



Grace Lutheran Church

Ministries

Annual Report

May 2020



Senior Pastor's Report



Dear People of Grace,

I feel so blessed to have been called to ministry at Grace and to be with you on this journey in life and faith as together. The apostle Paul often opens his letters with greetings to his church and thanksgiving for them and for God's grace. I understand

why he did this. In many ways, I feel that I am pastoring a little bit like Paul lately: writing letters, thinking theologically about God's presence and wanting to lift you up in faith wherever you are today, even though we are not together. So, grace and peace to you, people of Grace from our Lord and Savior, Jesus who is the Christ.

It has been fun looking through my calendar and remembering all that has transpired in the last year, especially since the last two months have felt like they have lasted forever. I hope that you will also enjoy this trip down memory lane with me as we celebrate what God is doing within us as a people, and through us as we reach out in love to our community.

Pastoral Transition:

Pastor Bruce said goodbye to all of you at the beginning of August. I am thankful for his work and for his ability to walk with you all during the interim period. I know that this period felt long for many of you, but after the long-term pastorate of Pastor Mark Hellmann, it was an important time to grieve and to reflect on the future.

I started at Grace on August 26th and felt so welcomed by all of you. Thank you for showing up, wearing name tags, introducing yourselves over and over again, and giving me grace. It made a tremendous difference. Assistant to the Bishop, Pastor John Hulden installed me as your new Senior Pastor at Grace on September 15th, 2019.

I spent my first few months getting to know the staff, moving into the office, meeting all of you, and then organizing and attending Cottage meetings. During October and November, I attended 13 cottage meetings and met over 100 people, hearing your stories and gathering information about Grace and our areas of growth, our strengths and the needs of the community. I heard about how Grace has been a home for you, nourishing you in faith, welcoming you and others and providing for connection and care. I also heard of your concerns in wanting to make sure our children and youth continue to have vibrant and faith nurturing ministry provided for them. Thank you to everyone, who hosted and attended.

Children's Ministry:

When I met with the staff in July, Grace was still searching for a new Children's Ministry Director. In early August, we were able to hire Maria Markman. Maria is a student at Luther Seminary and was entering her last year. She concluded her internship in California in early August, moved back to Minnesota, and began her ministry at Grace by mid-August. Maria brings wonderful creativity, enthusiasm and care to our kids and family. Maria will graduate from seminary this May. I am so grateful to have her on our team at Grace Lutheran.

We made some changes to Children's Ministry in September, bringing kids to worship with us each Sunday, having a children's sermon and then transitioning to Sunday School. Our Nursery was also unstaffed when I arrived. We partnered with Youth Ministry to create an opportunity for our youth to earn money for youth ministries and provide care for our youngest people. I am so grateful for our youth who staff our nursery allowing young families to worship.

Stewardship:

In October we kicked off our stewardship campaign "C" and Imagine what God is doing. Each week people gave testimonies about their experience of God through Grace, and invited us to imagine what God is calling us to do in the future. I am grateful for the Stewardship Team for their leadership. I am also grateful for Mike and Hayley Seide, Joe and Low Jackson, Doug and Angie Hanson and Dave and Mary Jo Trapp, who shared their faith and encouraged us to support the ministries of Grace. Our stewardship campaign concluded with our Oktoberfest celebration.



Mental Health:

In my cottage meetings, one of the themes that emerged was a concern about the mental health of our young people and our community in general. This fall, a mental health team formed at Grace that is organized by Nancy Jenkins. The team is focused on having meaningful discussions about mental health, raising awareness and learning opportunities. In February, one of our worship services was dedicated to Mental Health. We also had a speaker from NAMI (National Alliance on Mental Illness) present to Grace helping us to learn together.

Lent: Daring to be Vulnerable

Our Lenten theme this year gave us the opportunity to follow Jesus into caring for one another by being vulnerable. We used the writings of Dr. Brene Brown as a lens to view the Gospels.

Staff Transitions:

In December, Beth Clarstrom, our Bookkeeper and Communication Coordinator resigned in order to move to Canada with her family. Beth served Grace two different times for a total of 7 plus years. She provided a warm, honest presence in our office and is missed.

In February, we hired Marie Kolar to our staff as Bookkeeper and Communication Coordinator. Marie is a member of Grace. She has run her own business, and currently works part-time at Grace, while also running a house cleaning business. Marie brings a quiet, loving presence to our staff. I am glad she has joined our team.

Kate Morphew, our Church Administrator, is also stepping down from the Grace staff. She has served in a variety of roles during her 5 years at Grace. Kate has agreed to stay at Grace until mid-June to train in her replacement, and to help us through COVID 19. I am grateful that while Kate is no longer going to be on staff, she and her family intend to remain part of our community of faith. Kate works hard, has a passion for learning and is persistent. I am grateful to her for helping me in my first months at Grace and for all that she has done during the Pandemic, training Marie and so much more. Kate, you will be missed on our staff!



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Golden Rule Daycare:

Our daycare is a vibrant part of the life at Grace Lutheran. Kristi Larson (our Youth Director), Maria Markman (Children's Ministry Director) and I all rotate and provide a weekly bible time for the day care. Sandy Schmoll has served as director at Golden Rule for almost 2 years now and continues to look for ways for us to grow in our partnership.

COVID 19/Virtual Worship:

The weekend of March 14th and 15th was our last worship in person before we were told not to gather in groups of 10 or more because of COVID 19. We began offering our Wednesday Lenten Worship and weekend worship online starting that next week. The staff and some members have started providing daily video or written devotions in order to connect us and help us listen for God's word during this time. We also connect with small groups for prayer, study and activities via Zoom.

As I write this our church building has been closed to the general public for 6 weeks now. Our food shelf continues to operate, feeding our hungry neighbors. Our daycare continues to provide care and learning for children. Our staff continues to work hard in order to share the love of God through their ministry. The staff is working often from home, but sometimes at church in order to continue to provide ministry and spiritual nourishment for our community. I am grateful for their creativity, flexibility and adaptability as we have learned to walk this new road together.

I am so grateful for your support through your financial gifts, and your kind messages of care for our staff. We all miss seeing you more than you can imagine. We do not know when we will be able to gather again safely, so we have worked to call our community. I am grateful to Pastor Hahn for organizing a calling tree for our staff and other volunteers.

People of Grace, I hope that you know how much God loves you and even though we cannot gather together in our building at this time, Grace Lutheran Church is alive and well as we continue to follow Jesus in our homes, our neighborhoods and out in the world. I am so thankful that I get to be on this journey with you and discover where God will lead us together in the future.

Blessings

Pastor Joanna Mitchell

President's Report

Mirrors, Windows and Open Doors

As I sit to write this, it is hard to believe that I am only weeks away from the close of my time on Vision Board. In some ways, it seems as if I began this term only a short time ago, but in other ways, it seems much longer than three years.

