

Church *FutureFinder* Report

Prepared for:

Grace Lutheran

7300 W. Division Street
River Forest IL
60305

Thursday, April 30, 2009



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Congregation Information



Grace Lutheran

7300 W. Division Street River Forest IL 60305

Denomination: Independent Evangelical Lutheran Church

Mission Statement

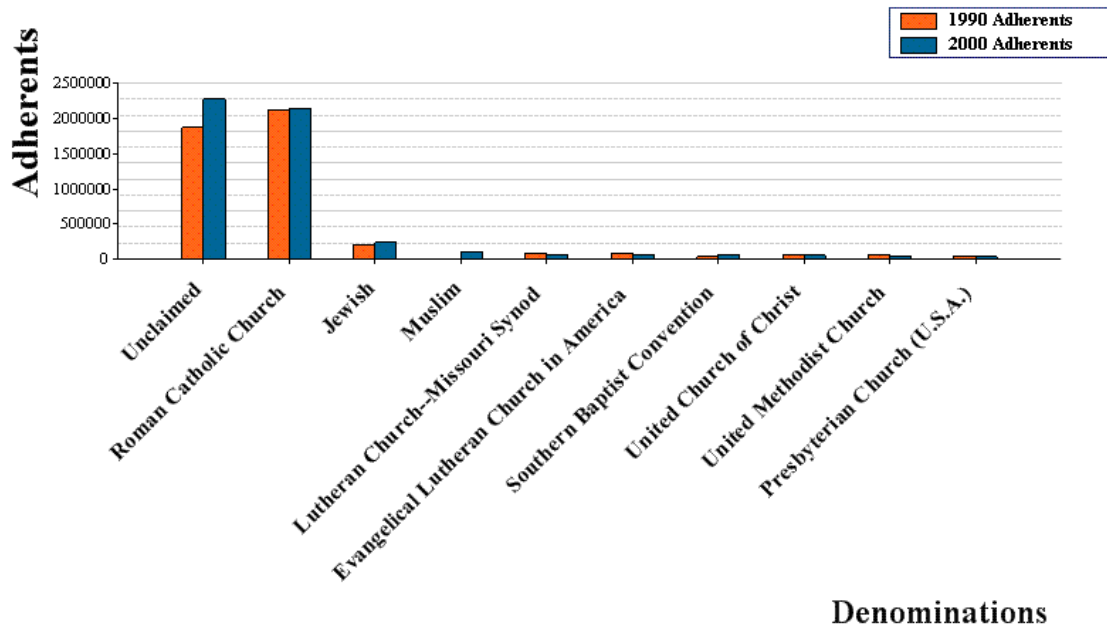
Bring in, build up and send out for Jesus Christ.



Denomination Information



Denomination adherents by area 1990/2000



| Denomination | 1990 Adherents | 2000 Adherents | % Change |
|--|----------------|----------------|------------|
| Unclaimed | 1,875,328 | 2,278,793 | 21.51 % |
| Roman Catholic Church | 2,121,152 | 2,146,961 | 1.22 % |
| Jewish | 208,577 | 234,400 | 12.38 % |
| Muslim | | 95,623 | Infinity % |
| Lutheran Church--Missouri Synod | 83,205 | 63,814 | -23.31 % |
| Evangelical Lutheran Church in America | 80,710 | 63,421 | -21.42 % |
| Southern Baptist Convention | 32,192 | 63,084 | 95.96 % |
| United Church of Christ | 55,001 | 52,747 | -4.10 % |
| United Methodist Church | 57,560 | 42,712 | -25.80 % |
| Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) | 40,909 | 36,966 | -9.64 % |

