

# Grace Free Lutheran Church Trumpet January 2021



## **Our Mission:**

**By Grace we seek life in Him. In Love we serve Him.  
By His power, through faith we share Jesus with the world.  
Confessing together 1 Timothy 1:12-17.**

## **Grace Free Lutheran Church Contact Information**

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Pastor Ron Smith

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Council President

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January 2021

Forgetting what lies behind; straining forward to what lies ahead

Pastor RonS

Wow! 2020 a year of vision is a year I think most of us are looking forward to putting behind us. The vision, perfect vision, of 2020 turned into a year of glaucoma and cataracts. Plans we wanted, joys of our Christian walk and the excitement to share our Faith so others could be encouraged... Those dreams all seemed to not work out as planned.

In Philippians 3 we read from verses 13-14 in regard to our faith and salvation, "Brothers, I do not consider that I have made it my own. But one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead, I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus."

Dear friends, May this year of 2021 be a reminder to us of the need for us to trust in the faith we have in Christ Jesus as our Lord and our Savior. We just come through the season of Christmas. It was there where the manger of Christ Jesus provides for us the true understanding of the meaning of Christmas. The Manger leads to the Cross. The Cross to the Tomb. The Tomb to the Victory of the Resurrection.

We remember the past, the history, the completed work of Christ Jesus. Forgiveness. Justification is yours by faith. So, in new life you forget what lies behind. You forget the dark of your sinful past. You forget about the 'work' you have been trying to do in order to earn salvation. Rather, we trust by faith the Christmas gift of new life. The promise of Justification by Faith alone.

2021 is a new year. We have new opportunities to share the old, old story. So, we put what happened, or what did not happen in 2020 behind us. We learn. But, but we don't get stuck in the past... we move forward to the goal of the prize straining forward to what lies ahead. I need you to know, dear reader, of the joy of Christ in your life. You need to remember the goal... Eternal life.

This is the calling of God in Christ Jesus for you. God loved you so much that He, being the Judge, required for your sin debt to be paid in full. God loved you so much, He could not overlook the payment and let you pass without the shedding of blood. In Christ Jesus, your payment has been made. Immanuel, God with us. The Son was born. The Son was born in your heart. Jesus is Immanuel: God with you. As you confess and accept His forgiveness for your sins.

We then come to the question for this new year. Salvation is ours in Christ Alone by Grace alone: Then why do we need to press on? Friend, it is not to earn. We press on to the goal of Eternal Life which is yours in Christ Jesus. We press on to hold to and to maintain the truth of God's word in your heart. To keep His truth free and upon your heart and on your tongue: You must press on!

You must keep learning and hold to the truth of God's word. Even as your world continues to change and we all want to look back to find comfort in the 'good old days.' We press on. Paul says in verse 16, "Only let us hold true to what we have attained."

May 2021 help us to be alive to the truth of God's promises and to hold to what we have attained: By Faith alone we are Justified. When we are weak then we are strong in Christ Jesus. May we not be discouraged, but may we be filled with a new fire and passion to share the name of Jesus as individual Christians. May we, the church, be up to the challenge of 2021 to be flexible as we seek to share the Gospel message in new ways to new generations of Christians with the Goal of Eternal Life in Christ.

Heavenly Father, Give to us a new joy, a new heart, and a new passion for sharing your Gospel Message with a lost world. May 2021 be a time of revival in our hearts and in the hearts of your people. In Jesus name, Amen.

December 10, 2020 Council meeting called to order by Council President, Colin Pierce at 7:00 pm.

Others attending: at Church- Colin Pierce, Marv Skovlund, Pastor Ron Smith and Charlie Anderson  
Via Zoom – Wendy Peterson, Chad Shultz, Clint Kooima, Jason Brands, and Jerry Anderson.

Pastor Ron opened the meeting with devotions and prayer.

Council went into Executive session for annual personnel review of custodian, Rochelle Knuth at 7:10 and came back into regular session 7:10

Treasurer's report: Wendy Peterson presented the November financial report for the Council review. Motion to approve the report as submitted made by Leland Reppe, second by Marvin Skovlund. Vote: all approved.

General Account:

11-01-2020 \$63813.88

11-30-2020 \$52785.95

Special Accounts:

Improvement Fund \$ 6204.92

Future Construction \$ 0.00

Memorial Account \$4499.57

Altar Cloths 2407.80

Kitchen Improv \$74.79

Parking Lot \$ 6493.10

PPP \$ 14187.50

TOTAL \$31385.09

Sale of Parsonage

4 year CD \$134290.64

November Offerings:

11-01-2020 \$4987

11-08-2020 \$3258

11-15-2020 \$1185

11-22-2020 \$1975

11-29-2020 \$1931

Total \$13336

\$ 13370 (need \$2674 per week to cover budget)

(\$ 34) budget deficit in November

Year to Date Offerings:

\$130421

\$128352 need to cover budget

\$ 2069 budget overage year to date

Wendy also presented a 2021 proposed budget along with year-to-date expenses. After discussion motion was made by Marvin Skovlund to continue with our 10% benevolence sent to AFLC, second by Clint Kooima. Vote: all approved.