There have been tremendous changes at Grace, and at the same time, we are still on the forefront of exciting things yet to come. Emerging from this time of transition allows us to look into a mirror and reflect upon where we've been, and all the ways God has worked in our lives and the life of our congregation throughout the years. Being at the beginning of the next chapter of our story provides us the opportunity to look through the windows around us and see all the things God is doing in our midst, and begin to discern where God wants us to be hands and feet in our community, as we write our ensuing narrative. As part of our discernment and visioning process, we are discovering the doors that God is opening for us now and beckoning us to walk through.

While starting to identify some of doors that God is opening before us, we have entered the call for a full-time Associate Pastor. We hope to move through this process, vote on a call, and welcome someone into that role in late summer or early fall. As of right now, this position is intended to assume responsibility for faith formation and will oversee Children and Family Ministries, along with other duties.

Another door that we are passing through is updating our constitution. Our current constitution was adopted in 1988 and remains in place until we affirmatively vote on a new version. There was a revision that was drafted in 2001, however, it was never officially brought to a vote by the congregation. The Synod released an updated model constitution in 2019, and encouraged congregations to update their governing documents if they hadn't recently done so. Updating our constitution provides us a current document to guide the ways in which we reinforce our foundation in the ELCA (Evangelical Lutheran Church of America) as part of the ongoing, living, breathing Kingdom of God.

Within our next visioning process, we need to again revisit and reexamine our role in God's Kingdom and determine which door God is leading us toward regarding our Round Lake property and our Nightingale land. We will also be discerning how we are called to live out faithful stewardship in our lives and the ways we are encouraged to engage with our neighbors, both locally and globally. Certainly all of these things must be aligned to most effectively support God's work, and therefore, must be considered in conjunction. A very big task that will take time and require we listen intently and prayerfully to God's constant guidance.

In these unprecedented days, when we are social distancing and staying safe at home, God continues to join our hearts and minds in worship and prayer. Our God is steadfast and merciful and will never forsake or abandon us – we are safe in our Savior, warmly embraced in the arms of our Heavenly Parent. When we feel alone, and when we are able to be physically back together, our God is, and always will be with us, guiding us and loving us through it all.

This is my continuous prayer for each one of us. May we always live out our name, actively extending and accepting *grace*. May we all be mirrors, reflecting God's light and love to all with whom we come in contact. May we each be windows, providing a glimpse into all that God can do in and through us if we are willing. And may we be open doors; open to God's Love and Promise, open to inviting and welcoming others to experience this Love and Promise, and to joining us in expanding God's mission in our world through service, empathy and compassion, while intentionally choosing to live in constant gratitude for how incredibly blessed we are! Thank you so much for allowing me to serve you. Praise be to God! — *Johnna Rohmer-Hirt*, President of Vision Board



Call Committee Report

Last year at this time, the Call Committee had been praying, interviewing and discerning since January. We interviewed 6 candidates initially in March and after discernment and prayer, the Call Committee narrowed the candidates to three for a second round of interviews by May. During this second round, dialogue with candidates included worship styles, unifying congregation across services, engaging children, youth and adults in their faith journey, engaging community / "non-churched", expected challenges and work/life balance as well as inspiration from Bible verses and theologians. All interviews were performed in person or via "Zoom". With all excellent candidates, the Call Committee had a tough choice to make. A thoughtful, prayerful discernment period concluded with the unanimous selection of Pastor Joanna Mitchell, which took place in our sanctuary amidst candles, prayer, meditation and God's guidance in late May, 2019. Pastor Joanna was presented to the Vision Board, had a "meet and greet" and was later presented to our Congregation for voting. A resounding vote confirmed her appointment as our next Senior Pastor! We are truly grateful for the prayers, guidance and Graceful blessings received during the process. The Call Committee met bi-weekly during the process and spent many hours in prayer and discernment. We are thankful for the selfless work, time and ministry of our Call Committee, who following Philippians 2: 1-11, imitated Christ's humility in ...*"do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves, not looking to your own interests but each of you to the interests of the others..."* Call Committee members: Lori Ackerson, Chair, John Anderson, Chaplain, Frances Fernandez, Communicator, Jan Anderson, Holly Dodds, Joe Jackson, Jeremy Matkke and Charlie Wold.

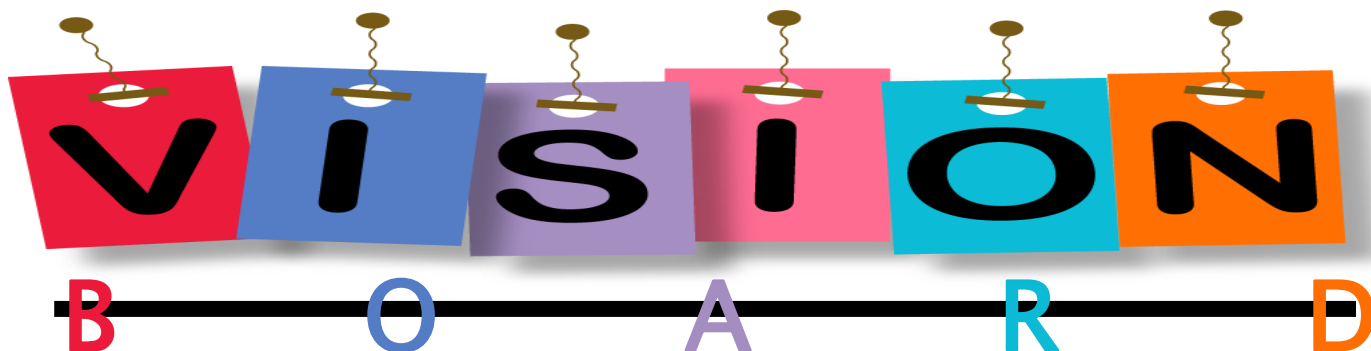
In God's Love — *Frances Fernandez*

Nomination Committee Report

We want to give thanks to Johnna Rohmer-Hirt and Alden Riley who have served on the Vision Board for the past three years, and also to Vickie Meade, who has served this past year after she was appointed to the board to complete a vacancy. The Vision Board appointed a Nominating Committee.

The committee consisted of Johnna Rohmer-Hirt, Alden Riley, Vickie Meade, Renee Miller, Nancy Jenkins and Chad Hadler. 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 one or more ministries, and has demonstrated leadership characteristics needed to serve at this top-level position. The list of candidates the Vision Board is presenting now for your vote is the result of the Nominations Process at Grace. The congregation will also be given an opportunity to write in a candidate for consideration.