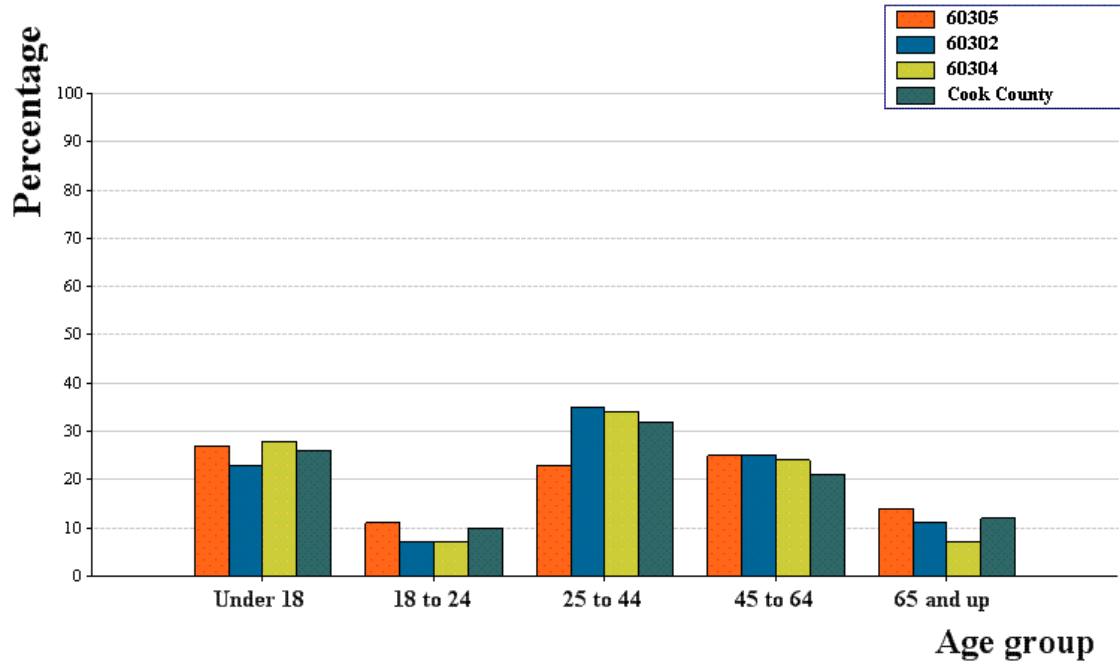


Population and Demographic Profile

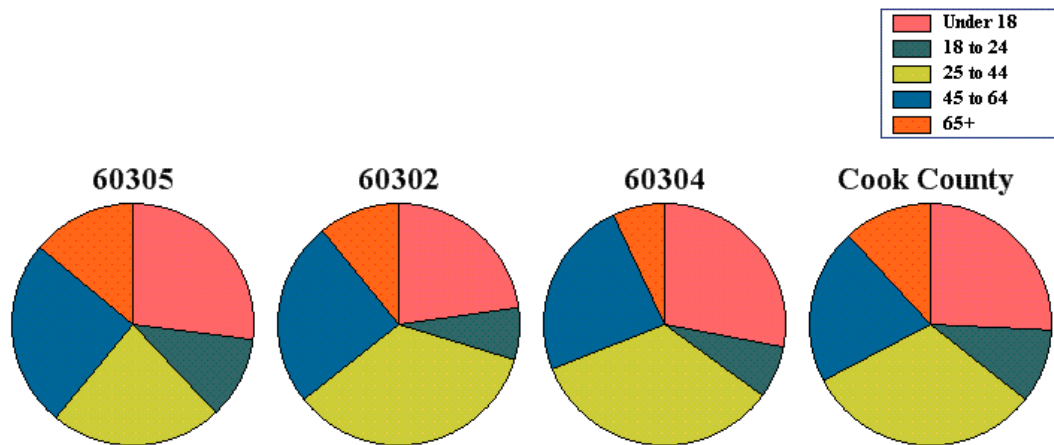


age demographics

comparison of area age profiles



age distribution by areas



| Area | Under 18% | 18-24% | 25-44% | 45-64% | 65+ % |
|-------|-----------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| 60305 | 27.00 % | 11.00 % | 23.00 % | 25.00 % | 14.00 % |
| 60302 | 23.00 % | 7.00 % | 35.00 % | 25.00 % | 11.00 % |



Population and Demographic Profile



| Area | Under 18% | 18-24% | 25-44% | 45-64% | 65+ % |
|-------------|-----------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| 60304 | 28.00 % | 7.00 % | 34.00 % | 24.00 % | 7.00 % |
| Cook County | 26.00 % | 10.00 % | 32.00 % | 21.00 % | 12.00 % |

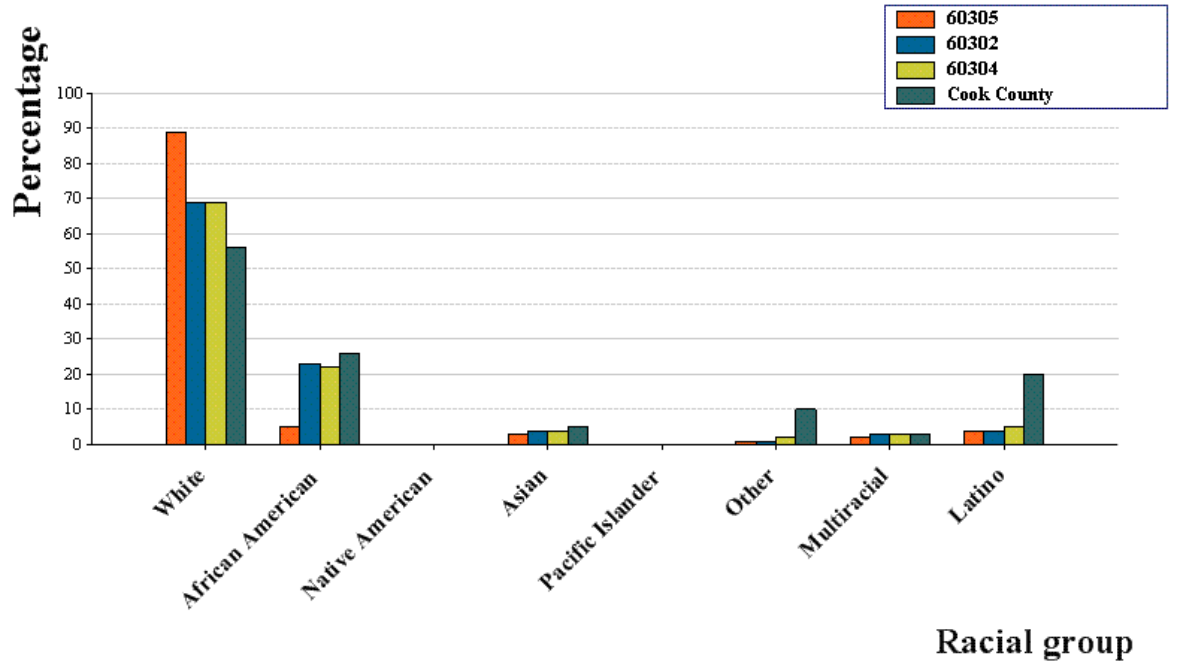


Population and Demographic Profile

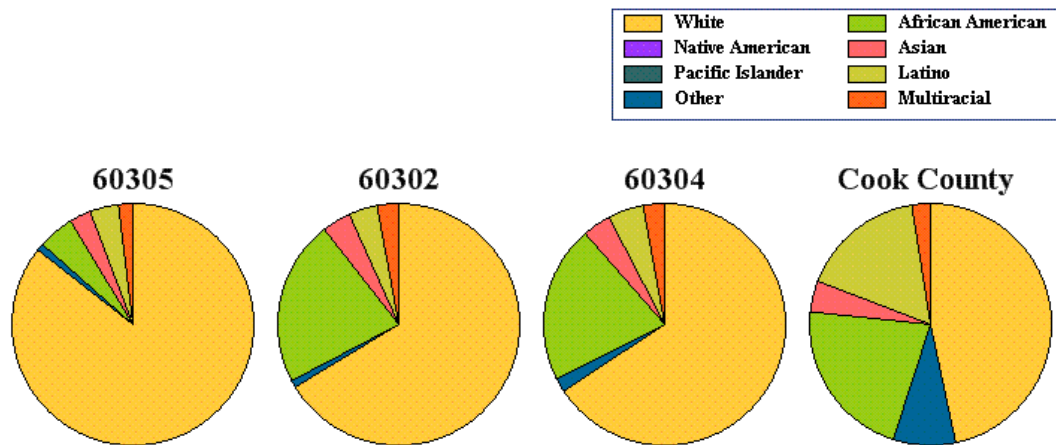


race/ethnicity demographics

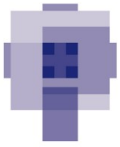
comparison of area racial profiles



racial distribution by area



| Area | White | African American | Native American | Asian | Pacific | Other | Multiracial | Latino |
|-------|---------|------------------|-----------------|--------|---------|--------|-------------|--------|
| 60305 | 89.00 % | 5.00 % | .00 % | 3.00 % | .00 % | 1.00 % | 2.00 % | 4.00 % |
| 60302 | 69.00 % | 23.00 % | .00 % | 4.00 % | .00 % | 1.00 % | 3.00 % | 4.00 % |



