

“Abiding in Christ through grace, we are gathered to grow and sent to serve.”

Notes of Grace

Grace Lutheran Church (ELCA), Brownton, Minnesota

December 2019

December Servants

Acolyte

- 1 River Hansch
- 8 Grace Lipke
- 15 Braxton Streich
- 22 Max Hansch
- 24 (Christmas Eve) Sydney Harpel
- 29 Ava Waller

Communion

Jan Messner

Altar Guild

Vonnie Schuett, Shalon Werner,
Karla Trettin, & Michelle Gens

Ushers

- 1 Keith & Jane Tongen,
Sarah & Louise
- 8 Lowell & Sherry Rickheim
- 15 Klark & Paula Katzenmeyer,
Jamie Erickson
- 22 Jeff & Deb Messner
- 24 (Christmas Eve) Larry & Jeanette
Tongen
- 29 Vicki Herrmann,
Ben & Gloria Schuft

Readers

- 1 Tison Werner
- 8 Oather Martin Jr
- 15 Christmas Program
- 22 Jeff Kosek
- 24 (Christmas Eve) Cheryl Schwarze
- 29 Vicki Herrmann

Greeters

- 1 Jim & Shirley Lindeman
- 8 Keith & Jane Tongen
- 15 Darwin Frauendienst
- 22 Oather Martin Jr
- 24 (Christmas Eve) Joyce Peterson &
Grandchildren
- 29 David & Sharon Carrigan

Grace Welcomes Pastor Angela Denker

***This is her acceptance letter to the congregation**

Dear People of Grace in Brownton,

I am overjoyed to accept your generous and grace-filled call to serve as your Pastor. Since leaving full-time ministry in Southern California in 2017, I have spent much time in discernment about what God is calling me into next, while also serving a long-term interim call as teaching pastor to Easter Lutheran in Eagan, MN, and publishing my first book - and raising our two boys, Jacob, 7, and Joshua, 4.

During this time of writing and discernment, I became convinced that I had a deep need to serve in called parish ministry. The vital acts of pastoral ministry: of proclamation, preaching, teaching, visitation, and administering the sacraments -- these are vital parts of my call from God that were unfulfilled even as I continued to write and speak in churches about my book.

After considering many call opportunities closer to home in Minneapolis, none of which were a good fit for my needs and gifts, a dear pastor friend of mine encouraged me to look west to the Southwestern Minnesota Synod. He spoke highly of his time pastoring in Dassel, MN, even as his wife worked in downtown Minneapolis, like my husband does.

After speaking with my friend, I sent a message to Bishop Jon Anderson about my desire to consider congregations in your synod. Two days later, I heard back from Pastor Steve Cook about a wonderful congregation in Brownton who was looking for a part-time pastor. My email was just in time for me to be a part of consideration for your call process.

In my meetings with your call committee, I just felt so at home. I felt my mind and body relax as I made the 50-minute drive to Brownton, as Highway 62 turned into 212.

I appreciated the frank honesty and authentic spirit I experienced while spending time in Brownton and with the people of Grace. I felt a clear sense of call and opportunity to be part of a loving and dynamic faith community, with opportunity for my husband and two young boys to also find community at Grace.

I'm honored by your unanimous call vote and the opportunity to follow the Holy Spirit's call to Brownton for the future together. I look forward to beginning my ministry with you officially on Dec. 9, with my first Sunday on Dec. 15 - just in time to witness the special kids' Christmas pageant. I can't wait to join the fun!

In Jesus' love,
Pastor Angela Denker

Grace Holiday Schedule

Sunday School Christmas Program—Held during worship time on December 15th at 8:45am

Installation of Pastor Angela Denker— This will be on December 22nd during worship at 8:45am.

Christmas Eve Worship—Will be held on Christmas Eve at 5pm

Grace Lutheran Church Council Meeting Minutes
Abiding in Christ through grace, we are gathered to grow and sent to serve.

November 13, 2019

Attending: Pastor Linda Pedersen, Nancy Deppe, Michelle Gens, Jan Messner, Tim Olson, Vicki Schlenner, Ben Schuft, Keith Tongen, and Dave Wendlandt. **Absent:** Oather Martin

President: Jan Messner called the meeting to order.

