

Grace Lutheran Church

2017 Annual Meeting
Sunday January 21, 2018

Agenda

Opening Devotions

Meeting Minutes

Financial Report

Nominating Committee

2018 Budget

Old Business

New Business

Adjournment

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Messages From The Pastoral Staff

2017 Ministry Report of Pastor Steven J. Berkeland

I pray that Christ Jesus and the church will forever bring praise to God. His power at work in us can do far more than we dare ask or imagine. Amen.

(Ephesians 3:20-21, CEV)

Dear Friends of Grace,

I rely heavily on this promise of God's ability, that Paul refers to in his Letter to the Ephesians. In his words to the early believers, he was celebrating the life of the church, as a unique community established by God, through the work of Jesus Christ, who is its head, and also the head of the whole creation. Some 2000 years later, the church is still established by Christ, to bring praise to God and let His power work through us. I am blessed to be able to experience that with you, at Grace.

In some ways, things are always changing at Grace (beloved staff/members depart, blessed new workers/friends arrive, ministries 'hand-off' leadership, needs around us evolve, strengths within us develop). And in other ways, things never change at Grace (the Gospel is preached, God's ways are taught, the Sacraments are administered, the saints are remembered, the needy are tended to). And most importantly, changing or unchanging, we look to the Lord for direction and inspiration.

In the year to come, we can count on God's power to work in us, in ways that far exceed what we might plan to do. HOWEVER, God is counting on us to think about what we have as a congregation and dream about how we can share the love of Christ and the mercy of God with others. Whether that takes place in Committee or Team membership, participation in any of the activities at church, or through conversation following worship, please know how important your part is in the thinking, dreaming and planning of God's work through Grace.

Your work might be a quiet smile of encouragement to a stranger on the street, or it might be a huge donation to a mission around the world. The amazing truth about doing God's work is that we don't have to worry about the results (we will truly never know what they are, anyway), we merely need to offer the effort (and God will do the rest). And then, as Paul declared, through us God will do *far more than we dare ask or imagine*.

I thank you for your partnership in the ministry at Grace, and for being gracious and supportive of me and our work together. And I pray that 2018 will be another wonderful year of praise and service.

God's peace be with you all!

Pastor Steve

p.s. I also like the way Eph. 3 reads in The Message:

God can do anything, you know—far more than you could ever imagine or guess or request in your wildest dreams! He does it not by pushing us around but by working within us, his Spirit deeply and gently within us.

...so let's keep dreaming, and make room for the Spirit!

2017 Ministry Report of Pastor John Heille

I write this report with gratitude for the year just past and hope for the year ahead.

On a personal note 2017 was full of blessings and changes. Laura Aase asked me to marry her in April. We were married in October—and yes we continue to both be pastors, just as we were before—in two different locations. Many people have asked how exactly that works out for us. The simple and best answer is that every week is different. We try to make time to see each other over the week and to talk everyday when we aren't together. The drive between Hutchinson and Fairmont is one we've both become very familiar with this last year.

As a pastor I feel blessed to be part of Grace. I'm blessed to serve as a pastor among so many people who have both a great love for their church community and an abiding trust that God is in the middle of everything that they do. This past year has been full of ministry for me including visits, work with Chaos and confirmation, preaching and leading worship, writing conversation starters for mentors, leading Bible studies and more. Each day for me as a pastor is a little different—but the reason to be a pastor at Grace is more clear now than ever: We are called as a congregation to share Good News with the world. We are called to tell the people of this world of God's love revealed for all people in Jesus.

One way to think about the Word of God is like seeds. We can plant the seed—but don't make the seed sprout, take root, and grow. Instead our work of sharing the love of God means that we are trusting that God will be at work in our world too. Faith teaches us to trust, to believe that the Word will bear fruit because it's from God and not from us. Paul wrote to the church in Philippi, *...because of your sharing in the gospel from the first day until now. I am confident of this, that the one who began a good work among you will bring it to completion by the day of Jesus Christ. (Philippians 1:5-6 NRSV.)*

Paul's hope wasn't based in human strength. It was based in faith that God was at work and that as the church we join in God's redeeming activity.

I have great hope for the year ahead at Grace because God's word is going with us. The promise of new life that we have to share is so needed by our world and God has promised that his Word will not return empty.

Thanks for your support and encouragement in this past year and in the year to come.

2017 Ministry Report of Visitation Minister Russ Steele

To all my sisters and brothers in Christ,

I began my work here at Grace in March of this year and have found it to be a good experience. I have been made to feel very welcome by the staff and the entire congregation. I have immense respect for my predecessors in this role and I work each day to approach the level of their good work.

I have visited with some 60 people in their homes and have had wonderful times of communion, prayer and visiting. It has been a great pleasure of mine to remind these sisters and brothers that they are very much an important part of our church family, and as we share communion together they are reminded that this is a continuation of the communion of Grace Lutheran Church. Most of these visits have been to our homebound listed folks while other visits were to those in need of ministry for differing important reasons. Please let myself or the pastors know of anyone who would be in need of visits.

2 areas of interest that I have been working on are as follows:

- A visitation ministry team. I have been provided a list of members who might be interested in visiting our homebound members on a regular basis. I hope to complete my phone calls on this list by the end of 2017 and further hope to gather the team and get them started early in 2018. My hope is to facilitate the team in their visits and encourage them to use their gifts in sharing God's love in a real and present way with these folks in their homes.
- A bereavement program. I have been consulting with Grace members who have suffered a death in their family and have dealt with the corresponding grief. We have settled on a mailing program using pamphlets called Care notes and will be mailing them out to people at appropriate times using appropriately themed pamphlets. My hope here is that our grieving members will be reminded that Grace is interested in helping them in their grief, as little or as much as the grievers may ask for. If, as we contact the grieving, we find an expressed need for grief-help, we will respond to that need.

I feel very blessed to be doing this work with you at Grace.

