

## **Grace Lutheran Church—Semi-Annual Fall Congregation Virtual Meeting Minutes— January 27, 2021**

**Mission Statement:** To proclaim and celebrate the gospel of Jesus Christ through word and sacrament so that a community of believers is created, trained, nurtured, and sent into mission.

**Core Values:** Worship – Community – Service

**Background:** According to the GLC Constitution, “Semi-annual meetings of this congregation shall generally be held in September and January.” Since GLC has been “closed” due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Council decided to hold a “virtual” meeting through a series of letters to which voting members could respond. The most important order of business was to approve the 2021 Budget and vote on a new welcoming statement.

Council sent out two letters in January of 2021 that constituted our overall meeting:

### Letter 1 (January 8, 2021)

- Announced that the congregation meeting would be held remotely via mailings that stipulated how meeting information and voting would occur.
- Grace Church Council met twice in December to review 2020 spending and expense projections for 2021. This included:
  - Cost of Living Allowance (COLA) for staff and Pastor
  - Diminished staff, and team workloads due to ongoing COVID shut down of Grace
  - Updated tithing considerations via Synod and Social Concerns teams.
  - During a special council meeting December 8<sup>th</sup>, a proposed budget was decided and ratified for release to the congregation following the December 29<sup>th</sup> regular Council Meeting.
- Council established two (2) congregation budget forums via Zoom on Jan 17 and Jan 24, 2021 to allow for open discussion of budget items and to take Congregation recommendations for proposal changes.
- Proposed a 2021 operational budget of \$496,411.
- Provided the below Reconciling in Christ Grace Lutheran draft Welcoming Statement for consideration from Reconciling Works Group:

“The stained-glass windows in our church display a beautiful collection of glass pieces, each one unique and important. The same is true for all of God’s children. As people of Grace Lutheran Church, our diversity makes us stronger and more resilient.

We strive to welcome all. We want to be a church where all are safe, all are welcome. Believers, non-believers, doubters, seekers and questioners: You are welcome here. Old and young. Able or disabled. People of all sexual orientations and gender identities: You are welcome here. Rich and poor. Black, brown and white: You are welcome here. Jeans and a t-shirt or a suit and tie. Addiction and mental health concerns: You are welcome here.

You are welcomed and valued here, because we are all pieces of stained glass, broken and beautiful in our own way.

As a church, we resolve to open our hearts, our minds, and our doors. We seek to reconcile ourselves to one another and to God, the master artist.”

- Special recognition was given to Council members and Staff for enduring difficult times within the church due to COVID-19.

### Letter 2 (January 27, 2021)

- Following two (2) budget forums conducted via Zoom on Jan 17 and Jan 24, 2021, Council adjusted operational budget proposal to \$497,736 based on congregation comments and recommendations.
- Provided the same RIC welcoming statement (above) for member vote consideration.
- Provided the September 2020 Semi-Annual Congregation Meeting Minutes transcribed from the three submitted mailings and mail in ballot results.

- Provided current Grace Lutheran team and committee reports.
- Provided Grace's end of year 2020 Financial Report.
- Provided a letter from the Pastor.
- Provided a voting ballot that included the following:
  - Motion to approve 2021 Budget Proposal of \$497,736 as presented.
  - Motion to approve RIC Welcoming Statement as presented
  - Motion to approve the Sept. 2020 Congregation Minutes as presented.
- Included a self-addressed, stamped envelope and requested that ballots be returned to Grace no later than February 10<sup>th</sup>, 2021.
- Reminded voters that the Constitution requires a quorum of thirty voting members to be official.
- Grace Church Council welcomed new official members at Large (elected from September 2020 Semi Annual Congregation meeting) Sara O' Daffer and Trina DeCamp, as well as Chad Dulac as President and Gwen Sparks as Treasurer for their second terms.
- Special thanks were given to Monte Olson and Andy Sheets who served faithfully on Council during trying times and had finished their Council terms.

Ballot results (recorded February 11, 2021)

- Council received 128 ballots from church members by the deadline of February 10<sup>th</sup>, 2021 which validated and established a Quorum.
- The motion to approve the proposed 2021 operational budget of \$497,736 as presented passed with a unanimous vote.
- The motion to approve the new RIC welcoming statement as presented passed with a majority vote.
- The motion to approve the Sept. Semi-Annual Congregation Minutes as presented passed with a majority vote.

Special thanks and gratitude were extended by President Chad Dulac who was very appreciative of the Congregation's patience to conduct virtual and paper meetings to satisfy Constitution and Synod requirements. It has been a very trying year for 2020 and now 2021 with COVID and we are so very pleased to have the support of our members, staff and Council.

Respectfully submitted,

Chad Dulac, Interim Secretary