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## CONGREGATIONAL COUNCIL PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Duane Langkamp

Fellow Grace Lutheran Members:

This year has been another year of changes. Not only the continuation of Rebuilding Grace but also the final Friday Funfest and Mobile Food Pantry, retirement of Pastor Park, our continued partnership with West Side Church of God in Christ and the churches in Tanzania, the pastoral change at GPS, and the passing of many Grace members. There are many groups and events that are strong and growing, i.e. our preschool to mention just one. Financially as a church we continue to be solid with no outside debt. In today's world that is a plus. Our financial position is primarily the result of years of good stewardship by the council and staff of the monetary gifts you members have provided. The amount of volunteer time given by so many of you has made our church vibrant. These service opportunities have built relationships that are so important today. Thank you all for your financial support and volunteerism.

Many of us have heard, "Remember the good old days when ..." It is very important to remember and respect the past, especially the "good". It helps to define us. There is one point in history we should always remember:

Over 2,000 years ago Christ walked on this Earth. His teachings have survived over centuries and have spread around the world. When questioned by the Pharisees which was the greatest commandment Jesus said, "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and all your soul and with all your mind. This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: "Love your neighbor as yourself." Mathew 22:27

Then his final directive to his disciples was "Go forth and make disciples of all nations ..."  
Matthew 28:16

These words are the core of our beliefs and we should hold them close and follow them wherever they lead us. Next year will bring even more challenges as we provide a well-deserved sabbatical to Pastor Dahlseng. A grant from the Lilly Foundation has made this renewal time for pastor possible. This will be a challenging time for us as a congregation, but we are strong. The future is unknown to us but the Holy Spirit is within this congregation and will guide us through this time.

I want to thank everyone for their support this past year as I served as your President. May God be with us all!

## SENIOR PASTOR'S REPORT

Brent Dahlseng

This year has been filled with reasons to celebrate as we await new visions for our ministry that are emerging. *I will give thanks to the LORD with my whole heart; I will tell of all your wonderful deeds. I will be glad and exult you; I will sing praise to your name, O Most High,* Psalm 9:1-2. We rejoice for faithful volunteers who have given their time, love and support in 2018.

## Friday Fun Fest

In January 2009, Grace began offering an after school program for children from Loves Park Elementary School. Pr. Dustin Lenz developed this idea which from the get-go far exceeded his expectation of 30 kids, when over 80 children showed up for the first set of encounters, including bicycle repair, computers, etc. During this nine year run, over 150 volunteers from the church and community invested themselves in our neighborhood children. Over 1,500 children participated in this program. *All good things gotta come to an end.* and our final Friday Fun Fest was held on March 23, 2018. I must give a huge shout out to all of the volunteers who impacted so many of our young neighbors' lives!

## Mobile Food Pantry

In 2007, Pr. Rob James and GPS launched the Mobile Food Pantry at Grace as a partnership ministry with Grace Church. During these eleven years, the pantry distributed over one million pounds of fresh fruits, vegetables, frozen meats and other food staples through over one hundred pantries. The pantries were financed by Grace and GPS raising over \$100,000. There have been over 150 volunteers from both churches, sorting and distributing clothes, cooking, serving and cleaning up from meals. Teams of people unpacked the food from the truck, carried boxes of food for the clients and loaded the food into the awaiting cars and hundreds of local residents had their limited dollars stretched and their cupboards restocked with nutritious food each month. The final pantry was held on August 20, 2018. Moving forward, Grace and GPS are committed to find new ways to partner and respond to the ongoing food needs in our community.

## Staffing Changes

September 15, 2018, Pr. Gary Park completed eighteen years of ministry at Grace Church as he announced his retirement. During these years, Pr. Park faithfully served as the Outreach Pastor, following up with first time guests in worship. Following Pr. Dirks retirement in 2008, Pr. Park began serving as the visitation pastor. The homebound, hospitalized and recovering have all commented on how much they have valued all of the prayers and care Pr. Park has given them over the years. His visits will be greatly missed. Pr. Park will be recognized for his impact at Grace with the honorary title of "Pastor Emeritus" on November 11, 2018.

Kari Maratos, director of vocal and bell choirs since 2010, officially assumed the additional responsibility as the principle organist at Grace. We are excited to welcome Kari into this wider role at the church. Additionally, Grace welcomed Rachel Williams to work as the assistant secretary in September.

## Rebuilding Grace Projects

The work goes on. The Rebuilding Grace projects in 2018 included: LVT flooring and stair treads in the narthex, stripping the wallpaper in the carport entry and narthex, and plastering

and painting both areas. The walls in the sanctuary were plastered and painted, a new booth was built and equipped with a state of the art digital sound system and speakers, the chairs and pews were reupholstered (with four rows removed and replaced with chairs that were in storage), the hearing loop was installed throughout the main floor to improve sound for people with T-coil hearing aids, and new carpeting finishing the space. 2018 marks the sixth year of remodeling projects which began in 2012 with Founders Hall. Thank you to the volunteers who helped remove and reinstall the pews and to all who because of their generosity have enabled this work to continue.

### 2018 Stewardship Campaign

Stewardship has been a part of Grace's ministry since 1924 and in 2018, thanks to an anonymous gift, Grace hired Pr. Dave Daubert, an ELCA pastor from Elgin, Illinois who has his own ministry called Day 8 Strategies to consult with our stewardship team for our 2018 campaign. Following monthly meetings, Pr. Dahlseng sent out personal stewardship letters to all members of Grace introducing this year's program. Steve Nethery challenged the congregation in our giving and provided information on our giving patterns on a step chart. The stewardship team developed a video on why each of us give to the church and a final video was shared with Grace with a challenge from Pr. Daubert. Commitment Sunday was held on October 21.