Russ Steele

2017 Ministry Report of Worship & Music Director

Make a joyful noise to the Lord, all the earth. Worship the Lord with gladness; come into his presence with singing. Psalm 100:1-2

This Psalm encourages us to join making a joyful noise to the Lord. We make this joyful noise in worship to our God. We worship our God because of the wondrous works God does for us and for the love, faithfulness, and mercy God shows us. God is worthy of this praise and worship. At Grace we worship through song, prayer, liturgy, and through the sharing of our gifts in many forms. Let us worship with joyful noise, gladness, and singing!

In my one month at Grace, I have gotten to know the wonderful staff, musicians, and volunteers with whom I get to help create meaningful worship. Advent, Blue Christmas, and Christmas Eve worship has continued with thoughtfulness, excitement, and joy. Christmas Eve saw beautiful and wonderful traditions continue, and couple of new ideas start like the Christmas Chimes and kids ringing jingle bells to Joy to the World.

In 2018 I will continue to learn about Grace's traditions and share some of my own. We will look to expand our musical repertoire by looking to a variety of trends and traditions for guidance. New opportunities for people to share their musical gifts individually and in groups will be created. I look forward to working with the young people to share their musical gifts and assist in worship in a variety of ways. We will worship God with gladness.

Amy Engel

Council President Report

Thank You God! Now quit yer bellyachin'!

When our children were young, we got in the habit of adding “Thank You God” items to our family prayers. It kept us appreciative for each other, our joys and successes, but also for God’s hand in getting us through life’s challenges. We kept a thankful heart at the center of our relationship with God.

Every now and then I think back on our congregation’s “interim pastor days” in 2003 and say, “Thank You God” for the struggles of that time. Things were a bit unsettled at Grace Lutheran Church during those many months of stress, argument, laughter, crying, soul-searching, worship, work, and growth. In other words, it was exactly how our personal lives can be! “Thank You God” that members of Grace were reminded that this congregation belongs to us – not the ELCA, not the Synod, and not our Pastors. The mission and responsibility of bringing God the glory and praise through worship and service to one another and to our neighbors is shared by us all. God is leading, but like in all families, the Grace Lutheran Church family succeeds the most when everyone contributes.

There are endless service opportunities for every member of Grace. These include confirmation mentoring, participation in music groups, sewing projects, missions, visitation ministry, giving rides, Sunday school, delivering meals on wheels, helping with worship activities – greeting, reading, ushering, and communion servers. In addition, there are bible studies, council, 5 ministry teams, vacation bible school, and the list goes on. We all have talents – and He has gifted them to be used! By serving with our brothers and sisters in Christ, you will meet and develop new friendships, uncover joy in giving, and get a glimpse of what Jesus means when he said in Matthew 7:24 “Therefore everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock.”

Our greater community is served by our actions too. Our “God’s Grace is Amazing Day” is a wonderful kickoff to fall - but we are a 365 days/year active family! We support food shelves at Salvation Army and Heaven’s Table, and invite the community on Wednesday for Open Door meals. We provide direct financial help to folks in crisis via People Helping People. Groups find our facility open to use for Community Bible Study, Girls and Boys Scouts, receptions, funerals and weddings – many times without any direct connection to members of our congregation. But if we want our programs and mission in the world to exist and thrive, then we each must prayerfully consider being a part of them. Do you want a Sunday school program for your children and others? Then sign up to teach and bring your kids along. If you value our church programs, facilities, pastors, and staff, their skills and experience, then show it in your financial giving. Every so often I’ll be in conversation with a member who disagrees with the direction of some activity or other in our congregation. My first question to them is, “Are you involved in that project?” I feel that if it is something important to me, then it is up to me to seek to understand and to get involved. If you share a passion for something going on at Grace or for something you would like to see happen, then quit yer bellyachin’ and get involved!

I want to thank all of you in the congregation for the opportunity to serve as Council President in 2017. Thank you to every member of this family who serve and love and give of their time and gifts throughout the year. “Thank You God” for putting me in this Grace Lutheran Church family!

Paul Ruen, Council President

Grace Lutheran Church
Annual Meeting Minutes

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Sunday, January 22, 2017

Call to Order: by Steven Stone, Council President at 9:40 AM with a quorum present.

Devotions: by Pastor John Heille - Litany: from the Annual Congregational Meeting Liturgy. Together, we are partners in ministry. Together, we accompany others in doing God's work. Together, we equip people to be disciples, evangelists and stewards. Together, we are members in the body of Christ. Together, we are stewards of God's gifts. Together, we are advocates of God's work for the sake of the world. Together, we are the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. A church that shares a living, daring confidence in God's Grace.

Secretary's Report: Reviewed. Motion by Deb Foster to approve and accept minutes from the 2016 Annual meeting. Seconded by Brian Huebert. Motion carried

Financial Report: Jane Reiman provided an outline of 2016 Finances, referencing the Balance Sheet and Profit & Loss Statement. While 2016 resulted in a negative Income balance of \$23,296.80, when factoring the offset of 2015 budget surplus the actual net deficit was \$9,754. All financial obligations in 2016 at Grace were met. There was no further discussion. Motion by Tina Hilgendorf to approve and accept the financial report. Seconded by Kris Tillotson. Motion carried

Elections: John Anthony from the Nominating committee presented the 2017 Congregational Ballot as follows:

Congregational Council - 3 year term: (vote for 4)

Jack Gerhardt
Mark Hernes
Jennifer Nielsen
Greg Brolsma

Congregational Council - 2 year term: (vote for 1)

John Anthony

Auditing Team - 1 year term: (vote for 3)

Dave Johnson
Randy Lubenow
Dennis Madsen

Nominating Committee - 1 year term: (vote for 1)

Ian Bents

Motion by Loren Dunham to appoint all by way of a unanimous ballot. Seconded by Louise Hendricks.

Motion Carried. Congratulations to all those elected to serve.

