

Annual Report

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A Word from the Bishop – 2017

The 500th Anniversary of the Lutheran his coming year, 2017, marks the Reformation. January, as you meet for your annual meeting, is also likely to be a month of continued political turmoil as we inaugurate a new president.



This is our context. We minister in interesting and expectant times!

Our church has a 78-year history of formal refugee resettlement and relocation work through Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Services (LIRS). In 1945, immediately following WWII, American Lutherans formed a government advocacy ministry which today is known as the Lutheran Office of Governmental Affairs - LOGA. Through LOGA American Lutherans have under our belt 72 years of advocating for individual and family rights and benefits. And, for over 150 years, Lutheran hospitals have served the sick, counseling centers have worked with families, and adoption agencies have striven for the wellbeing and safety of children. Lutheran Services of America (LSA), an umbrella network for these institutions, now touches one in every 50 American lives. We give thanks for the many ways we are able to serve.

This coming year will call us from many directions to focus and refine our ministry as Lutheran Christians.

- Living in a world of the “spiritual but not religious” we seek relevant language and connections for vital ministry.
- With a large number of Oregon Synod congregations feeling the pinch of increasing ministry costs and declining member contributions, we wonder about sustainability.
- And, with new initiatives on the political horizon, we are likely to have basic Lutheran convictions and work (such as those mentioned above) challenged.

The blessing here is that these three issues all relate. Those who have given up on institutional religion often do so because they find ‘church’ politically and practically irrelevant. We are neither of those things, and this year will give us a fresh opportunity to walk our talk as socially relevant people of faith. Committing clearly and courageously to all whose daily lives we can impact is the most direct path forward. The coming 500th Anniversary of the Reformation gives us a opportunity to share our joy.

As you gather and pray around your ministry for the coming year I would ask the following:

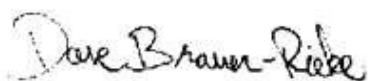
1. Engage in celebration around the 500th Anniversary of the Reformation. I have written a series of bulletin inserts for your use, (oregonsynod.org/500) and Augsburg fortress has wonderful resources as well. We are finding ways to give thanks together.
2. Send thoughtful leaders to our May 5-7, 2017 500th Anniversary Synod Assembly in Portland - individuals who will eagerly engage in conversation and bring our work back to you. We want you present. We want you active in shaping the future of our church, and we want everybody at the table. (Send Youth Voting Members, too!!)
3. Give generously of your time and treasures. We fell (possibly significantly) behind Mission Support this year and I know there are pressing needs in your local community and congregation as well. The Mission Support you give us this coming year goes 41% to the national church, another 10% to ministries outside of Oregon, with the remaining supporting the synod's operating budget. Above and beyond this, though, over \$350,000 in the form of New Beginnings grants, Health and Wellness grants, Ethnic ministry support, Transformational Leadership Initiatives, and New Ministries support will go directly to you in 2017. This money comes from synodical endowments and churchwide sources. I thank you, our national church organization, and the courage of your Synod Council. We are investing heavily in our future!
4. Consider becoming an ELCA AMMPARO Welcoming Congregation to help protect the rights and wellbeing of Latino Immigrant children and their families. The Synod voted to become a "Sanctuary Synod" in 2016 and requested resources for engaging this work.

AMMPARO is a good place to start! www.elca.org/en/Our-Work/Publicly-EngagedChurch/AMMPARO

I am excited about the work we are doing together. I share your concern in changing social and financial times, but rest in the words of our Risen Lord, "Fear not!" The Grace of God, which we embrace so boldly as Lutheran Christians, is given to us so that we might risk the new and resist the temptation of the temporary.

You are called – you, uniquely and by name - to be a part of God's great, gifted, unfolding of the Kingdom. Here there is room for all. And, living in the hope of the feast of life yet to come, we are bold to confess our faith, welcome the stranger, serve our neighbor, and embrace ventures of which we cannot see the ending, by paths as yet untrodden.

Keep the Faith!



Bp. Dave Brauer-Rieke, Oregon Synod - ELCA

Welcome!

It has been a challenging year for all of us at Grace and Mercy. With God's help we have managed the many squalls sent our way.

