



# 2017 Annual Meeting

## Sunday, February 5, 2017 (10:30 AM)

*"The community of Living Grace exists to make known God's love and grace by welcoming everyone, sharing the story of Jesus, growing in faith, and serving beyond ourselves."*

### **Core Values of Living Grace**

- Jesus is Lord and Savior.
- We humbly welcome, accept and value everyone.
- We are strengthened in worship through Word and Sacrament.
- We value faith as an ongoing journey of renewal and growth.
- We recognize and respond to the needs in our community and the world.
- We bring God's message of hope into the world.

### **Agenda:**

Welcome/Call to Order  
Opening Prayer

### **Table Topics:**

- Coalition/Partnership with Gran-Park-Rollag Parish
- Lent/Holy Week Schedule/Bible Studies, etc.

We are scheduled to host/serve the service/noon lunch on Wed. March 15 @ UMC-Hawley

- Summer Worship
- Service Groups
- Directory
- Nominations for Outreach Positions, Leadership Team, Executive Team

#### Leadership Team:

Deb Andvik, Galen Andvik, Alicia Carley, Loretta Ramstad (Secretary)  
Brett Dahl (Treasurer)

#### Outreach Positions

- 2 Delegates to Northwestern MN ELCA Synod Assembly Gathering  
(Friday/Saturday, June 9-10 @ Concordia College, Moorhead)

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- 1 Delegate to Pathways Lutheran Outdoor Ministries  
(March 11 @ 2 p.m. @ St. Paul's-Crookston) \_\_\_\_\_

- Financial Report (Prepared by Brett Dahl/Galen Andvik)  
(Audit Committee: \_\_\_\_\_)

Sending/Blessing/Prayer

## Living Grace 2015 Statistical Report

	<u>2012</u>	<u>2013</u>	<u>2014</u>	<u>2015</u>	<u>2016</u>
Disciples (Members)	36	49	49	54	53
Associate Disciples (Members)		2	2	2	2
Potential Disciples (Members)		54	61		
Baptisms	0	1	0	0	1
Confirmation(s)	0	0	0	1	3
Deaths	1	0	1	0	2
Transfer of Membership					1

<u>Attendance Statistics:</u>	<u>2011</u>	<u>2012</u>	<u>2013</u>	<u>2014</u>	<u>2015</u>	<u>2016</u>
Average Sunday Worship	28	29	29	26	20	20
Average Winter/Spring (Jan-May)	26	24	32	25	22	23
Average Summer Worship	29	24	26	21	17	14
Average Fall Worship (Sept-Dec)	30	30	28	30	18	20
Average Advent Midweek Worship	15	--	--	--	--	--
Easter Worship	64	68	43	35	38	46
Christmas Worship	57	69	58	36	32	32
Sunday School	3	5	5	5	1	6
Confirmation	---	---	1	4	3	0

## 2016 Finances – Snap Shot

<b>MONTH</b>	<b>Attendance #</b>	<b>Offering</b>	<b>CSM</b>	<b>Partner Contract</b>	<b>Total Income</b>	<b>Budgeted Expenses</b>
<b>January</b>	12/19/12/22/18	\$2617	\$1674	\$2740	\$7031	7101
<b>February</b>	0/17/15/19/53	\$2608	\$1250	\$2740	\$6598	7101
<b>March</b>	25/18/31/46	\$3499	\$1250	\$2740	\$7489	7101
<b>April</b>	17/31/15/24	\$2297	\$1250	\$2740	\$6287	7101
<b>May</b>	54/15/20/14/15	\$3095	\$1250	\$2740	\$7085	7101
<b>June</b>	13/19/23/19	\$2355	\$1250	0	\$3605	7101
<b>July</b>	12/14/15/16	\$2091	\$1250	0	\$3341	7101
<b>August</b>	13/09/09/10/10	\$2409	\$1250	0	\$3659.30	7101
<b>September</b>	13/15/20/23	\$2550	\$1250	2740	\$6,540	7101
<b>October</b>	14/21/17/18/23	\$5161.77	\$1250	2740	\$9,151.77	7101
<b>November</b>	17/23/22/12	\$1832.79	\$1250	2740	\$5,822.79	7101
<b>December</b>	13/35/21/32	\$2808.36	\$1250	2740	\$6,798.36	7101

### Monthly Expenses:

Pastors Salary	\$4,412.00 (Includes Social Security, etc.)
Portico	<u>\$1,386.00</u> (Health Insurance, Retirement, and pastor's pre-tax contributions)
Total:	\$5,798

