

Grace Lutheran Church

Ministries

Annual report

May 2018

grace
remember • rejoice • renew



Core Values



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Interim Pastor's Report

May, 2018

Interim Senior Pastor

I began serving Grace as interim senior pastor on January 23. I'm grateful to Pastor Sara Vanderpan for serving as "bridge interim senior pastor" from November 27 to January 22. And I'm grateful for the congregation's willingness to wait which allowed me to fill this position. I'm truly enjoying getting to know the people of Grace in worship and in other gatherings. I greatly appreciate the staff and congregational leaders I'm privileged to work with. And I look forward to helping guide Grace through this interim time.



2017 was a year of major staff transition for Grace. Pastor Mark Hellmann highlighted some of these in his annual report last May. But then Pastor Mark and Jeannie Hellmann retired in November after serving Grace for 22 years. With all these staff departures, along with new staff coming on board, Grace has been in major transition now for a full year since Pastor Steve Thomason's resignation last spring, when he left to accept a call to another church. Pastor Steve's departure was a big loss for many people. From what I've observed, it seems that perhaps the congregation didn't grieve the loss of Pastor Steve in the way it may have needed to. Confusion around questions like "Why aren't we forming a Call Committee for a new associate pastor?" weren't clarified until Pastor Mark's and Jeannie's retirement announcement in the fall. In the span of less than a year, in 2017 Grace lost its entire pastoral staff, along with losing other staff members. That's a lot of loss and change. That's no small amount of grief.

This kind of grief may manifest itself in the struggle of some people to adjust. Evidence of this struggle are those who have been absent in worship in recent months. While it's too bad when people step away from their congregation during such times of transition, it happens. Some will wait to see if and when they may return to Grace. Some will wait to see who the new pastor will be. Some have and will continue to come back to check things out.

I know that Grace can remember higher overall weekend worship attendance numbers not many years ago. Compared to those peak attendance years, current levels are lower. It's also true that the Church and the culture continue to change even as I write this. But despite all these realities, I want to emphasize that Grace still has "critical mass" and a lot of vitality. Grace is a congregation that still has many people active in its life and mission. So please know that the Holy Spirit has not left Grace, that Grace's life and mission will continue during this interim, and that Grace can have a strong future, even if that future may look somewhat different than its past.

The Alban Institute says that congregations become "unstuck" during interim times. They are given an opportunity to take a fresh and honest look at themselves, their mission, and their future. While some anxiety or unresolved tensions may float to the surface, they are also freed in positive ways to creatively look at new possibilities.

Grace has now formed a Transition Team which held its first meeting on April 30. The eight members are: Lori Ackerson, Chuck Donaldson, Kevin Gast, Johnna Rohmer-Hirt, Nancy Jenkins, Ann Lange, Sue Melody, and Mike Seide. The team has a good demographic mix of age, gender, recent vs. longtime membership, and worship service (5:00, 8:00, 9:00, 10:30) normally attended. I'll be the 9th member of this team as I work closely with them in my role as pastoral advisor and consultant.

Together we'll look at Grace and the surrounding community. We'll ask questions about who Grace is, who Grace wants to be, what we see as Grace's mission and future trajectory, and what kind of skill set is needed in Grace's new senior pastor. Congregational input will be an important part of the Transition Team's process.

The Transition Team's work will take about six months from start until the final report they present to the Vision Board and Call Committee. Then the Call Committee will begin their work. A typical Call Committee timeline – from first meeting until the new pastor arrives – is about nine months. So, for example, if Grace's Call Committee begins their work in November, the new pastor could be on board before September 2019. It could be sooner, or it could be a later. The important thing is that Grace makes its way through this process thoughtfully and intentionally.

Can't Grace just quickly get a new senior pastor? Usually taking a pause for the cause is healthiest and best for a church in the long run – especially after a 22 year pastorate. This is what many congregational studies have shown. This has been my experience as an interim pastor. And that was the experience of Salem English Lutheran Church in Minneapolis where I was the pastor who left after 20 years. It's probably not wise for Grace to rush to get its new pastor before the congregation really knows who it's looking for. It will also be important during this interim time to review Grace's current staffing configuration, look at the roles and responsibilities of each staff member, and at least consider future staffing possibilities that may best fit Grace's size and needs.

Finally, an intentional interim time can also be a very spiritual time when we are open to the way the Holy Spirit may be at work within us and our congregation. Even as our personal faith journeys need continual renewal and re-birth, so does our life together as a faith community. May the Spirit actively work within and among us during our interim sojourn together at Grace! – Pastor Bruce Arnevik

Grace Lutheran Church begins its 51st year...

Have you ever waited and waited for something grand and then after it's over felt a sense of loss or emptiness? That is how we felt following our weekend of service and celebration of 50 years of Grace. For those that helped, "Thank You, Thank You, Thank You!" For those that attended, we hope you had a grand time. For those that missed the event, here is what you missed:



On Saturday, September 9th about 50 members of Grace went out into the immediate neighborhood and helped our neighbors with fall cleanup projects around their houses, as well as cleaning two local parks. Following the 5:00 service, the party began. Music was provided by the Vintage Grapes Band which played many songs from the era when the church was first formed (the 60's). Businesses in the neighborhood provided incentives for us to use their products and services. Children found much to do with jumping castles, face painting, a police car to investigate, a fire truck to climb into, etc. Dinner was served all evening providing nourishment for all. We had a great time with perfect weather!

On Sunday we reflected on the theme: Remember, Rejoice, Renew. Video messages of former pastors and employees were played and congratulations from ELCA Bishop Ann Svennungsen were heard. Pastor Mark reflected on his apprehension working for a church named Grace because it would carry expectations of the congregation serving others. He then went on to describe the many ministries that do



serve our community and beyond, and realized that Grace is the name we do want for our church. Following the service, the congregation enjoyed refreshments and connected with one another.