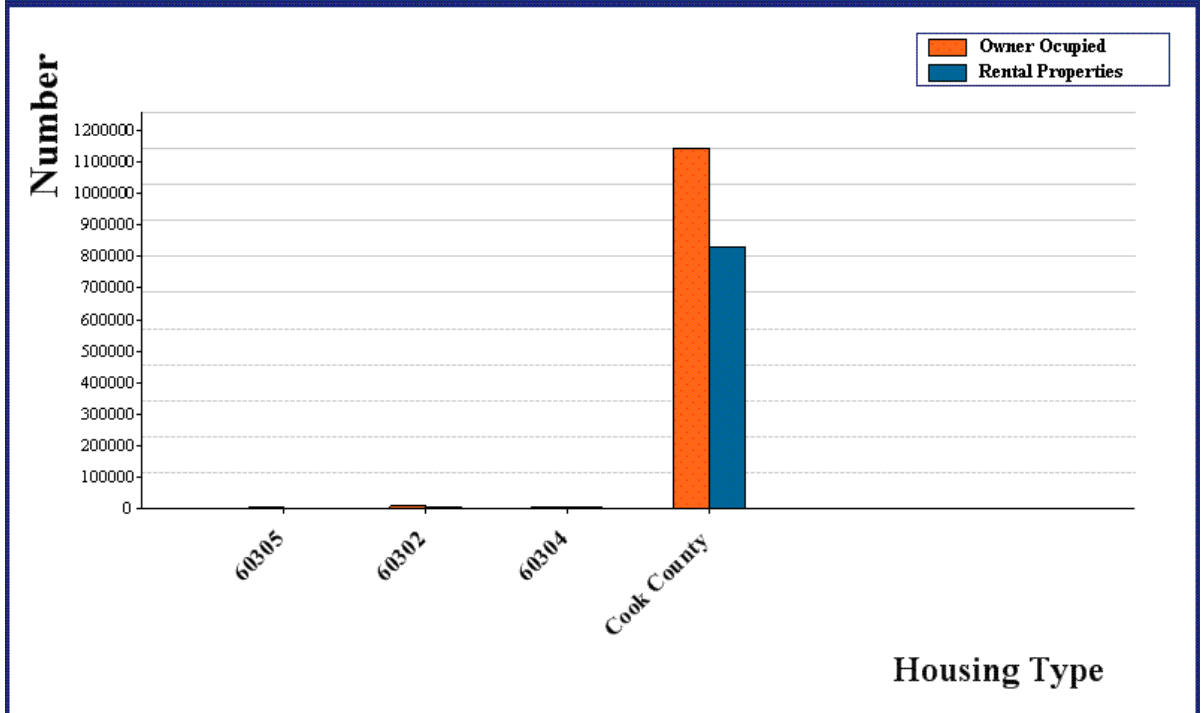
Population and Demographic Profile



| Area | White | African American | Native American | Asian | Pacific | Other | Multiracial | Latino |
|-------------|---------|------------------|-----------------|--------|---------|---------|-------------|---------|
| 60304 | 69.00 % | 22.00 % | .00 % | 4.00 % | .00 % | 2.00 % | 3.00 % | 5.00 % |
| Cook County | 56.00 % | 26.00 % | .00 % | 5.00 % | .00 % | 10.00 % | 3.00 % | 20.00 % |