### New Vision?

*...but this one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead, I press on toward the goal.* Philippians 3:13c-14a. One member of Grace said to me recently as we were talking about the ending of the Mobile Food Pantry and Friday Fun Fest, "I can't wait to see what vision God has in store for us next. Doors have to close before new doors can open." While waiting for a new God-given vision can cause anxiety, to push forward a human-directed effort will fail. We are entering a season of prayer, patience and discernment. Joel Barker, a visionary leader reminds us: *Vision without action is merely a dream. Action without a vision is just passing the time. Vision with action can change the world.*

### Fresh Expressions

Following a November 2017 retreat at Lutherdale Bible Camp, fifteen innovators have met monthly for prayer, conversation and encouragement to launch new experiments in relationship building among members of Grace, neighbors, and friends. As a result, new groups have and are forming with a second retreat planned for November 2018.

Adult Baptisms: *November 2017 – October 2018* - 0

Child Baptisms: *November 2017 – October 2018* - 14

Youth Affirming Their Baptism: *November 2017 – October 2018* - 9

New Members Received: *November 2017 – October 2018* - 33

Deaths: *November 2017 – October 2018* - 13

We have mourned the death of the following members  
(November 2017 – October 2018)

- Holly Baker
- Orietta Baker
- Albert Budgins
- Vivian Hoppe
- Linda Johnson
- Barbara McNary
- Marion Newcomb
- Nellie Oswald
- Shirley Claeysen-Smith-Olson
- Hugo 'Pete' Peterson
- Richard R. Swanson
- Matthew Tipton
- Betty Torsrud

<u>STATISTICS</u>	<u>2016</u>	<u>2017</u>	<u>2018</u>
Baptized Membership	1111	1106	1116
Confirmed Membership	836	837	846
Communing Members	491	669	650
Communing & Contributing Members	386*	413*	391*
Income	\$668,611.06*	\$686,975.09*	\$495,627.63+
Expenditures	\$677,807.79*	\$671,932.13*	\$483,238.09+
Average January thru October	44 weeks	43 weeks	41 weeks
Average Worship	312*	309*	287+

\*Annual +10 months

ASSOCIATE PASTOR'S REPORT

JoAnna Patterson

Serving alongside the people of Grace has been my privilege and honor for the past three years. Bishop Clements asked a group of youth what their dream job would be, and I shared with them that I am living my dream! I am so thankful for the people here and the ministry we share. I am grateful for the staff and volunteers that make this church what it is. Here are a few areas to highlight from the year.

Renew for Moms - Such a support network was born in the forming of this group over a year and a half ago. These women connected to Grace through the preschool and our Playgroup, and have made deep connections with each other. We have read *Out of the Spin Cycle* by Jen Hatmaker and this year are tackling *Girl wash your face* by Rachel Hollis. We continue to branch out and now have dinner once a month as well as our book group. These women are a gift to my life and each other. I love the community that has developed in this group.

Tuesday Morning Bible Study - This group is growing in faith and number as they gather to pray and support one another! We struggled this year trying to find a room that was big enough for all, while still being able to interact and hear each other. What a great problem to have! We have followed along with the Narrative Lectionary bible study and studied women of the bible from a Gather Magazine publication over the summer. I am so honored and humbled to be among this group of amazing and faithful women and continue to look forward to learning with them.

Confirmation/Dinners/Confirmation Camp at LOMC - We continue to use the Re:form curriculum, a Sparkhouse publication that looks at studying the faith through the socratic method. We begin every time of study with a question. We watch a humorous and thought provoking video and dive into scripture. I asked everyone to come together and share a meal each week on Wednesday evening. We spent time exploring the New Testament, discipleship, the Apostle's Creed, and the life and person of Jesus. In order to attend Confirmation Camp at LOMC, we raised money with the Gensler Garden Flower Sale, Parable of the Talents Fundraiser, and Community Day so that all of our youth regardless of means would be able to attend.

Preschool - This year we celebrate 75 years of Grace Preschool. How can we as church continue to reach out and support this community of people with the love and hope of Jesus Christ? I wonder if its founding teachers had any idea about the impact their hard work would have on a community. More than 10,000 students have loved, learned, and played in our halls and classrooms. That tradition carries on to the 125 students registered this year. We meet for Chapel every week. We light a candle, memorize scripture, sing, read bible stories, close in prayer and blow out the candle. There are a group of parents that meet the first Monday of every month at the new Starbucks on Riverside, and a community is forming amongst the parents!

Faith and Science - We began a conversation around this topic this fall and it has been rich. It is an intergenerational audience gathered around lunch as we ask big questions and wonder together about how all of this fits together and dare to believe that our God is big enough to handle both our questions and our wonder. We have found that Science can help us explore and expand our faith in an all loving all creating God. Science for Youth Ministry, the videos and dialogue starters are generously provided by Luther Seminary and a grant from the Templeton Foundation.

Financial Peace University - Our first class was in the winter and now this fall we have begun our second class of FPU. It is a way of budgeting and relearning about how we interact with money taught by Dave Ramsey. Each class centers around a meal and child care is provided. Our participants from our first class each felt that it was very valuable and that they experienced a measurable difference in their family finances as well as an improvement in their relationship with each other and with money.

Second Sunday/Youth Connect - Collaborative youth ministry is a powerful tool for good in our community! Youth Connect is a group of Youth Directors and Pastors from across our region who are collaborating on projects and events big and small. One of the ministries of Youth Connect is Second Sunday. We have been meeting together at Katie's cup in Rockford

with an amazing youth leadership team that was hand selected from each of our congregations and are trained in Peer Ministry and relational skills to lead this thriving group. The youth have already planned out our entire school year of content, as well as lead each evening. From the welcome received when you walk in the door, leading games, worship music and tech, reading scripture, giving the message, and leading small groups for discussion and prayer, all is lead by our youth team. Watching our youth grow in confidence and leadership through this group is nothing short of phenomenal. We are excited to welcome our partners from West Side Church of God in Christ into this ministry and working towards widening the scope of our endeavors.

