace to grow in, forgiveness that breathes new life in me and unconditional love. -Margot Kellough, Deacon of Home Care

Grace is community. -Ava, one of the Church School Leaders (As a high school student, Ava brings a special energy as she shares her faith with the children)

To me, Grace is a community of fellow Christians striving to walk in the footsteps of our Lord. -Richard Wilson

I became aware of Grace Church at the start of the pandemic. My cousin suggested the excellent worship broadcasts. I recommended them to my United Church home in Winnipeg until ours was running. I connected with Grace online and on social media, and was inspired by the thoughtful and sensitive response to the red paint on the church doors, the impressive community involvement, and meaningful worship. When I moved to Calgary, I was struck by the excellence of Grace's choir, and was warmly welcomed, which made my decision to become a member and get involved easy. -Carol Latter

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Reconnecting and Growing as a Community Member

Grace worked in the Beltline to faithfully share hope and build community. We were invited to gather with, listen to, and hold space for neighbours as needs increased (Food Bank demand grew from 15 to 20 hampers/week.) We learned to care for vulnerable neighbours, grew in our understanding of Truth and Reconciliation, and sought to be a place of welcome. Engagement and service continues as we learn to care for neighbours, better steward creation, join community work, and reflect on how God calls us to do justice, love in kindness, and walk gently.

-Rev. Jake Van Pernis, Associate Minister, Engagement and Service

Reconnection and growth in the community took many forms:

- Outreach and reconnection with neighbours included an Easter Egg Hunt and invitations to worship, Open Doors in the sanctuary, Beltline Open Mic, Halloween Trunk 'N Treat, a multi-church Concert, English classes, Grace quilters activities and more
- Grace continued to provide safe housing for women and children through Grace House, run by the RESET Society of Calgary (RESET helps women escape sexual exploitation and trafficking)
- Grace continued to support Connaught Elementary School families
- Truth, Healing and Reconciliation efforts included opportunities from book studies and a lecture on the Doctrine of Discovery, to Red Paint ceremonies and support for repatriation of the Sacred Stone, along with a new collaboration with Stardale Women's Group and Beltline organizations to support Indigenous girls and women on Orange Shirt Day
- The Grace Quilters collaborated with the University of Calgary and the Calgary Public Library in the 'Sewing Hope' Exhibition



Impacts of Grace's missional work in the community

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We are so appreciative for the support we receive from Grace Church. Over 15 plus years, we have housed hundreds of women and their children at Grace House. This gives children a safe, stable environment to call home, and mothers a place to heal and reconnect with their children. For many children, this is the first safe environment and it provides a foundation for them to grow and move forward. One alumnae of Grace House said "My wee son and I so appreciated having a home and not having to go to a shelter." -Theresa Jenkins, Executive Director, RESET

When people are struggling to make ends meet, food costs are often the first to be cut from a family budget. Hampers remove stress from the table, providing a variety of nutritious food for 7 to 10 days. Thanks to the dedicated volunteers at the Grace Church Satellite location, food is even more accessible. Grace Church volunteers have an incredible impact on fellow Calgarians; beyond food, they also give hope. -Crystal Milne, Program Coordinator, Calgary Food Bank

Stardale has been welcomed with open arms by Grace on the road to reconciliation and strengthening relationships between Indigenous peoples and the community. -Helen McPhaden, Executive Director, Stardale Women's Group

Our relationship with Grace Church has a profound impact on our families. Grace helps with many basic needs such as food, gift cards, diapers and detergent. The wish tree at Christmas put smiles on the faces of many families. One grandparent was brought to tears; your generosity meant she could provide her grandkids with a Christmas gift. Thank you for your ongoing support of our school. -Nicole Bezugley, Principal, Connaught School

We are blessed and grateful that our friends at Grace Church opened the doors to celebrate Never Too Late graduates. Everyone who completes high school should have the opportunity to wear a cap and gown, and celebrate with loved ones and community members. Grace provides this opportunity. The beautiful space has been described as "a magical place to celebrate this huge life accomplishment". Clients are often unsure of their worth and ability to belong in community settings. Grace shows that they too belong. -Amy St. Jean, Supervisor, Community Programs

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Growing with Grace Through Change

Grace continues to experience change, but is also creatively exploring what ministry looks like today. Grace has a long history of care and continues to be blessed with gifted individuals – both lay and clergy – who attend to the healing and wholeness of the congregation. Grace will continue to experience change, but must remember God's presence in our lives and our relationships with one another.