housing tenure

comparison of area owner occupied rental and other properties

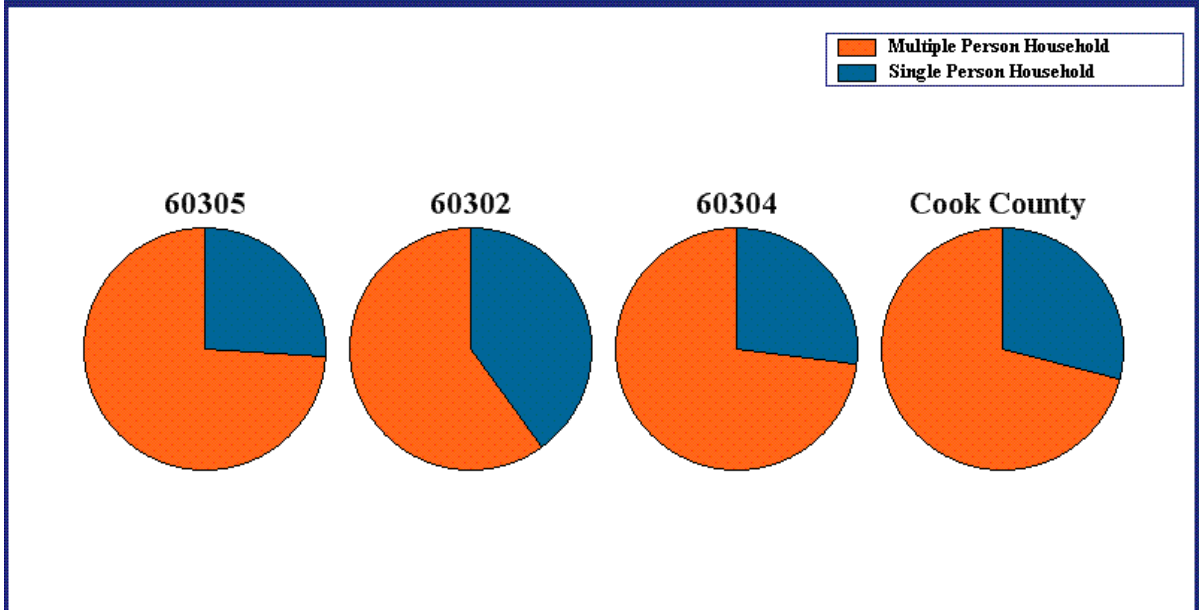




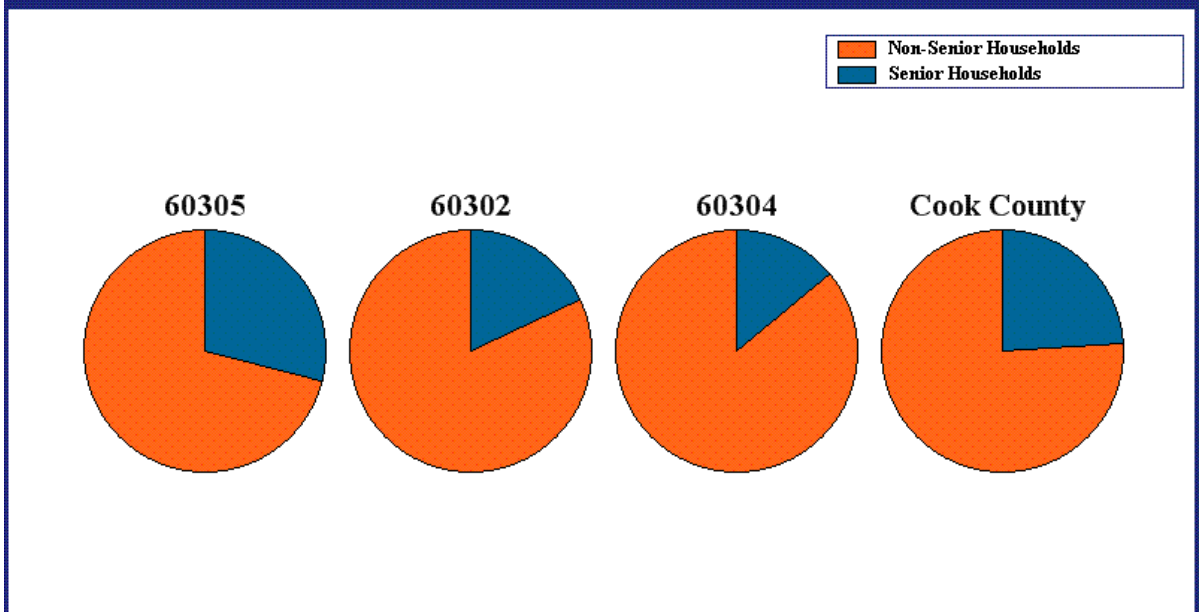
Population and Demographic Profile



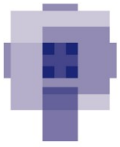
distribution of single vs. multiple-person households by area



distribution of units with one or more residents 65 of over by area



| Area | Total Units | Owned | Rented |
|-------------|-------------|-----------|---------|
| 60305 | 4,092 | 3,554 | 538 |
| 60302 | 14,896 | 8,085 | 6,811 |
| 60304 | 6,881 | 4,491 | 2,390 |
| Cook County | 1,974,181 | 1,142,677 | 831,504 |



Population and Demographic Profile



| Area | Single Resident % | Multiple Resident % |
|-------------|-------------------|---------------------|
| 60305 | 26.00 % | 29.00 % |
| 60302 | 40.00 % | 18.00 % |
| 60304 | 27.00 % | 14.00 % |
| Cook County | 29.00 % | 24.00 % |

| Area | Senior % | Non senior % |
|-------------|----------|--------------|
| 60305 | 29.00 % | 71.00 % |
| 60302 | 18.00 % | 82.00 % |
| 60304 | 14.00 % | 86.00 % |
| Cook County | 24.00 % | 76.00 % |