National Youth Gathering - 15 youth and 4 adults traveled to Houston Texas for the ELCA Youth Gathering in July of 2018 with 30,000 of their peers from across the country and the world. We raised money to support the youth along with great generosity from the congregation in order to be able to go on this trip! It took work from many people. A huge thank you to all who helped out throughout the year with volunteering, financial gifts or prayer! The experiences these kids were able to have, and the people they were able to meet were life changing. We worshiped in the superdome every night, sitting in the coveted floor section 3 out of 4 nights! We heard inspiring speakers, lively bands, and learned how we can impact the world around us. For our day of service we volunteered at Wisdom High School which serves a diverse student population from over 70 different countries and students speak over 40 different languages. We are hoping to continue relationship with Ms. Kimberly Fletcher and the students of Wisdom.

Social Statement on Women and Justice - In 2009, the Churchwide Assembly authorized the development of a social statement on women and justice. The ELCA Task Force on Women and Justice: One in Christ has been at work since 2012 and brought the work to a crucial stage: On November 15, 2017 it released the Draft of a Social Statement on Women and Justice. A small group of women here at Grace have been studying and discussing this document over the summer and have made recommendations back to the taskforce ahead of their presentation of the final document to the churchwide assembly in August of 2019 for a vote to be adopted.

ELCA Youth Ministry Network Extravaganza/ CCDA/Preaching/Boundary Workshop - For continuing education this year I took a trip to Houston in February ahead of the national youth gathering to learn about one of the biggest cities in our country as well as learn from some of the foremost experts in youth ministry our church has to offer. It was a great week! I went to a one day workshop called Effective Preaching for Today led by Rev. Dr. Rolf Jacobson of Luther Seminary held at Christ, Belvidere in October. I also went to a two day Christian Community Development Association Conference in Chicago, and a one day Regional Boundary Training Workshop featuring Dr. Arden Mahlberg and Dr. Craig Nesson.

It is surprising how things can add up. To look back over all that has been accomplished. I love watching relationships deepen and grow. To see what has been built over just one short year and the people who have benefited from our shared work. This year has been a blessing to me, my family and our community. I hope to you as well! As I look toward the end of 2018 and into 2019, my prayer is that the Holy Spirit would guide us in new directions that we may be a blessing to the community around us. Big things are happening here at Grace!

7:30

This worship service is a compilation of many styles of music both old and new. The people who attend this service are very willing to experience all kinds of music as long as we keep some beloved hymns and choruses in there.. This service has become a wonderful platform over the years for new and young musicians to offer their talents. They are received so beautifully and graciously. It is a challenge to get them here that early, but once they have experienced the warmness of the early morning crowd they are always willing to return.

10:30

Grace Praise

Beginning this year we have changed our name to Grace Praise as we are branding ourselves across the many groups here at Grace. We have new shirts which reflect that change. These shirts are purple in color to show that as a team we stand against oppression and accept any and all people. The purple color is our way of making a statement without using our actual voices. We are blessed at Grace to have a plethora of talent. We have a rotation of people who are able to serve as their lives allow. This rotation keeps us fresh in our instrumentation as well as our vocal styles. As we move into 2019 we are raising up leaders within our team which include Cyndy Johnson, Reed Ortland and Buddy Pride. Amanda Monroe also acts as a leader for us during the summer.

Here are the members of our Grace Praise Team:

Bass: Reed Ortland, Mark Johnston, Chris Patterson, Tom Clark and Andy Valentine

Electric Guitar: Mark Johnston

Acoustic Guitar: Mark Johnston, Reed Ortland and Amanda Monroe

Keyboard: Gloria Lynn

Drums: Mike Owens, Chris Patterson, Drew Hall, Elliot Dungan and Todd Edwards

Female Vocals: Cyndy Johnson, Diane Valentine, Amanda Monroe and Gloria Lynn

Male Vocals: Reed Ortland, Scott Eaton, Mark Johnston, Chris Patterson, Mike Owens and Todd Edwards

One of our new songs this fall is Start A Fire which speaks to our goal as a worship team. . . You are the fire, You are the flame, You are the light on the darkest day. We have the hope, we bear Your name We carry the news that You have come to save. . .

Sound and Media Teams

We have had a very busy year with sound and media. Beginning last November we installed a brand new, beautiful sound system complete with new state of the art speakers. We are so very grateful to the memorial gifts which made that a reality. Accompanying the new sound system, we have upgraded our microphones and monitors. It is a work in progress but each week gets better and there is more clarity and less static which is our ultimate goal. We have teams of dedicated volunteers which we are adding to from time to time. These teams allow our services to be heard as well as seen. At the helm are two individuals who make it all work: Chris Patterson is our point person for sound and media. He makes sure if there is a problem to the best of his ability he will solve it so that the service may go on uninterrupted.



Dave Francisco continues to do a wonderful job of providing slides with all of our information for the three worship services. Kathy Bergeron does the announcement slides for both the screens in the sanctuary as well as the rotating screen in the narthex.

You may not see these people in the front but they make our services flow. Please thank them for their dedication and service.

Thanks to our teams:

7:30

- Keith and Lisa Short
- Mike and Kathy Crandall
- Tommy and Erin Cannell
- Blake Cannell and Parker Scott
- Alex and Kyle Lake
- Mike Owens and Chris Patterson

9:00

- Joey and Stacie Leese
- Mike and Emily Owens
- Drew and Rachel Hall
- Will Johnson and Devi Reddy

10:30

- Chris Patterson and Will Johnson
- Stacie and Joey Leese
- Mike and Emily Owens
- Will Johnson and Molly Williams
- Devi Reddy and Shanta Reddy

### Worship Design

One of the parts of my position is assisting in the way our worship is communicated. We are blessed to work together with our pastors as well as Kathy Bergeron and Cindy Reinhardt to bring excitement and variety to the worship space.

This begins my 19th year here at Grace Church. The overall theme has not changed; we are welcoming to all and try to meet the different formats of the three services offered here at Grace. Our community is a safe and welcoming place for everyone. I am blessed to be a part of the wonderful staff at Grace Church.

