



Red Oak Grove

Lutheran Church

GATHERING IN GRACE. GROWING IN FAITH. GOING FORTH TO SERVE.

November 23, 2020

To the Red Oak Grove Church Family,

We know that this has been a hard year and it continues to throw us a curve ball. The spread of the COVID-19 has been rapidly increasing in all communities. We do not know of any known cases of the virus in our congregation but we strive to protect our community and church family.

After prayerful consideration and on the recommendation of Bishop Hassanally we have decided that it is in the best interest of this congregation to cancel all in person worship services and activities through December 18th. Council will re-evaluate opening for worship after this time.

You have been very generous with your offerings during this time and we hope you will continue to do so if you are able. Our expenses continue during a pandemic and we thank you for your gifts. Offerings may be sent to the church or dropped off at the office on Tuesday mornings.

Even during our time apart remember that your church family is here for you. If you want to talk or need pastoral care, do not hesitate to call the office or Pastor Leandra.

Thank you for your understanding and cooperation. Please stay safe and well.

Yours in Christ,

Pastor Leandra and the Church Council



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December 2020

The season of Advent is upon us and we have begun the church year over. Many times, in Advent we are invited to breathe, to slow down, and to live into the time of waiting for Jesus to come. We have done much slowing down this year, and 2020 has felt like it moved at a snail's pace. The life of the church and its year moves ever forward, as we find ourselves still worshipping and celebrating in the safest ways we can. We are a tired people this year. Tired of the ever-shortening days, tired of rules, tired of limiting social interactions, and tired of worrying. Advent comes to us at a perfect time.

I believe that we can take some intentional time in advent to breathe, slow down, and live into the messages that Advent brings. Each week in Advent can be associated with a theme and we recognize these as we light our candles. These four themes are hope or promise, preparation and waiting, joy or peace, and love or adoration. For this month, I want to give you a passage from our Sunday texts and a short prayer, that you can add to, for each week of Advent. Together, we will spend some time grounding ourselves in the season and taking a moment to breathe.

Week 1: Hope and Promise

1 Corinthians 1: 3-9

Accompanying God be with us in this darker season. Remind us that you sent your Son to be the light in the world to guide us. Inspire us in your promise of our salvation through Jesus and move us in our promise of your gifts. Amen

Week 2: Preparation and Waiting

2 Peter 3:8-15a

Persistent God remind us why we wait and who we wait for. Amen

Week 3: Joy

Psalm 126

Almighty God you bring joy in the morning. Remind us of the great things you do that bring great joy in our lives and the lives of others. Amen

Week 4: Love or Adoration

Romans 16: 25-27

All knowing God you are worthy of our praise and adoration. Bring us strength in these tough times and remind us that you are a God of love. Amen

Merry Christmas! I hope that you stay safe and healthy and that the light of God shines through you this Advent and Christmas seasons.

May God's peace and joy be with you,
Pastor Leandra

RED OAK GROVE LUTHERAN CHURCH

COUNCIL MINUTES 11-8-2020

The meeting was called to order by President, Julie Hoffman. Members in attendance included; Julie Hoffman, Julie Berg, Linda Christianson, Rony Magnuson, Pastor Leandra and Laura Tjomsland.

Check-in with highs and lows were shared.

Pastor Leandra led in opening prayer.

Treasurer's Report was presented. Opening balance was \$46,802.73. Income was \$6,828.88. Expenses were \$9,874.54. Leaving a balance of \$43,757.07. The Youth Fund has a balance of \$3,879.56. The Improvement Fund has a balance of \$17,240.02 and the Scholarship Fund has a balance of \$2,677.29. The report was approved as presented.

There was no Old Business.

New Business: A charitable donation has been made and will be used for charitable projects. Part of this donation will be used to purchase books for children in Blooming Prairie School. The remaining funds will be used for the Feed A Family project coordinated with Hy-Vee. Christmas Eve Worship was discussed. A motion was made by Laura and seconded by Rony to hold two services. The first one would be at 3:00 PM with a maximum of 50 people in attendance. The second service would be at 5:30 PM. This will allow enough time to clean, sanitize and disinfect all used areas of the church before the 2nd service. A registration will be made and it will be requested that all who will be attending RSVP with the time and the number of people in their group. Linda Christianson reported on the costs related to removing the tile floors. A motion was made, seconded and passed to pay the bill for the estimate. A motion was made, seconded and passed to reimburse Julie Hoffman for the Confirmation gifts. A motion was made seconded and passed to allow the interest funds from the Seminary Endowment Fund be given to Pastor Leandra to pay on student loans.

Pastor Report was given. Weekly Confirmation classes have been going well. Phone calls and ZOOM visits have been made. Information regarding protection guidelines for youth and vulnerable adults has been sent out from the Synod. The Zumbro Conference gathering was virtual. The Fall Theological Conference will be virtual. There will be no Thanksgiving service.

The Secretary's Report was presented. A motion was made seconded and passed to approve the report as given.

WELCA Report was given. They have been working on quilts on Monday mornings for two hours a week. They made the stoles for the Confirmation boys.

There was no Deacons Report.

Trustees Report: New phones for the church office were discussed. The phone in Pastor's office does not provide any sound in the receiver. A motion was made seconded and passed to approve the expense of this project.