Pastor's report: Pastor Ron extended his appreciation and thanks for all the cards, prayers and allowing the family to use the church for Michele's father, Larry Gunderson's funeral. It was easier here since it is set up for Facebook and Vimeo and parking lot FM broadcast. Also, he thanked Jason Brands for helping with the sound and Facebook programs. Pastor Ron said he has making his visits by phone mostly. He said he is working with Stephanie Callesen and Michele Smith for Sunday school students. He wanted to thank everyone for their comments on Facebook at the time of viewing of the service if there is a problem with the live stream presentation. It helps them to correct it right away or follow up for any problems.

Trustees report: Leland said he checked the outdoor sign and said it may need new lights. He will contact Keven Christensen or Perry's Electric to look at it.

Set-up for extra seating for Christmas Eve service. Jason will come up before the service and set up extra chairs in the fellowship hall to accommodate up to 130 people and still provide social distancing. Mask wearing will be required for Christmas Eve and Day services. Some discussion about checking the snowblower before it is needed and storing it in the garage this year.

Deacons report: None

Shout outs:

- Jason Brands for helping with Larry Gunderson funeral
- Marvin Skovlund for helping with Ardyce Apland's funeral
- Wendy Peterson for all her extra work and presentations of year to date and proposed budget preparations

Old business: Pastor discussed the tentative plans for music and readers for Christmas Eve and Christmas Day services. December 20<sup>th</sup> will be a special service for the children, so Pastor Ron encouraged everyone to have their kids 'attend' the online service that day.

Music leaders: Some discussion about volunteers leading music each Sunday. Charlie will put a notice in the bulletin and newsletter requesting other volunteers to give the current leaders a break.

New business: Nominating Committee. There were names submitted of those who are interested in serving 2 year terms for Deacon and Trustee. Annual meeting is scheduled for Sunday January 17<sup>th</sup> with the 24<sup>th</sup> as an alternate date. The meeting will be held in the sanctuary and all members will be invited to attend via Zoom.

Pastor Ron had attended the monthly Pastor's meeting in Sioux Falls. They discussed the 2022 Annual AFLC Pastor's Conference and possibility of joining two or three other congregations to host the conference in 2022, splitting tasks, and costs. Pastor Ron will get more specific information such as average attendance and discuss further at the next meeting.

Motion made by Chad Shultz and second by Jerry Anderson to adjourn the meeting at 8:25 pm

Pastor Ron led the council members in a closing prayer to include those brought to our attention with special prayer needs. Council members joined in the Lord's Prayer to close the meeting.

Council secretary, Charlie Anderson

Next regular meeting: Thursday, January 8<sup>th</sup> at 7pm

**WMF for January**  
**Altar Committee: Ruth Circle**

**Miriam Circle: Monday, January 4<sup>th</sup>, 7:30 pm**

Hostess: Mary Ann Williams    Bible Study Leader: Dianne Holter

**Priscilla Circle: Wednesday, January 13<sup>th</sup>, 9:30 am**

Hostess: Lucille Hanson    Bible Study Leader: Marcene Severson

**Ruth Circle: Thursday, January 14<sup>th</sup>, 2:00 pm**

Hostess: Audrey Ulvestad                      Bible Study Leader: Necia Benz

**2021 WMF Handbooks** are printed and ready for you to pick up. They are on the kitchen window counter. Please sign your name on the paper when you get your copy.

**Michele and I would like to thank you so much** for the gift from the Church. We are so glad God brought us to be here with you. This past year has been tough, yet we continue to see blessings and working of the Lord. Michele and I look forward to growing with all of you and your families in your faith walk. May Jesus bless you this upcoming year of 2021. May it be filled with a rich presence of the Lord in your life and a new passion and revival in your own hearts and families for the Word of God. We are also thankful for so many prayers, cards, and gifts we have received: We are blessed by your love. Pastor Ron, Michele, and Family.

**Grace Free is your Christian family and we want to know if you need anything during this time of social distancing.**

Please reach out to Charlie if you (or if you know of someone who has a need). If you have a specific need like grocery shopping, picking up meds. meals and cannot do this yourself without risk please call. If you are able to help with those in need, please call.

Contact person to coordinate is Charlie: Church W-F 10-2 call 627-5445,  
email [gracefreelutheranchurch@gmail.com](mailto:gracefreelutheranchurch@gmail.com)

Home: 627-6533 (leave voice mail) if no answer,

Cell: text or call: 605-651-0546. Council has asked that I coordinate needs with those who can help.