Proceeding Council Members: Continued Term

1 Year	2 Year
Paul Ruen	Tim Miller
Ryan Fett	Brenda Fellersen
Harriet Danielson	

Departing Council Members: Term Concluded

Steven Stone
Lyn Johnson
Sandy Lunn
Tim Hested
Chery Brumbaugh

2017 Budget:

Jane Reiman reviewed information covered at the budget forum, noting that there is a 1.4% increase (\$8,584) to the budget for 2017, Totaling \$617,487. All ministry teams reviewed and submitted their proposed budgets, the forecasted expenses were then reviewed by the service team, and presented to the council for approval. Jane offered explanation of increases due to our changing need regarding maintenance cost, and computer software within the budget. With no further discussion, Motion by Kay Schellpeper to approve and accept the 2017 budget. Seconded by Renee Tillotson. Motion carried

Old Business:

Referencing the outcome of the building options survey by our congregation, Ernie Nuss proposed that the current funds available in the Capital Campaign fund, Building fund, and Grace and Growth fund be utilized to finance the beginning phases (roof and windows) of the project. Advocating support on behalf of other senior members, Mr. Nuss noted a change to the bylaws in 2006 that would make it possible to borrow money from the Grace and Growth fund, to be paid back at a prime rate of interest. The intent to do so could prevent current cost estimates from rising, and promote progress for contracted work to begin in 2017. This would also aid efforts to move forward with a Capital Campaign, and encourage donations to be made by way of memorials or estate benefaction. Council Chairman - Steve Stone suggested that this request be presented to the council for consideration.

An update was given by Steve Stone regarding the Building project.

Roof and Windows: With guidance from fellow members Wes Brown, Jeff Greischar and Troy Nemmers, (experienced engineers) we have contacted Brunton Architects of Mankato to review plans on the project. Options will be discussed for the roof, with the possibility of adding air conditioning in the future. In addition they will review window replacement plans. When the new windows are installed, the room AC units currently in place will have to be removed, and will not be an option with new windows.

West Entrance: Bolton & Menk will survey the west parking lot to offer options for improvement and estimated cost of the project. Options include: 1. Tearing out the existing ramp and making a new one wider with less slope, we would lose parking spaces just to the west of the ramp. 2. Add heat under the driveway & steps, this would make winter entry much safer as snow and ice would melt. 3. Leave existing ramp and just redo the

landscaping and steps, as these are falling away from the driveway.

In acknowledgement of other discussion, the following comments, suggestions and/or motions were made:

Sue Redman: Inquired on the building project post card replies. Was it just an opinion survey, or congregational vote? Should there be a congregational vote to move forward with the project? Pastor Steve explained that the council need not seek a congregational vote to proceed with maintenance and repairs to the building, but rather supported the councils request to seek the opinion of the congregation due to the expense involved in these repairs.

Scott Nagel: Suggested that a congregational vote should be required regardless, making a motion to approve the money spent outside of the budget, for the funding of the building projects. Seconded by: Loren Dunham. The motion was not carried at this time, due to further discussion.

Mike Katzenmeyer: Recommended that a gabled roof replacement on the education wing be researched, prior to moving forward with repair on the current flat roof. This suggestion to examine the cost vs. longevity of each style roof should be examined for consideration.

Jane Reiman: Clarified that money going into the Trust account for the building project is not part of the general operating budget. It is money set aside in a separate account for specific purpose.

Jaime Bless: Asked that our church constitution be referenced regarding approval for making a required, or unnecessary motion to approve the congregational vote as made by Mr. Nagel. As our governing leadership may already be in place for the circumstance in question. The church constitution was presented to reference, no information was found requiring a congregational vote for money spent outside of the general budget.

Dick Gerhardt: Further agreed that Grace's elected council members are placed in these positions to make decisions on behalf of the congregation. In questioning the need for a congregational vote one could also reason, Does that mean all voting members should be contacted? Or exclusively the people gathered at the annual meeting today?

Judy Klenz: Expressed concern for a lack of communication between the ministry teams, council, and the congregation. Paul Ruen asserted the effort made to communicate council decisions and the happenings at Grace by several methods: during services, in weekly bulletins, at Gracetime, letters, council minutes printed in the Ways of Grace, etc.

Tari Riley: Stated concern for a vote taken, that appears to be unnecessary according to the church bylaws.

Deb Foster: Requested that we proceed with a vote on the motion made earlier, regardless of requirement, as it can be omitted later if unnecessary.

Paul Ruen: Reiterated the council's intention to seek congregational guidance on the building project maintenance and repairs needed. After further discussion, and clarification of the motion made by Scott Nagel, Seconded by Loren Dunham. A congregational vote was taken to approve the money spent outside of the general budget, for the funding of the building projects. Motion was carried

New Business:

Jennelle Cunning spoke of the annual report written by Pastor Jackie Ziemer. She conveyed that the congregation should have an opportunity to personally thank Pastor Jackie for her valued service and visitation ministry. It is understood that as of January 1, 2017, Pastor Jackie has left to continue her education, seeking board certification as a chaplain. Jennelle proposed that a motion to formally recognize Pastor Jackie's resignation be acknowledged, by way of a letter of gratitude written and printed in the next Ways of Grace. In addition, she requested that the council consider offering Pastor Jackie a gift of no less than \$100 to aid funding toward her education. Seconded by Judy Klenz. Motion was carried.

Ernie Nuss shared statistics he gathered regarding the average weekly attendance of services at Grace. With concern for the attendance percentage, versus total number of members, he suggested that a survey be conducted to determine ways and opportunities to increase the overall attendance.

Regarding the absence of the Visitation Pastor, Kay Schellpeper inquired on a plan to fill the position with a replacement. Pastor Steve shared that he and Pastor John will fulfill the need as best they can, until it is determined whether or not finding a replacement is needed. As representative of the personnel committee, Jaime Bless assured members at the meeting that the 2017 budget includes the funding to fill the position, if necessary. This affirms that the visitation ministry at Grace continues.

Pastor Steve Berkeland - Would like to encourage all to read the annual report booklet, as it represents the work and ministry happening at and through Grace. The ELCA ministry report also provides information outlining how the Holy Spirit is at work through the people and congregations of our Southern Minnesota Synod. Pastor Steve praised Steve Stone, Lyn Johnson, Sandy Lunn, Tim Hested and Chery Brumbaugh, for their council leadership and service to Grace. He also offered thanks to the staff, and all others who serve and worship at Grace. His words were applauded by all.