### Other Expenses:

Garrick Theater Rent	\$450 Average
Music	\$450 Average (Includes Gina: \$75/Sunday; Singer \$25 additional)
Phone	\$ 42
Office	\$202
Storage	\$ 30
Workers Comp \$ 40 (\$10/week)	
Misc.	\$75 (\$50-75/month)
Movie License	\$20 (Per Month)
Total Other:	\$1,309

Total 2016 Expenses:	\$7,107.00
CSM 2016 Grant:	\$1,250.00
Offering:	\$3,117.00
Contract:	\$2,740.00
<u>TOTAL:</u>	<u>\$7,107.00</u>

### **Changes for 2017:**

- Office Space Rent was expected to increase about \$100.00; the lease was cancelled December 1.
- Pastor Hope's compensation will be brought up to 2017 guidelines. GPR partnership will offset this increased costs.
- CSM Grant will be \$10,000 for 2017. It was \$15,000 in 2016.

*An updated budget will be presented to Living Grace members within a few weeks.*

### **2017 Budget – In Words and Actions:**

Our income includes: Pledged Money, Loose Offering, Special Gifts, Grants (ELCA has provided more than \$113,000), and Memorial General Fund. In 2015-2016, the Northwestern MN Synod contracted with Living Grace for half of Pr. Hope's time. Since September 2016, Bethlehem-Ulen has contracted for half of her time. If we partner with GPR Parish, they will contract for half of Pr. Hope's time. In addition to these resources, we need to create a signature event (monthly or annually) that can also help offset ministry funding needs. Please see financial handout for specific numbers.

### **Where does our money go?**

#### ***Evangelism: We bring God's message of hope into the world.***

Working with unchurched/non-churched; website presence, Facebook, visitation of non-members, friends and members, equipping leaders, helping members see that they can and should be church where they are, not just on Sundays.

#### ***WORSHIP: We are strengthened in worship through Word and Sacrament.***

(Expenditures include pastor's time, musicians, worship resources such as Augsburg Fortress' Sundays and Seasons purchase, etc.) Worship is central to our congregation's work. Planning for Sunday morning worship, preparing sermons, conducting weddings, funerals, and other special services require a significant part of our pastor's time. Musicians work with pastor to create meaningful worship services. This category includes costs for music, bulletins, candles, communion supplies, seasonal decorations for the sanctuary and supply ministers when needed.

#### ***Youth/Family Education: We value faith as an ongoing journey of renewal and growth.***

Under the leadership of Pastor Hope and Brett Dahl, our Sunday School Teacher, we provide Sunday school and confirmation youth programming, as well as periodic Adult Bible Studies. Curriculum materials and other supplies as needed are included. Youth are encouraged and supported in attending synod sponsored youth events and Bible camp.

#### ***Reaching Out to Serve our Community: We humbly welcome, accept and value everyone.***

Since May 2014 we have helped host the past three years the Backpacks for Hunger event – which has included events, community awareness through newspaper articles and encouraging businesses, churches, and organizations to contribute money. On September 11, 2016, we hosted our first 9/11 Breakfast to honor and thank military and emergency personnel in our community. The breakfast was well-received! As well, Pastor Hope serves on the REACH Board and several members volunteer their time at REACH – helping with the thrift store! Thank you for being a servant of Christ in the community!

#### ***Supporting the Wider Mission of the Church:***

#### ***We recognize and respond to the needs in our community and the world.***

Our congregation's work extends far beyond our own community but goes "from our doorsteps to the ends of the earth." In the past 5 years, we have given benevolence support to the Northwestern MN Synod, REACH and other organizations in the area, such as REACH and school needs, we are able to join others in serving the greater church and those in need.

**Summary of Actions of Leadership Team for 2016  
Living Grace Lutheran Church, Hawley, Minnesota**

**March 15, 2016:**

No actions were taken by the Leadership Table.

**April 24, 2016:**

L.T.16.04.1 M/S/A The Leadership Table meeting minutes for December 20, 215, and March 15, 2016, were approved.

L.T.16.04.2 M/S/A The proceeds of the noisy offering taken at the May 31, 2016, service, will go toward the costs of the woodworking cross project.

L.T.16.04.3 M/S/A To encourage cooperation and sharing with the Gran-Park-Rollag Parish to the extent it makes sense and is mutually beneficial.

L.T.16.04.4 M/S/A As a token of our appreciation for their generosity in sharing their talents for the benefit of Living Grace and to repay a small portion of the costs they have incurred, \$25 will be given to Sylvia Nelson and \$50 will be given to David Gausman with our sincere gratitude.