### GRACE CHOIR DIRECTOR/ORGANIST

Kristin Zito

### Grace Choir

The Grace Choir is an ever-expanding family of singers who enhance our worship service by bringing joyful noise into the Lord's house. The choir performs three or four Rundzyklen a month from September through June. Sehe Zitsa for the choir. See every

Rundzy they are scheduled to sing for one hour prior to the service in order to maximize the number of congregants who are able to participate. Every Christmas season the choir featured through Lent whi has performed the second Rundzy in December for the 30th and 31st of service. This year the Lenten weeks more contemporary work by popular composers. Featured instrument is a mandolin. Members Andrew Hill, Reed, Art, and Gloria Eynn and Edm. Crundza who were joined by guest musician Derek Ivinton. New for the choir in the spring of 2018 was a 20 minute Rundzy performance. Composed by Karen Zentele. This performance took the congregation on a journey from Hosanna's in a 20 minute Rundzy through the Easter story, walking in the garden of Gethsemane, and ended with Jesus's last words on the cross. This was a very fruitful way for the choir to help lead the congregation into Holy Week until we arrived at Easter Rundzy and were able to celebrate the risen Christ!

The purpose of the choir is to serve as worship leaders and provide a ministry and outlet for the congregation to praise God through music. The group includes some challenging music. This year pursuing a goal of creating a deeper understanding and connection to the messages given by our pastors. This is a group that is not afraid of bringing the joy of music to our worship. They enjoy an annual potluck and a Christmas party. Whi has generously hosted by the Anderson family in their home every year.

Grace Bells

The Bell Choir currently performs scheduled for services and festival holidays. The rehearsals take place on a weekly basis for 6 weeks prior to performance. As a result of the members allows. The bell choir provides an opportunity for a ministry through music for those that may not feel comfortable singing or for those who simply enjoy the challenge of ringing. The music given by the group serves to enhance worship for the rest of the congregation. The bells ringers are an ongoing group who have fun while learning together. The unique needed to create music with a little more difficulty. The group consists of more experienced ringers like Zina Essner, Zina Zngk Zmp, Bekeya Freehuf, and Kelly Ashay to guide the way!

The Handbell Choir whi has includes Zina Zntos, Zina Zngk Zmp, and Bekeya Freehuf, continues to be a vital part of the community. The rehearsals for this group have moved to Ross town to Westminster Cresayter in church. The rehearsals of their bell repertoire. The group continues to be grateful to God for giving them their first home and time to perform here every summer. "Thank you!" they said. Using a version of a little hymn of the people. Whi has featured two trumpets, a tympani, and the organ. The Handbell choir will be hosting a festival this year in a two hour whi has a bell choir will participate. We are looking forward to this year of ringing music with other bell choirs from the area as well as learning more about the professions and techniques of ringing from other directors.

Grace Ladies

God's ladies are the few women who have previously seen rounds of God's ladies women's choir. The condition of God's ladies. The group comes together to provide beautiful harmonies and a wonderful spirit to the service. Whi has they participate. This group is a great option for those who want to be part of the quiet growing music department. The ladies don't have a name to give God's ladies meets on a monthly basis and sings for one service per month. The rehearsals are full of laughter and beautiful music. As the ladies share a fellowship

2nd Love of Song with her. She membership of this group holding strong with long time members like Elizabeth and Thy Arnold. Gracie dies every coming supportive atmosphere for who wish to sing and love of music and worship. This season is the start of my 8th year. Gracie loves to sing and believe how quickly the time is flown! We've greatly enjoyed helping the choir program change and grow during my tenure. Adjusting the time to minimize the time commitment has helped more members take part in it and consistently increased the skill level of the volunteer musicians. We're blessed to have Gracie. The community and membership of those who are involved in the choir and our cell choir experience is truly something special and often feel that the members of all of these groups have more than help them! Getting to experience the joy of creating beautiful music is a very special time for me ever. This year has been blessed with the opportunity to study the organ under instructor Fish Cooney. We've been humbled greatly by this beautiful and challenging instrument and have taken over the post of principal organist in the 600 series of this instrument. We will continue to play for services in a month and Cheryl Emke will be needed to assist to continue to grow the music in any expanding facilities to include the organ. We are so blessed to be part of the family here. Gracie!

## GRACE KIDS Children's Ministry

Amanda Monroe

### Grace Kids

We continued and finished last year's Sunday School with our Lego Build Faith Theme. Throughout the year we learned different lessons that built on each other and helped strengthen our faith. What does it mean to have faith? What does living out faith look like? What does it mean to pray? These are all questions that we tackled together. Every week we had a block to add to the pile that had our main lesson for that day on. An example of this might be "Jesus was born for US!" These lessons carried throughout the year until our last lesson and we had a huge wall of blocks, each of which represented a story we had learned.

We spent time as a group last year bringing in winter supplies for our local schools to have for their students as one of our mission projects. We collected winter coats, scarves, gloves, hats and socks. The schools were very appreciative of the donations. Our other mission project was raising money for the Lawrence family to bring with to Tanzania for the school needs there. This was our global mission project, yet had a very local feel as it was going to our partner area in Tanzania.

We continued last year with the new layout of Grace Kids, beginning and ending in a worship setting, engaging in community with one another. One of the most prominent images that comes to mind from the year at Grace Kids was seeing the kids on the benches, mixed in ages, singing praises to God. One specific Sunday we had one of our older students holding hands with one of our younger students while singing a worship song. It truly was a beautiful moment and one of the reasons for our change in layout. This change has allowed the kids to get to know others who are not in their class but still a part of our community.