Pastor Steve Berkeland closed the meeting with a prayer. Adjournment:

A motion was made by: Christy Stone to adjourn the annual meeting. Seconded by: Paul Ruen. Motion Carried.

Respectfully submitted by: Lyn Johnson, Church Council

Statistical Summary – 2017

Baptisms: Youth –28 & Adult-2

Confirmations: Youth –33

Weddings: 18

Funerals: 31

Membership Additions:

By Baptisms: 28

By Transfer: 55

Membership Losses:

By Death: 13

By Transfer: 42

Grace Lutheran Church Membership as of 12/31/2016:

2217

Grace Lutheran Church Membership as of 12/31/2017:

2245

Saturday Evening Worship Services: 50

Sunday Morning Worship Services: 86

Special Worship Services: 33

(Ash Wednesday, Lent, Maundy Thursday,

Good Friday, Easter Sunrise,

Worship on the Water, Thanksgiving, Advent,

Blue Christmas, Christmas Eve, Grace is Amazing,

Festival of Music)

Average Weekly Attendance: 362

(includes Saturday evening & Sunday morning
Services only)

Saturday Average Attendance: 57

Sunday Service Average Attendance:

8:30: 138

10:45: 189

Summer/9:30: 215

Average Wednesday Confirmation Worship: 100

Ministry Team Updates

Children, Youth & Family Ministry Annual Report

“Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these.” Mark 10:14

Grace has continued to make youth and children’s ministry a great blessing. About 140 children have explored the word with 40 plus servants guiding children during **Power Hour** in 2017. New to Power Hour this fall 3-year old’s through sixth grade children are enjoying a new curriculum, Dig In! They are digging into the bible and will go through the bible from Genesis to Revelation in two years! Power hour servants can access an online lesson plan with many great ideas for classroom activities to teach the bible story for that week. Each Monday a newsletter is emailed out with the story that was taught and ideas on how to expand on what was taught. Every five to six weeks the classes gather together for a large group service project. In October members from Teens Encounter Christ joined the children as they tied blankets. In November, they made Christmas cards that were sent to some of our Grace family.

Teens in Christ is made up of students in seventh through ninth grades. Students reflect on God’s Word as it applies to our modern day life. They are going through a series called ‘Jesus is...’ doing topics like Jesus is our healer, our friend, a forgiver and they are reading stories in the gospels. During the mid-winter rally kids had fun at some Lego-themed activities. They made crafts, cupcakes, Lego projects and got their picture taken at a Lego photo booth.

On Palm Sunday the power hour students presented an Easter Program for friends and family. They shared the message of Jesus’ Resurrection through story and music. The children are looking forward to doing this again next year.

CHAOS (Christ’s Hands Around Our Students) returned on Wednesday’s in March and ran through the first week of May, as children talked about the parables of Jesus in the gospel of Luke. The story was also a part of the crafts, games and music for the day. We were blessed to have Cindy Bly, Stacy Martinson, Andrew Paulson, Bryan Struck, Pastor John and Bill Christianson help during this time. In October & November, children returned to CHAOS to hear about 7 miracles of Jesus from the book of John. The children not only participated in crafts, stories & games, there was a service component each week. Some of the favorite service projects were: making many crafts that went to Goldfinch and Lakeview, decorating placemats, first aid kits that were taken to Salvation Army, packed Operation Christmas Child boxes making Christmas decorations and cleaning up the garbage around the neighborhood. We were blessed to have Cindy Bly, Pastor John and Bill Christianson help with the busy Wednesday afternoons.

In May, the **TLC Ministry** welcomed the children entering into Power Hour in the fall and their parents for a special time at Grace. They enjoyed fun activities and met their classmates for Power Hour next year, each child was given their own prayer book to take home.

During the week of June 26th-30th Grace experienced Peru during **Vacation Bible School**. Over 90 servants helped 130 children experience Peru and had fun “Discovering God’s Good Gifts”. This year’s VBS offering went towards two projects. First was making sandwiches for the Summer Hunger program in Martin County. Children made over 600 hundred sandwiches that were handed out in area parks. The second project was bringing offering for water filtration systems in Peru. With the help of many families and using money raised both past & present Grace could send \$1964.32 to support this wonderful ministry.

Children Youth & Family Ministry Team continued.

Power Hour offering has continued to support a variety of hands on service projects. This year the children made Easter baskets for nursing homes, birthday bags for Heaven's Table (which consisted of a cake mix, frosting, gel writing, sprinkles and balloons), blanket tying for area organizations, Christmas cards for members of Grace, and eighty-nine shoe boxes were donated to Operation Christmas Child. In addition to the regularly scheduled education hour, children and their families have engaged in a variety of faith building activities. Numerous family activities were scheduled throughout the year to strengthen the bond between our church families. Among the most notable events were Bingo, Center Creek Orchard, the community Easter egg hunt and the Keepsake Christmas event where everyone made a nativity set to take home!

During January and February children in 3rd-6th grades, participated in a **Sunday evening Bible study**. They learned that prayer is a conversation with God. It is not about saying the right words; it's about speaking from your heart and then listening to what God has to say. In addition, the kids talked about how being successful in school and in life depends greatly on your character. When you choose to walk with God, commit to be a person of integrity, and refuse to take the easy way out, you will go far. These were fun nights and when the weather was cold the holy spirit warmed our hearts.

On Wednesday afternoons in July and August children in 3rd-5th grade gathered at Grace and enjoyed devotions, games, crafts and dived into service projects. A few of the favorite activities were baking pretzels as they talked about praying, spending some time at Ingleside playing games, making slime as they learned that our plans are not always God's plans.

Preparation for the **ELCA 2018 Youth Gathering** are under way, 34 youth and 6 adults are preparing their hearts and minds to travel to Houston, TX in June. The theme for the 2018 ELCA Youth Gathering, "This Changes Everything." Our primary scripture will be Ephesians 2:8 "*For by grace you have been saved through faith, and this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God.*" The youth that are attending have participated in many fundraisers to help offset the travel cost. Thank you for all of your support during the Holy Hotdish, Easter Breakfast, Bounce Fest, Thanksgiving Pumpkin Pies, Advent Calendars and pancake breakfasts.