Funding woes sent us in a bit of a tailspin but many meetings later and a trip to the Dalles by your Council to meet with the Bishop helped find some alternatives to deal with that situation. When we thought that challenge was met a rent increase sent us looking for an alternative place to worship. Our friends at the First United Methodist Church offered to share their space with us and gave us a very warm welcome.

Thanks to JoAn, Phil, and Jerry who met with their Council, worked out and accepted the opportunities offered us.

Meanwhile we carried on with our Mission Focus and actually increased the Prison Ministry to include food and participation by both Grace and Mercy and the Prison.

Jerry led us and we are looking at where we want to focus our energies for the next few years.

Our children have increased their participation and continually surprise us:-) They too are joining with the children of FUMC in Sunday School learning about God's great love for us all.

We have challenges and opportunities ahead of us and with God's help and Pastor's encouragement we will creatively deal with them.

Regina Marks,

Leadership Team Chair

Year End Report — 2016

Grace and Mercy Lutheran Church, Hermiston, OR.

I always pray for you, and I make my requests with a heart full of joy...

Philippians 1:4 (NLT)

So here we are again at the end of one year and the beginning of the next. It would be an understatement to suggest that this has been anything but an "interesting" year. We have been involved with (ongoing?) financial issues (actually, they just kinda snuck up on us a year earlier than we expected. They really weren't anything that we didn't know that we would have to deal with one day. But money, for some reason, is an ongoing "tissue" in the church. We tend to approach finances from a perspective of scarcity rather than from the view of the blessing of God. Thoughts on this?); space issues (or we might say, "Where is our next home?" Thank you to First United Methodist Church who extended an invitation to live with them and to explore with each other how ministry can, is, and will be done in Hermiston.). We wouldn't be far off to say that our thoughts and actions were consumed by these two issues — but much more took place.

We again celebrated another 'Cod's Work Our Hands" Sunday (you have circled September 10, 2017 for the next one, correct?) doing yard work for the Domestic Shelter. Far from being a "one-off" event, initial talk has started about doing a little more in-depth work for the shelter. Though this hasn't materialized, yet, the conversation has started.

We continue to worship at the Prison every six weeks. This year we added a Reformation Sunday Celebration, complete with Brats and trimmings; a Christmas Eve service and requests that we begin to include the concerns of this community in our Sunday morning worship. And, I have been asked to help mentor one through his Master of Theology degree (anyone want to read up on Process Theology). Events and requests like this only happen as relationships are established and allowed to grow. As part of our worshipping together, we have seen the numbers who participate grow and the congregation become more diverse.

We have found a new home. My thanks to the members of the First United Methodist Church who have graciously received us. It was a wonderful "moving Sunday" as we joined together to worship in two sites and share a meal together. Talk continues as we seek points where shared ministry can take place (think Sunday school, Open Table, Prison Ministry, and Quilting to start).

We had a wonderful turnout for the Family Christmas festival in December, Women's Appreciation Sunday, VBS, a good two-year Site review, etc., etc., etc. In short, we had/have much more to celebrate than to worry about!

To paraphrase Paul, "we look through a glass dimly..." What does the future hold? The only honest answer is, "Only God knows." For some this could mean that we wait and let God tell us what to do — or more to the point we would call this a holding pattern. Preferably it means that we are proactive in understanding what God has already called us to (think Baptism in its grandest terms). The place we need to start is where the Site Review report dovetails with the sticky note survey of ministries that G&M is involved with. Where are the points of greatest passion? How are the identified areas of ministries and identified growth edges an expression of the hand of God at work in our world? This is exciting to think about — to see how far and wide God works through us. Add on top of this the layer of FUMC and it really does begin to look like the edge of ministry is our imagination.

One other big conversation we need to have, soon, is our ministry together. We now enter year 3 of a 3year term call. What lies ahead for us? Will our journey continue together? If so, how will this take place (in real practical terms we can now talk about those financial issues). Should our journey continue or does God have something else in mind? I don't have an answer for this, but I do think that the conversation does need to begin, now.

With that, I do want to thank you for this past year and to underscore what Paul says to the church at Philippi: When I pray for you, I do so with great joy.