The following candidates are presented by the Grace Lutheran Church Nominating Committee to be elected for the open Vision Board positions to serve 3 year terms. The 2020 Vision Board Elections will be held during the 2020 May Congregational Meeting, which will be held on May 31st at 9:00 am via Zoom. A link to the meeting may be found on our website and on Grace at a Glance. If you do not have access to Zoom or cannot access the link, please call the church office and you will be provided a number to call to be a part of the meeting. Please pray for each of the following candidates.



Hello, my name is Lori Ackerson and I have been going to Grace since 2005. I live in Oak Grove with my husband Greg, my daughter Sara (17) and our dog Sacha. I am a Patient Care Supervisor and Registered Nurse at Mercy Hospital for both of our campuses in Coon Rapids and Fridley (Unity campus). I serve on the World Wide Village Board of Directors and Walker

Methodist Board of Directors. I love serving in a variety of ways at our church. I currently serve on the Grace2Haiti team leading trips to Haiti and the Abandoned Children's Ministry. I have served on Vision Board in the past and also the Call Committee and Transition Team. Thank you for your consideration. I'd be honored to serve Grace in this capacity! **Lori Ackerson**



I have been a member of Grace Lutheran since 2007. I have been happily married to my wife Becky for 45 years and we have three adult children. Along with our children come three grandchildren and soon to be a fourth! I have been very blessed with my family. Becky and I have lived in Andover since 2002 and I recently retired last June 2019.

I am a regular usher at Grace, and frequently participate in FMSC and OK@Play events. We have sponsored two children through African Children Today; Ester, until she left the school when she was 17, and now we sponsor Rosette. In early 2012 Greg Ackerson asked me to go on the first Grace to Haiti trip in July 2012. I said yes, and that really affected me in a positive way. I also worked with the Free 2B

Grace Stewardship Drive; and worked on Grace's 50th Anniversary committee. Recently I started helping out as an overnight attendant with Family Promise.

One of my greater passions is being active with the Coon Rapids Lions Club. The Lions motto is "We Serve." Through that I am still involved with Boy Scouts through a troop and Cub Scout Pack that our club sponsors. I am also a trustee and co-treasurer with the Minnesota Lions Diabetes Foundation.

One of the great things I have always loved about Grace Lutheran Church is the staff! I have always felt connected to our leadership with our pastors and interim pastors as well. And of course, we have the friendliest congregation too!

If I am elected to serve on the Vision Board, I will do my best to help as needed. **Joel Anderson**



My wife Amy and I have been members of Grace for seven years now. We have two children, Maya (15) and Alex (13).

I came to Grace through the Cub Scout program where I served in many leadership roles. Finishing my time with them as the Cubmaster for the last two years. In my professional career I've been in the service department for GEPHART ELECTRIC for the past 15

years.

In my church life, for the last 5 years we have been sponsoring a girl in Uganda through the Grace 4 Rakai program.

I have co-taught Sunday School to the 4-5 graders. I was also a mentor for Own Your Faith.

Currently I am looking forward to becoming more involved with Family Promise. As well as other opportunities as they become available.

Thank you for your consideration. **Brook Vanderleest**

Grace kids!

Grace Lutheran Church May 2020 Annual Report

Chapter 18 in the Gospel according to Matthew begins with a definition of "True Greatness," Jesus' disciples are again wondering, who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven? Jesus responds not just with words but with actions. He places a child in their midst and says, "Truly I tell you, unless you change and become like children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven. Whoever becomes humble like this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven. Whoever welcomes one such child in my name welcomes me" (NRSV Matthew 18:1-5). This year has marked transition and newness in a lot of ways, including in Children's Ministry at Grace. But the message to our children is clear, you belong and your perspective is a vital part of our ministry together at Grace. In the waters of baptism we are adopted into the body of Christ where the ongoing ministry of nurturing faith is who we are. We nurture faith in many ways, not limited to formation, education, service, belonging, and witness. This work begins anytime we encounter a child of God, and continues throughout their life. In addition to providing programming for our families and their children, Grace continues to look for ways for the Children of Grace to be more involved in worship and life of the church. This year we have intentionally broadened the age ranges of many of our events making them more intergenerational, and we have invited and encouraged our children to participate in worship in many ways, reading scripture, singing in a children's choir, playing an instrument, and by simply being present in worship! This has been, is, and will continue to be the work of Children's Ministry at Grace.



Welcoming Maria

This year we welcomed a new Director of Children's Ministry, Maria Markman. Maria joined the staff at Grace in mid-August. Her infectious enthusiasm and passion for working with children and their families is what made her a great fit at Grace. She has worked hard with the Children's Ministry Team to continue to provide meaningful faith formation for children and families at Grace, while also completing her studies at Luther Seminary in St. Paul, MN. She graduates at the end of May 2020 and will leave her position as Children's Ministry Director in June in search for a call in Pastoral Ministry as an ordained Pastor in the ELCA.

SONday School

This year at Grace we made the move to have every Sunday be Family Worship Sunday. This meant children and their families

were worshiping together until after the children's message. After the children's message, children were dismissed to SONday School. It was important to us at Grace to find a SONday school curriculum that used the same readings as used in worship, so faith could be nurtured in the home. With the same ideas, language, and themes, families could talk about their faith, not just here at Grace, but in their homes and throughout their daily lives. The curriculum we used is called Bloom! It is a very adaptable curriculum designed to nurture seeds of faith. Bloom! includes storytelling, music, crafts, and games for our children, preschool to 5th grade.



Bloom!

Nurturing Seeds of Faith



Kids Night Out

Kids Night Out has taken on many different shapes over the years at Grace, and this year is no different. With a faithful group of 15 kids in Kindergarten through 5th grade we focused on service. Recognizing we have been called by

Christ to serve not only as adults, but as children too. Our service took many different shapes, cooking treats for local firemen in Andover, making activity packs for children who are ill at Children's Hospital of Minnesota, and even performing in Grace's Christmas program: "O Come Let Us Adore Him" and in a children's choir in worship on Sunday. This group has also devoted itself to making liturgical art for our Worship Center. All of this combined with reading the Bible, playing games, and collaborating with other intergenerational events at Grace has proven to be an eventful year for Children's Ministry at Grace.

Nursery

As an extension of our hospitality to all people, in addition to welcoming families with small children to attend church together, giggling, fidgeting, sleeping and wandering included, we also wanted to provide child care during worship in the nursery for families who need this service. Because of Grace's commitment to offering this care on a consistent basis, and because our youth needed to raise money for their summer trips, we combined these two needs into a single solution. We budgeted in 2020 to include the cost of hiring these youth to staff the nursery each Sunday at all services and during special holiday services throughout the year.