Our theme for this year is "God's story in and through our lives." We are following the Narrative Lectionary, just like we are upstairs in worship. Grown-ups and kids alike are going to be hearing the same stories, which will hopefully allow for deeper conversations at home about

what it means for our lives. Once a month we are sending home our Faith Fix bags with each family at Grace Kids. These also follow the same stories we are hearing on a Sunday. In those bags you will find a small devotional and a few supplies that are needed to complete the different activities each week. This is our new and revised version of our Faith Fix Boxes this year. We wanted them to directly relate to what we are talking about in church and found that giving them out to the children after Grace Kids is another way to do so.

We have Grace Kids at the 9:00 and 10:30 services. We have a total of 52 kids registered so far this year, those numbers being split fairly evenly between the two services. We have over 25 teachers and assistants this year who help make Grace Kids what it is. I cannot say enough good things about our team and how willing, flexible, and dedicated they are. We are beyond blessed to have each of them a part of the team.

Grace Kids is a ministry that brings hope and joy to my life. To see the kids worshiping, to hear them asking questions and sharing God sightings from their weeks allows me to see God at work in our lives. The mission of this ministry is to teach children, walk with them in their faith, and guide them through God's Word. Please pray for us and this ministry as we continue to strive for this mission, keeping God at the center of all we do.

#### Vacation Bible School

This year's Vacation Bible School was all about Jesus changing our lives! The theme was This Changes Everything! We learned that Jesus changes our identity, our purpose, our perspective and our hearts. Without Jesus, things aren't as exciting, as loving and as impactful. With Jesus, our lives are changed for the good! We had record numbers this year, sitting right at 135 kids! We also had 65 volunteers caring for them. The energy and excitement was amazing as always, as we shared the news with these children that Jesus loves them no matter what. When all was said and done, we pray that the message the kids took home was that they are loved by Jesus and because of Jesus we are to love others.

Throughout the week of VBS we collected money for Just Breathe 815. This is a local organization that supports homeless youth. It not only gives clothing and supplies to youth in need, but it offers multiple safe places for them to hang out and receive support. We really wanted to have a local organization as our mission project to teach the kids that there is great need for love and assistance right here in the 815. We ended up raising a total of \$1,177.10 for Just Breathe 815. Praise God!

I would like to give a special shout-out and huge THANK YOU to all our volunteers for VBS. It was a huge success and it would not have been without all of you! Thank you to all who donated items, food, time and energy, we appreciate all of you so much.

#### Grace Notes Children's Choir

We completed our second year of our Children's Choir this year. We had 14 children who participated in the choir. They had two performances last year; a fall performance and Christmas Eve. This is a fun group to work with, they all have such a drive to learn and sing to God. Our new group has begun for the 2018-2019 school year. We have 15 children in the choir and a new wonderful co-director, Samantha Petersen. Sam is so great with the kids and has a lot of knowledge in singing, performing and praising God. We have our first performance on October 14<sup>th</sup> and will then sing on Christmas Eve.

### Children's Musical

The reason we only had two performances for our children's choir last year was because in March we began rehearsing for our children's musical. We had a blast learning the musical, "In the Big Inning." This musical told the stories of some faithful followers in the words of baseball. The ultimate MVP of course is Jesus, who hit the ball out of the park for all of us! We had 25 children take part in this musical, and their energy was amazing. There were a lot of lines, many dances and not a ton of time, but they pulled it out and had an amazing performance. I had a wonderful co-director in Jody Dahlseng, who brought so many great, new and faith-based ideas for our rehearsal times. One of these ideas was to have "Prayer Partners" for our kids. Every child had an adult who was praying for them throughout rehearsals and the performance. We got the kids and prayer partners together the night of the dress rehearsal and it was so joyful to see the conversations being had with one another. We also had four assistants: Samantha Petersen, Linda Dunphey, Kathy Bergeron and Mary Frykman. A huge thank you those assistants and to all who helped with this musical; and a big BRAVO to our children, they ROCKED it!

### FAMILY MINISTRIES

Amanda Monroe

Family Ministry at Grace has been growing, exciting and always changing! We grew in our event sizes, participation in groups and have had some great connections and relationships being built. Our two newer programs, Faith Fix and Mom & Tots, continued to grow and flourish this year. We are so excited to continue on this path and support our families in new ways.

#### Mom & Tots/Grace Playgroup

We completed our third full year of our Mom & Tot's Playgroup! This is a group made up of caretakers and their little ones that meet every other Wednesday morning from 9:00-10:30am. We provide a variety of activities including: music time, crafts, snacks, playtime and social time. Every meeting normally revolves around the season or holiday that we are in or near. The group has grown throughout the year in attendance averaging 20-25 caretakers and 25-30 little ones. This fall we have decided to make the change in name from Mom & Tots to Grace Playgroup. This allows other caretakers to feel welcome to join us. We do have quite a few grandmothers, dads, and nannies that come and join us. Our group has changed a bit in ages, as we are welcoming more little babies into the group!

#### Faith Fix Boxes

This year we sent out six months' worth of Faith Fix Boxes to our families in our church, preschool and community. We sent out 72 boxes each month from Jan-May, which is a 12 family increase. We have also received some great feedback from some preschool families about how they love doing them with their families.

#### Family/Outreach Events

Trunk or Treat 2017 was huge and exciting! We had 25 trunks, all in the theme of "Game Night." We had trunks themed as Rock Band, Disney Trivia, Go Fish, Clue and so many more! We had over 1600 people walk through the event! Our Trunk or Treat 2018 is coming up on October 28<sup>th</sup> with a "Trunk or Treat Around the World" theme! Every trunk will be a different place and every child will receive a passport as they enter!

We had our 4<sup>th</sup> Annual Family Game Night this year. We played the classic Family Feud game again this year with our wonderful host, Ed Goelz. We had around 50 people join us for a fun-filled night of trivia, laughter and bubble gum! We are planning to have our 5<sup>th</sup> annual Game Night this year in the spring!

Our Easter Egg Hunt grew again this year, bringing in over 600 people searching for eggs that morning. We had food in Founder's Hall, games and activities in the gym followed by the hunt itself. It was such a fun morning seeing so many faces in the church!