We can't help but give God the glory for the church we have become in the past 50 years and are energized by the thought of where He might take us 50 years from now. What will the future hold? What we do know is that Grace Lutheran Church will continue to be "A Ministry of Grace in the Heart of Andover."

God Bless,

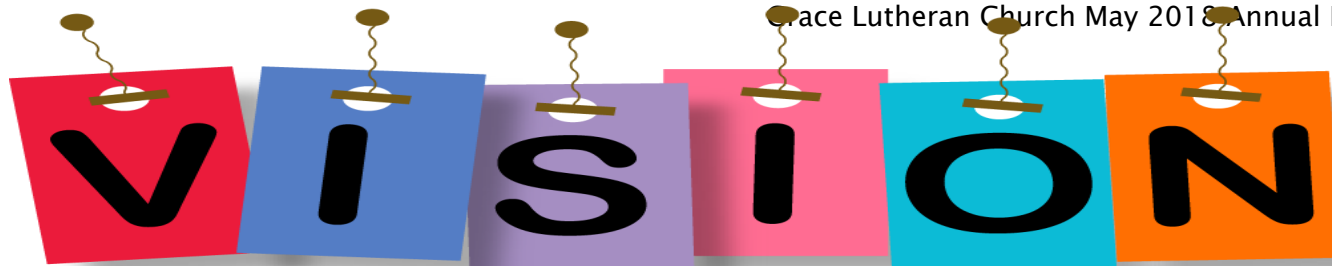
Dianne & Dennis Grabowski

President's Report

I can't believe it's been 3 years since I joined the Vision Board at Grace. I didn't really know what to expect when I started, but if someone would have told me 3 years ago about all the changes coming to Grace during this time, I'm not sure I would have believed much of it. This past year especially has brought more change than many of us are comfortable with. There is no doubt that change is underway at Grace, and more of it is coming. This can be a scary and uncertain time, and I have indeed spent my share of time worrying and wondering what will happen. Many times I've reached out to our Heavenly Father to pray and ask Him to help me and to bless Grace and all the members, staff, and ministries here. And as I think about our future here at Grace, I'm filled with excitement and hope. I know that the Holy Spirit is at work here, and I'm confident that His guiding hand will lead us into a new and beautiful time. Will there be bumps along the way? Absolutely. Will things be different than they were, and different than we imagine? Most definitely. Along with all of you, I will without a doubt miss the pastors and staff that we have said goodbye to in the past year or so. But as long as we keep our hearts open and our minds focused on where our Lord is trying to lead us, I have no doubt that our future will be truly exciting and wonderful.

As I look back at my time on the Vision Board, the thing that stands out most to me is the friendships that were created, and others that were strengthened. Some of the people I've had the fortune to serve with were from "the other services" that I don't regularly attend. I'm thankful to have gotten to know them when I otherwise may not have, and I'm grateful to now call them friends. I also have a MUCH greater appreciation for everything that the pastors and staff do on a regular basis. We truly have a wonderful and special group of people that call Grace home. I'm so thankful to be a part of it, and I feel so blessed and honored that you all have allowed me to play a part in leading this beloved church.

*In Him,
Doug Hanson
Vision Board President*



B O A R D Vision Board Nominees

We want to give thanks to Deb Stang and Doug Hanson who have served on Vision Board for the last three years. We are grateful for their leadership and dedication to our congregation during this time of transition.

The Vision Board appointed a Nomination Committee. The committee was Pat Walters, Doug Hanson, Deb Stang, Greg Ackerson, Chris Pace, and Scott Christensen. The committee met and prayerfully discerned who to ask to run for Vision Board. The nomination team looked at who is actively involved, has served in at least one ministry, and has demonstrated leadership characteristics needed to serve at this top level position. The list of candidates Vision Board is presenting now for your vote is the end result of the Nominations Process at Grace.

During the year, the Vision Board appointed Chad Hadler to complete the term of Deb Shepard. Members of the congregation will have the opportunity to affirm his appointment on the 2018 ballot.

The following candidates are presented by the Grace Lutheran Church Nominations Committee to be elected for the two open Vision Board positions to serve 3 year terms. The 2018 Vision Board Elections will be held during the 2018 May Congregational Meeting which will be held after all the regular worship services, 5:00, 8:00, 9:00 and 10:30 on May 19th and 20th. Please pray for each of the following candidates.

Vision Board Appointee Chad Hadler



I have attended Grace for 8 years and been a member for 4 years. My wife, Leah, and I have been married for 11 years, and have two daughters, Cora (6) and Eve (5 months). In my professional career, I worked 6 years for the Boy Scouts of America in the Rochester, MN area. My role included fundraising, volunteer management, and recruitment. For the past 11 years I have worked as Operations Manager for Lake Restoration in Rogers,

MN. My role includes budgeting, sales, service, and staff management. I have to be a forward thinker in my profession and continuously consider the bigger picture, which I intend to prayerfully utilize on the Vision Board if I am elected. My volunteer efforts at Grace have included ushering at the 10:30 am service, member of the Men's Ministry team, Finance Team, as well as the Stewardship committee. Thank you for your consideration; I look forward to serving our faith community.



Vickie Meade

My name is Vickie Meade, and I've been a member of Grace Lutheran Church since September 2004. I am an active choir member and on the 'Welcome Center' team. I've also assisted the Women's Ministry team with various Great Escape events and women's retreats. I served one three-year term as a Vision Board Member. I work full time as a loan of-

ficer at Electrus FCU. I have one sponsored daughter, Grace, from Rakai Uganda, and my brother and his family in Verona WI. I offer to serve this community of faith to help discern God's path for Grace and share that vision with the rest of you.