Devotions/Bible Study & Prayer - Pastor Linda led devotions & prayer based on Psalm 107.

Treasurer's Report:

- 1) Treasurer Nancy Deppe provided October 2019 financials.
- 2) General Fund Checking: \$ 7959.40 as of Oct 31, 2019.
- 3) Memorial Fund Checking: \$ 3586.03 as of Oct 31, 2019.
- 4) Building Fund Checking: \$3113.12 as of Oct 31, 2019.
- 5) Building Fund Certificate of Deposit: \$10,235.00 as of Oct 31, 2019
- 6) Memorial Fund Certificate of Deposit: \$20,470.00 as of Oct 31, 2019
- 7) Total Contributions & Other Income: \$ 92,363.55 through Oct 31 , 2019
- 8) Total Operating Expenditures: \$126,138.30 through Oct 31, 2019
- 9) Total Current Assets: \$45,438.93 as of Oct 31, 2019
- 10) M.S.C. to approve the Treasurer's Report.

Secretary's Report: M.S.C to approve the Council Mtg. minutes of Oct 9 and Oct 13, 2019.
 M.S.C to approve the Congregational meeting minutes from Nov 3, 2019.

Correspondence:

- 1) None

Pastor's Report:

- 1) Calendar of Pastoral Activities.
- 2) Pastor Linda Pedersen will be the Keynote Speaker for the SWMN Synod Jr. High Gathering in Willmar, MN on November 22-23-24.

Calendar:

- 1) Nov 27 Thanksgiving Eve Service 7pm (offering to ELCA World Hunger)
- 2) Dec 1 Decorate Church for Christmas after Worship
- 3) Dec 7 WELCA Guest Day
- 4) Dec 8 Pastor Linda Pedersen last Sunday as Interim
- 5) Dec 9 First day of Employment for Pastor Angela Denker
- 6) Dec 11 Church Council meeting
- 7) Dec 15 Sunday School Christmas Program 8:45 am
- 8) Dec 22 Installation of Pastor Angela Denker
- 9) Dec 24 Christmas Eve Worship 5 pm
- 10) Jan 26 Congregational Annual Meeting

Old Business:

- 1) Raise the Roof outstanding balance as of Nov 3, \$6406.54
- 2) Area Congregations will be notified of our retaining Pastor Angela Denker to serve Grace.
- 3) Sarah Tongen will resume Secretarial duties.
- 4) Response to Letter of Call: President Jan Messner and Pastor Linda Pedersen met with Pastor Angela Denker to address some previous commitments Pastor Angela has in place on Dec 29, 2019, Jan 26, 2020, and Feb 9, 2020. Arrangements are tentatively in place to cover these dates.

New Business:

- 1) Deadline for Annual Report Information is Jan 5, 2020. Council will assemble reports on Jan 15.
- 2) Motion by Dave Wendlandt, second by Nancy Deppe to extend employment contract with Pastor Linda thru Dec 13 to help with transition/initiation of Pastor Angela. Carried.
- 3) Motion by Ben Schuft, second by Dave Wendlandt to leave credit card in Jan Messner's name until further action is taken by newly elected Council in 2020. Carried.
- 4) January Church Council Meeting will be Jan 15, 2020 starting at 6:30 pm to assemble annual reports.

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(Council Minutes continued from Page 2)

Committee and Group Reports:

- 1) Stewardship Committee- reported that Nancy Deppe is presenting options for Electronic giving. Keith Tongen will speak at Thanksgiving Eve service.
- 2) Worship and Evangelism- Nov 24 Thank Offering Service led by Joyce Peterson and WELCA of Grace. Likely to host Hymn sing sometime in February.
- 3) Nominating Committee- will meet Nov 19 to seek nominees for various positions.
- 4) Finance Committee- meeting Nov 17 after services.
- 5) Property and Management Committee- seeking volunteers to help with snow removal of Parking lot.

Next Meeting: Dec 11, 2019 @ 7:00 pm.

M.S.C. to adjourn the meeting.

Closed with the Lord's Prayer.