Pastor Inch

Kiva

Kiva Microfunds is a 501 non-profit organization that allows people to lend money via the Internet to low income entrepreneurs and students in over 80 countries. Kiva's mission is "to connect people through lending to alleviate poverty.

Kiva is an international nonprofit, founded in 2005 and based in San Francisco, with a mission to connect people through lending to alleviate poverty. We celebrate and support people looking to create a better future for themselves, their families and their communities.

By lending as little as \$25 on Kiva, anyone can help a borrower start or grow a business, go to school, access clean energy or realize their potential. For some, it's a matter of survival, for others it's the fuel for a life-long ambition.

100% of every dollar you lend on Kiva goes to funding loans. Kiva covers costs primarily through optional donations, as well as through support from grants and sponsors.

Advent's Dinner 2012 G&M collected donations for \$700.00 and made our first eight loans. We have been reinvesting that same money over and over again.

We have had individuals and whole groups decide who we want to sponsor.

Please check in the attached papers for a lot more information about the loans we have made.

Respectfully submitted,
Jerry McMichael

Grace and Mercy Lutheran Church

Children's Sunday School Report

Our Children's Sunday School attendance averages about 8. Right now we have two age groups: lower and upper elementary. Children assist at worship services as acolytes, "gatherers" of the offering, and communion helpers. Traditionally our congregation presents a Bible to each 3rd grader at the fall Rally Sunday; this year Bibles were also presented to the 2nd graders as they are grouped together.

Activities at Sunday School this past year (besides the regular lesson and craft projects) included:

- Children's Choir,

- Children's Bell Choir (our bells, and the music are color-coded so the non-readers can participate),

- Sending cards at Valentine's Day to members of our congregation, Helping decorate for the Congregational Easter Breakfast,

- Caroling on Main Street with the adult choir group,

- Presenting a Christmas program for our congregation and guests,

- Giving a basket of colorful balls of thread to the Quilting Group as part of our end-of-year celebration,

- Participating in the community project of our congregation for God's Work, Our Hands.

We are eagerly looking forward to working and worshiping in the Methodist Church building, and hopefully joining with them on serving God and His people. Respectfully submitted,

Dot Hensley

Building Report

The Grace and Mercy Church building is functioning well. Hoping to do a 80-90% of move to FUMC building in November.

Hospitality Report

Sunday School opening on September 18th : cake

Kari Inch Going to England on September 25th : cake

Asked congregation to provide candy for Halloween Downtown Michelle

Ascetic Committee

We have not had much going due to conflict of schedules, but most of all time. We apologize for this and hopefully things can get back in order soon. We will start soon with all the packing and labeling of all decorations before the move.

Also, the Women's Celebration "Luau" went well. Hopefully all were happy with everything. The men did an amazing meal as always.

Scrapping Book — 2012, 2013, and 2014 are ready for print but I have not had a chance to take it to the printers.

Worship Committee

- Average attendance for the year thus far was 27.45 (as of October)
- Midweek services during Lent were shared with Hermiston First United Methodist and St. John Episcopal
- Monday morning find two groups involved in study of the Bible texts for each Sunday's worship o In June, and outdoor service and picnic was held in a city park

Prison Ministry:

- In May of this year, we were given the opportunity to initiate a Vesper and communion worship service at Eastern Oregon Correctional Institution. We have continued worshipping with the prisoners in a service about every six weeks. Average attendance at these services has been 26.
- Beginning in January, we will be providing the prisoners who attend the Sunday morning Lutheran services with the devotional booklets, "Portals of Prayer".
- This month of October, we will combine the Vesper service with a Reformation Celebration meal.
- In May, during the annual "Art Walk" on Main Street, sponsored by the Parks and Recreation staff of the city, we were able to display art work created by the inmates of TRCI. This is the third year we have done this.

Music:

Using funds from memorial gifts, we have purchased a set of hand chimes. We are still on a learning curve in their use, but hope to add special music to worship services soon.

Foot Care Clinic:

On the third Wednesday of each month, two retired nurses make available basic foot care to any community members.