**May 24, 2016:**

L.T.16.05.1 M/S/A The Leadership Table meeting minutes for April 24, 2016, were approved.

**June 27, 2016:**

L.T.16.06.1 M/S/A The Leadership Team meeting minutes for May 24, 2016, were approved.

**July 25, 2016:**

L.T.16.07.1 M/S/A The Leadership Team meeting minutes for June 27, 2016, were approved.

**August 22, 2016:**

L.T.16.08.1 M/S/A The Purchase-of-Services Agreement between Bethlehem Lutheran Church, Ulen, Minnesota, and Living Grace Lutheran Church, Hawley, Minnesota, was approved, and Brett Dahl, Treasurer of Living Grace Lutheran Church, was directed to sign the agreement on behalf of Living Grace Lutheran Church.

L.T.16.08.2 M/S/A The Leadership Team meeting minutes for July 25, 2016, were approved.

**September 21, 2016:**

L.T.16.09.1 M/S/A The Leadership Team meeting minutes for August 22, 2016, were approved.

**October 24, 2016 (Special Meeting):** No actions were taken by the Leadership Table

**November 2, 2016:**

L.T.16.11.1 M/S/A A contribution to the Synod for Mission Support will be made in the amount of \$100.

**December 13, 2016:**

L.T.16.12.1 M/S/A The Leadership Team meeting minutes for September 21, 2016, November 2, 2016, and October 24, 2016, were approved.

L.T.16.12.2 M/S/A Living Grace Lutheran Church accepts with gratitude the Developing Congregational Support Covenant between the Domestic Mission Unit of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and Living Grace Lutheran Church.

L.T.16.12.3 M/S/A A separate bank checking account for the woodworking ministry shall be opened at Bell State Bank; persons authorized to sign checks on this account will be Pr. Hope Deutscher and Brett Dahl.

L.T.16.12.4 M/S/A The Youth bank checking account will be moved from Valley Premier Bank to Bell State Bank; persons authorized to sign checks on this account will be Pr. Hope Deutscher, Alicia Carley, and Brett Dahl.

L.T.16.12.5 M/S/A A gift of \$50 will be given to the Hawley United Methodist Church with our thanks for use of their beautiful sanctuary for our Christmas Eve service.

**Annual Congregational Meeting - January 24, 2016  
Living Grace Lutheran Church - Hawley, Minnesota  
MINUTES**

- A. A quorum being present, Pastor and Mission Developer/President Pr. Hope Deutscher called the congregation of Living Grace Lutheran Church to order for its annual meeting at 10:40 a.m. and offered an opening prayer.

**CM.16.01.01 M/S/A The Table Topics as amended were adopted.**

B. Approval of Minutes

**CM.16.01.02 M/S/A** The minutes of the Annual Congregational Meeting held on February 8, 2015 , as presented, were approved.

C. Table Topics:

1. Congregational Vitality and Sustainability Survey: The members filled out the Congregational Vitality and Sustainability Survey followed by preliminary discussions. The Leadership Table will look at the results and we will discuss at our next Caring Conversation.
  2. Lent/Holy Week Schedule/Bible Studies, etc.: Ash Wednesday services will be held on February 10, 2016, at 7:00 p.m. at the Garrick Theatre. Several members are attending Bible studies sponsored by other local churches so at this time there does not appear to be a need for Bible studies at Living Grace at this time.
  3. Faith Statements: The confirmation students and other members of the congregation will have conversations during fellowship on January 31, 2016, regarding faith statements.
  4. Cancellation Policy: At the last Leadership Table meeting, the cancellation of worship services was discussed. It was decided that if there was a blizzard warning issued or if it was felt other weather or travel conditions dictated cancelling worship services, the Leadership Team would confer and issue a statement cancelling worship services. Notification of cancellation of worship services would be by local television stations, KFGO radio, Facebook, and email.
  5. Serving Opportunities:
    - a. Living Grace will be serving a meal at the Ronald McDonald House on February 29, 2016. Confirmation students will be participating and other members are encouraged and invited to participate.
    - b. Living Grace will be in charge of the Community Lent Luncheon/Worship on February 24, 2016, held at the United Methodist Church in Hawley. Loretta Ramstad, Minnette Carpenter, and Romelle Strache will help organize the lunch.
  6. Prayer Chain: Loretta Ramstad will prepare some information and materials on instituting a prayer chain at Living Grace Lutheran Church.
  7. Directory: Pr. Hope will print out current directory information for updating and providing copies to the members of the congregation
  8. Nominations for Outreach Positions, Leadership Team, and Executive Team:
    - a. Outreach Positions:  
Two delegates to Northwestern Minnesota ELCA Synod Assembly Gathering Friday/Saturday, May 20-21, 2016, at Concordia College, Moorhead, Minnesota. No volunteers coming forward, Loretta Ramstad agreed to attend as a delegate if other delegates do not come forward.  
One delegate to Pathways Lutheran Outdoor Ministries (afternoon of March 5, 2016, at St. Paul's, Crookston, Minnesota.) No volunteers came forward.
    - b. Current Leadership Team members are as follows:  

