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Dear friends in Christ,

In February, I sent you a letter detailing the difficult position we were in concerning leadership in the church. On Sunday, February 27th – which should have been our Annual Vestry Meeting – we postponed our meeting to March 13th and I presented a proposal to the parish about a potential path forward that has been developed in concert with Bishop Kevin Robertson and Janet Marshall of the Congregational Development Department of the Diocese of Toronto. Here in this letter, I want to explain the proposal and why we should strongly consider it.

At this time, it appears that we may be able to elect and appoint a full slate of Wardens and while I am grateful for those who have stepped up, it does not remove the challenge we faced in getting there. While Anglican churches are canonically required to have two Wardens that form the Corporation of the church along with the Incumbent Priest, in certain circumstances churches can ask or be invited to have a different governance structure under Canon 25 of the diocesan canons. Canon 25 would designate Grace as a Mission of the Diocese of Toronto while still retaining our Parish status. The benefit of this designation is under the Canon we move from a traditional corporation model of governance to a Board of Management that is made up of 6 to 8 people who help to administer and govern the church, with the incumbent as the chair of the board. The Board of Management would assume all the roles and responsibilities typically carried out by the Corporation and Advisory Board, meaning that neither would meet.

The board would be made up of some members of our parish and some outside diocesan volunteers who would bring specific skills and competencies to help us in developing the necessary leadership capacity and organization systems that will help us in the future. By moving from 2 canonical wardens to 6 or 8 people involved in governance the hope and expectation are that the pressures of the job will be lessened and allow for work to be shared among more people. I hope that the people who have allowed their names to stand as Canonical or deputy Wardens will make up the Grace contingent on a Board of Management.

In considering this move the current leadership of Grace has identified two particular areas of expertise that we will be requesting assistance in Leadership and Volunteer Development and Information dissemination. Finding ways to raise up, support and manage leaders and volunteers will be essential for us as part of our exit from the Canon 25 process. Additionally, we recognize that some of our systems and practices for communication and information sharing have been lacking so expertise in this area will help us in all facets of communication with you, the diocese and the wider community.

One important thing to note is that the Board of Management and our designation under Canon 25 is not intended to be a permanent reality. Both the Diocesan and Grace leadership expect and hope for this to be a two or three-year endeavour that will allow us to take the necessary steps to stand strong on our own for years to come. However, we do envision and hope that in the future we may continue to operate under a

*Our mission is to **worship** God and **proclaim** Jesus Christ in the power of the Holy Spirit and to **embody** – in word and action – God's reconciling love, justice, compassion and liberation, through which knowledge of God's reign is extended.*



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Diocese of Toronto
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board structure, as some churches do, but with all members of our Board coming from within the parish – allowing for a division of responsibility and work under certain portfolios or areas of church life.

On Sunday, March 13th at our Annual Vestry Meeting, you will be presented with a motion to ask Synod Council to place us under Canon 25 and designate us as a Mission of the Diocese. This decision is ours to make and I believe it is a decision we should make to ensure the best possible future for our parish. I encourage you to pray about over the week ahead, and if you have any questions or concerns please don't hesitate to contact the office or myself directly so that we can either answer them directly or at our Annual Meeting.

I am so very grateful for every one of you and for the gifts, passion and energy you bring for the proclamation of the Gospel by word and deed here at Grace Church. Having just celebrated our tenth anniversary, even with the rocky start to our eleventh year, I can see a glimmer of hope and new life on the horizon.

Yours in Christ,

Rev. Graham McCaffrey