Intergenerational Events

Grace Lutheran Church offers many events throughout the year, some of which include children and the families, while others had not yet tapped into the opportunity of including children and their families into the festivities, at least not in an official capaci-

ty. This year all program areas strived to collaborate in new ways, engaging across demographics to serve a greater number of people. During the annual **Oktoberfest** celebration, children and their families were invited to paint pumpkins, generously donated by John and Donna Druley. During Grace's big outreach weekend, **God's Work, Our Hands**, children and their families were encouraged to attend any of the service projects of the weekend. Together with Outreach Director Debbie Jorgens, we added many kid friendly projects, wrapping linen for Global Health Ministries, and frosting cookies for homebound members of Grace! 2019 marked the **third annual Trunk or Treat** event at Grace (October 30, 2019), although this year it had a slightly more broad focus combining it with activities on Wednesday Night (Family Pizza and Kids Night Out). We had 12 trunks and over 200 children attend, not including their adult family members. Families were encouraged after Trunk or Treating to head inside for cider and pizza, and "It's the Great Pumpkin, Charlie Brown" viewing. Members of all ages were encouraged to stick around for a game night, extra large Yahtzee, Jenga, Bingo, Guess Who and many more! Seeing the success of this combined Wednesday night event, the Children's Ministry Team decided to do a similar event in February, continuing the previous year's addition of the **Special Person Valentine's Dance**. The dance was held on Wednesday, February 12, 2020 during Kids Night Out. Families were encouraged to come, dance, and play games!



On December 1st, 5 families came together to share a potluck meal and make **Advent Wreaths**. Each family took home the Advent Wreath they had made and an Advent family devotion. Due to COVID-19 our usual spring events, **The Resurrection Garden** making event, and the **Eggstravaganza** were cancelled. It is our hope to offer these intergenerational events for families and individuals at Grace in the future.

PRAYground

The newest addition to our Grace Lutheran Church Worship Center is the PRAYground, a sacred place for worship, prayer and play. Just as Jesus took a child and said to his disciples "whoever welcomes one such child in my name welcomes me, and whoever welcomes me welcomes not me but the one who sent me," we at Grace want to proclaim this welcome to any family and child who walks into our

worship space. Our PRAYground is one extension of this grace! It is filled with quiet toys and tools to help kids learn and grow during worship.



Baptism, A Reunion Party, Communion, and Intro to Bible Classes

A vital part of Grace's ministry to families comes

through parent and child education. This has continued through Baptism classes offered by Pastor Joanna and Director of Children's Ministry, Maria. This year we also offered a Baptismal Reunion Party to celebrate all those who had been baptized at Grace in the past year. We also offered Communion instruction to those in third grade and above. A meaningful time to gather together and discuss the promise and presence of Christ experienced through the sacrament. Maria also started Intro to the Bible instruction in between services



for SONday school participants to dive deeper into Biblical instruction.

Continuing ministry in a virtual space

Due to COVID-19 and Stay at home orders, our ministry has moved online. This is an exciting new space, although also difficult because we cannot be together. It is exciting because faith is being nurtured at home, as families engage in devotions online together. We at Grace are encouraged by the possibilities this presents for future ministry! —*Maria Markman*



God's Greetings from Golden Rule. As I think back on this last year, I am thankful and amazed at my staff, board members, and the wonderful people who work at Grace Lutheran Church. Golden Rule saw a lot of staff turnover this past year, and admittedly it was a huge struggle at times. Long hours were worked to make sure the students, as always, were our top priority. After the dust settled and we were back on our feet, God blessed Golden Rule with an amazing staff. Miss Nichole, Miss. Bre, Miss Tammy, Miss Gabby, Miss Leah, Miss Kylie and Miss Natalie make a wonderful team. I am blessed to be surrounded by such amazing women who work hard to make sure God is in everything they teach.

Unfortunately, many of our families were greatly affected by the Covid 19 shutdown. We saw many of our parents lose their jobs, get layed-off and/or had hours cut. It was hard to see so many of our students leave. We were struggling, again. We decided that we would stay open for as many parents who still needed child-care. I also wanted to keep as many people working as I could, and still have employees shelter-in-place without losing their income. We saw many days that we had 10 or less students at school. There were days that we wondered if it was worth staying open, but the gratitude our parents showed us told us we were doing the right thing. We also had amazing support from the staff at Grace and that helped us to stay strong.

Our enrollment has started to pick-up a little bit, as some parents are able to go back to work and we also received the PPP loan! We are feeling so blessed! We are looking forward to the summer and hopefully enrolling more students as restrictions are lifted. This year has had many ups and down, tears have been shed for the families we see that are hurting, children who are confused and scared, but also smiles as children are coming back to school. In our time of struggle, we have all grown in our faith, both our students and our staff. Golden Rule has a wonderful new God centered curriculum, more connection and support from Grace, and we have a wonderful new road to follow! God is great!

Sandy Schmoll

Youth Ministries

Eight months ago, Tom Baker and I went out for lunch. It was a celebration to end a successful summer ministry season. It also was a lunch with a mission. After working together at Grace for over 4 years we needed to take a 10,000-foot view of Youth Ministry at Grace. We discussed questions, such as “What do we want students to know after they have encountered youth ministry at Grace?” and “How do we want students to grow from 6th-12th grade?” We digested these questions and worked towards finding 5 words that we could center Youth Ministry around. These words have become integral when setting our goals and making plans, and we seek to weave them into all aspects of Youth Ministry at Grace Lutheran. Now as we enter a new summer and program year, we will continue to focus on these 5 words. Until then, please join us as we unpack these words and recap with a few memories from the 2019-2020 program year.

Relationships – *“We love because God first loved us” is the core of all relationships. We work to provide an environment where young people connect and grow in their relationship with God and with people who care deeply for them, this includes both peers and adults.*

The graduating Seniors at Grace Lutheran Church give us a wonderful example of what relationships can offer a young person. This group of young adults have created tight knit bonds that extend outside of the walls of our church with not only their peers, but also with adults at Grace. We give thanks for the mentors, adult leaders, small group leaders and staff members that have accompanied these amazing students over the last 18 years. Please join us as we celebrate with the class of 2020 and pray for their future.



Leadership – *We hope to create an environment where youth are comfortable and excited to lead their peers and the church through worship, summer stretch (HS), VBS, Sunday School and more. This also includes looking for sparks of passion and interests in young people and giving youth the permission to try something. Leadership means both relying on young people and giving them permission to fail safely.*

Every year I am blown away by the commitment and dedication of the Summer Stretch High School Leaders. Summer Stretch is a ministry that combines service and fellowship and is designed for Middle

School students, but it is led by over a dozen High School Leaders. These students give up their Thursdays to hang out and support Middle School students. They show up each week with positive attitudes and are willing to do whatever is needed to help the program run smoothly. Over 60 Middle School students were influenced by their leadership and passion for this program. THANK YOU for your willingness to lead!