Deb Andvik	Galen Andvik
Alicia Carley	Brett Dahl (Treasurer)
Loretta Ramstad (Secretary)	

 No nominations were received for positions on the Leadership Team or Executive Team. We will continue to address participation by other members.
- D. Statistical Reports: The 2015 Statistical Report and attendance statistics were presented to the congregation.
- E. Brett Dahl presented the financial report. Brett Dahl and Galen Andvik presented the proposed 2016 budget.
- CM.16.01.03 M/S/A** The 2016 proposed budget was approved.
- F. The Annual Meeting ended with the Lord's Prayer

Respectfully submitted, Loretta Ramstad, Secretary  
January 24, 2016

Approved: \_\_\_\_\_

## Mission Developer Report

Submitted by Hope Deutscher  
February 2017

The past two years have been a time of exploration and transition. From June 2015-May 31, 2016 the Northwestern Minnesota ELCA Synod contracted with Living Grace for half of my time, as they had just lost their communication's coordinator. Last Spring they hired John Bell to be their full-time communications coordinator. They needed a full-time coordinator.

In September, Bishop Larry Wohlrabe suggested we consider a contract with Bethlehem Lutheran in Ulen, MN. Their pastor recently left and they are in the call process. Since September, 2016, Pastor Steve Wold and myself have served Bethlehem as their interim pastors.

While I enjoyed working with the synod, doing two completely different vocations was quite challenging. I also realized that while, God gave me communication skills to share and use; I am definitely feeling called to 100%+ pastoring and not back into a communication job! My skills in communication definitely are used every day being a pastor; and I will continue to use them in serving God in Hawley through Living Grace.

During the past two years we have tried our best to keep expenses to a minimum. As I look at our offering numbers, I am quite impressed with your stewardship of offerings! While we had to dip into our Money Market this summer to defray the gap in our income and expenses, we ended the year in the black.

As we discuss entering into a partnership and coalition with Gran-Park-Rollag Parish, it is about more than a solution to a financial or budget shortfall. Our Mission Statement is: *Living Grace is a worshipping community focused on making known God's love and grace by: welcoming everyone, sharing the story of Jesus, growing in faith, and serving beyond ourselves.* If we partner with GPR Parish, we will be expanding who we reach and together our ministry and mission will expand as together we join together in movie events at the Garrick Theater, youth activities and confirmation, Wednesday morning Bible study, outreach activities such as serving at the Ronald McDonald House, etc. I see a partnership expanding what Living Grace was formed to do: sharing God's grace, which is living, vibrant and active in our own lives!

So what does this mean for Living Grace? What will change? For the past five months I have been balancing my time between working on this partnership and serving Bethlehem. In a lot of ways this partnership will allow me to shift my focus, and our focus, from short-term to long-term goals of Living Grace. The partnership, if approved, would begin on March 1. Bethlehem will contract with Pr. Steve Wold for more of his time till they are able to call a full-time pastor.

Worship: It would make sense for our worship time to move back to 9:30 a.m. on Sundays. Currently Gran and Park worship at 8 and 11 a.m.; Rollag worships at 9:30 a.m. Pr. Jim Greene and myself are in conversation about roles in leading worship – at Living Grace and Gran, Park and Rollag. My main responsibilities will remain with Living Grace.

Bible Study: I already attend and co-lead the 10 a.m. Bible study at Rollag. This is an opportunity for our members to join us at the table. As well, I have already been approached to see if we can have another Bible study at Living Grace at another time.

Pastoral Care: I will remain the primary pastor for Living Grace's members. Pr. Jim and I already share responsibilities of helping one another during vacation times, etc.



**Living Grace Lutheran Church**  
**Like bricks in a building,**  
**member, family at a time!**

**Building the body of Christ!**

Lay Leadership: This partnership cannot be just about the pastors working together! It is my hope that in the coming weeks and months our youth leaders and parents will sit down with leaders from GPR and discuss joint youth activities; the women will also sit down at a table and discuss ways they can meet for Bible studies and events; perhaps men from GPR will join our men in the shop making crosses! I want us to let the Holy Spirit enter into these conversations and not be hindered!