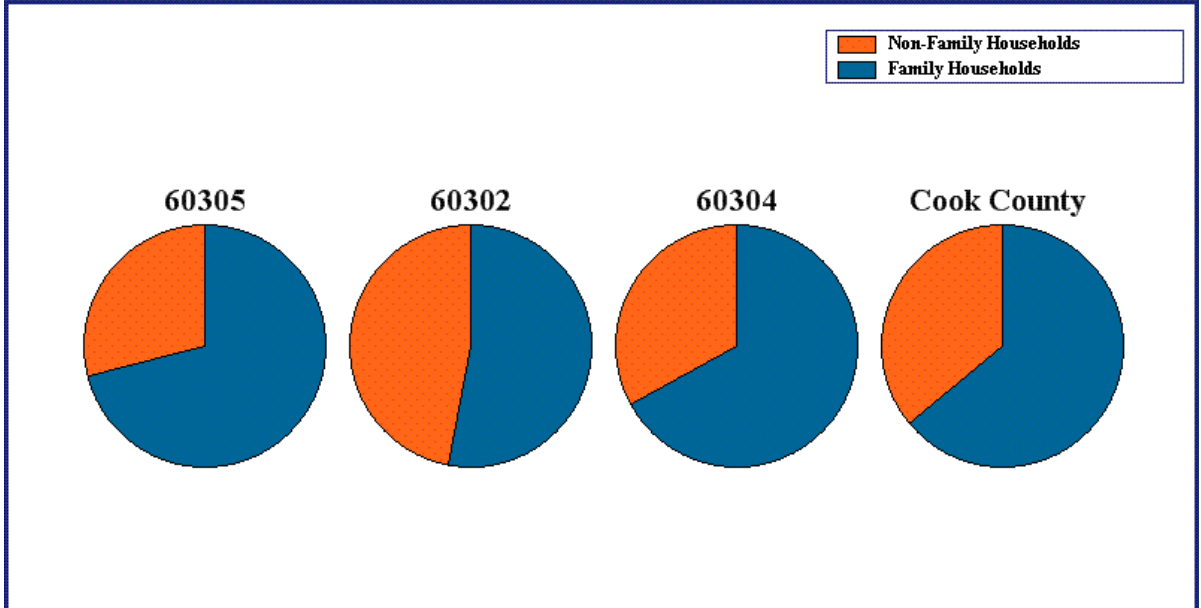


Population and Demographic Profile

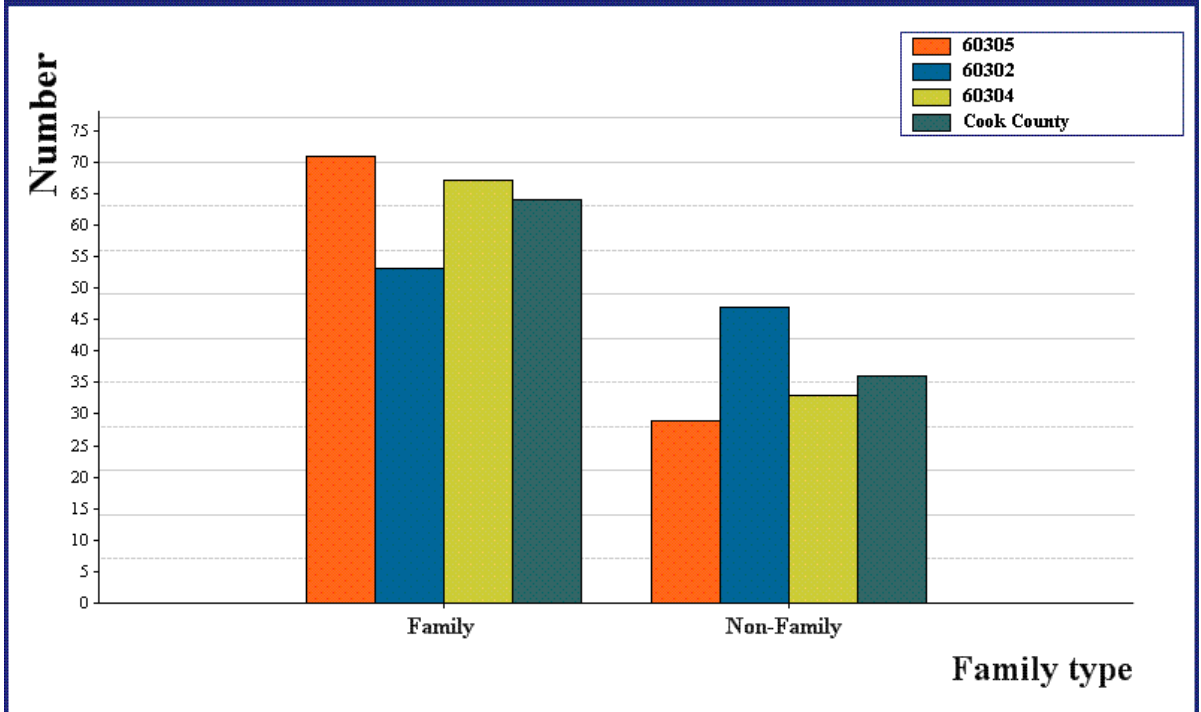


number and size of households

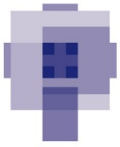
distribution of family vs. non-family households by area



comparison of area family vs non-family households



| Area | Family | Non-Family |
|-------|--------|------------|
| 60305 | 71 | 29 |
| 60302 | 53 | 47 |



Population and Demographic Profile



| Area | Family | Non-Family |
|-------------|--------|------------|
| 60304 | 67 | 33 |
| Cook County | 64 | 36 |