Youth in 7th grade and up have had opportunities to participate in many **MERGE activities**. MERGE is an ecumenical gathering of area youth leaders working together to further God's kingdom on earth through support of youth and each other. There have been many activities offered for the youth including a volleyball/basketball tournament in East Chain, end of the school year bash with food, games and music, a summer kick off with boating, tubing, games and food, 5th quarter, a Thanksgiving meal and a Broomball tournament.

In May graduating seniors and their families were treated to a brunch, in recognition of their achievement. They heard a speaker, Fairmont track and cross-country coach Bob Bonk, share his faith and wisdom, and were presented blankets with the word "Grace" and a cross printed on them. The junior class served at the event.

The Children, Youth and Family Ministry Team includes: Andrea Miller, Carissa Andersen, Ryan Fett, Greg Broolsma, Nicki Kueker, and Pastor John Heille. We are always looking for new faces and ideas on this team! God has truly rewarded Grace with the gift of children!

Respectfully Submitted,
Nicki Kueker

Ministry Team Updates

Fellowship Ministry Annual Report

Each one should use whatever gift he has received to serve others faithfully administering God's grace in various forms. 1 Peter 4:10.

The fellowship team coordinates activities to provide opportunities for Grace members and non-members to interact and celebrate Christ in their lives. Fellowship is praying, serving, and giving together. Fellowship ministry teams focus is providing congregational and community events. Fellowship with God and his people increases our family of faith.

The Fellowship team for 2017 consisted of council members Harriet Danielson and Brenda Fellersen as well as Pastor John Heille.

Fellowship team supported the following activities in 2017:

Community events consisted of Open Door meals (coordinated by kitchen manger Harriette Connor and her team members), along with many outside groups who use our kitchen and fellowship hall, which is a blessing to our community.

Holy Hot Dish, coordinated with other participating churches. This is indeed a community event and many Grace members spend lots of hours in planning and preparing this meal. Many thanks to all involved and attending. It was held May 23, with approx. 155 people attending.

God's Grace is Amazing block party with many projects and many workers. We have been blessed with wonderful weather and many helping hands to prepare and serve this block party. It is indeed amazing to see all those yellow shirts all over town working on projects in Gods service to others. Served approx. 300.

Congregational events include Good Friday luncheon, consisting of sandwiches, chips, pickles, cake and beverages.

Thanksgiving pumpkin pie social served after the noon service. This past year was our best attendance ever. Approx. 60 + people attended.

Fellowship team contributes to the youth ministries when needed by teaming together with the youth in fund raising activities such as pancake breakfast and Easter breakfast.

Fellowship provides hospitality by furnishing donut holes and coffee each Sunday and is enjoyed by all, young and not so young.

Funeral committees and circles are also grouped under fellowship and serves many small groups.

Grace Lutheran Church is blessed with many servants who reach out to members and non-members in service, fellowship, hospitality, and love of the Lord and our family of faith. Thanks be to God in the year to come, may we serve others with a joyful heart.

Respectfully submitted,
Harriet Danielson

Ministry Team Updates

Open Door Ministry Report

Grace's Open Door ministry continues to serve Wednesday evening meals to our congregation and other members of our community 30 weeks of the year coinciding with the school calendar. Ten volunteer teams rotate weekly to cook, bake, set up, serve and clean up three times annually. These dedicated, unselfish servants are the heart and soul of Open Door and are the reason we are able to provide this ministry.

We lovingly encourage everyone with an interest in eating and/or serving to join us for a meal, serve on a meal team, meet new people and enjoy warm fellowship while sharing Christ's love. Please encourage your friends & neighbors to experience our hospitality. It's always a joy to see new faces.

We'd love to hear your input and suggestions regarding the menu, ways we can improve, how to reach additional individuals, and things we are doing well.

Thanks you to everyone who makes Open Door possible and for allowing me to be part of this amazing ministry.

We look forward to sharing a meal with you!

Harriette Connor

Ministry Team Updates

Outreach Ministry Team 2017

“In the same way, let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven”. (Matthew 5:14-16)

“Support and Empowering Servants” is the Outreach mission statement. We make an effort to extend services and support in our church, the community and the world by showing God’s love. Outreach focuses each month on missions within the church. We invite individuals already involved in an Outreach mission to come to our meetings, giving us insight and knowledge of what they do. Most of the mission teams are small and our goal is to make the congregation aware of what each mission does to get others involved.

We have dedicated volunteers helping at our area food shelves – the Salvation Army and Heaven’s Table and delivering “Hot Meals on Wheels” to those in our community that are shut-ins or are not able to prepare a meal.

Lutheran Social Services is a very strong mission within Grace Lutheran. Dedicated individuals put in their time preparing treasure chests and making blankets for homeless individuals in Minnesota. Grace Lutheran takes in new members twice a year where the Team puts on the new member supper inviting Council members to join us to introduce and inform new members of what Grace has to offer. Our Visiting Team and Card Ministry bring encouragement and friendship to individuals in need of comforting and companionship sometimes bringing them prayer shawls. The number of aging members of Grace living in nursing homes or alone is increasing significantly. The Visiting Team is in need of volunteers who are willing to give a small portion of their time to be a friend to listen and to pray with those in need.

The Star Tree Ministry is so rewarding to people who normally would not have a Christmas gift without this mission. Much time and effort is needed in organizing and getting the gifts ready. Thanks to congregational support this ministry has been well received at a time of year when giving is so essential in the lives of others.

Other ministries Outreach is actively involved with include: Women’s Circles, Prayer Chain, Greeters, Grace Floats used in parades, Assisting people who come to Grace for help, Local Military Support, and our Missions Team which offers support to many ministries. The Outreach Team meets the second Tuesday of every month. If you are interested in giving back and serving others please consider being a part of our team.

Outreach Team members are Pastor John Heille, Mary Kotewa, Jan Nielsen, Connie Havnen-Gustafson, Lyn Johnson, Mark Hernes, and John and Connie Anthony representing missions.