Carla Renner

I have two adult children, and I am a grandmother of three. I have a sponsored son, Moses Gift, from Rakai. I am a self-employed, licensed family daycare provider. My prior employments included youth ministry, paralegal and financial services to name a few. I began attending Grace in 2009 and became a member in 2012. I currently serve as Assistant Minister, Grace Choir, Worship Volunteer, and have been the hostess for



Rockin' Kids Bible Club. I have served on women's ministry events as well as God's Work Our Hands, and was the Co-coordinator for the Art of Grace. My personal interests include gardening, art, crafts, sewing, birding, biking, and photography. I love road-trips and enjoy our great state of Minnesota. Thank you for your consideration. I look forward to serving our faith community.

Dave Trapp



My family and I have been members of Grace for 30 years. We have always enjoyed the feeling of welcome and friendships that Grace offers. It is also wonderful to feel grace at Grace.

I am currently involved with outreach to homeless shelters, music, lawn mowing, Own Your Faith mentor and sound board. I have been a small group Bible study leader, Sunday school teacher, directed the church band and served on a hiring committee for the position of music coordinator. I have been a Lutheran my entire life, and church has always been a vital part of my life. If elected I look forward to the opportunity to serve on the Grace Lutheran Vision Board.

Children's Ministries

Every child should know that God created us, God loves us, and God will always be there for us. Children are the future of the church. By teaching them about Jesus and showing them our faith early, with the help of the Holy Spirit, we are helping them develop a true and meaningful relationship with God. Watching a child recite a bible verse from memory, say a prayer by themselves or sing a song about Jesus is an uplifting experience. It can take your breath away. Taking these small steps to begin their faith journey helps give our children the tools to know the perfect time to pray or talk to God. When a child asks to pray before a meal, or spontaneously prays for family or friends that might need it, we see a real and authentic faith forming.

God's Kids

VBS 2017 Gadgets and Gizmos

We had a "Wired" week as we learned that we are unique and wonderfully made by God to Trust Him, Follow Jesus, Help Others, and to Shine for Jesus! We had over 230 children and over 100 volunteers that made this an amazing week of fun and learning! Our youth led music team, the Radical Robotics, had us "Rock this Planet" everyday in the Worship Center! We got really wet at games, enjoyed delicious and unique snacks, and explored our creativity in crafts. Our decorating team put the gears and gizmos together to make a robotic experience.



Professor Doohickey began each day in an interactive activity to set the tone for the day. To see the kids in the Worship Center come A-L-I-V-E and praise God with their whole hearts was a joyous expression of faith!

Summer Musical Adventure Camp

Our last Summer Musical Camp was especially precious and poignant. Our musical was **Once Upon a Parable**. Our musical allowed us to explore the parables in our weeklong adventure. We created a flood as we sang about the Wiseman Foolish Man. We had many actors AND actresses cast in the role of Jesus. Our musical was a very powerful journey of salvation as we met the prodigal, in our play a daughter, and ended with Jesus's death and resurrection.

We had a cast of 27 brilliant actors and actresses who sang from their hearts to praise God. We had a crew of 8 caring and talented individuals who made this production possible. Summer Musical Camp has given children amazing opportunities and allowed youth to serve and grow in leadership. Each year, the cast have grown in confidence and ability and it has been a joy to see the steps each of them has made as they have grown!

SONday School

This year the children have studied a different Bible story each week, that relates back to the Bible verse they are learning for the month. Each grade has spent the year learning and memorizing faith milestones. These allow them to grow deeper in their relationship with God. Preschoolers are learning how to love their neighbors by memorizing Mark 12:31. Kindergarteners are learning about eternal life by memorizing John 3:16. First Graders have spent the year memorizing the Lord's Prayer. Second Grade is learning all the books of the New Testament. While Third and Fourth Grade have been learning the books of the Old Testament. Finally, our Fifth Graders have memorized the Apostles Creed and are excited to recite it with the entire congregation in church. Our fifth graders are also getting ready to make an important step and cross the bridge from SONday school to catechism.



Rockin' Kids Bible Club

In the fall of 2017, we learned about choices the men and women of the Bible made to follow God and lead faithful lives. Our next unit let us study stories told by a great story teller, Jesus. We dug into the Parables where we learned that Jesus told these stories to help us learn about God's Kingdom. Parables also have special meanings for how God wants us to live. We continued our yearly rotation with games, Bible Discovery, crafts, and malt night. We ended our year with RKBC's Greatest Hits, where we sang many of the songs we used in our weekly worships since October 2010.

Rockin' Kids Bible Club has been an amazing ministry that has equipped youth for leadership, connected adults to children, and allowed kids to know the joy living for Jesus! It has been an amazing journey with the community of Grace. Thanks to all who made RKBC a dynamic, loud, and crazy night!

Trunk or Treat

The Grace community opened their trunks for the first annual Trunk or Treat in the parking lot on October 25, 2017. With the theme "Shine with the



Light of Jesus", children and youth were able to dress up and collect candy and goodies during this family friendly event. More than 20 vehicle trunks were included, and God's shining light blessed the event with wonderful weather. The smiles were contagious and grace was shared by all. This event was able to bring children, families and guests together in a light-hearted way.

What the Elf Knew — an Off-the-Shelf Christmas Pageant

This year, Jen Bobbe, a member of Grace wrote and directed the Christmas Program. She worked hard to bring this story to life with a modern twist, while maintaining the true reason for Christmas. The program explained the real Christmas story of Christ's birth to two children from an Elf on the Shelf that comes to life. The program had 25 actors and actresses from grade's second-fifth, along with 40 plus SONday school students singing Christmas songs throughout the performance.