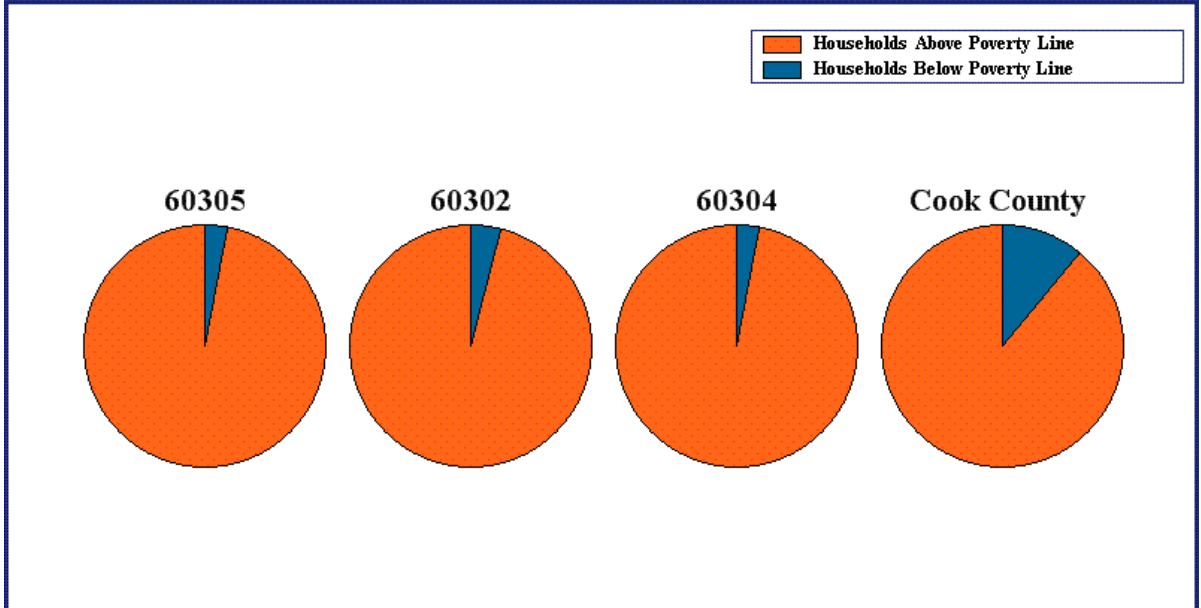


Population and Demographic Profile

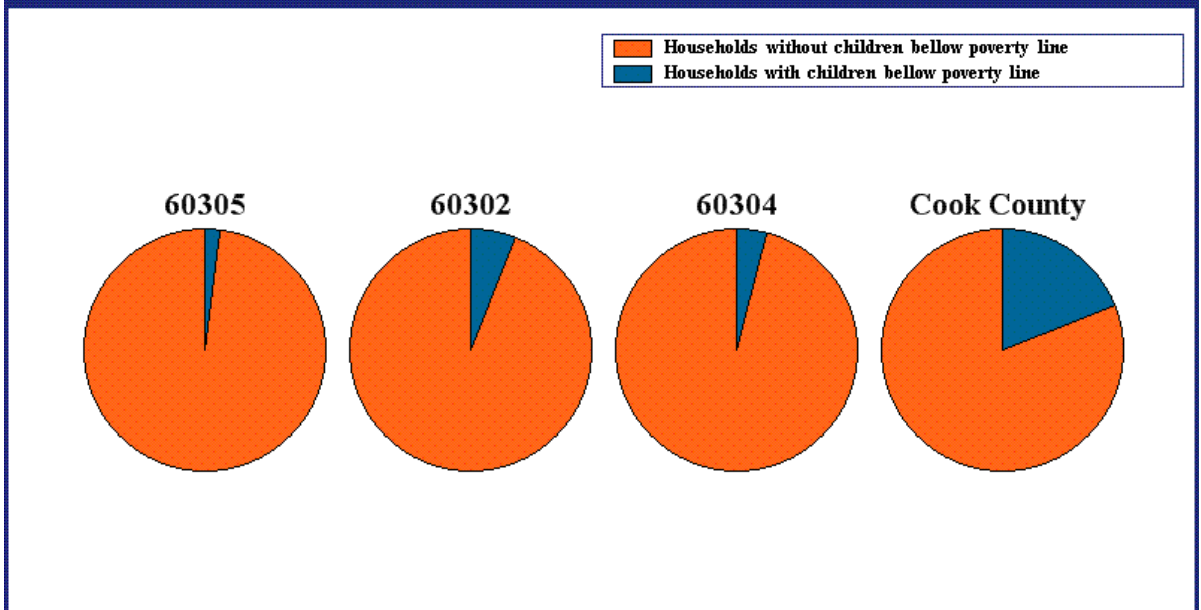


income

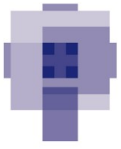
distribution of families below poverty line by area



distribution of families with children below poverty line by area

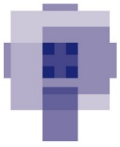


| Area | Family in Poverty % | Families Not in Poverty % |
|-------------|---------------------|---------------------------|
| 60305 | 3.00 % | 97.00 % |
| 60302 | 4.00 % | 96.00 % |
| 60304 | 3.00 % | 97.00 % |
| Cook County | 11.00 % | 89.00 % |



Population and Demographic Profile

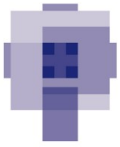




Population and Demographic Profile



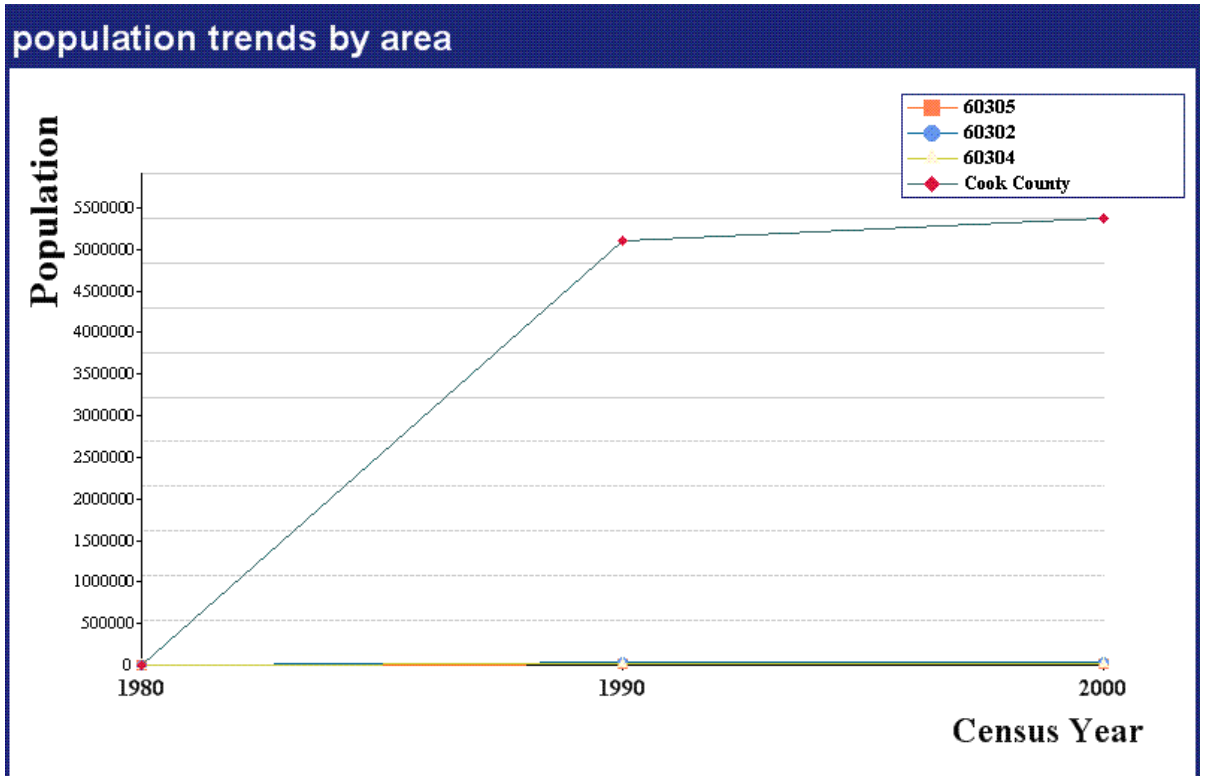
| Area | With Children in Poverty % | Without Children in Poverty % |
|-------------|----------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 60305 | 2.00 % | 98.00 % |
| 60302 | 6.00 % | 94.00 % |
| 60304 | 4.00 % | 96.00 % |
| Cook County | 19.00 % | 81.00 % |



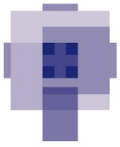
Population and Demographic Profile



population trends



| Area | 1980 | 1990 | 2000 |
|-------------|------|-----------|-----------|
| 60305 | | 11,669 | 11,635 |
| 60302 | | 33,339 | 32,527 |
| 60304 | | 18,677 | 17,839 |
| Cook County | | 5,105,067 | 5,376,741 |



Finances, Attendance and Membership



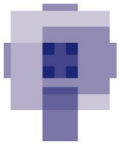
leadership

| Year | Lead | Associates |
|------|--------------|-------------------|
| 1997 | | , |
| 1998 | Bruce Modahl | Phyllis Kersten , |
| 1999 | Bruce Modahl | Phyllis Kersten , |
| 2000 | Bruce Modahl | Phyllis Kersten , |
| 2001 | Bruce Modahl | Phyllis Kersten , |
| 2002 | Bruce Modahl | Phyllis Kersten , |
| 2003 | Bruce Modahl | Phyllis Kersten , |
| 2004 | Bruce Modahl | Phyllis Kersten , |
| 2005 | Bruce Modahl | Phyllis Kersten , |
| 2006 | Bruce Modahl | Phyllis Kersten , |
| 2007 | Bruce Modahl | Phyllis Kersten , |