Justice – *service with understanding. In Christian community we are called to bear witness to people’s stories, hear their struggles and their joys and listen compassionately without judgment.*



Justice includes caring deeply for the concerns of the world outside of our own lives and being passionate about working together to find solutions.

This past summer, Tom Baker organized two fantastic mission trips to Lynn, MA (outside of Boston) and Milwaukee, WI. We learned about their communities and listened to locals describe the gifts and challenges their area has every day. We worked with preexisting organizations to feed, clothe, and comfort the residents of Milwaukee and Lynn. Mission trips allow us the time and space to observe and listen, and then ask difficult questions about what is happening in our world.

Community – *When students encounter Grace Lutheran Church they are met with welcome and hospitality. Students feel a sense of belonging and acceptance.*



For over a dozen years Portable 2 has been home for our High School Youth. This year we knew that it was time to shake things up and break in a new space inside the church building to welcome students.

With the help of a few parents and the interior stylings of one of our High School Seniors, Aria Hanson, we have converted room 106 into our new youth room! Our hope is that this space is more accessible to our youth. Aria and the other volunteers have created a cozy and warm environment where students can feel a sense of welcome, community and acceptance.

Seeking – *We encourage asking questions about God, the Bible and our faith while seeking under-*



standing. Students at Grace are encouraged to deepen their knowledge of the Bible while also seeking how God's word is at work in the world today.

This year our Catechism students walked through the Bible and learned that we are to love God and love others by hearing stories from the Old and New Testament. Meanwhile, the 9th grade Own Youth Faith students learned about themselves and their faith with the help of their mentors. These students will confirm their faith on October 25th. We thank God for the dedication of these young people as they seek to ask questions and understand themselves and God in a meaningful way.

The 2019-2020 program year was a great one filled with wonderful memories! I want to thank 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, we would not be able to do what we do. Thank you for your support and we look forward to partnering with you in the 2020-2021 program year.

Kristi Larson

Director of Youth and Family Ministries



preaching, or it just *really* fits the theme too well to skip it.

I was privileged to resume conducting the Grace Choir on a regular basis, and we welcomed Melita Anderson as our Choir Accompanist. We purchased and learned a lot of new music in the time we had together this year.

One of my favorite events was the annual Advent/Christmas musical celebration on the 3rd weekend of Advent. This year we used only Grace personnel (no outside "help"), and in addition, the Worship Team/band joined us to make the event a joint effort. April Anderson was our soloist and made us cry with her beautiful heartfelt solos, too. I recruited some players from Grace for a small ensemble to accompany us (flute, oboe, clarinet, alto sax). Mike Frazier and I prepared the orchestrations for them – it was a wonderful time of worship, and I was very pleased to have more of our musicians involved in this event.

The Grace Brass continues to play 3-4 times a year, thanks to the leadership of Dave Trapp and Joe Jackson... but the biggest news was that Joe and Dave recruited and started an instrumental ensemble... there are 16 people on the roster, and they were practicing to play on both Palm Sunday and Easter – unfortunately due to the COVID-19 shut-down that wasn't able to take place, but I look forward to when we can resume.

Since we transitioned to "virtual worship", much of my energy has transferred to video recording, editing audio and video, and getting the worship services produced for each week. I am so grateful to Grace staff and volunteers for helping me create content, doing readings, etc. Early on, the worship team recorded 9 songs for us to use, so between that and the archive of recordings I have (both of them and of traditional worship), we've been able to have content for worship without putting people at risk

In this time of doing worship differently, may we continue to trust in God's faithfulness, and look forward to where God is leading us.

Jonathan Orwig, Director of Worship and Music

Worship Ministries

As we look back on the year, I want to share some high points.

The Worship Team continued learning new songs this fall, in keeping with our desire to "freshen up" our repertoire. Some more of the older songs were either retired (or mostly retired, to be used only rarely). We continued to enjoy the talents of our team, both volunteer and paid. I also implemented a weekly song log to help us know how often songs are being sung – while we do sing new material (usually for 3 weeks in a row), after that I try not to repeat a song more often than every 6-8 weeks... unless it is specifically requested by whoever is



Adult Ministries

Graceful Seniors

Graceful Seniors is a group of post-retirement folks who gather on the second Tuesday of every month in the dining room at The Farmstead, just north and east of Grace. Each month 30-40 persons come together for breakfast, devotions and a brief program.

The devotional period is usually led by one of the members of the group, and the programs this past year have included a study of the Muslim faith, the introduction of new staff members, a brief look at the Apocrypha and how our Bible came to be, a consideration of Mary Magdalene's role in the life of the early church, and the much looked forward to festival of Christmas carol singing with readings connected to the Nativity.

The meeting schedule has been interrupted with the coming of Covid-19 and will not resume actually meeting until restrictions are lifted on public gatherings. Graceful Seniors welcomes new members and invites any who might be interested to join them when that does happen. Please keep your eyes on the church website for that date. —Pastor Hahn

G.R.A.M.P.S.

(G.R.A.M.P.S. (Graceful, Resourceful, Able, Members, Performing Service), more commonly referred to as the Grace Property Team, meets once a month (generally the 3rd Thursday) to do light maintenance such as painting, repairing the building and grounds, stringing Christmas lights, hanging the wreath, and having a little social time which usually involves coffee & donuts. Meetings typically last 4 hours or less. This, of course, saves the church countless dollars that would otherwise go to hiring outside services to perform these tasks.

Typical recent accomplishments include: Striping the parking lot, installing plastic film on windows in the portables to reduce heating costs, repairing a loose keyboard drawer, fixing loose book holders on pews, realigning a door that was rubbing on its frame, painting and many more.

The team is grateful for the talented and dedicated support it receives from its members and is always looking for men and women willing to spend a few hours a month to keep the church in topnotch condition.—Dennis Grabowski

Love of Grace Bazaar

Our 2019 Love of Grace Bazaar was a huge success thanks to all who volunteered by donating food and your time. We do our best to help the many vendors and shoppers feel the Love of Grace when they come into our building. Funds raised at last November's Bazaar were donated to Robin's Nest Sewing School in Haiti and used to provide weekend meals for Sand Creek students in need. In addition, we purchased two new kitchen carts for Grace. — Mary Jo Trapp



Men's Ministry

We have a variety of opportunities for all men to connect and grow in their spiritual journey. There are two weekly Men's Bible studies on Monday morning and Saturday morning. We have a monthly gathering at BWW in the evening, and Bakers Square for breakfast and connecting. Check out the schedule on the online calendar. For more information contact Steven Hirt

OK@PLAY

OK@PLAY (Old Kids at PLAY) is a fellowship group for retired/nearly retired members and friends of Grace. This group was created in 2017 and continues to meet for fun and laughter. We plan events during the day or evenings and days or weekends. This is not a "members only" group, all are welcome! Since the last Annual Report, we have provided 6 events including FMSC, brewery tour and potluck, backyard BBQ, backyard Halloween bonfire and potluck, Christmas Trolley Lights tour, and movie night at Grace. Come join the fun! For questions, contact Ann Lange, Deb Stang or Mary Jo Trapp. —Ann Lange



Oktoberfest

The past year has been a year of transition for the Grace Stewardship Ministry Team, as we welcomed our new Senior Pastor Joanna Mitchell, and she shared with us her vision for stewardship. This past October we launched our most recent stewardship drive that concluded in early November. Our annual Oktoberfest celebration was an integral part of the drive. Fellowship Hall once again was decked out like a Bavarian Beer Garden. Good food, root beer and music were enjoyed by all, and we were able to raise nearly \$1,000 to support Family Promise. The Oktoberfest Band organized by Dave Trapp, created a festive atmosphere and featured 10 musicians from the Grace community!