Bible Study:

Other than the Next Text studies noted above, there is also a twice monthly group that meets to discuss the Bible studies from "Gather" magazine.

Benevolence:

Each month our benevolence giving focuses on a different need — sometimes local needs, such as Agape House or Domestic Violence Shelter; or more globally, to Lutheran World Relief or ELCA World Hunger.

09 October 2016

Grace and Mercy Council

Good evening. I am not certain if I am formally considered chair, or even part, of a standing committee for Grace and Mercy Lutheran. However, I am very active in some groups that are hosted by the congregation and I want to take a moment to talk about these groups.

1. Next Text

- a. Next Text is a group that meets weekly to discuss the next Sunday's Lectionary Bible readings. The concept for this group was borrowed from a similar group that meets in Coos Bay and after attending sessions there Michelle wanted to have a similar discussion group here in Hermiston.
- b. There are now two discussion groups. One known affectionately as Next Text Classic and the other Next Text version 2.0
- c. Attendance at the Monday morning session that meets at the Pheasant Restaurant at 0632 is usually 6 to 8 early risers. Pastor Tom has added a wealth of knowledge to the discussions there and is certainly a major factor in the success of the group.
- d. Attendance at the Monday mid-morning session meets in the social area of Grace and Mercy and I believe its attendance numbers are consistent in the 6 or 7 .
- e. I believe that both sessions are alive and a viable outreach mission of Grace and Mercy.

2. Tapping into Faith

- a. Tapping into Faith is an idea that Caitlyn Cozad brought to the attention of the congregation during a mission development meeting back when we were meeting at the Presbyterian Church.
- b. Research into the original program found that the material, name, and concept were copyrighted by the Roman Catholic Church. The idea of meeting regularly in a non-traditional setting, e.g. a local pub, where a discussion could be held about theological ideas while enjoying a brew was still favored by some of the congregation.
- c. Thus was born Grace and Mercy's Tapping into Faith. We avoided copyright laws, have a forum that meets monthly to discuss theological ideas and socialize.
- d. Topics that have been discussed in the past are the relevance of beer to the church, Pascal's Wager, Does God Answer Prayers, is the book of Mark written in a Homeric style to attract the Hellenic reader?

- e. Tapping into Faith is a well attended outreach ministry of the Grace and Mercy Congregation. Attendance averages around 8 regular attendees with a high of 14.

On multiple occasions guests of the pub who are not members of the congregation have joined us either for nearly the entire discussion or have made comments to the group after sitting nearby and listening in.

- f. As the last meeting was about to start I overheard one patron of the bar asking what was going on as we started gathering around the larger table. Another patron answered that it is a local church that holds a bible study there. The first person responded "here?" and the second patron said "Yeah it is kinda cool."

3. Novel Ideas book group.

- a. The book group grew from a desire that Michelle and I had to have a book group here in Hermiston that could meet on a regular basis and discuss books mutually selected by the book group.
- b. There was a contest to name the group and Novel Ideas was selected as the theme.
- c. We meet monthly in the social area of Grace and Mercy to share a meal time, socialize, and discuss various books nominated to be read by the group.
- d. We have read a wide variety of books that include; Proof of Heaven, The Five People you meet in Heaven, Water for Elephants, Tuesdays with Morrie, The Book Thief, Spilt Milk, Sometimes A Great Notion, The Invention of Wings, Astoria, A Light in the Woods, The American Lady, Accidental Saints, Sentence of Marriage, Three Lines A Day, and many more.
- e. The book group is in its fourth year and going strong.
- f. I hope that when we begin worshipping at the Methodist Church that some members of that congregation will join us in the book group.
- g. Attendance at the monthly meetings averages 6 to 12 people depending upon abilities to attend.

4. The Sound System

- a. Within the limits of the current worship area the sound system seems to be meeting our needs.
- b. If we had a different meeting area I believe that we could improve on the sound system's abilities by moving the speakers out in front of the service's presider/reader.

- c. Currently we sometimes get a minor feedback from the microphone to the speaker when the Pastor moves out in front of the speakers. To counter this I have reduced the gain on the wireless mic. This results in his voice sometimes being muffled. However, since we meet in a small area this change has not affected us too adversely.