Eggstravaganza

The Annual Easter Eggstravaganza packed the Fellowship Hall again this year and brought joy to many children. We had 100 children in attendance with their parents. The children started by learning to make crosses with their palm branches, viewing what the last supper might have been like, and visiting the empty tomb of Jesus. There were many other activities offered, starting with lunch; followed by a cake walk, face painting, games, door prizes, pictures with the Easter Bunny, an egg hunt, and ending with Bingo. It was a great way to bring families together for fellowship and Jesus.

Children's Ministry Team

This year Children's Ministry has formed a team to help guide and make decisions for Children's Ministry. The team is made up of parent's, volunteers and staff: Alison Kacer, Amber Ringwelski, Annie Fitzl, Breanne Foschi, Jen Bobbe, Jillian Newlin, Kendra Mattke, Kristin Lowe, and Mandi Degrote. This team has played an intricate roll through the transitions this year.

*Kristin Lowe Director of Children's Minsitries Annie Fitzl Director of Preschool Ministires
Monica Allen Rockin' Kids Coordinator*



It has been so rewarding to see our program grow and flourish over the years. It is great to see the impact we have on so many families in our immediate and surrounding communities. It's a wonderful feeling when families, whose children have graduated from our program, come back to visit and say, "Hi" because they miss us! We are so thankful to all our families that refer Golden Rule to their family and friends. In February, we started a waiting list for the 2018-2019 school year and our Toddler Program is full until the summer of 2019!

This past year we started composting in all of our classrooms. One of our parents is a farmer and he helped us get started. We are showing the children how to give back to the Earth God has created for us. In the Spring, when the weather finally warms up, Farmer Justin is going to bring us some of the compost for our gardens. In addition, our playground became a Certified Wildlife Habitat by the National Wildlife Federation. We earned this recognition because of our conscientious planning, landscaping and sustainable gardening where wildlife will find quality habitat for food, water, and cover. In the Preschool Classroom, we added a cool loft for the children that includes a dramatic play area and a reading nook. One of our past Dads, whose daughter started in our toddler room and now joins us for our summer camp as a school-ager, spent an afternoon putting the loft together for us.

We have another exciting summer camp planned this year filled with fun, friends and faith. Our theme is a Jungle Safari, "Where Adventure Awaits." This year we will be "Explor'n" some exciting destinations. Every week will be a new adventure! In June we are going to the Wildlife Science Center to see Minnesota's largest wolf pack. It is also home to black bears, foxes, lynx, raccoons and birds of prey. In July we will enjoy the musical adventure of "Madagascar" at Stages Theatre. We're also going on a colorful adventure to the Crayola Experience at MOA. In August we will go on a swing'n safari at Hyland Park's Chutes and Ladders and splash splash at a brand new splash pad in Coon Rapids.

We feel very blessed to have so many amazing families as part of our Golden Rule family. We currently have 57 children enrolled in our program both full and part time. We have a wonderful opportunity to share God's love with our children and help them grow and learn through our child-centered curriculum, caring staff and nurturing Christian environment. We are looking forward to continuing our mission of providing high quality Christian care to the families of Andover and our surrounding communities in 2018.

*Many blessings in 2018,
Tami Mielke, Director
Golden Rule Child Care*



Youth Ministries

We often look at the young people in our midst at church and think, "they are the future of God's church." However, this year I was especially reminded that our youth are NOT the FUTURE of God's church – they ARE God's church. Our year of being God's church was full of worship, service, fellowship, connecting, and learning how God is at work in the world. Just as our congregation as a whole took time to Remember, Rejoice, and Renew over the past year our young people also spent time mourning and rejoicing in transition. They grieved the loss of beloved mentors in faith but they also embraced new ministries and traditions.

Middle School

Catechism

This was another great year of Catechism. Sixteen small groups, led by adults and high school students, met each Wednesday throughout the school year. Each week in the fall we gathered together to understand and **rejoice** in the gift of the 10 commandments. After Christmas we continued our understanding of God's promises by **remembering** our Baptism and **renewing** our faith weekly through Holy Communion. Our small group leaders worked to provide discussions, activities, prayer and leadership so students could engage in these topics deeply. Pastor Bruce Arnevik joined us for class twice and is looking forward to being more involved in Catechism in the future!



Connection Events

Over fifty students (and several fearless adults) spent a weekend at the Fall Recharge at Okoboji Lutheran Bible Camp in November. This was an excellent week of deepening friendships and spiritual formation. Over forty students also gathered for the Ultimate Lock-In in Maple Grove where they were able to connect to new friends from multiple churches in the area. Students swam, ice skated, played games, ate pizza, danced, and sang until the sun came up! On a smaller scale, students met as small groups throughout the year. Each small group meets twice for a service project and twice for a fellowship opportunity. One opportunity for students was to roll bandages made of white fabric strips for Global Health Ministries to be sent all over the globe to developing countries in need of health care supplies.

Summer stretch was back at it with 50 middle school students servicing and connecting with new and old friends all over the city! We also had 10 devoted high school students as

Junior Leaders who helped mentor the younger students by leading them in Bible Studies, helping to carry out the day to day tasks and befriending students. This program could not run without the help of these high school students and the adult leaders who gave of their time this summer. THANK YOU!



High School

Own Your Faith

OYF is designed to give high school freshmen one additional year following catechism to process their faith questions with an individual mentor in preparation for Confirmation. Twenty-seven students worked diligently with their mentors in monthly one-on-one sessions throughout the school year. Students participated by watching a monthly video that allowed the students and mentors to interact with the topics and questions in their own time and space. The discussions were rich and both the students and the mentors learned about God's promise and their faith. The year ended with a wonderful weekend of **Confirmation where students and their families remembered their Baptism, rejoiced in their faith, and renewed their commitment to God and our church.**

High School Ministry

High School Ministry at Grace was in a wonderful time of **renewal** this year. Students embraced new programs and worked to make them their own. Our new Youth Group meets twice a month (1st and 3rd Tuesday of the month at 7:00) for fellowship and Bible Study surrounding topics relevant to student's lives and the world around us. This year we have explored relationships, mental health, social justice, homelessness, and community. We also started monthly fellowship events adventuring all over the twin cities.