Next meeting will be Sunday, December 13th at 3:00 PM

The meeting was adjourned and closed with the Lord's Prayer.

Respectfully submitted,

Laura Tjomsland, Council Secretary

RED OAK GROVE LUTHERAN CHURCH
SPECIAL COUNCIL MEETING 11-22-2020

The meeting was called to order by President, Julie Hoffman. Members in attendance included; Amber Anderson, Julie Berg, Holly Ille, Cathy Kleinschmidt, Rony Magnuson, Julie Hoffman, Pastor Leandra and Laura Tjomsland.

The purpose of the meeting was to discuss and decide what the worship plans for the next four weeks will be. The Governor of the State has issued new mandates regarding gatherings. The Bishop of the Synod has also put out additional suggestions. With these suggestions coming forward the Council will need to make a choice. A motion was made, seconded and passed to suspend in person worship services until December 18, 2020.

The Council will meet again on December 13, 2020 to review this plan and look forward to the rest of December and how that will be handled.

With no other business the meeting was adjourned and closed with The Lord's Prayer.

Respectfully submitted,

Laura Tjomsland, Council Secretary

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Join us for worship on YouTube!

During this time of pausing in-person worship and beyond, we have posted worship services on our YouTube channel. You can search YouTube (www.youtube.com) for "Red Oak Grove Lutheran Church Austin", or follow this link: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCBsDIIQnMqIL3H6jWpkjHZw>

We hope that you will join us as you would normally for worship online. The bulletin can be found as a pdf file on the church's website. See you, virtually, in worship!

Pastoral Care or Conversation

If you are in need of pastoral care or conversation during these difficult times email Pastor Leandra at rogpastorleandra@gmail.com. Do not hesitate to call the office or the pastor if you are in need of support.

Poinsettias

If you would like to order a poinsettia through the church, we ask that you send in \$10 or drop off on a Tuesday between 8am-noon by December 13th. This will ensure we can get the poinsettias for Christmas.

We also want to offer you the opportunity this year to drop a poinsettia off yourself December 19th from 2-4pm or December 22nd from 8am-noon. If you choose to drop your own poinsettia off, please label it with your name so that you may take your plant home. *If you have any questions call the office.*

Ladies – Quilting is done for this year. We made 35 quilts. Thanks to everyone who helped in any way.

Judy Wambeam

WELCA Minutes

On Sunday, November 1, 2020 our WELCA meeting was called to order by President Joyce Peterson at 10:15 a.m. following Sunday worship with 11 ladies in attendance. The meeting was opened in the Name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. The purpose was read together in unison. There was no opening hymn. Devotions were read by Judy Wambeam "On the Wings of Prayer". There was no Secretary Report. There was also no correspondence other than greetings from Dorothy Peterson. Ardell Swenson gave our Treasurer's Report. \$1,000 was given to missions and Rony Magnuson was reimbursed for coffee treats.

Committee Report: Quilting – Judy Wambeam. Quilting started on Monday, October 12, 2020. Time 9-11 only. No potluck dinner or coffee served. Masks were worn. We completed 4 quilts during this first session. Twenty quilts were given to Marie Sandvik and delivered by Cindy Hingeveld along with many items. We will be making four Senior quilts – Cole Christianson, Boone Carlson, Grace Magnuson and Rachael Riley. Joyce Peterson had visited with Dorothy and Galen Peterson. Ardell visited Janet Hope, Pat Hanson and Marlys Peterson.

Unfinished Business: Painting of Pastor's office. Rebekah Circle has purchased and will be painted soon. Paint bought local at B to Z Hardware in Blooming Prairie.

New Business: Thank you to all the ladies that donated and decorated the church. It looks so festive. Confirmation stoles were made for our 3 Confirmands – Cade Christianson, Alex Riley and Jesse Cardenas. Also WELCA gave a card and gift purchased from WELCA by Ardell. The annual donations were given. A motion by Nancy Wesely and seconded by Julie H. to give the same donations as 2019. They are: Pastor Anderson, Lutheran Campus Ministry, Austin Public Schools, Good Earth village, Lutheran Social Services, Marie Sandvik, Blooming Prairie Youth Fund, Peace and Power, Albert Lea, Rachel's Hope, Katie Zipse and Marilyn Blume, ARC and Women of the Evangelical Church of America. Total donation \$1,075. It was discussed and voted not to make a new WELCA booklet for 2020. Motion was made by Doris Draayer and seconded by Julie Hoffman to keep officers same as 2020 in 2021 and also keep the same book for 2021. Committees will be reviewed at a later date. Fall Festival had about 12-15 kids attend along with their parents. They had a bonfire, ate hot dogs and painted pumpkins.

Joyce presented the idea of "Prayer Buddies". Praying for and sending cards of encouragement to youngsters. It was discussed and tabled at this time. Julie Hoffman made the motion and Nancy Wesely seconded it.

Thank Offering was received and Joyce read a reading about Thanksgiving. Our next meeting will be Sunday, December 6th at 10 :15 a.m. November birthdays were sung to, Pat Hanson, November 7th, Esther D., November 25th and Lavonne Smith, November 30th.

Closed with the Lord's Prayer.

Notes taken by Joyce and Nancy W.

Linda L. Christianson, Secretary