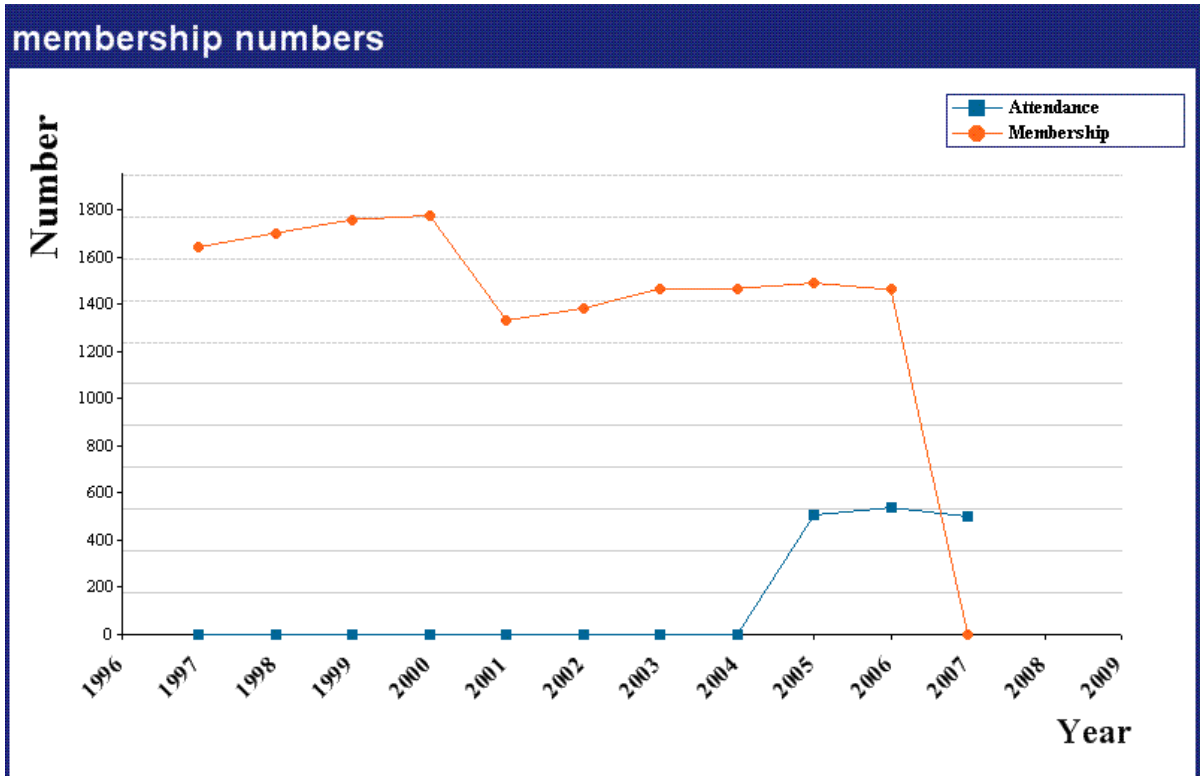
membership, attendance and finances

Membership numbers

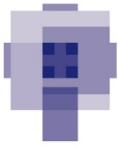
| Year | Membership | Attendance |
|------|------------|------------|
| 1997 | 1,642 | |
| 1998 | 1,701 | |
| 1999 | 1,758 | |
| 2000 | 1,775 | |
| 2001 | 1,331 | |
| 2002 | 1,382 | |
| 2003 | 1,466 | |
| 2004 | 1,466 | |
| 2005 | 1,489 | 507 |
| 2006 | 1,461 | 538 |
| 2007 | | 500 |



Finances, Attendance and Membership



| Year | Operating | Total Income | Mission |
|------|-----------|--------------|---------|
| 1997 | | | |
| 1998 | | | |
| 1999 | | | |
| 2000 | | | |
| 2001 | | | |
| 2002 | | | |
| 2003 | | | |
| 2004 | | 2,562,632 | |
| 2005 | | 2,712,204 | |
| 2006 | | 2,761,989 | |
| 2007 | | | |