Ministry Team Updates

Missions Ministry Team

“I am the vine, you are the branches. Whoever remains in me and I in him, will bear much fruit, for you can do nothing without me.” John 15:5

The Missions Team would like to thank everyone for their outstanding support throughout the year. With many volunteer hours and financial help from the congregation, we donated over \$31,000 to local, regional, and global mission needs. Including special designated gifts, donations were over \$52,000.

In order to reach this amount, the team held our standard fundraisers: Phantom Tea, , Apple Pie Bake – 340 pies, Christmas Tree Lot – about 200 trees, “Homes for the Homeless” Snowmen, and Christmas Bake Sale. We weren’t able to quite sell all the Christmas trees this year, but still did make about \$6000. We didn’t have the Salad Luncheon this year, but did hold the Silent Auction. We hope to grow this next year and would encourage people to donate “service” items as well as physical auction items. The bi-annual no clothes rummage sale was not held this year, but will be held in 2018.

The congregation’s generous support enabled our team to contribute to over 30 worthy causes. Donations are given locally, regionally, and globally. Many words of thanks are received from the recipients to show that our efforts are appreciated. We also appreciate the outstanding fellowship between the generations as volunteers baked pies and sold Christmas trees. That is an extra blessing gained by these projects.

A special welcome to this year’s new members: Mark Hernes, Laura Odgren, and Pete Odgren. The Missions Team meets approximately six times per year and would welcome new members to help keep missions strong at Grace!

Our goal is to follow the teachings of our Lord by serving as His branches, working to provide hope for the hopeless, food for the hungry, and help for those in need.

Co-Chairs: John & Connie Anthony

Secretary: Louise Hendricks

Treasurer: Carol Voss

Members: Carol Cress, Mark Hernes, Keith & Karen Hertzke, Todd Mathews, Carol Nasby, Pete & Laura Odgren, Kay Schellpeper, Ross Sheppard, Joel Teskey, Donna Torgerson, & Pastor John Heille

Worship Ministry Team

The Worship Ministry Team meets seasonally to work together to make worship a meaningful and spiritual experience for all members of Grace. There are three services each weekend – Saturday 6:00 p.m. and Sunday 8:30 a.m. and 10:45 a.m. The services vary from Holden Evening prayer to Traditional to Contemporary. Services can be seen weekly online by going to our website and on the local cable channel.

Special services were offered on Palm Sunday, Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, Easter, Thanksgiving Eve, and three services on Christmas Eve. Other special events during the year were as follows:

March - The Festival of Music

August – Worship on the Water

December – Blue Christmas service

Amy Engel was hired as Grace Lutheran Church’s new full-time music director to create a unique musical experience that enhances and supports the message of the worship service.

Worship on the Water had an extremely positive response, and the worship team looks forward to making this an annual event in August.

The Worship Ministry Team is represented on Council by Jennifer Nielsen and Jack Gerhardt.

Those also attending meetings include: Pastor Steve, Judy Berkeland, Marilyn Nielsen, Carol Madsen, Carolyn Brown, Stan Sundberg and Tina Hilgendorf. Anyone interested in joining the Worship Ministry Team, please contact Pastor Steve.

Ministry Team Updates

Service Ministry Team 2017

- Received/monitored the month general and trust account financial report.
- Reviewed the annual audit presented by the Audit Committee.
- Accepted the resignation of Visitation Pastor Jackie Zimmer.
- The Personnel Committee falls under the Service Team and they reviewed current staff positions. All non-pastoral staff positions were completed. The Pastors are still in process.
- Hired Russ Steele as Visitation Minister.
- Tuckpointing project on the west side of the building was completed.
- Replaced the roof on the education wing which included adding insulation.
- Reviewed the Memorial Policy and made several changes.
- Received a proposal plan from Bolton & Menk for the west side entrance reconfiguration.
- Replaced 7 windows on the 2nd floor, west side of the education wing.
- Reviewed our general liability insurance and renewed current policy.
- Accepted the resignation of Director of Worship & Music, Andrew Paulson.
- Purchased new window coverings for the new windows in the 2nd floor, south office.
- Contracted with Fairmont Glass to replace the windows in the 2nd floor kitchen/choir room and lounge.
- Hired Amy Engel as Director of Worship & Music.
- Worked with Financial Director to prepare 2018 budget.

Council Representation: Paul Ruen, Tim Miller

Members: Dave Johnson, Pastor Steve Berkeland

Staff Members: Jane Reiman, Bill Christianson

Maintenance Report for 2017

2017 saw a couple of big ticket items come to fruition. The new roof was completed on the educational wing, and new windows were installed in all the offices as well as the Laurel Lounge and Kadesh Kitchen. Thanks to all for pulling together to help with these two projects. New windows in the upper floor classrooms and lower level classrooms are in the works, and will be completed as funds become available. There will be a new person, Rich Wolf, plowing the west parking lot as we move forward. Dylan Kallemyn was married and moved out of town-we all wish Dylan well. Other than those two big items, maintenance costs were about normal. Our Church continues to be a busy place. We are home to many groups during the year including three women's circles, two sewing groups, a rug hooking group, Hardanger club, Girl and Boy Scouts, MRCI, The Masons, Parkinson's support group and our numerous Missions fundraisers. All these plus weddings and other special functions continue to make Grace Lutheran Church an active and vibrant place.

I wish all of you a Happy New Year.

Bill Christianson

Ministry Team Updates

Personnel Committee Report

Ecclesiastes 3:1 - There is a time for everything, and a season for every activity under the heavens.

2017 was a season of change and delightful new beginnings for our committee and for Grace. Our team transitioned by welcoming three new members to the Personnel Committee--Greg Brolesma, Tim Miller and Beth Senf. Thank you to outgoing members-Jaime Bless, Lyn Johnson, and Steve Stone for their contributions.

In May and June, we conducted employee reviews with our salaried and part-time staff, and listened to their needs and ideas for change. We are very thankful to have such a caring and positive staff that works hard to meet the many different needs of our congregation! Reviews for the pastoral staff will be conducted in the first quarter of 2018.