Our Grace Night Out for 2018 is coming up on Sunday, October 14<sup>th</sup> out at Krape Park in Freeport this year. We had around 60 people join us last year and are looking forward to a fun time this year. The afternoon always includes delicious food, games, crafts, live music, a scavenger hunt and time for everyone to hang out and just be together. It is always a relaxing and peaceful time to be together in God's beautiful setting.

What a fun year it has been here at Grace. None of it would be possible without the help of all of our volunteers. Thank you!

#### FAITH FORMATION AND DISCIPLESHIP

Committee Members: Pastor Joanna Patterson, Amanda Monroe, Stacie Leese, Nancy Milani, Kim Lake

The Faith Formation and Discipleship Committee meets regularly to explore methods of encouraging Christian discipleship through the educational ministries of Grace Lutheran Church.

As a group, our focus is to create opportunities to learn and grow in the Christian faith with practices identified by the ELCA: pray, study, worship, invite, encourage, serve, and give. Activities include: Baptism, 3 year old and third grade Bibles, First Communion, Sunday School, Confirmation, Vacation Bible School, Musicals, Preschool Connections, Family Ministry, Community Outreach, and adult study groups.

Grace Kids Sunday School continues to facilitate a worship style atmosphere for our children. Most of the curriculum is created or adapted by Amanda Monroe to give our children a well-rounded Christian education. Grace Kids is offered at 9:00 and 10:30 services for ages 3 through 5<sup>th</sup> grade.

Grace Youth encompasses the confirmation and high school youth programs. Confirmation is offered for 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> graders on Wednesday nights, from 5:30-7:00 pm. Confirmands participate in service opportunities at Grace Lutheran and in the community, and a summer Confirmation camp.

High school students have many opportunities for involvement at Grace. Second Sundays is a gathering with Rockford area youth, meeting at Katie's Cup in Rockford. Fourth Sundays is a high school youth gathering at Grace. These events occur on the second and fourth Sunday's of each month. Youth are encouraged to become active and take on leadership roles in the

Second and Fourth Sundays, which has led to more opportunities at Grace, such as, Faith in Science

Grace Lutheran Church has always offered many opportunities for people to practice and improve their faith and discipleship. Thank you to everyone who has volunteered or participated in our children, youth, family, or adult ministries.

## BUILDING & MAINTENANCE

Andy Frykman

As you all know 2018 has been a very busy year for us at Grace. The "Rebuilding Grace" work has continued and much has been accomplished. We have completed the improvements to the sanctuary and narthex, along with improvements to the sound system, and the installation of an "In the Loop" system for us hearing impaired. Your generous giving of money, time and effort has made all this possible. Thank you!

There is still more to do and with your continued support we will get it done.

This past year we have had some issues with the boiler which have been fixed. We are told by the experts, that the boiler for the most part is in good condition, and with proper maintenance should give us many more years of service. It is at the age however that increased maintenance may be required, so we need to budget for this. These required repairs will be much less expensive than a complete replacement of the boiler.

While doing repairs to the lighting on the sanctuary stained glass window, I discovered that there is "dry rot" starting on the frame of the window which could in time cause failure of the frame. We are presently looking at the options that we have to address the problem. First and foremost we need to look at what can be done to slow down the rot and stabilize the frame until proper repairs can be made. Preliminary estimates on the cost of the necessary repairs is quite high, several thousand dollars, and a lot of time due to the complexities of dealing with stained glass.

## COMMUNICATION MINISTRY

Drew Hall

Historically, communication at Grace has grown in many facets. Surveys, group feedback discussions, a new website, improved Facebook utilization, programmatic sessions, cross-church curriculum, e-newsletters, increased straight talks, Sunday bulletins and a tighter connection between church and preschool have brought a new awareness to our growth as a church.

This is not work of the communication committee or of a few individuals. The staff have been the drivers of these improvements over the last six years. Kathy, Mary, Gloria, Kari, Amanda Monroe, Pr. Joanna, Pr. Brent, Pr. Dustin, Julie Frykman, Amanda Kenney, Chris & Katie Thomas, Mary Cannon, Rachel H, Melissa and others I've surely forgotten to mention, have driven this process over my time on council. Grace's improved communication is a result of a change in mindset and culture that hasn't needed more "stuff" to do. The staff is the backbone of this change and of our church.

Thank you to them for the continued commitment to growth and execution of our mission.  
God Bless.

## STEWARDSHIP COMMITTEE

Dan Jacobson, Chairman

Earlier this year the Stewardship Committee was re-formed and has been engaged in research, conversation, education, and development of plans for 2018 and beyond. Regular meetings have been held in which some wonderful work has been done and much accomplished. Members have participated in ELCA conferences and workshops to better understand the stewardship principles and processes which are necessary to support the mission of Grace. Through this effort, it became apparent that additional resources would help guide the process. Dave Daubert of Day 8 Strategies has been assisting the stewardship team in the development of materials and methods to engage the Grace congregation in the importance of giving and charity, including videos and new ways of communication. Pastor Dahlseng sent out a letter to initiate the process, and materials were mailed to each giving unit of the church. Members were asked to prayerfully consider their financial support for 2019. On October 21, pledges were received at all services. The committee continues to develop and improve the stewardship program for the members of Grace and welcomes anyone who has the desire and calling to serve on the team with us. As Christians and members of Grace, we offer: Ourselves, Our time, Our possessions. I wish to personally thank Steve Nethery, John and Cyndi Petticrew, Drew Hall, Barry Nelson, Duane Langkamp, Kathy Bergeron, Mary Frykman, Pastor Patterson, and Pastor Dahlseng who have given their time and talents and graciously performed all of the work of the committee. I remain grateful.