High School students at Grace are vital part of our congregation's ministry and their contributions reach far outside the youth room. They can also be found at outreach events, taking adult education classes, serving as ushers, lending their musical talents, traveling to Haiti, and fostering the faith of younger students as SONday School and Rockin' Kids Club leaders, nursery workers, and VBS leaders. They are a won-

derful asset to our church and we are so blessed to have such a wonderful group of young people being the church.

Special Events

Once again our mission trip master, Tom Baker, coordinated two amazing mission trips for our middle school and our high school students to help them better understand how God is at work in two communities. First, 15 middle school students and 3 adults journeyed to Milwaukee, WI to meet and serve our neighbors to the east. In July, 20 high school students and 4 adult leaders traveled to the south side of Chicago. In both trips students learned about how racial divides break trust in communities and how poverty, gang violence and resource disparity impact these areas.

In both locations, we worked with preexisting organizations that work to build bridges in the community and provide food, child care, housing, and hope in these neighborhoods. Students also spent time visiting with local senior citizens, children, adults with special needs, and people experiencing homelessness. We were welcomed with open arms in both communities and learned and gained much more than we gave. Both mission teams experienced deep spiritual, emotional, and relational growth. A heartfelt "Thank You" to the staff, parents, and congregation members who lent their time, talent and finances to make these two memorable trips a reality.

As the Director of Youth and Family Ministries I want say thank you to the entire congregation for continually supporting our youth and their desire to grow in their faith and serve the community. Without the generous monetary gifts of the congregation, adult leaders and prayers of all of you we would not be able to do what we do. Thank you for your support.

Kristi Larson

Director of Youth and Family Ministries



Worship Ministries

As we look back on a year of transition and change, I want to consider how the worship and music ministry helped us **Remember, Rejoice** and **Renew**....

We started the program year **remembering** God's faithfulness with the celebration of Grace's 50th anniversary during the weekend of Sept. 10-11, 2017. The Grace Choir, Brass and Worship team led us in inspiring worship and celebration in the two morning worship services.

We continued with our celebration of the 500th anniversary of the Reformation in October, and then as we bid farewell to Pastor Mark and Jeannie, **remembering** their ministry among us, and **rejoicing** in what God had done through them.

The Grace Choir and Worship Team helped us celebrate during Advent, and also reflect on the cross on Good Friday, leading special times of worship.

With the retirement of Pastor Mark, Justin Cook joined the music staff as Choir Accompanist. He has been a great addition, **renewing** and helping us grow musically with his sensitive accompaniment and wonderful demeanor. In addition, Justin has begun to play some of the liturgy at the 9am service, played for the Holden Vespers during Wednesday evening Lenten services, and has led worship for me at the 5 and 10:30 Contemporary services during my vacations in January and late April, 2018.

Our two paid band members (R.D. Nelson and Michael Reitz) celebrated a year of serving at Grace this April. Over the last year as a Worship Team, we've grown musically and learned a number of new songs, as well as discussed as a team, which of our older songs to retire gracefully. I've heard many positive comments from members of the congregation about the quality of worship, and how it is much more exciting with a regular band. I sense a **renewed** energy and return to vitality!

In this time of transition and change, may we remember and rejoice at God's faithfulness, and look forward to where God leads us, always renewing God's church!

*Jonathan Orwig,
Director of Worship and Music*



Adult Ministries

Graceful Seniors

In 1998, Pastor Gene Heglund organized the Graceful Seniors, and for 19 years he led them in a monthly Breakfast/Bible Study meeting until his retirement to Missouri in April 2017. The Graceful Seniors thank him and Margaret for their years of dedication both collectively and individually. They wish Pastor Gene and Margaret a happy, healthy retirement. A smooth transition of leadership to Pastor Delwayne Hahn has occurred, which the seniors are appreciative of. Graceful Seniors meets the third Tuesday morning of each month for breakfast and study at The Farmstead in Andover. Additional information is available through the church office and all seniors are welcome.

Kay Cooper

OK@PLAY

OK@PLAY (Old Kids at Play) is a fellowship group for retired and nearly retired people connected to Grace. The group was created in November of 2017 and has already met several times with lots of fun and laughter. We meet for a social gathering about every other month. If you would like to join us, please don't hesitate to contact **Ann Lange** (ann.lange@comcast.net), **Deb Stang** (DebOdellStang@gmail.com), or **Mary Jo Trapp** (mjtr3718@yahoo.com).

Deb Stang



Women's Ministries

Over the past year, Women's Ministries has been blessed to serve God and the women of Grace through an assortment of events and weekly or monthly activities. Three events - two sessions of Mugs, Muffins & More in October and February; Around the Town summer gatherings; and the "Let Go...Let God" Retreat at Luther Point Bible Camp in January - encouraged approximately 120 women to connect with one another and with God through fellowship and laughter. The weekly and monthly Bible study opportunities for women include Ruth Circle, Monday Night Women's Group, and W.O.W. (Women on Wednesday). These studies have touched

over 80 women this year, equipping the participants with insights into God's Word while also rejoicing in the nuance of our shared daily lives. Women's Ministries looks forward to continuing to serve the women of Grace and the surrounding community. Please keep an eye on the church calendar for upcoming events.

Leah Hadler

Men's Ministry



2nd Annual Men's Retreat

In 2018, we completed our 2nd Annual Men's Retreat at Luther Point Bible Camp in Grantsburg, WI from March 16th through March 18th. This year's theme was "Into the WILderness" where we explored the experiences of Jesus's time in the wilderness, and wildness of God's grace and love.