5. Technology

- a. Currently we have a Digital Subscriber Line (DSL) access to the internet through Eastern Oregon Telecom. This service seems to meet our needs.
- b. We have a modem/router installed that has no public access on it that if we needed a network for the church with greater security we could start using. To date this network segment has not been utilized. This router is owned by EOT and will return to them when we move.
- c. Michelle and I have loaned another router/wifi access point/firewall to the church that gives public access to the internet over an un-secured network segment with a different Internet Protocol address pool than the secure network segment. Having the two network address pools makes the network segments invisible to each other. This router should be returned to us if it is not put into use after the transition to the Methodist Church. Attached to the un-secure network segment are the printer and a file server.
- d. The printer is adequately used and served by this network. The file server is underutilized and Michelle, Pastor Tom, and I will work on making it more useful to the congregation; specifically to members of council who have need of a centralized storage point.
- e. There has been discussion of purchasing a laptop computer for the church. I strongly urge the council to not make this purchase at this time.
 - i. Pastor Tom has repeatedly expressed his desire to continue to use his own laptop(s).
 - ii. If no one is using the laptop it will sit in disuse and the anti-virus programs and operating systems will not be kept current creating a possible hazard of having the computer hacked into if it is put into use.
 - iii. Additionally technology advances so quickly that if we have a computer sitting on a desk that is unused for a few months to a year it will be stale, dated technology before it is even put into use.
 - iv. I have heard that there is a desire to have documents stored on the computer as a central repository. The computer will be less secure than the file server and it will be more difficult to put files onto the laptop and later to retrieve them than by using the file server which the council has already purchased.
 - v. The printer is available to anyone who brings their computer, phone, or tablet to the building, installs the correct drivers, and connects to the nonsecure network segment. The printer is outside the range of shared network addresses and thus less visible to casual users.

- vi. In the past members of the congregation were having trouble accessing the internet through the non-secure router. I found a problem in the way that the address are shared with users and after a change was made in the way that addresses are shared I have not heard a complaint for over a year about access.
 - f. Michelle and I will be working to create a website for the church prior to our departure for Arizona this winter. In the past the church had a web page however the cost was too great to justify keeping it. At the time we discontinued the web site it was costing the church 30+ dollars a month to maintain. Michelle and I are researching web sites that will not cost the church anything on a monthly basis.
 - i. Once established we will work with the council to see what information should be shared through the web site.
 - g. Currently Michelle and I are using Facebook pages and groups to share information about the Church, Tapping Into Faith, and Novel Ideas. After the web site is created I anticipate that the Facebook pages will continue to be used and the information will also be posted on the web site.
- 6. Phone system at Grace and Mercy Church
 - a. Currently we have a phone system installed in the church that gets little if any use. Messages are left and not retrieved in a timely manner. When we move to the Methodist Church I recommend that we discontinue the traditional landline phone and get a cell phone using a metered service such as cricket or similar.
 - b. If the council desires to maintain a landline type phone presence here I recommend that we research a VOIP (Voice over Internet Phone) type device. We have one at home that costs us \$35 per year. Calls may be made anywhere in the Continental U.S. without additional charge. And voice messages left are forwarded to an email address that we can establish. Rochelle is putting one in their residence soon for use by Em, Laura, and Dan in emergencies after they return home from school.
 - c. The existing phone device that the church owns could be used with the VOIP device thus saving the expense of the phone itself.
- 7. KIVA
 - a. The KIVA project, I believe, is an underutilized mission of Grace and Mercy. This concept was brought to the congregation by Jerry McMichael and I believe it is a brilliant method for the church to directly help persons throughout the world as they try to better their lives and their livelihood.
 - b. The monies that have gone into the KIVA project have been loaned out time and again with 100% return so that the monies can be used again.
 - c. KIVA is a monthly mission of the congregation with monies collected during December given to the benefit. However, we have never had a major KIVA fund

raising event except for the Luminaria sales that Michelle and I have promoted in the past.