-Rev. Christian Persaud, Interim Pastoral Care Leader

On change at Grace: Experiences and impacts from the journey

The Lead Minister Search

The Lead Minister search is a journey for the congregation and the committee. The congregation has been supportive with comments, suggestions and prayers. The committee is diverse and brings a breadth of backgrounds, which is very effective in developing the position description, congregational profile, identifying candidates and in interviews. The Interim Moderator also plays a significant role, spending a lot of time communicating with candidates. There have been candidates of interest, some are still in conversation with us. We are confident God has a candidate identified for us and even now is preparing them to carry out God's work at Grace. -Janet Hyde, Co-Convener of the Lead Minister Search Committee

Stewardship

Indeed, everything is for your sake, so that grace, when it has extended to more and more people, may increase thanksgiving, to the glory of God. (2 Corinthians 4:15)

This verse speaks about stewardship, a word we're using a lot these days. As a congregation member, and a Christian, I pray that all I do is to the glory of God. As Coordinator of Volunteers, I seek to engage with more and more people, with opportunities to serve God and God's beloved creation, that they may know both grace (and Grace Church). As Convener of the Ad Hoc Stewardship Committee, I am reminded how very blessed we are at Grace Church. I give thanks to God for the generosity of time, talent and treasure of the congregation, past, present and future.

-Cindy Stephenson, Coordinator of Volunteers, Convener of the Stewardship Committee

South Sudanese Community at Grace

We hope to come together and grow a future for God's people so we can get to know God. We want to help the community - you can see people are in need. In the future, we can all be together and be with God. -Jiebiene Nyajwok, Session Elder and South Sudanese member

Grief Circles

Grieving in God's Grace has been a blessing to me as I grieve the loss of my husband, Brian. From the first session, I felt safe, connected, supported, understood and surrounded by love. This very positive experience is far beyond my expectations. -Barbara Henson, Participant

The Congregation and Church: 2022



The Congregation: The Roll 2022

- 389 Professing Members; 161 adult adherents
 - Total: 550 adults
- 186 children and youth



Worship Participation: In-person and Online

- In-Person Participation: Fall: Approximately 130 per week
- Online Participation: average 94 views/week; 13 minutes/view



Online Congregation and Community

2,229 users - growth of approximately 28% in 2022: Mix of congregation, those from other faith groups, and those attracted by events and activities

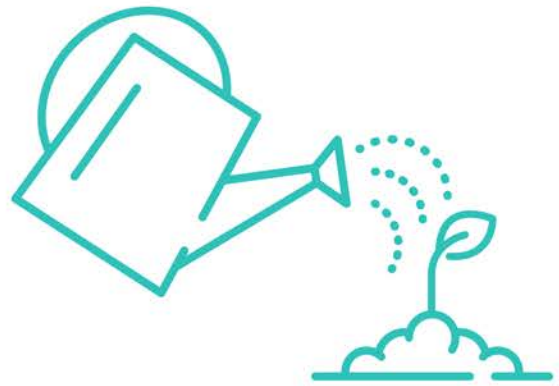
- Website users 955
- Social Media Presence: Grace appeared 229,000 times to 66,000 users - 10% engaged; 65% of 66,000 users from online ads (\$1,300 spent - \$108/month)



The Church: Facilities 2022:

- 1,069 Events, Meetings and Activities, in-person and online, for congregation and community

Stewardship: Time, Talent and Treasure



Time

- 21,200 Hours
- 2,825 workdays (10.2 positions)



Talent

- 190 volunteers
- 280 volunteer roles (50 more than 2021)



Treasure

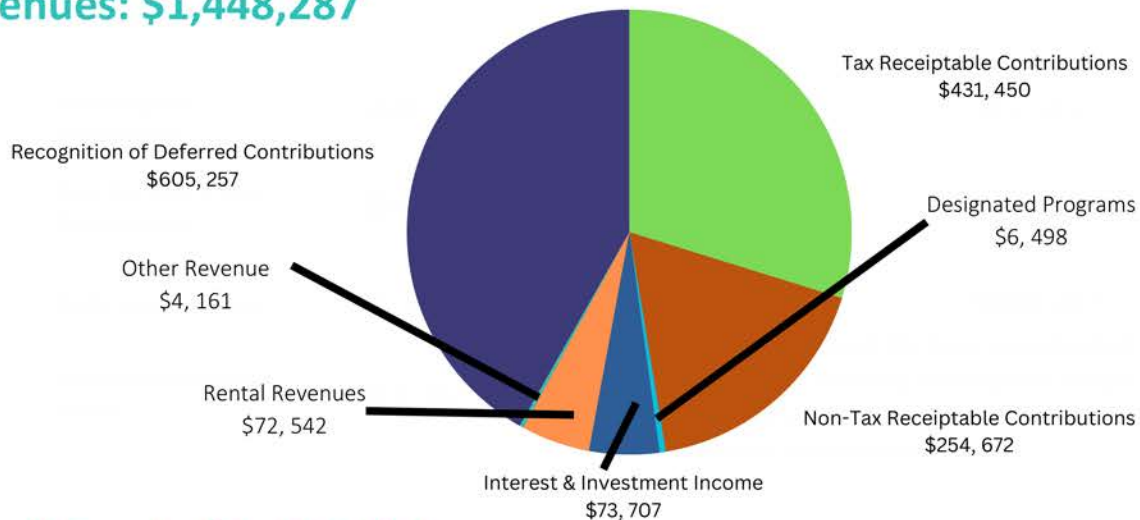
- Giving Trend: More people giving; People giving more
- 2022 rentals 2x 2021; rental revenue \$30,000 over budget
- Number of Contributors: 342
- Total Contributions: \$1,237,603
 - (Tax receiptable: \$431,450; Non-Tax Receiptable: \$254,672; Designated Programs: \$6,498; Additions to deferred contributions: \$544,983)