SALT Prayer and Adult Education Ministry

SALT (Seek, Abide, Love, Trust) meets or Zooms on the third Thursday of the month, anyone is welcome to join us for our time together. We pray, we



explore, we discuss "new" and "different". We have high focus on *Christ for all*, seeking and creating an environment for beloved, belonging and be transformed --- that God will use SALT and Grace in these ways.

In the past year, we sponsored prayer gatherings and events such as using a prayer labyrinth. We conducted studies such as Ragamuffin and When Christians Get It Wrong to encourage growing in grace. We held special inclusivity trainings --- Bridging Divides and Gray Area Thinking, with nationally known speaker, Ellie Krug. We also hosted other heartfelt inclusivity training with Tapestry Lutheran Church staff, then visiting their Worship and fellowship time, in Richfield.

The seven lay members of SALT are Frances Fernandez, Chrissy Gast, Nancy Jenkins, Stephen Hirt, Leoma Sparer, Scott Lien, and John Anderson. Pastor Joanna Mitchell is an integral part of this ministry.

"Do not conform the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is - his good, pleasing and perfect will."
Romans 12:2



Women's Ministries

G-Grace women and their friends have had the opportunity to attend Bible Studies. Five different WOW (Women on Wednesdays) groups meet weekly on Wednesday mornings to support the need for spiritual growth, as well as for social connection. Women also have the opportunity to meet on Mondays for "Monday Night Bible Study." Many of these groups also perform community service projects.

R-Retreats are always fun and inspiring! Women met this year in February at Luther Point for a wonderful time together learning about de-stressing and finding peace. Many attendees have raved about the success of the yearly retreat and the importance of being renewed away from home.

A-A new activity that began in May 2019 was called "Girls' Night Out." On the first Thursday of each month women came together to connect while eating at Davanni's in Coon Rapids. Making new friends and supporting each other was definitely a game changer.



C-Christmas baskets and family surprises were the emphasis for this year's Women's Ministry sponsored "Grace Giving Tree." Several families, including many children, received toys, books, clothes, and gift cards which were donated graciously by Grace members.

E-Everyone who attended October's Mugs, Muffins, and More made greeting cards to be used by a future card ministry. The morning was filled with food, fun, and much needed laughter.

Mental Health Team

Our mental health efforts at Grace began in the summer of 2018 when Kristi Larson formed the Green Ribbon parent support group. This group continues to meet monthly and is a valuable resource to parents whose children are dealing with mental health issues.



The Grace Mental Health Team was formed this pastor winter and consists of Mary Boren, Frances Fernandez, Stephanie Fernandez, Cristy Frazier, Bekah Hirt, Nancy Jenkins, Kristi Larson, Maria Markman, Joanna Mitchell, Lisa Newcomer, and Chris Pace. Our team members have a variety of backgrounds and experiences. In short, our team is focused on mental health Education, Awareness and Conversation. Prior to our first team meeting, we read the book, "Blessed Are the Crazy" so that we would have a common understanding and launching point for our work.

The first weekend in February was designated "Mental Health Kickoff Weekend" and all three services (including the sermon, liturgy, prayers and music) were focused on mental health. We also provided informational resources in the fellowship hall between services. In late February we hosted a foundational NAMI (National Alliance on Mental Illness) presentation, "In Our Own Voice". This spring we offered a virtual discussion group two evenings on the book "Blessed Are the Crazy". May is national "Mental Health Awareness" month and several team members wrote reflections on mental health topics for posting on Facebook and the church website during the month.

Recently Grace joined a collaborative, faith-based organization in Minneapolis named "Mental Health Connect" as an educational partner. In the year ahead, we plan to offer educational opportunities virtually and we look forward to hosting additional NAMI classes at Grace once that is feasible. We also plan to participate in the annual MWCAC (Mental Wellness Campaign for Anoka County) 5K walk in Bunker Regional Park on Saturday, October 3.

Outreach Ministries

Grace2Haiti

Greg and Lori Ackerson, team leaders

In April 2019, after being delayed due to political instability, 12 people were able to travel to Haiti to participate in an amazing Grace2Haiti annual mission trip! You may remember that Grace's Noisy Offerings for Lent in 2019 went toward the "Healthy Mothers, Healthy Babies" initiative – a new Maternal Health Program – at the newly constructed medical center in Williamson. On this mission trip we got to see the impact this program is having on expectant/new mothers and their babies! Other highlights of the trip included helping a Haitian baker start his own business, building an irrigation system for a garden, and making improvements to the well and watering station that we built in 2015. We were also able to follow up with the abandoned kids and some of the families that we have built relationships with over the years. We are so grateful for the generosity and support of the people of Grace that has allowed us to:

- Provide a new home for a Haitian family
- Provide medical care for Gyslene, the little girl who was in danger of losing her arm
- Pay school tuition for 14 kids and provide housing, food and nutrition for 7 abandoned children

We are currently considering dates for a 2021 trip. If you're interested in joining us or just want to learn more, please contact Lori Ackerson or Stacy Lenz. Most of all, we ask for your continued prayers for the safety, prosperity and health of our Haitian brothers and sisters!

Grace4Rakai

Scott Christensen and Stacy Surrat, team co-leaders

The Grace4Rakai Outreach Ministries have continued to thrive this past year! The ACT Junior School in Rakai has grown to more than 900 students with nearly 400 living on campus in dormitories. Many students are sponsored by the Grace community, and those living in the dormitory have been blessed with quilts from our Grace quilters! Nearly 20 young adults sponsored by Grace are in the 11th grade, attending boarding school and well on their way to attending university or becoming teachers. A new solar energy system began operation in January, which provides electricity for the school and made a new milling operation possible to make

flour. Rakai is experiencing a lock down right now as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. Schools and markets are closed, and hunger is growing. Please keep Richard Mutaawe, Lwondo Johnson, and the ACT staff in Rakai in your prayers as they do their best to support the vulnerable women and children during this pandemic.