After receiving our Worship and Music Director's resignation, we quickly went to work on searching for and selecting his replacement. We asked for input from congregational members involved in music on desired qualifications. With this information in mind, our team conducted a search, and were excited to welcome Amy Engel in December.

2017 brought changes to the Jr/Sr Youth Director position, and many conversations over how best to structure this position. We conducted a job search to find a part-time person to coordinate activities for our 7-12 grade youth. This position remains open at this time, and a priority for 2018. Our Director of Education has graciously agreed to leading and coordinating the youth's trip to the ELCA National Youth Gathering in summer 2018.

Together with the Service Team, we recommended staff compensation changes. Throughout the year, we have worked to communicate often with the congregation on our work. We welcome your input, and look forward to the 2018 season, and to the work and opportunities God brings to our Grace Lutheran community!

Respectfully submitted,

2017

Personnel Committee Members

Pastor Steve Berkeland, Greg Brolesma, Brenda Madsen, Tim Miller, Beth Senf, Cindy Wohlhuter

St. Luke's Lutheran Care Center Update

St. Luke's commitment to excellence is evident in good reports we received from families of our residents and physicians during the past year.

During the past year, we have been able to maintain a census of 75 residents. Currently the average facility in the state has 65.8 residents. In addition to working diligently to comply with many new federal regulations, we've maintained our standard of excellent person-centered care. We had excellent results with the MN Department of Health annual survey completed in January of 2017.

Throughout the state, the labor force fails to keep pace with our growth in aging population. Statewide there are 2,800 open direct care positions in care centers. Rural areas are noted to face the toughest workforce challenges. During the past year, one of our biggest obstacles continues to be securing adequate personnel. We have had open positions for nursing as well as dietary, building services and activities. We are very grateful for our devoted staff members who are faithful to pick up extra shifts, even though it often means giving up time on their weekend off or picking up extra hours on the evening or night shifts. The wage incentives offered by our generous board have been widely appreciated by our staff and have made a difference in recruiting and retention.

Additionally, we feel fortunate to have a nursing assistant training program and the opportunity to provide clinical experiences for nursing students from University of Minnesota, Mankato and Presentation College in Fairmont. We are hopeful that this will help in recruiting nursing staff. St. Luke's offers competitive wages, a good benefit package and a scholarship program. Church members are challenged to encourage people they know who may be looking for a job to consider employment at St. Luke's.

New Life Manor, Southview Estates, Friendship Court and Adult Day Services can all be proud of the wonderful services offered.

We would like to thank you for your support and prayers as we continue to strive to meet the needs of long-term care in our area. Your partnership with us in our ministry of gentle service is greatly appreciated.

Margaret Brandt
Administrator

Dennis Madsen
Representative from
Grace Lutheran

A Ministry Report of the Southeastern Minnesota Synod, ELCA *in celebration of the ministry that took place throughout 2017*

We join together in giving thanks for the multitude of ways the Holy Spirit is at work through the people and congregations of our Southeastern Minnesota Synod!

DEVELOPING LEADERS

- 4 Ministers of Word and Sacrament were ordained
- 1 Minister of Word and Service was commissioned
- 191 rostered & lay leaders participated in the Fall Theological Conference in November 2017
- 22 active ministry candidates across 6 seminaries are participating in the candidacy process
- 258 congregational leaders participated in the RENEW! event in Spring 2017
- 3 candidates for rostered ministry were approved and sent into the wider church to serve as either Word and Sacrament or Word and Service Ministers
- 11 rostered leaders participated in the Difficult Conversations Training

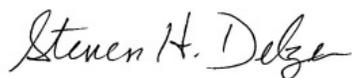
EQUIPPING CONGREGATIONS

- 11 congregations took part in Stewardship for All Seasons, utilizing a stewardship coach for a year
- 4 congregations worked with LEAD (Living Everyday As Disciples), receiving a congregational assessment and coaching for a year
- 7 congregations participating in the Hope in Christ process, discerning together what it means to follow Jesus
- 39 congregations were in the call process
- 18 congregations called a rostered leader
- 512 people attended the 2017 Southeastern Minnesota Synod Assembly

ACCOMPANYING GLOBAL PARTNERS

- 52 congregations partnered with congregations, schools, rural clinics and a hospital in Tanzania & Colombia
- 1 congregation visited congregations and ministries within the Lutheran Church in Colombia (IELCO)
- 1 congregation partnered with medical staff at Iambi Hospital within the Central Diocese of Tanzania
- 7 synod delegates representing congregations and the Office of the Bishop, visited partner congregations, schools, and health ministries within the Central Diocese of Tanzania
- 2 synod delegates representing 2 congregations and the Office of the Bishop traveled to Colombia to participate in the Lutheran Women's Encounter (Assembly) and visit with the Lutheran Church in Colombia
- 3 synod representatives attended 2017 Ecumenical Advocacy Days in Washington, D.C.
- Synod delegates, including leaders from the 5 South Sudanese Worshipping Communities and the Office of the Bishop attended the South Sudanese Consultation in Chicago, IL
- An AMMPARO Team (Accompanying Migrant Minors with Protection, Advocacy, Representation and Opportunities) was formed in the synod
- Rev. Wal Reat, ELCA Missionary to South Sudan, visited congregations during his appointed home visit to the Southeastern Minnesota Synod
- 4 synod delegates, representing 2 congregations, a South Sudanese Worshipping Community, and the Office of the Bishop participated in the inauguration of the Reconciliation Lutheran Church, Community Center, and Primary Health Clinic in Juba, South Sudan and visited congregations in Gambella, Ethiopia with Rev. Wal Reat

Peace in Christ,



Steven Delzer, Bishop

Endowments

Grace & Growth Fund

Fund Balance as of 1-1-17		
Grace & Growth balance		196,608.82
Distributions made/not distributed balance		<u>8,736.36</u>
		205,345.18
Income:		
Contributions/Interest (gain/loss)		10,450.64
2017 Operating Loans Repayment		<u>16,000.00</u>
		26,450.64
Disbursements:		
2017 Operating Loans		16,000.00
Payout 2016 interest:		
\$ 4,835.05	50% Missions	
\$ 2,417.52	25% Capital Equipment	
\$ 967.01	10% Worship	
\$ 967.01	10% Education	
\$ 483.50	5% Library/Christian Promotion	
		<u>9,670.09</u>
		25,670.09
Fund Balance as of 12-31-17		206,125.73