2022 Operations Statement

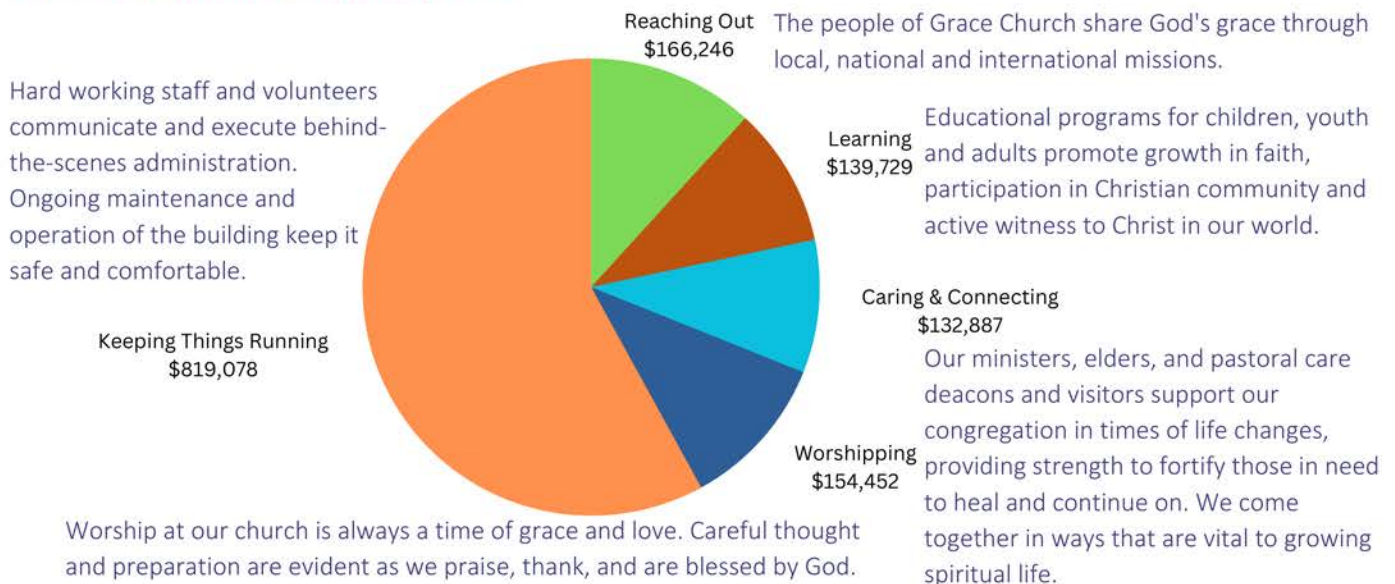
These charts show a snapshot of operational financials for 2022. The financial report is shared at the Annual General Meeting and posted at www.gracechurchcalgary.com/givingandfinancials/.



Revenues: \$1,448,287



Use of Funds: \$1,412,393



Deferred Restricted Contributions

Grace receives some contributions designated by donors for specific purposes – the use of the funds is restricted. If the funds are not used during the year of donation, they become deferred restricted contributions. Deferred restricted contributions are drawn down as expenditures matching the restrictions or conditions of giving are incurred. Donor contributions to deferred restricted contributions in 2022 were \$544,983. The overall draw on deferred restricted contributions was \$605,257 (2021 - \$711,373);

- The net draw down in 2022 for deferred funds was \$46,603 (\$596,848 in 2021).



Connect or Reconnect!

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