Respectfully submitted by Keith Tongen, Secretary

"SPECIAL" Grace Lutheran Church Congregational Meeting Minutes
Abiding in Christ through grace, we are gathered to grow and sent to serve.

November 3, 2019

Meeting was called to order by President Jan Messner at 10:00 a.m.

71 Voting members were in attendance.

Call Committee Chairperson Julie Olson reported that the Call Committee had reached a unanimous decision on one of the 4 Pastor candidates received from Synod leadership, Pastor Angela K. Denker. Julie then proceeded to give the voting membership details of Pastor Denker. Other Call Committee members also shared information about Pastor Denker. The Committee shared that Pastor Denker was seeking 75% time employment and seemed like "the Perfect Fit for Our Congregation". The Call Committee was recommending that Grace Lutheran issue a "Letter of Call" to Pastor Angela K. Denker.

President Jan Messner reported that the Grace Lutheran Church Council also, was recommending that a "Letter of Call" be initiated following a "Positive vote by the General Membership".

Larry Tongen then offered the following motion, "That a Letter of Call be sent to Pastor Angela K. Denker, to be the next Pastor at Grace Lutheran Church". Motion was seconded by Vickie Herrmann. A ballot vote was then taken, Yes- in favor of the motion, No- opposed to the motion. The result of the vote was 70-Yes votes and 0-No votes.

Thanks were noted to Call Committee members- Julie Olson, Vickie Herrmann, Deb Messner, Jane Tongen, Diana Lindeman, Joyce Peterson and Jim Lindeman.

Special Thanks was given to Pastor Linda Pedersen for "Her knowledgeable assistance in the Call Process".

Being no further business the meeting was adjourned and closed with Prayer led by Pastor Linda Pedersen.

Respectfully submitted by Keith Tongen, Secretary

"Raise the Roof" & General Account Update

As of 11/26/19, the contributions needed yet to complete our Raise The Roof fundraising effort: \$6,098.54

2019 Budget Update(As of 11/19/19):

2019 General Fund Income	\$74,619.36
2019 Building Fund Income	\$25,057.26
2019 Memorial Fund Income	<u>\$453.00</u>
Total Funds Raised In 2019	\$100,129.62

2019 Approved General Fund Expense Budget	\$118,154.00
2019 Actual Expenses as of 11/19/19	\$127,197.50

Christmas Eve Worship

Christmas Eve worship is 5pm on Tuesday, December 24. Join us as we celebrate the birth of Jesus with the re-telling of the Nativity story, singing Christmas carols and share in communion. This is a great time to invite a friend, relative, co-worker and/or new neighbor to share in worship.



McLeod County Christmas Project

The McLeod County Social Services Giving Tree ornaments did not come in time this year to be put up! But as a church we would still like to take this opportunity to show our love to children in McLeod County.

Here are ways you can still give:

- 1) Bring ANY new toy(s)** donations appropriate for ages 0-17 and place in box by the Giving Tree. Please bring the gift(s) to church unwrapped.
- 2) Give a monetary donation.** Place any amount Cash or Check in an envelope to be put toward the purchase of gifts/toys. (Checks payable to: Women of Grace) All gifts and monetary donations must be at church on December 8 or to Jane Tongen on December 9

*If questioning what to donate consider buying a second item the same or similar to what you are giving to your own children, grandchildren, or other important children in your lives.

***VOLUNTEERS are needed to help set up & distribute as well. If they are unable to get volunteers, this could potentially be the last year for this Project.**

Please contact Veronica Coates at 320-864-1316

or veronica.coates@co.mcleod.mn.us.



Pastor's Note:

Soon Pastor Angela Denker will arrive as Grace's called Pastor. I want to thank you for the opportunity to share this pastoral ministry with you at Grace. It has been an honor and privilege.

As we prepare to receive the gifts of Pastor Angela, I invite you to be generous in getting Grace's financial house in order. It is common in congregations during interims to see a drop in financial support. You can probably come up with your own explanation of why this might happen. Especially when some folks think of their church offering being like paying for a business. If that were true (and I have to say it is NOT) then when it is perceived the church has less expenses, then it "needs" less offerings. Right or wrong this is true about Grace's general support during 2019.