On Saturday we had the pleasure of having a speaker come in and share his testimony about his wild journey through tragedy, to healing with God's grace and love. Also in connection with the churches display of building crosses with found items, we gathered supplies during our nature walk along the St. Croix River for our own cross building. This year's hike was a little more challenging as there was still snow on the trail. We finished the weekend with worship service, singing and communion.

Between all our activities, the camp staff keep us well fed with delicious meals.

Men's Bible Studies and Gatherings

We have a variety of opportunities for all men to connect and grow in their spiritual journey. There are weekly Men's Bible studies, monthly gatherings for connecting (one for dinner and one for breakfast). Check out the schedule on the online calendar or the Men's Ministry page on the church website.

Mike SchAAF

Mission • minded

SALT

SALT (Seek, Abide, Love, Trust) is a prayer and adult education ministry of Grace. *The purpose of the SALT ministry is to provide opportunities for God to transform hearts and minds, by these means: 1) encourage prayer for the church, the world and all those in need; 2) seek, plan and implement adult Christian education opportunities; 3) serve as a catalyst and resource for Grace ministries.* We meet on the third Thursday of every month, or as arranged to another date. We have seven members with three year terms based on calendar years. January 1 is the beginning date for new members, and a leader is chosen in January of each year.

In the past year the SALT ministry has transformed from its beginning in 2016 as a "spiritual formation team". We desired to follow God's leading toward a ministry of spiritual growth, and this led to a specific ministry name, purpose and implementation of unique opportunities to transform and renew our spiritual lives at Grace: monthly prayer gatherings, prayer labyrinth experiences, and adult education courses toward understanding the expansive love of Christ:



The Ridiculous Journey, Lutheran Course, Fear of the Other, And Who Is My Neighbor, Cross Active and Introduction to Centering Prayer as opportunities that stretch our grasp of God's love. For more information contact SALT ministry members Jan Benskin, Anne Weikle, Terry Kornberg, Leoma Sparer, Scott Lien, Nancy Jenkins or John Anderson. "Be still, and know that I am God." Psalm 46:10

John Anderson



Grace Bazaar 2017

This involved a ministry team of 11 plus additional volunteers the day of the event. Much of the food was donated by Grace members.

We increased the vendors to 48 this year, from 38 the previous year, and we utilized both sides of Portable 1.

Financial Results:

Kitchen/Food \$1142; Emporium Room (Quilting ministry and baked goods) \$408; Vendors/table rental \$1850 = Total \$3400

Distribution of the proceeds:

The Sheridan Story at Sand Creek Elementary

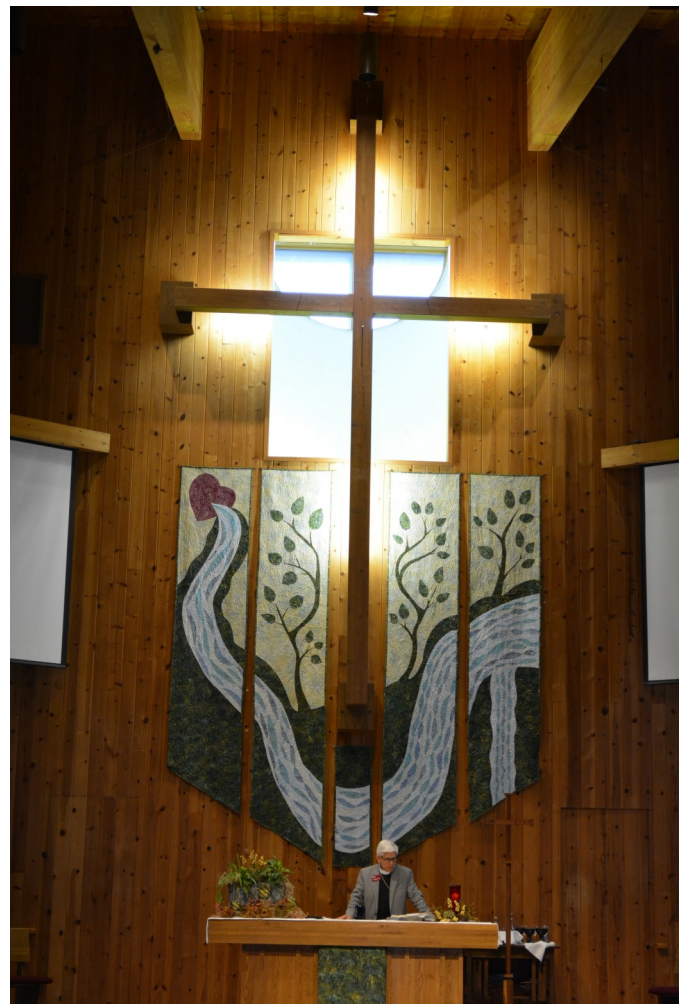
Purchase tables at Grace

Bible fund at Grace

Extra funds for next year's expenses

The Youth Ministry also gained an additional \$1110 from the sale of crosses at the Bazaar.

Ann Lange



integrity • faithful

Outreach Ministries

Faith & Community Partnership with Sand Creek Elementary

This is a Grace Team of 7 people who share the work, but each have responsibilities of leading the special projects.