GRACE LUTHERAN CHURCH ENDOWMENT FUND (MN FOUNDATION) 10-1-16 through 9-30-17

Beginning Balance as of 10-1-16 143,516
Contributions

Investment Activity

Interest & Dividends 2,244
Investment Gain/(Loss) 17,204

Disbursements

Administrative Fees (1,259)
Gains Paid (5,696)
Investment Expenses (612)

Ending Balance as of 9-30-17 155,397

ENDOWMENT COMMITTEE

Members: Todd Mathews, Wendy Nemmers, Jack Gerhardt, Jane Reiman

The Endowment Committee met to discuss the 2017 distribution of the interest from the fund that is held by the Minnesota Community Foundation.

Funds available -

\$5,813.99 – Balance from previous years
\$5,696.10 – 2016 interest earned
\$11,510.09

Funds were distributed as follows -

\$1,898.70 – GLC Missions Committee (1/3 of the 2016 interest)
\$3,400.00 – 2018 National Youth Gathering (\$100 x 34 attending)
\$2,000.00 – GLC People Helping People Account
\$4,211.39 – Building Campaign – Window Replacement
\$11,510.09

Missions Ministry

GRACE LUTHERAN MISSIONS MINISTRY
2017 ANNUAL REPORT
Carol Voss, Treasurer

BEGINNING BALANCE 1/1/17	\$12,278.04
RECEIPTS:	
Missions Envelopes and Direct Deposits	\$2945.00
Memorials	945.00
2016 + 2017 GLC Budget	4000.00
Grace Trust Fund	6733.75
Phantom Tea	4085.00
Silent Auction	1220.00
Apple Pie Bake	3462.00
Homeless Snowmen Shelters	596.00
Christmas Bake Sale	470.00
Christmas Tree Lot	12,625.00
Designated Donations:	
Ross Sheppard Family	19,000.00
Kids against Hunger-Fairmont Area, Operation Smile, Mpls. Community Emergency Services, Options Pregnancy Center, Union Gospel Missions-Mpls., Beacon Interfaith Housing, Life Song for Orphans-Guatemala	
Chris and Carol Nasby	1000.00
Haiti Nursing Foundation Scholarship	
Roger and Carol Voss	1000.00
Belize Lighthouse Church and Charity	
Interest	2.05 +
TOTAL RECEIPTS	\$58,088.80

(continued on next page)

DISBURSEMENTS:

Rev. Herb Haferman	\$1000.00
S.A.L.T. Pastor Steve Torgerson	2000.00
Haiti Nursing Foundation Scholarship	2000.00
Lutheran World Relief	1500.00
Global Health Ministries	1500.00
Operation Bootstrap Africa	1000.00
O.B.A. – Post Secondary Scholarships--- Tanzania	1000.00
Lutheran Mideast Development, Kurdistan, Iraq	500.00
Belize King’s Children’s Orphanage	1000.00
Mn. Adult and Teen Challenge	1000.00
Metro Hope Ministries	1000.00
Our Savior’s Housing	1000.00
Lutheran Lakota Shared Ministry (Pine Ridge, S.D.)	1500.00
Caring and Sharing Hands --- Mpls.	1000.00
Mpls Community Services	1000.00
Lutheran Social Services, Mankato	1000.00
Fairmont Area Kids Against Hunger	1000.00
Heaven’s Table Foodshelf--- Fairmont	2000.00
CREST---Fairmont	1000.00
House of Hope --- Fairmont	1000.00
Fairmont Area Kinship	1000.00
Martin County Literacy Council. Fairmont	1000.00
Campus Life Youth for Christ --- Fairmont	500.00
Youth for Christ--- Fairmont	500.00
Options Pregnancy Center	1000.00
People Helping People – GLC	1000.00
Habitat for Humanity	250.00
Luth. Disaster Relief (South Sudan)	1000.00
ELCA --- YMGA	1000.00
Designated Gifts (See RECEIPTS for Disbursements)	21,000.00
Operation Smile (Designated Gift)	20.00
PQT, Inc. (Christmas Trees)	6,275.75
Christmas Tree Trailer Storage	325.00
Blanket Material for Lutheran Social Services --- Mankato	250.00
Apple Pie Bake Expenses	489.69
Christmas Tree Lot Expenses (P.U.C.)	116.39
US Post Office and Speedy Shipping	152.13
Miscellaneous	44.88
TOTAL DISBURSEMENTS	\$59,923.84
Ending balance: Dec. 31, 2017	\$10,443.00

To: Congregation
From: Dennis Madsen
David Johnson
Randy Lubenow
Date: January 3, 2018
Re: 2017 Audit Committee Report

The audit committee met on December 22, 2017 to perform the 2017 Grace Lutheran Church audit. This summary details the results of our audit.

Audit Procedures:

We performed audit procedures on revenues of the church. The audit committee selected two months, April and October of information. The general, trust and savings accounts were reviewed. Audit procedures included the following:

- We obtained copies of the monthly bank statements.
- We obtained the weekly offering envelopes, ACH deposits, and the worksheets of the weekly count of the offering deposits.
- We obtained copies of the monthly profit and loss statements.
- We agreed the weekly count sheets to the deposits indicated on the bank statements.
- We agreed the monthly deposits on the bank statements to the monthly profit and loss statements.
- We traced a sample of weekly contributions from the members to the deposit statement.

We also performed audit procedures on church payables. We selected two months, April and October to review. The general, trust and savings accounts were reviewed. Procedures included the following:

- We obtained copies of the bank statements.
- We obtained invoices for each check written.
- We agreed checks written to the supporting invoices.
- We agreed timesheets to payroll checks written.

Results:

In our opinion all entries are entered and processed according to Generally Accepted Accounting Principles.

Recommendations:

None

Respectfully Submitted,
2017 Audit Committee