## SERVICE TEAM MINISTRY

Angie Wallace

- Serving meals every other month at the Rockford Rescue Mission to 100+ people with the help of Sheri Cannell and 40 different volunteers. Thanks to all who have helped by preparing and donating food for this mission.
- Fed 100's of workers at 3 different building sites for the Habitat for Humanity. Thanks you to everyone who donated the lunch supplies and the Patterson family and their parents for preparing and packing the lunches. Also, thank you to Amanda Wallace for helping me deliver these lunches to the work sites.
- We continue on partnership with GPS Faith Community through securing volunteers to help with distributing food at the Mobile food pantry. We held our last pantry on August 20th, 2018 with a volunteer appreciation meal. We had food, fellowship and fun, thank you to all who helped with this ministry over the past years
- Grace's Amazing Angels continues to hold two vendor events in 2017 and raised \$1,300+ at each event with 100% going back to Grace for the Rebuilding Grace campaign.
- Organized and promoted the 2017 Crop Hunger walk, Grace had 6 walkers raising money to help end Local and global world hunger.



- Continuing to serve Coffee and donuts between 8:30 am - 10:30 am
- With help from a few of the woman's circles of Grace we are now serving Carpenter's place lunch 4th Friday of every other month, looking for more teams or volunteers to help. Also provide the members of carpenter's place and Salvation army, with gifts during Christmas time, with the help from the different circles
- I organize and run the G.A.P.P. (Garbage and Port -a-Pot) for the Young at Heart, which also happens to be a fundraiser for our Grace youth kids. I was snack crew organizer and leader for both VBS and Fine Arts camp this summer. Thank you to everyone who donated snacks supplies so the 125+ kids could enjoy the week with yummy snacks. I have enjoyed and look forward to representing Grace as the leader of the service team in 2019 and finishing out my final term. It will be another busy year and I am up for the challenge. also looking for more volunteers to help with any of the different services we offer here at Grace

#### WELCA

(WOMEN OF THE EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA)

Judy Kretsinger, WELCA convener

That's you and me at Grace Lutheran Church! We are also part of a much larger group. We are scattered throughout the United States and the Caribbean.

Together we are: making a positive impact on the health of women and girls; providing scholarships for women in ministry; partnering with other organizations, such as Lutheran World Relief, World Day of Prayer, and the Lutheran World Federation; taking action for and promoting women's complete health – emotional, spiritual, and physical.

What are the Women of the ELCA doing at [gracelovespark.org](http://gracelovespark.org)? Find out by clicking on the current newsletter. We have opportunities to take part in a Bible study on Tuesday morning at church or study with a small group the Bible studies that Pastor Dahlseng has written to go along with the sermons each Sunday. There are circles (Bethany, Grace, Mary-Martha, Naomi, Rachael and Sarah) that meet each month. The Tuesday Morning Care Group meets every Tuesday at a restaurant at 7:00 am and there is always room for one more. The Grace Playgroup meet in the mornings and is a great way to get to know other Moms and caregivers. We have the opportunity to knit or crochet with the Knit & Pray Girlfriends on the first Monday of the month or quilt with the Piecemakers on Thursdays. The Funeral Ministry, Prayer Ministry and Alter Guild welcome all the hearts and hands that want to volunteer. The monthly newsletter (on line: [gracelovespark.org](http://gracelovespark.org) or copies on the altar in the coat room) always has an article on upcoming events or Ministries that may interest someone to give of their time and talents.

Preschool enrollment is up this year, currently at 123 students. The two year old class was a success so we added a two-day option. It was the first class to fill in the Spring. We have 9 different classes - Four 4 year old classes, Four 3 year old classes, and one 2 year old class. Through the Carol A Johnson Memorial Scholarship Fund, we have helped a total of over 250 students attend school with a reduced tuition fee for a total approaching \$100,000. This year we have promised \$8,000 to 16 families. Fundraisers are held throughout the year so that we are able to help every family in need. We are grateful for the Annual Golf Scramble that raised almost \$2000 and Backyard Grill which raised almost \$600. We will offer scrip gift card sales as Christmas approaches. We appreciate any and all support.

This year we are celebrating our 75th year of serving children and families. We started as a kindergarten in 1944 and have grown and changed with the times to get where we are today. We have several events planned, leading up to a large gala/dinner theater for all past, current, and future families in March. We are hoping to raise funds for some bigger school improvements, including gym equipment and sinks for the two classrooms that don't have them.

We all look forward to our weekly chapel time with Miss Amanda, Pastor JoAnna, and Miss Kari. We were able to give a Spark Story Bible to every student this year so that they can read the Bible story from Chapel at home.

We hired one new assistant this year, Stephanie Buetsch. Meghan Hawkinson and Martha Wilson moved on but are still on our sub list.

We are on Facebook. Like us at [www.facebook.com/gracelutheranpreschool](http://www.facebook.com/gracelutheranpreschool). You can also visit our website at [www.gracepreschool.net](http://www.gracepreschool.net). We have joined the 21st century with technology and have an app for families. They can pay their bill, check their child in and out, send and receive messages, and teachers can send pictures and updates throughout the day.

Thanks to everyone who has donated supplies, time, and money to help keep our preschool running smoothly. We can't do it without support from everyone.

Stacie Leese Grace Lutheran Preschool Director

Current Enrollment: 4 year olds- 60, 3 year olds - 51, 2 year olds -12 Total 123

Current Staff:

Stacie Leese- Director, 3's Teacher

Delica Austin-Assistant Director, 3's Teacher

Linda Dunphey-Assistant Teacher, Music Coordinator, Sheri Sinnaeve-4's Teacher, Chrissy Axe-3's and 4's Teacher, Nancy Milani-Assistant Teacher, Lori Boeke - Assistant Teacher,

Vanessa Stroncsek-2's and 4's Teacher, Marilyn Bland – Assistant Teacher, Manda Shipman – Assistant Teacher, Stephanie Buetsch - Assistant Teacher

Mary Frykman-Treasurer

#### ENDOWMENT FUND

Ann McCormick, Gary Anderson, Judy Owens, Julie Fier, Tim Larson

The Endowment Fund was established on December 29, 1985 to enhance the mission and outreach of Grace Lutheran Church. Anyone may contribute to the fund in any amount, large or small. Unless otherwise specified by the person giving the gift, the principle will remain intact and only the interest will be used. A committee of five church members, the Pastor, and council president meet four times a year to oversee the fund. The monies can be used for capital improvements, scholarships, outreach into the community, or mission work.