School year 2017-2018

- Collected school supplies during August (with our 'Grab 2' project).
- Contributed/added \$3,513.80 to the "Little Bit of Grace" fund at Sand Creek from Octoberfest and the Grace Bazaar.
- Extra benevolence funds of \$2,400 given to us in January 2018 is being used for: One half for The Sheridan Story Project; and one half for reimbursement of Grace volunteer expenses.
- The above money contributions are also used to fund The Sheridan Story Project for 20 students. The Sheridan Story project supplies food to families in need every Friday (food for over the weekend) put into the child's backpack. The food is user friendly for the children to open, heat and eat on their own if no adult is available. It includes all the food groups to keep it healthy but also appealing to children.
- Purchased and delivered Food Baskets to families in need for holidays and spring break.
- Food Gift Cards purchase and delivered at Easter for 10 families.
- Adopt A Family at Christmas for 11 families.
- Cut, prepared for tying, and delivered fleece fabric for 10 adult and 6 child size blankets.
- Created 30 red heart-shaped felt pocket reminders/gifts for students missing a parent.
- Purchased and delivered individual snacks for students in need.
- Staff Appreciation encouraging notes with treats for 100 Sand Creek staff throughout the year:
- Donation of \$200.00 for Math related games for children needing extra math skills help.

June year end Staff Appreciation lunch will be delivered on the last day for teachers.

Family Table Meal

On the third Sunday of each month, volunteers prepare and serve a complimentary and nutritious evening meal for the those in need within our community.



Family Promise in Anoka County

Is an, inter-denominational organization, committed to addressing the issue of family homelessness in Anoka County. This past year, Family Promise in Anoka County, with the help of over 900 volunteers from 19 congregations, has helped 20 families, 74 people, 47 of them under the age of 12.

72 Grace Members hosted these children and their families for one full week during four different weeks last year. During those weeks Grace opened its doors to welcome our neighbors who are experiencing homelessness. We provided these families with nutritious evening meals and a safe place to spend the night. At the end of the week each person was presented with a Quilt provided by the Grace quilters as a parting gift.

This year Family Promise has initiated their "Home for Keeps" program. In this program, distressed mobile home units are purchased and refurbished. Prospective families are placed in these units. After one year of working with case workers and demonstrating their ability for home management they will be given ownership of the unit. Family Promise has hired a second case worker. His job will be to work in an outreach capacity. He will work with families before they enter the program to insure greater potential for success. And to work with families after they leave the program.

We would like to thank you for choosing Family Promise in Anoka County to be the recipient of your gifts of time and service. We are grateful for your partnership and support of our program. We would not be able to do what we do without you.

Feed My Starving Children (FMSC)

Grace provided over 1000 volunteer shifts this past year and packed more than 280,000 meals which is an entire shipping container of food for kids! Grace had a very successful marathon pack in November 2017 and has scheduled another marathon pack for a weekend in November 2018. Additionally, Grace Lutheran Church and its members donated \$9500 towards FMSC meals. The need at FMSC continues to grow with their fiscal year goal to pack 1 million meals per day!



Outreach Ministries—Continued

Global Health Ministries

Grace volunteers bring their willing hands and feet to this local ministry which sorts medical donations, then sends supplies to Lutheran hospitals and medial missionaries around the world. Volunteers also help roll bandages, load supplies onto semi-trucks, and sort supplies.

Grace2Haiti & Our Abandoned Children

We had 5 members of Grace travel to Haiti in January to continue the construction of the medical clinic and the home for abandoned kids. In April, 21 more people went to Haiti and we made further progress with the medical clinic, the home for the abandoned kids, the 2nd fresh water well, the two community bath houses, drain field and septic, and Robin's Nest (the sewing building). It is amazing to see the progress that has occurred since our first trip to Haiti in 2012. God is alive and well! The most amazing part is how God works on our hearts and minds when we are in Haiti. We need to do an official count, but we are awfully close to having sent 20 teams to Haiti since 2012! Stay tuned because we are starting the planning process for our 2019 trips! If you have ever thought about coming with us, now is the time!

Grace4Rakai Ministry Update



Grace4Rakai Ministry at Grace continues to provide critical support for many outreach ministries in Rakai, Uganda. The new **ACT Junior School** opened in January 2018 and welcomed 516 new students to the school. The "Grace Wing" is now a dormitory for 120 young girls. The Grace Quilters have lovingly provided more than 80 quilts for the beds in this dormitory with more in production. The school is in need of textbooks and additional sponsors to support children at the school. Our community of Grace now provides sponsorship of 105 children in need in Rakai. Some of the younger children are in the new school and many others are preparing for high school and university. We hope to establish a scholarship fund so that our sponsored children can attend university in the future. The **Amazing Grace Bakery** now operates 24/7 and employs 50+ people. They dream of expanding the bakery in 2018 to meet the growing demand for "fresh bread" in Rakai! Praise God for all He is doing in Rakai, and how our Grace community impacts the lives of people there!

Grace Quilters

Over 300 beautiful quilts were lovingly created and given to local hospitals, shelters, hospice care, foster care, teen moms, Family Promise and more.

Grace Quilters 2

So far, 77 quilts have been sent to the precious children of Rakai for the dormitories in their new school. Many of the children receiving quilts are sponsored by members of Grace. There are about 300 students that sleep at the school, so we have some work to do.

Habitat for Humanity

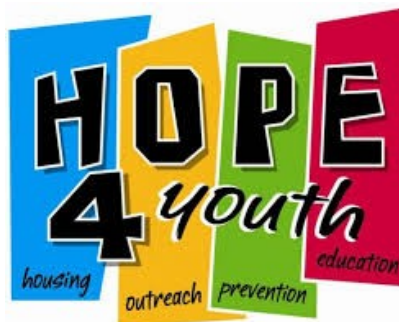


July 2017 Grace had several volunteers serve through Habitat for Humanity for a build in Blaine, MN. This provided affordable housing for a family in need. The family was set to take ownership just before Christmas as a surprise from the father who was onsite everyday helping build their home.

Grace's Outreach Ministry is currently working with Habitat for Humanity and Thrivent to find a build date for the 2018 year.