Family Promise of Anoka County

Alden Riley, team leader



Family Promise in Anoka County provides temporary shelter, hospitality, and case management to assist families who are experiencing homelessness to achieve housing independence. This past year, Grace hosted 12 families over four different weeks. We're grateful for all of you who made this possible, whether you set up beds, transported the families,

provided meals, or served as evening or overnight hosts. Your time and generosity make our partnership with Family Promise possible! In response to the extraordinary circumstances brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic, Family Promise is temporarily hosting families through hotel stays. Grace is not scheduled to host again until next fall, and we'll have to wait and see what the situation is at that point. In the meantime, we ask that you hold the entire staff of Family Promise and those they serve in your prayers.

Our Saviour's Housing

Mary Jo and Dave Trapp, team leaders

Our Saviour's Emergency Shelter in south Minneapolis serves homeless adults (age 18+) who are in immediate need of a safe place to sleep at night. The Shelter provides a bed, hot dinner, and supportive resources to 34 men and 6 women every night of the year. Grace Lutheran Church helps by providing and serving a hot meal to our homeless brothers and sisters on the first Monday of every other month. The gratitude that we receive in return is touching. If you would like to be a part of this ministry by either preparing and/or donating food, or joining us as we serve our meal, please contact Dave or Mary Jo Trapp.



Family Table Meal

Michelle Healy, team leader

On the third Sunday evening of every month, Grace welcomes all who are hungry to the Family Table Meal! The individuals serving on this ministry team prepare and serve a nutritious, complimentary dinner for all who come through the doors of the church. Those who are fed are nourished not only in body, but in spirit, as they experience a warm and welcoming community. From August 2019 through March 2020, Family Table served approximately 240 people.

Outreach Ministries—Continued

Prayer Shawl Ministry

Bev Jovanovich, team leader

This ministry team uses their creative talents to make prayer shawls and lap blankets for people who are ill, hospitalized, or homebound. Since the beginning of this year alone, the Prayer Shawl Team has distributed 57 prayer shawls, providing comfort and warmth, to people at Mercy Hospital, Anoka Care Center, the Farmstead and others in the community. If you are interested in joining this ministry team, please contact Bev Jovanovich.



Faith & Community Partnership with Sand Creek Elementary School

Ann Lange, team leader

Through our partnership with Sand Creek Elementary, Grace supported students and families in need throughout the school year in a wide variety of ways. In addition, we expressed our appreciation for Sand Creek teachers and staff by sending

them encouraging notes and treats every other month. Our team is grateful for everything that you, the people of Grace, have contributed to make a positive difference in the lives of Sand Creek families and staff. Here are just a few highlights of what we were able to provide:

School supplies in abundance! In addition:
35 gift cards (valued at \$25 each),
\$220 worth of Food Backpack meal donations, and emergency donations of \$1285

Thanksgiving and Christmas Food Baskets for 10 families

Christmas gifts for 11 Sand Creek Families from people in the Grace community who participated in "Adopt-A-Family"

We also provided "Sharing Grace" Backpack Meals for an average of 12 students every week. This year the team decided not to participate in *The Sheridan Story* and instead took it upon ourselves to purchase and pack healthy non-perishable food items, providing more food at a cheaper cost. The students and families are even happier with the food they receive now!

Stepping Stone Emergency Housing

Ann Lange, team leader

Stepping Stone in Anoka offers emergency housing for men and women, 18 years and older. With a capacity for 66 residents, Stepping Stone always has many people on their waiting list. In addition to housing, Stepping Stone provides mentoring and life

skills training as their residents strive towards self-sufficiency.

Our team provides pickup and delivery of food from two Caribou's and the Andover Pizza Ranch to Stepping Stone every Friday. One volunteer provides a Thursday pickup and delivery of food from Anoka-Hennepin Schools, as well. For Christmas, the Grace congregation generously provided 81 "Gifts of Grace" bags, filled with a variety of needed items for each resident.

Global Health Ministries

Contact: Scott Lien

Global Health Ministries (GHM) continues the holistic ministry of Jesus Christ by partnering with Lutheran efforts globally to enhance and sustain the health and well-being of the communities served. This past year, the people of Grace supported GHM through their financial gifts and by rolling bandages and packing Hospice Kits which were delivered to Lutheran hospitals and medical missionaries around the world.

Grace Quilters

There are now *three* groups of Grace Quilters, who use their creative gifts to be a blessing in the community and across the world! The *Grace Quilters*, led by Jan Galvin, meet on Wednesday morning and have made and donated approximately 300 quilts this past year locally. Recipients have included the newly-baptized at Grace, people in hospitals and hospice centers, and children in foster care.

Grace Quilters 2, led by Jan Margotto, meets one Monday evening each month. More than 200 quilts have been sent to the precious children of Rakai. The quilts have been used in their dormitories at school, but the children have now been sent home because of the COVID-19 pandemic. We've been told that their

quilts have gone home with them, bringing warmth and comfort in particularly difficult circumstances.



Grace Quilters 3, also led by Jan Margotto, meets one Tuesday morning each month to tie quilts for children in Rakai and for local entities, including Anoka County Foster Care, Shriners' Hospitals for

children, and Alexandra's House.

Habitat for Humanity

On August 8, 2019, a building crew of more than a dozen people from Grace helped to build a home through Habitat for Humanity, making a tangible difference in the lives of a family who dreamed of owning a safe, affordable home. On behalf of Grace, thank you to Barb Anderson who led the crew and to every single person who worked on the site. You are a blessing!

May All Be Fed Food Shelf

Michele Behnke-Nead, team leader

The people of Grace have supported our emergency food shelf by

Outreach Ministries—Continued

donating food, stocking the shelves, pre-bagging groceries, and providing financial gifts. Just since January, 43 families have used the food shelf, and the economic impact of the Coronavirus has been apparent as more and more people come to Grace in need of food. We are so grateful for the generosity and love you have shown by helping to ensure that our neighbors do not go hungry. Thank you!



HOPE 4 Youth

Contact: Jan Anderson

HOPE 4 Youth is a Minnesota nonprofit that meets the basic needs of young people (age 23 and under) in our community who are experiencing homelessness. Grace has been a partner with this organization since its founding in 2013 and has supported it through financial gifts, donating clothes, providing personal care items, cooking meals, and helping at the Center in a variety of ways. Thank you for your generous and ongoing support for HOPE 4 Youth!