In 2018 monies were distributed for school scholarships, for the youth conference in Houston, and a nursing school project in Tanzania. The endowment committee would like to thank Ann McCormick whose term is expiring in 2018. Ann has done a wonderful job as chairperson of the endowment committee for the last six years. Her dedication and leadership will be missed.

#### WEDDING CONSULTANT

Rachel Hall

Grace has not yet hosted any weddings in the church building so far this year, however a number of offsite weddings have been officiated by our pastors. We have two weddings scheduled at Grace this Fall/Winter. Both are non-member weddings. Pastor JoAnna will officiate. As we look to 2019, Pastor JoAnna and I continue to brainstorm and work on ways to expand our relationships and ministry with couples that choose to celebrate their marriage with Grace. Our goal remains for Grace to offer ways to help them strengthen their spiritual relationships together and remind them of the community and support they have here at Grace.

#### MEMORIALS

Mary Frykman

Memorial contributions from October 1, 2017 to September 30, 2018 were made in loving memory of: Glenn Throndsen, Robert Paulson, Nellie Oswald, Betty Torsrud, Hugo Peterson, Shirley Olson, Marion Newcomb and Donna Wick.

This past year we received a sound booth in the sanctuary in memory of Carl Lee. We also had a sound system in the sanctuary installed in memory of: LaVerne Dahlstrand, Beverly Wick, Delmar(Doc) Knorr, Helen Knorr Jack Dunn, Edith Stevenson, Dorothy Heidemann, Leslie Mayborne, Charles Runyard, Mary Jane Niffenegger, Steve Ortland, Florence Tarpley, Jack

and Nellie Oswald, Vi Robbins, Phyllis Robbins, Robert Larson, Arnie Foss, Franklin Herbert and Sue and Leo Burns.

Thank you to Sheri Cannell for calling on the families and Linda Dunphey for her wiliness to help sending out the thank you cards.

#### FINE ARTS CAMP

Chrissy Axe

Fine Arts camp theme this year was God's Wonderful World and it proved to be the perfect theme. We were blessed with 106 campers registered and on average 40 volunteers. The days were filled with games, crafts, amazing snacks, music and dance. We had amazing guest speakers thanks to Gloria. The energy and love could be felt all week long.

## Grace Lutheran Church Employee's start dates of service

MINISTRY STAFF

Brent Dahlseng, Senior Pastor - November 27, 2006

JoAnna Patterson, Associate Pastor - November 16, 2015

Gloria Lynn, Director of Music and Worship - October 1, 1999

Kari Maratos, Grace Choir and Bell Director/Organist - June 1, 2010

Amanda Monroe, Director of Children and Family Ministries - August 1, 2014

SUPPORT STAFF

Kathy Bergeron, Administrative Secretary - October 12, 1989

Rachel Williams, Assistant Secretary - September 17, 2018

Mary Frykman, Financial Secretary - September 1, 1994

Connie Schonberg, Custodian - January 16, 2016

Chris Patterson, Maintenance - January 22, 2016

Judy Owens, Building Attendant - October 22, 2000

David Francisco, Media - January 1, 2004

Joy Swenson, Nursery - January 1, 2009

## Grace Lutheran Preschool Employee's start dates of service

DIRECTORS

Stacie Leese, Director; September 2015 (Teacher start date: September 2007)

Delica Austin, Assistant Director; September 2016

TEACHER STAFF

Chrissy Axe, September 2010

Marilyn Bland, September 2016

Lori Boeke, September 2015

Linda Dunphey, September 1978 (Music Coordinator: September 2016)

Nancy Milani, September 2012

Manda Shipman, September 2016

Sheri Sinnaeve, September 2010

Vanessa Stronczek, September 2016

Stephanie Buetsch, September 2018

FINANCIAL SECRETARY

Mary Frykman, July 2012

## 2017 CONGREGATION COUNCIL OFFICERS

President ..... Duane Langkamp  
 Vice-President .....Cindy Rienhardt  
 Treasurer.....Barry Nelson  
 Secretary ..... Ann-Marie Kuchinski

### FAITH FORMATION AND DISCIPLESHIP – Melissa Lawrence

The Faith Formation and Discipleship committee is responsible for the formation of Christian disciples through the educational ministries of Grace Lutheran Church.

### SERVICE TEAM – Angie Wallace

The purpose of the service committee is to guide Grace Lutheran Church in its responsiveness to the needs of people within its service area within the greater Loves Park area. The following service projects fall under the direction of the service ministry: Mobile Food Pantry; Carpenter’s Place; the Rockford Rescue Mission, Habitat for Humanity, and the crop walk.

### CHURCH PROPERTY MINISTRY – Andy Frykman

The purpose of the Church Property Committee is to oversee the proper maintenance and protection of all property of the congregation, and shall take care that the same is kept in good repair and is adequately insured.

### STEWARDSHIP MINISTRY – Dan Jacobson

The purpose of the stewardship committee is to teach biblical principles for the use of money, time and passions/gifts; to communicate with the congregation about the ministries we support locally, through our synod and the ELCA as well as our global partnerships; and lead all its members to higher levels of proportionate giving for the Lord’s work.

### COMMUNICATION MINISTRY – Andrew Hall

The purpose of the communication team is to assist the congregation in both effective internal as well as external communication of the mission and ministry of Grace Lutheran Church. This includes and is not limited to Web-based communication; cell communication newspaper and television coverage of events and online community building.

### PRESCHOOL LIASON - Janine Messner

The purpose of the preschool committee is to guide Grace Preschool in its work to develop the spiritual, emotional, and academic growth of its students while building relationships between the church and preschool