- d. I believe that the council should put a greater level of support into KIVA and that we should promote it just as we do the Crisis Center, the Holiday Meals, and etc.
- e. I would like to see a social event offered and that attendees at the social listen to a short presentation about KIVA applicants from the KIVA committee and then the attendees vote on how the KIVA monies are distributed. This could be a very fun time together with a very good outcome for KIVA applicants. I would like to see the KIVA fund more actively supported and promoted by the Council during December when it is the monthly benevolence.

8. Luminaria Fund Raiser

- a. Selling Luminaria is still a viable method of fund raising except that we have saturated the market here at Grace and Mercy.
- b. Anyone who wants the electric Luminaria has already purchased them. I have suspended ordering additional boxes of lights because we were paying for them and not selling all that we had to order to get merchant pricing. Thus we now have many, many sets of Luminaria available to Michelle and I from unpurchased sets of lights.
- c. Perhaps after we move to the Methodist Church, and if we use the lights that are available to the congregation, we may be able to offer them to the members of the Methodist Church. But for now I believe that project is at its mature point and do not anticipate making orders this winter.

Pax Vobiscum,

Kevin Hedgepeth

**Grace & Mercy Volunteer List
Coordinators and Committees 2017
(DRAFT)**

Leadership:

(Usually the 2nd Tuesday of the month at 6:30 PM)

Chair - Regina

Treasurer - Cindy

Financial Secretary - JoAn

Secretary - Michelle

At Large - JoAn, Phil, Rosaline, Dot

Budget -Katja, Cindy, JoAn, Rochelle

Scholarship - Kathleen, Dawn, Cindy

Church computers/wifi/webpage: Kevin Pastor

Committees

Building Committee:

General Building: Phil

Aesthetics: Flora, Joni

Bulletin Board: Amber

Sound: Kevin

Phone: Kevin

Cooperation Committee w FUMC: Jerry, JoAn, Phil

Mission Statement Revisited: Jerry, Kevin

Worship Committee: Rosaline, Jean, Katja, Pastor

Hospitality Committee: Rochelle, Dot, Dawn, Michelle, Geri, Cindy

Education/Sunday School Committee: Pastor, Dot,

Michelle, Kathleen, Katja, Rochelle, Dawn, Amber

Church Activities:

Altar Guild/Acolytes: Geri and Maxine

Card Ministry: Dorothy Lee

Benevolence: Rosaline

Choir: Rosaline (usually Mondays at 1 PM)

Chime Choir: Steve, Rosaline (usually ... Piano: Rosaline

Newsletter: Pastor

Bulletins: Rosaline

Prayer Requests: Pastor, Dot, Michelle

Facebook: Michelle and Rochelle

Visitation: Pastor, Rosaline, & Phil

Communication for non internet people: Geri

Foot Clinic: Rosaline

(usually 3rd Wednesday of the month at 9:30)

Kiva Project: Jerry, Kevin

Church Scrapbooks: Flora

Quilters: Ruth, Dorothy (usually Thurs at 9:30 AM)

Gather Bible Study: Rosaline

(2nd and 4th Wednesday at 10 AM at Jean's)

Novel Ideas at G & M (Book Club): Kevin

(usually the last Tuesday of the month open by 5:30, program starts at 6 PM)

Tapping into Faith: Kevin (usually last Friday of month 7 PM at Hermiston Tavern)

Next Text: Michelle, Kevin, Pastor (Every Monday morning 6:32 AM at The Pheasant or Monday at 10 AM at church)

Grace and Mercy Lutheran Church Leadership Team Meeting in The Dalles

With Bishop Dave Brauer-Rieke and Pastor Michael Keyes
Wednesday, May 25, 2016 at Zion Lutheran Church

Meeting called to order at 1:13 PM at Zion Lutheran Church in The Dalles

Attended by: Bishop Brauer-Rieke, Pastor Michael Keyes, Pastor Tom Inch, Pastor Tyler of Zion Lutheran, President Regina Marks, Katja McMichaels, Rosaline John, Phil Schmidt, Dot Hensley, JoAn Hill, Michelle Hedgepeth

Opening Prayer: Bishop

Brief explanation from the Pastor of Zion about partnership with the Methodist Church in The Dalles, news from Zion Lutheran.