*I know it is hard to ask for help so I will keep all requests confidential if you want, just let me know. Only the volunteer will know. All deliveries will be left outside for you to pick up. No home entries while we continue to honor social distancing.*

The WMF officers have offered to help with calls. If you would like to make calls, the WMF have a 2020 Handbook that has phone numbers of all their members. I have put extra copies on the table by the south entrance and also some on the cart at the front door entrance.

What an awesome appointment from God: We are all called to be the Hands and Feet of Christ Jesus.

Church,

Every first Sunday of each month we share Holy Communion.

I would like to encourage you to stop by or contact the church so we can get you a couple communion cups for your home. This will allow you to partake in communion with us on the first Sunday of the month. I know for some you are most comfortable at home right now. These cups would allow you to commune with us so we may all receive grace in forgiveness by the blood of Christ Jesus together. Please stop by or call to let us know how many you may need for 2 months. These are prepackaged communion wafers and a cup of juice. I give detailed instructions on opening them as we receive communion together.

Praying for God's peace in your life and your family. May you today know the real presence of the Lord Jesus as you grow in your faith daily through prayer and Bible readings.

Pastor RonS

**Due to continued spread of the Virus Grace Free is making the following protocol changes:**

- We will continue to offer Church
  - o On Facebook Live and Archived on Vimeo.
  - o On the parking lot FM Broadcaster on 89.3
  - o In Church service as well with a strong suggestion for masks to be worn.
- Confirmation will continue to be held in the church while kids are still allowed to be in School together. Masks will be required.
- Pastor and the Youth Group leaders will be working on online options for us to grow in Christ together.
- Pastor encouraged all to spend time in God's word each day and to write out verses which speak to you during your daily time with Jesus.

If you have questions or concerns please contact Pastor Ron Smith, Council President Colin Pierce, or anybody who is serving on the Grace Free's Church Board.

Heavenly Father, we seek a hedge of protection around Your people. Help us and encourage us to not be separated from You during this time. Help us to trust in Your grace and help us to rejoice in knowing You hold all our tomorrows. In Jesus name, Amen.

**Nominating Committee:** Our Constitution names the congregation as the nominating committee to nominate officers for the vacant terms to be presented at the Annual meeting. This year's Annual Congregational meeting is Sunday, January 17<sup>th</sup> and alternate January 24<sup>th</sup>. If you or someone you know is interested please submit your nomination to Pastor Ron or a Council member.

Office vacancies to fill: Council Deacon: 1 for 1-year term  
Council Deacon: 1 for 2-year term  
Board of Education: 2 for 3-year term

**If you are wondering how you can continue to provide your tithes/offerings to the church I have listed a few options for your convenience.**

- Mail or drop off your offering at the church
- Automatic transfer from any bank – fill out form
- PayPal

There are printed copies of the options on the cart at the front and south entrances.

***Thank you for sharing your blessings with your continued tithes and offerings of support.***

**Please give this form to Wendy Peterson, Church Treasurer**

I authorize Grace Free Lutheran Church to initiate payments from my account for my monthly/weekly offering.

**(Please circle your choice of weekly or monthly) and the amount)**

Weekly : \$ \_\_\_\_\_ beginning Month: \_\_\_\_\_ every \_\_\_\_\_ of the week

Monthly: \$ \_\_\_\_\_ beginning Month: \_\_\_\_\_ and every \_\_\_\_\_ day of the month

Bank Name: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_

My Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Routing #: \_\_\_\_\_ Please attach voided check or deposit slip

My Account #: \_\_\_\_\_

This authorization will remain in effect until Grace Free Lutheran Church receives written notice of termination.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Received by: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

If you have an article or information you want added to the **February 2021 Calendar or Trumpet Newsletter** please get it to Charlie by noon on Wednesday, January 20th.

**Reminder that Sunday School is expected to resume January 3rd**



### **Fall/Winter Hours**

9:00 Sunday School & Adult Bible Class

10:00 Worship service

- We have resumed church worship service inside as an *option* for anyone who would like to be inside.
- Services will continue to be broadcast on FM 89.3 for those who want to be in their vehicles in the parking lot (*near west entrance has best reception*)
- or you can watch live streaming on our church Facebook page
- the service will be posted later for viewing on Vimeo and our church website.

*You are welcome to come inside for the worship service practicing CDC guidelines, including social distancing except your immediate family and **mask wearing is strongly suggested**. Pews are designated for seating. Please consider bringing your personal Bible to the in-church services. Hymns will continue to be printed as a bulletin insert. Please leave the sanctuary at the end of the service by last pews first.*