Now as we approach the end of the year, in December most congregations receive about 30% of their annual support. We at Grace, like most congregations, rely on December to be a strong financial month. However, I think it is even more important this year as we welcome a new Pastor and look forward to our new relationship with her.

During 2019 we witnessed a drop in general support, but an increase in overall financial support because of specialized giving to the roof project. Before the end of the year, we have two challenges. First to meet our general expenses with a generous December financial support. Second, if we get the roof paid then we can begin 2020 without the burden of having to decide if are we going to support the daily ministry of our congregation or direct our support to last year's roof project?

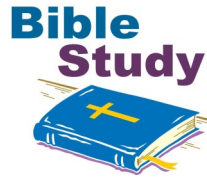
All of us will make decisions in the days ahead to give gifts, some to our church, some to family members and some to others. I want to invite you to give a generous gift to your church to end the year in the black and to finish the Raise the Roof project.

I have found this congregation to be generous in many ways. I am impressed by how generous people are with their time. You may not know how rare it is for a congregation our size to rely completely on its members to do all the cleaning and most of the repairs and yard care since we have no paid custodian. It is a generous blessing.

Recently, Sunday we took a "Noisy offering" asking people to bring their loose change to support our sponsorship of a young boy in Guatemala. The loose change came to \$242.66! We are a generous congregation.

Adult Bible Study

There will be NO Adult Bible Study scheduled for December. The Bible Study group will return to a regular time in January based on Pastor Angela's schedule.



During the month of December you may want to check out Luther Seminary's daily online devotion God Pause at:

<https://www.luthersem.edu/godpause/default.aspx>

Women of ELCA

Women of Grace Guest Day is Saturday, December 7th at 10:30am. You are invited to share in a wonderful program and lunch at Grace with your friends. The theme is "Heavenly Lights—Earthly Sounds with Heavenly Sounds on Earth." To sign up call Ardis Waller at 320-328-5371.

Grace Welcomes Newborns

Grace Lutheran members welcomed four new babies in the last couple of months.

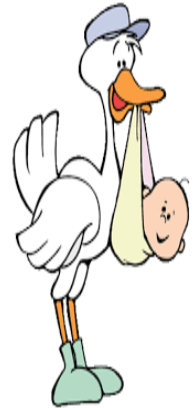
Congratulations and prayers for God's blessing on:

Vera Helen
born October 21, 2019
Parents: Ryan and Blair Hansch

Taelynn Grace
born October 24, 2019
Parents: Sarah Tongen and Randy Braun

Jayce Robert
born November 6, 2019
Parents: Bryce Lindeman and Mikayla Alsleben

Adeline Grace
born November 12, 2019
Parents: Chris and Sara Ulrich



Confirmation Sunday was October 27



Our confirmands: Ross Jerabek (L), Pastor Linda Pedersen, and Hunter Gens (R)

Hunter receiving God's blessing (Left)



Choir singing (Left)



Ty Winterfeldt & Leyton Yerks tying a blanket (Right)



Sunday School Blanket Project For Minneapolis Children's Hospitak



Children & Karla Trettin working on the blankets (Above)



Blessing of the blankets made by kids in Halloween costumes. (Left)

December 2019

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 8:45am Worship/Communion 10am Christmas Program Practice Decorate for Advent/Christmas (after worship)	2	3	4 4pm Confirmation Class 6pm Choir Practice	5	6	7 10am Choir Practice 10:30am WELCA Guest Day (Choir Sings)
8 8:45am Worship w/Baptism 10am Christmas Program Practice	9 Pastor Angela's First Day	10	11 4pm Confirmation Class 7pm Council Meeting 7pm Choir Practice	12	13	14 8:30-9:30am Christmas Program Practice
15 <u>Sunday School</u> <u>Christmas Program</u> 8:45am Program during Worship	16	17	18 4pm Confirmation 7pm Choir Practice	19	20	21
22 <u>Installation of Pastor</u> <u>Angela Denker</u> 8:15am Choir Practice 8:45am Worship/Communion w/Baptism (Choir Sings at Service)	23	24 <u>Christmas</u> <u>Eve</u> 5pm Worship	25 <u>Christmas Day</u>	26	27	28
29 8:45am Worship	30					