HOPE 4 Youth

HOPE 4 Youth is a nonprofit organization situated in Anoka that seeks to provide pathways to end youth homelessness. The drop-in center is open five days a week and provides food, clothing, educational resources, and housing possibilities. Thanks to various groups at Grace, the youth have received numerous food and hygiene items plus one group also furnished a warm meal for the youth. A hot,



nutritious meal is provided every weekday so it is our hope that more groups would volunteer in that capacity. Our residential expansion, called HOPE Place, located by Northtown, has also received donations and quilts from the Grace Quilters. A heartfelt

thank you for the financial support from Grace that has helped to purchase necessary perishable supplies, as well as expand educational opportunities. Due to the success of the organization, it is being used as a model for other youth outreach programs in other communities.

May All Be Fed Food Shelf

May All Be Fed Food Shelf has been in existence at Grace for over 20 years and continues to be an emergency source of non-perishable food items for families who are struggling to put food on the table.

Outreach Ministries—Continued

May All Be Fed Food Pantry is stocked entirely by donations from our Grace family. A team of dedicated volunteers, led by Cheryl Nelson, maintain the food shelf on a monthly basis by re-stocking the shelves and removing any outdated items, as well as packing 4 bags of nutritious food items that are then given to each family who requests help with food. This year, we are seeing a significant decline in the number of families requesting to use our food shelf.

Our Savior's Shelter

On the first Monday of every month, servants from Grace put their faith into action by preparing and serving a meal at this homeless shelter in Minneapolis. Families and small groups enjoy doing this ministry together.



Prayer Shawl Ministry

The Prayer Shawl Ministry donated approximately, 27 Prayer Shawls last year to Mercy Hospitals Chaplain. We have seven made since the first of this year and will also be donating them to Mercy Hospital.

Stepping Stone

Stepping Stone is emergency housing Shelter in Anoka for the homeless who are single and 18 years and older. Stepping Stone has the capacity to house 66 residents, but always have many, many people on their waiting list. They also provide mentoring and life skills training for their residents as they strive towards self-sufficiency.

A team of 5 Grace volunteers rotate to provide food pickup



and delivery to Stepping Stone every Friday afternoon from two Caribous and Andover Pizza Ranch. Grace also has two additional individual volunteers who do a Thursday Anoka-Hennepin school food pickup and delivery during the school year. For Christmas, the Grace congregation generously provided 93 Target "Gifts of Grace" bags filled with appropriate male or female personal toiletries of razors, soaps, shampoos, deodorant, and Christmas treats of hats, gloves, candy etc. The extra bags get saved and given to new residents as they come into Stepping Stone housing.



G.R.A.M.P.S. (*Graceful, Resourceful, Able, Men, Performing Service*) Property Team meets once a month, (generally the 3rd Thursday) to do light maintenance as needed (and have a little social time which usually involves coffee & donuts). Thank you so much to the entire GRAMPS team for all you do to help maintain our building.



Administrative Ministries

Church Administrator

Remember Rejoice Renew was a fitting theme for the 2017-2018 program year. Looking back on the program year is an exciting time to think of all the wonderful things that have happened at Grace. We celebrated and remembered 50 years of the Ministry of Grace in September. We said goodbye and rejoiced in the ministry of Pastor Mark and Jeannie. We were renewed in our faith with some challenging classes offered by our SALT team and our youth and children's programs. We welcomed Pastor Sara Vanderpan and said good bye. She was here for a short and pivotal time at Grace as the Bridge Senior Pastor. We also celebrated Monica Allen's Ministry at the close of the program year. She shaped many young hearts and helped them to understand the love of Jesus. We also said goodbye to Cheri Schaaf as our part time weekend custodian.

This program year we also welcomed Interim Senior Pastor, Bruce Arnevik to help lead the congregation through this pivotal time of transition. We welcomed Kristin Lowe as the Director of Children's Ministry and Annie Fitzl as the Director of Preschool Ministries. Justin Cook joined the music team as the accompanist for the choir.

The construction team is working with an architecture company starting to address what our options are with the portables. 2017-2018 was an exciting year at Grace and I am looking forward to where God is leading.

Kate Mophew



Church Secretary

It has been an honor and privilege for me to serve at Grace as the Church Secretary for nearly 22 years. While this past year has brought much change and transition to our church, one thing remains the same. God is good, and he continues to bless us with many gifts, and many, many gifted people. He allows us to give of our time and resources to help those who are less fortunate, and in great need of our love and random acts of kindness. He teaches us how to love and to serve others.



Grace volunteers give of their time daily, weekly and monthly to help in so many ways. From bulletins, computer and paperwork, and mailing the newsletter, to mowing the grass and serving during worship and during fellowship time. Volunteers are always there for me and for Grace. I feel so blessed to be a part of this ministry of grace in the heart of Andover *and beyond*, and I am so thankful for each of you!

For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve.

Mark 10:45

Thank you for serving!

Kris Miller



Annual Budget Minutes

Grace Lutheran Church called to order a congregational meeting on January 27th and January 28th, 2018 at the 5:00, 8:00, 9:00 and 10:30 services. A vote was called at each service to approve the 2018 Annual Budget. A motion was made and carried at each service. The 2018 Grace Lutheran Church budget was approved.

Respectfully submitted,

Lynn Noren

Vision Board Secretary

discerning • strategic

Grace Lutheran Church Mission Statement

God has created us as a ministry of grace in the heart of Andover. God...

Welcomes us into a personal relationship with Jesus Christ as Lord, through the transforming power of the Holy Spirit.

Encourages us to grow in our discipleship through worship, learning, and fellowship;

Equips us to share this ministry of grace and love through serving others; and

Sends us into the world to do his will.

Grace Lutheran Church 2018 Spring Annual Meeting

May 19th & 20th

At the conclusion of all services.

Agenda

Election of New Vision Board Members