



To: Grace Voters Assembly

November 15, 2020

Regarding: 2020 Elder Report

Dear Grace Congregation,

What a year it has been! Late in 2019 we celebrated Pastor Aaron joining our family and shortly thereafter our families, church and related ministries needed to transform dramatically due to the coronavirus. Even though this has not been the 2020 we would have imagined, we must trust that God is great, provides for us and is in control!

Your Elders have been meeting regularly and supporting our Pastors and ministries the best we can considering our current situation. Our first order of business was to review and confirm the Elder role at Grace in conjunction with our new Pastor and considering the possible move to Policy Based Governance. We reviewed and clarified the Elder responsibilities in our bylaws. More importantly we created some practical actions the Elders can and should take to accomplish these responsibilities. A summarized table is included on page 2 of this report. In addition, to support our foundation we have undertaken a comprehensive study and review of the important Lutheran theological documents as outlined in the Book of Concord.

Regarding actions and ministerial support, your Elders have been engaged in many activities, some of which are listed here:

- When the pandemic started, your Elders reached out to our congregational members to check in and see how we all were doing. We have been receiving reports and providing input into the possible reopening plans for our ministries.
- In mostly virtual formats, we continued to engage and lead ministries where it was possible. Dean Richmond led first communion and confirmation classes on Sunday mornings. Ceremonies were held for these students earlier in the year. Darryl Reitmeyer and Matt Arnold continued to lead their respective Life group Bible studies with Matt promoting and supporting other Life Groups. Ron Carter has been leading the Men's Bible study each Saturday morning. Many thanks to these dedicated servants as Christian education is a foundation of our church.
- AJ Brumfield has been using his musical talents as part of the worship team and has been continually working with Cheryl to plan for enhancements to our worship experience.
- Jack Anderson has been doing double duty as our congregational President and as our most experienced Elder. We rely on him so much for his understanding, wise council and dutiful service.

In closing, we hope and pray you are all healthy and joyfully clinging to God's word daily. We all long for being able to get back to worship without restrictions. We continue to pray for you, our church staff and our Pastors daily.

God's Blessings to you,

Mark Schmidt/Matt Arnold/Darryl Reitmeyer/Ron Carter/AJ Brumfield/Dean Richmond/Jack Anderson

Elder Responsibilities & Practical Actions We Should Be Taking

(Currently and under Policy Based Governance)

The Elders shall be responsible for providing support and oversight of the Senior Pastor. By supporting the Office of Public Ministry, the Elders are responsible for providing spiritual leadership to Grace Lutheran Church and Grace Christian School through discipleship, education, pastoral care, outreach, prayer and helping administer Word and Sacrament. This spiritual leadership includes....

What to do: Encourage members to be faithful in receiving the Word of God. This includes Encouraging commitment to congregational membership, especially regular worship attendance.

How to do it: Regularly attend worship, provide verbal encouragement for others to attend worship, maintain communication with someone who has been absent from worship

What to do: Ensure that doctrine and practice are in line with the Word of God and correcting that which conflicts with the Word of God.

How to do it: Recurring study of doctrine with accompanying discussion regarding faithful practice, reception of teaching with accompanying discernment, understanding of when and how to correct

What to do: Exhort the congregation to participate in opportunities that will bolster the Christian life, including but not limited to Bible study, prayer, fellowship, and reaching unbelievers for Christ.

How to do it: Attending these events, publicly advocating for attendance, prayer for members and the events/activities

What to do: Assist the pastoral staff with their ministry of Word and Sacrament as appropriate.

How to do it: Regular communion reception and assistance, read/proclaim/study the Word, verbal support to those who newly receive a sacrament

What to do: Support all staff, especially pastoral staff, with prayer, encouragement, and care.

How to do it: Regular prayer for staff, displays of encouragement through words/actions, questions to staff that demonstrate care of their person, support all staff (especially pastoral staff) with prayer, encouragement, and care.