Introductions and concerns around the room

JoAn listed improve communications, financial concerns, the way ahead

Regina asked about partnership with the Methodists

Grant Info: Pastor Keyes

2014 started grant

Pastor Reuban told Jerry and Katja that we would have \$45,000 grant first year. In reality it was a yearly grant. Our understanding was it was a 3 year grant. 2016 we should receive \$5000 from OR Synod (will continue) plus \$30,000 from Church Wide Social, Congregation Under Development and full church Email from Pastor Keyes stated we would receive \$10,000 in 2015

\$10,000 in 2016

\$10,000 in 2017

Nov 2015 figures given to P. Keyes signed by Pastor Inch and Dot Hensley.

This also was a change in original grant to yearly. Not very clearly stated.

P. Keyes took responsibility for the miscommunication.

2017 we should receive \$30,000 form church wide + \$5000 from OR Synod However, 2017 may need to be renegotiated.

Later it was said that we did not need to do anything for the grant process for 2017. P. Keyes

Bishop Brauer-Rieke

- we need to be consciously inviting people to the congregation
- being a welcoming church is not enough - becoming socially conscious is not enough What people look for now in a church:
 - safe
 - authentic
 - reflects their values
 - looking for relational, deeper conversations
 - direct mail invites - direct person to person invites
 - need to listen to the 20 - 50 year olds about church - need to add 20 - 50 year old people to the church - what are 6 things common to 20 - 50 year old?
 - they need a reason to 'connect! with us - 'If we build it they will come ' does not work
 - Pledge and Plate (congregation needs to pledge, direct deposit)
 - look for grants and partnerships outside of the Lutheran Church

- look for 'friends of' (another church or organization donates \$\$ to us because we do a specific project. IE: Prison Ministry)
- If you are under 50 years old you do not relate to church or Christianity.

Methodists and Lutherans:

work all angles at the same time

Bishop is our contact

Bishop will contact the Methodist liaison, Steve Ross.

we should start making contacts with members of the Methodist Church

Lease on Building: Phil

3 year lease is about to expire

Per Bishop: we are a Congregation Under
Development now OR Synod will not be
signers on the lease

Other concerns:

From now on all changes need to be addressed to the Pastor and the Council in writing.

Checks arrive at Grace and Mercy with no identifying info on them.

Bishop will talk to Ryan about putting some identifying information on the checks so we know what they are for.

Meeting adjourned at 3:08 pm

Meeting notes from Secretary Michelle Hedgepeth

Pastor Inch also recorded the meeting on his phone,

Grace and Mercy Lutheran Church

Our year + review with Pastor Tom Inch 2015/2016

Pastor Inch Installation March 21, 2015

Pastor Inch has been able to visit shut ins, people who are ill, and provide communion and comfort.

Pastor Inch is helping us refocus on our Vision Statement. How do we live out our Vision Statement?

Including our children in the weekly worship as full members of the congregation. Our first communion/acolyte class with pastor

Adult Education and Spiritual Growth: We as an adult congregation were not being fed. We had not had this for most of our time as a congregation. We spent every moment just getting through, planning, figuring out who was doing the service and how things would be handled each week.

Prison Ministry Vesper Worship consistently once each 6 weeks

Ash Wednesday service "on the street"

Lent Evening Services/Soup: Partnering with First United Methodist and Ste John's Episcopal.

Advent services each week in partnership with United Methodist and St. John Episcopal churches 2015 and 2016

Easter Celebrations 2015 and 2016

Art Walk May 9, 2015. We use our building to house the artwork from Two Rivers Correctional Facility.

Women's Celebration Luncheon open to the community. 2015 and 2016

Wednesday Evenings in the Summer Vespers

VBS with Faith Presbyterian Church and United Methodist Church June 14, 2015

Including service project of working/serving during the Open Table Food Program
3 on 3 Basketball Downtown Tournament. Players and families come from Ore/Wash/Id. We invited them to use the building for registration, information, and respite for coaches, referees, and volunteers during this 2 day event. This included lunch in an air conditioned building!

Worship in the park July 18, 2015

God's Work Our Hands: Yard clean up at the Domestic Violence House

Halloween on Main Street! We handed out over 1000 pieces of candy to children on Main Street.