A Place at the Table: If we partner with GPR, leadership members will be asked to sit at the table during the GPR Parish Council Meetings. The first one is Wednesday, February 8. Living Grace has much to offer and much to share at the table!

This partnership, if we say YES!, will be an exciting adventure. I have no doubt there could be some bumps in the road as we live into this partnership, but I also think it's important to remember that this is God's church; we are God's people and therefore, God is always in the mix of our conversations and future! We just celebrated our 5 year anniversary in December! I can't wait to see where the next five years leads us!

God's Blessings to you!

Pastor Hope Deutscher, Mission Developer for Living Grace

## **Ministries of Living Grace**

9/11 Breakfast  
 Serving at Ronald McDonald House  
 Youth Activities  
 Chili Cook-Off  
 Pocket Prayer Shawls  
 Woodworking Ministry  
 Friday Fellowships (Summer)  
 Movie Events  
 Bible Studies  
 Quilting  
 WELCA  
 Feed Your Faith  
 Pancake Breakfasts  
 Women's Tea

**During January, Gran, Park and Rollag Churches votes on a resolution to be in partnership with Living Grace, as well as a financial budget that included the partnership.**

The results of the votes were:

- Resolution to be in partnership with Living Grace: Yes=85; No=6
- Parish Budget: Yes=91; No=1

The Following article was shared in the Gran-Park-Rollag Parish Council Newsletter.

**WHY BE A PART OF A COLLABORATION WITH LIVING GRACE? A GREAT QUESTION:**

I went into the ministry because I believe God wants a relationship with us which is creative, supportive, and a lifelong reminder of our value to God.

I wanted to have an internship experience in this parish because I believe the parish is filled with wonderful stories, supportive people, and a safe place for a student to practice, learn, and expand their gifts. I wanted the parish to start to grasp they have something to offer to a student, to each other, and to the world.

A collaboration with Living Grace was not my idea- which excites me because no pastor should have all the ideas- right? We are better when everyone can share their ideas and we can hear and build on them! The idea came partly from the misguided notion that an intern was extra help and since we aren't getting an intern- where could we turn to for some help? An intern is more work for all of us- and me in particular; but it was worth it for the good I saw taking place in the intern, in the parish, and in me. So, the internship experience became a bridge for something new. God continues to open doors which we didn't know existed!

A collaboration with Living Grace starts with the idea this parish is worth investing in. The GPR parish is not a less than parish because it's not several thousand members or in the city. Just having people believe they are worth investing in doesn't mean we will now have a full church every Sunday or people will all want to come to annual meetings. I'm hoping it will be a slow build from the inside out with everyone understanding "this is our church" NOT a pastor driven church. There is good reason to keep these doors open.

A collaboration with Living Grace is about another person's eyes and ears and experiences who can step back and see things in a different light and help us open up our potential. This situation may only last for this year or it may go on for many years. I do not have a time table for this. Obviously, we need to approve it first, but I'm not sitting with an exact plan.

**A collaboration with Living Grace would start with some basics:**

- Worship is the foundation of our existence- how can we further strengthen our worship experience?
- Strengthening of the committees in each church from the ground up.
- The GPR Parish and Living Grace is a place where God invites growth and excitement to happen. How else can we do this?
- Rollag is not a small church anymore- how do we redefine ourselves in more efficient ways without losing the gift of who we are? Gran, Park, & Living Grace are small but each has much to offer - so speak loud.
- Visitation is key for our older members- in what ways to we expand and encourage this relationship with the parish and the pastors AND invite lay people to be more connected.
- Visioning for the parish/collaboration: maybe we have informal small group gatherings with 8 to 10 people where we share who and what the church is about and invite people to all be on the same page (kind of like a new member orientation for everyone WITH ideas coming from the members)
- Small group ministry expansion- not that Hope or myself would "run" this- but encourage this.
- While having someone long term brings stability, another person can lift us out of ruts we didn't know we are in AND help us to see other possibilities.
- Building a foundation which encourages conversation, discussion, and an openness to what could be instead of dropping anchor because "we can't do that"!

I know this is a bit foggy at this time, but we're at a place we've never been before and I'm not comfortable putting too many restrictions on us. If we vote to have a collaboration with Living Grace we will need to do some sort of celebration and welcoming and time of establishing the "Nuts and Bolts" foundation and build on this. Thank you for your questions- please ask more questions and encourage others to ask too and help me to refine what I need to say so it's helpful, concise, and forward moving.

God's peace, Pastor Jim