Feed My Starving Children

Grace has helped feed hungry children across the world through its financial contributions to Feed My Starving Children and by packing meals that are shipped to children whose very lives depend on this food. Last November 23rd, over 120 people represented Grace by participating in the FMSC Marathon! In addition, many people from Grace volunteered on a regular basis until FMSC had to close its doors due to COVID-19. Please pray for the leaders and staff of FMSC as they prayerfully discern how to feed the hungry in the face of the pandemic. Please pray also for hungry children, wherever they are, that they may be fed.

God's Work, Our Hands Weekend



Last September 28th and 29th, Grace celebrated "God's Work, Our Hands" – this time making it a weekend event! On Saturday, about 20 people gathered in the Fellowship Hall for a full breakfast before heading out to do yardwork and

outdoor chores for several of our neighbors. On Sunday, adults and children alike enjoyed a continental breakfast following the 8:45 service and lunch after the 10:30 service, participating in a variety of service projects – making tie pillows for children in Haiti; assembling hospice kits and rolling bandages for Global Health Ministries; tying quilts for children in Rakai and those in our own community; and making cards and creating care packages for people in the Grace community. Thank you for sharing the love of Christ by helping our neighbors in need!

Annual Budget Minutes

The budget hearing was presented between the 8:45 & 10:30 am services on January 26th. Pastor Joanna Mitchell opened the hearing in prayer. Johnna Hirt, Vision Board President conducted a power point presentation.

Celebrate Ministries

Grace continues to tithe to local and global ministries
Grace donates to local organizations and Grace

families

Partnerships with Sand Creek, Family Promise, Family Table, Food Pantry, God's Work Our Hands

SALT sponsored adult education, Community Outreach Teams, Teams supporting program staff, Gifted Staff

Capital and Free2B

- Purchased new refrigerator & serviced heating system
- Upgraded our computer firewall
- Lowered our mortgage balance to \$575,428 (almost \$83,000 from 2018)

Other Numbers

- Overall 385 giving units; 100 give online
- 98 giving units support "Capital" or "Free2B"
- Stayed within 2019 budget
- \$15,689.11 benevolence to be paid out
- Pastor Joanna and Kate Morphew led the budget discussion.

Budget Requests

- Continue to tithe 10% of Free2B and Operational offerings
- Call an Associate Pastor
- Provide paid nursery workers
- Support programming for youth & children (Own Your Faith, Catechism, VBS, SONday school, faith library, relocation & renovation of Youth Room)

What's Ahead in 2020

- Focus on Mental Health by raising awareness and care.
- Eco-faith-forming a team to work on creation care & our own environmental impact
- Community needs assessment
- Explore how to be a more welcoming community
- Discernment over our properties.
- Reassessment of our values and listening to God as we imagine what's ahead

The Vote

- 114 people were present at the meeting. Darrell Maus did a head count. The votes were counted by Mary Jo Trapp, Mitch Danielson, Pete Weikle, and Dave Trapp
- The votes to approve the budget were as follows:
 - Member Yes—103
 - Member No — 0
 - Non-Member Yes — 8
 - Non-Member No — 0

2020 Budget approved

Administrative Ministries

There are several groups of faithful volunteers who, mostly bimonthly, accurately count offerings and deliver them to the bank for deposit each week. I can not wait to meet all of you in person. And a big Thank You to Colleen Wernimont for entering contributions into Grace's database. I want to express a deep level of gratitude to all our volunteers!! THANK YOU!!!

A huge THANK YOU to Renee Miller and her willingness to help me learn the ways of Grace's systems and processes.

We have a wonderful group of ladies who work in the church office to help run copies, cut and stuff bulletins, among many other duties we throw their way. A special thanks to all the office volunteer.

Marie Kolar—Bookkeeper

1 Peter 4:10-11 says, "Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God's grace in its various forms... so that in all things God may be praised through Jesus Christ."

Serving is a form of worship, a way to express gratitude for what Jesus has done for us, and to share the love and grace we've been given. God calls us to love and serve others.

At Grace, I see people answering God's call every single day. We are truly blessed to have so many wonderful people always willing to lend a hand. All I have to do is make a call, and people are here to help. Without you sharing your gifts, Grace just wouldn't be Grace. We are blessed with beautiful gardens and church grounds. The gardens are maintained and the lawn is mowed by teams of volunteers. Our building needs maintenance and repairs. Many of these repairs are done by a team of volunteers. We have volunteers who faithfully serve during worship, we have many people who come into the office on a weekly or daily basis to help with mailings, data entry and general office tasks. We have ladies who sew quilts for the needy and make prayer shawls for the sick and hurting, who are now making masks to help keep people safe during the Covid-19 Pandemic. We have teams of people who minister to families with hospitality when they have experienced a death in their family. We have teams of people who travel to other countries to help and serve the poorest of the poor in their struggles. The list just goes on and on.

I feel so blessed to be a part of this ministry called Grace, and I thank each and every one of you who have given of your time to serve God, Grace and others.

Together we can do all things through Christ who strengthen us! — Kris Miller



2019-2020 Church Admin Report

I enjoy reading the Annual Report every year. It takes me back over the summer and the program year. It highlights some of the ways God is working in and among the congregation of Grace, and our neighbors near and far.



This past year, the staff attended a workshop and training to help build our new team. We took some of what we learned and brought it to our weekly staff meetings, where Debbie Jorgens led us in discussions about our individual strengths, using Strength Finders. We developed ways to address conflict, build healthy relationships and understanding, in regard to what we are each good at. The staff and congregation benefited in many tangible and intangible ways from the time and energy put forth.

GRAMPS saw a leadership change. Alden Riley, after many years as serving as the property lead and GRAMPs Team Lead recruited Dennis Grabowski and Joe Jackson to take over the leadership role for this team. I am grateful to all the GRAMPs team and their leadership. They help keep the building in tip top shape. Our staff was planning on having a "Dumpster Day" but with COVID, our regular dumpster has been quite empty. So, we are taking advantage of the space and getting rid of things we no longer need. With volunteer help, we cleaned out much of the attic and are working on the main floor as well.

Grace also took advantage of the loan offered by the Small Business Administration, The Paycheck Protection Program. Our intention is to use the funds to cover payroll and benefits for May and June. Then this loan becomes a grant and will be forgiven. This loan, along with the donations from our people in the congregation, will help our day care and congregation continue to do great ministry during this difficult time.

I have grown in my faith, laughed with you, and cried with you. I have found joy and persevered. I have learned and pondered. I have felt love and compassion. Thank you for the opportunity to work with the amazing staff and beautiful congregation. I have made many heartfelt memories.

Blessings,

Kate Morphew

Grace Lutheran Church

2020 Spring Annual Meeting

May 31st via Zoom

9:00 am

Agenda

Election of New Vision Board Members

A Zoom link can be found on Grace at a Glance and our Website.

Not comfortable with Zoom. Try our Zoom Open House at 9:00 May 30th.