Advent services jointly with United Methodist Church 2015 and 2016

Hermiston Christmas Bazaar inside Grace and Mercy. This was part of the Downtown Christmas Festival.

9 vendors used our building downtown to sell crafts during this 2 day event each weekend of

December. The money we were paid for space was donated to Agape House, the Backpack Program, and local Christmas Express.

Festival of Trees December 6, 2015 at the Convention Center sponsored by Soroptomists and the City. The Bishop, Pastor Inch, and members of the congregation helped hundreds of children make Christmas ornaments at no charge.

Worship with the Bishop December 6, 2015

Christmas Bazaar by the local craft guild and the Chamber of Commerce. Space available at Grace and

Mercy. December 11, 2015

Caroling on Main Street December 18, 2015

Christmas program December 20, 2015

Tapping Into Faith at Hermiston Tavern once a month

Topics: Doubt, Beer - the importance in the history of church, Homeric comparison to book of Mark,

Pascal's Wager, and Paul's letters reviewed, etc.

Novel Ideas (Book Club) hosted at Grace and Mercy once a month attended by non Lutheran members. Next Text (Liturgy Study) every Monday morning at 6:32 at a local restaurant, The Pheasant. Just expanded to Next Text 2.0 on Mondays at Grace and Mercy.

Two wedding showers

One Baptism

Choir (including hand bells for children and chimes for the adults, purchase made through our Memorial Fund)

Leadership Meetings at least monthly

Gather Bible Study twice each month

Downtown window ministry: each month we have wonderful displays that proclaim the Glory of God on Main Street in our windows!

Coffee and Chatter with the Pastor on Main Street. During nice weather Pastor has a cafe! table he puts outside to talk to people on Main Street.

Pastor supervised a local man who is studying/preparing for service in the Episcopal faith,

Benevolences:

Quilting Ministry

ELCA Disaster Relief

Warming Station/Cooling Station

School Kits for children
Mittens, gloves, hats for local school children
Oregon Synod
Backpack Program
Agape House
The ARC
Health Kits for Lutheran World Relief
Foot Clinic
Choir
KIVA
Scholarship fund to a seminary
Domestic Violence Center

Partnerships in the community: Chamber of Commerce, City of Hermiston, United Methodist, St. John

Episcopal, Faith Presbyterian, Two Rivers Correctional Facility, Merchants Association. We joined the Chamber and the Downtown Association. This is providing some free advertising for us and recognition in the city.

New Hotel being built 2 blocks from us! We are pursuing ways to partner with the new business and let visitors know where we are located and welcome them.

Ministry on Main Street!! We took communion to the bikers! The local bikers meet next door to us on Sunday for breakfast. They leave just about the time we service communion so we met them outside with communion!

Summary of Life of the 3 year Grant with Pastor Inch

In any business class or accounting class you would be told to expect 7 years to start a new business. To plan on funding for the whole 7 years as all profit will be returned to the business for 7 years.

Starting a new church has similar challenges and expenses.

When we started Grace and Mercy we had nothing but our faith and a need to be servants to our community.

We have grappled with worship in a building not our own.

We leased and remodeled a building downtown to begin our ministry downtown. The first year we were on Main street very few people knew we were there.

We have developed in the community and become more involved. More people now know who we are.

We have hosted 2 interns who each lent their gifts to us.

Year 1 of Grant 2015 - 2016: We began small group Vision Groups with Pastor Inch. The questions were: Where did we start? Where are we now? Where do we want to go?

Year 2 of Grant 2016 - 2017: We would start Large Group Discussions to formalize our goals and path in the community. How do we fulfill our Vision Statement??

We had just started the large group discussions when we had to turn our attention to financial matters. Since this is the first time we have had a pastor we spent many hours this year also working our way through wages, retirement, health plans, insurance issues, etc. We are still a relatively new business in town.

Year 3 of Grant 2017 - 2018: Implement our vision and goals in the community, continue building partnerships in the community.

Year 2 and 3 will be impacted without the continuation of the grant. Including us possibly losing our pastor and our building,