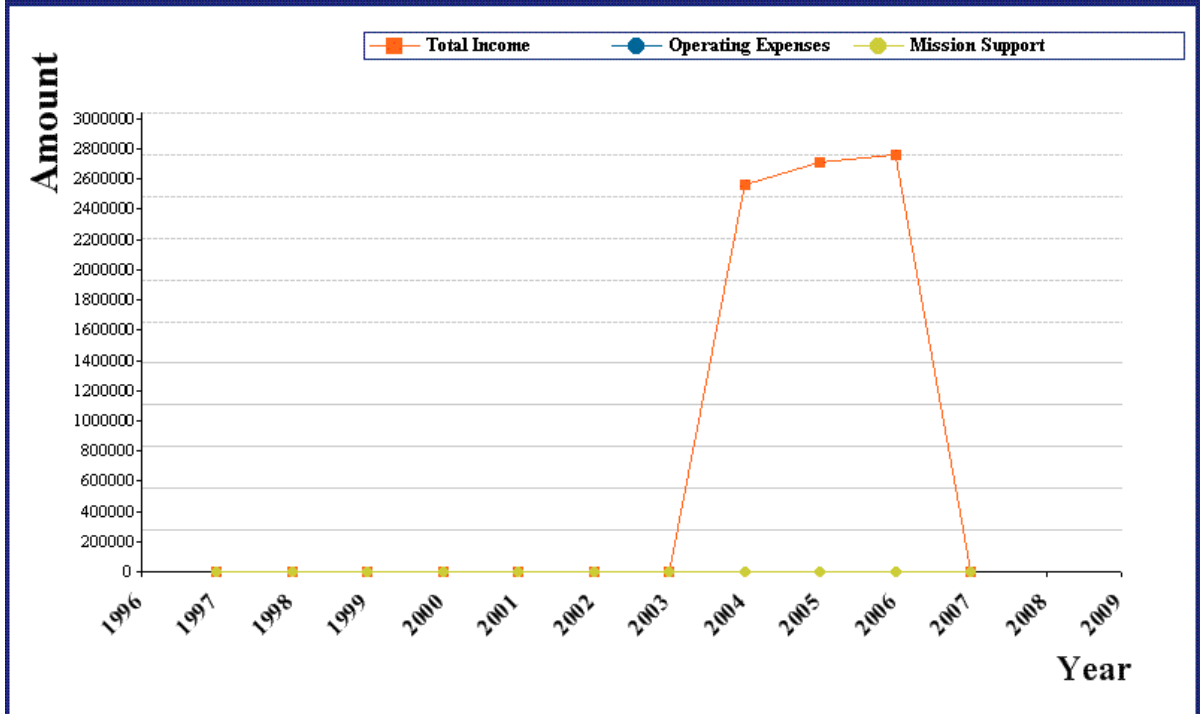


Finances, Attendance and Membership



membership gains

total income operating expenses and mission support



| Year | Baptism Children | Baptism Adults | Affirmation of Faith | Transfer From Same Denomination | Transfer From Related Denomination | Transfer From Other | Other Or Statistical Adjustment |
|------|------------------|----------------|----------------------|---------------------------------|------------------------------------|---------------------|---------------------------------|
| 1997 | | | | | | | |
| 1998 | 24 | 3 | | | 18 | | |
| 1999 | 24 | | | | 18 | | |
| 2000 | 35 | 1 | | | 19 | | |
| 2001 | 22 | | | | 66 | | |
| 2002 | 35 | | | | 75 | | |
| 2003 | 20 | | | | 75 | | |
| 2004 | 32 | | | | 59 | | |
| 2005 | 35 | | | | 38 | | |
| 2006 | 27 | | | | 37 | | |
| 2007 | | | | | | | |

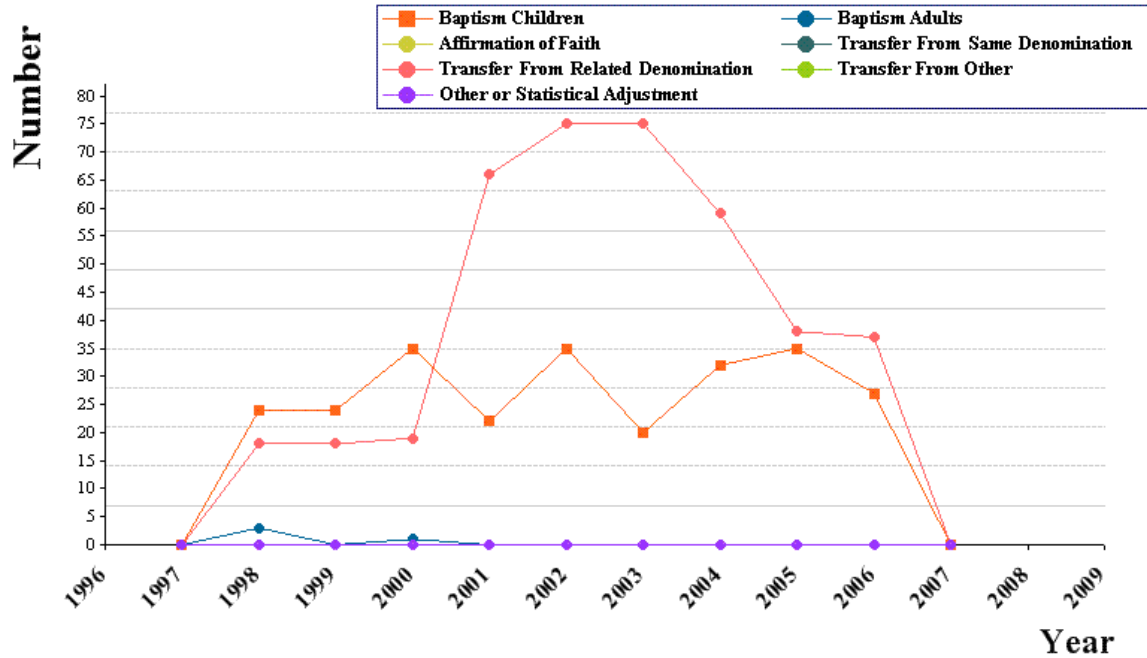


Finances, Attendance and Membership

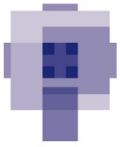


membership losses

membership gains from other denominations



| Death | Transfer To Same Denomination | Transfer To Related Denomination | Transfer To Other | Other Or Statistical Adjustment |
|-------|-------------------------------|----------------------------------|-------------------|---------------------------------|
| | | | | |
| 9 | | 43 | | |
| 7 | | 23 | | |
| 12 | | 18 | | |
| 12 | | 5 | | |
| 13 | | 28 | | |
| 13 | | 6 | | |
| 11 | | 8 | | |
| 14 | | 1 | | |
| 7 | | 6 | | |
| | | | | |



Transportation Patterns

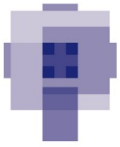


parking

| On Street | Off Street |
|-----------|------------|
| | |

traffic patterns

| Road | Traffic Volume |
|-----------------|----------------|
| Division Street | 9,800 |
| Harlem | 28,900 |



Building Use



During the period starting September 2006 and ending August 2007, there were approximately 110 different groups, events, programs, activities that used the building once per month or more often. Of the 110, 18 were outside groups. Approximately 17% of the total use.



Civil Society: Community Service





Local Church Society: Leadership, History and Heritage

leadership

history and heritage

In 1895, several dozen families of St. John Lutheran Church in Forest Park, Illinois, opened a branch Lutheran school at Augusta and Belleforte, in northwest Oak Park. Harlem Avenue, the main north-south thoroughfare that linked the two towns, was not paved in those days, and attending the new school meant that students would not have to trudge through mud to get to class.

The school flourished, and in 1902, the school families and others chartered a new Lutheran congregation in Oak Park, for which they chose the name Grace. In 1904, they erected a church structure next to the one-room schoolhouse--a brick building with a tall steeple that still stands today.

In 1922, Otto A. Geiseman was called to be pastor at Grace, the beginning of an era of growth and outreach into the non-German, non-Lutheran surrounding community. A larger church and school building was dedicated in 1931. The building, in the English Gothic style, was designed by the architectural firm of Talmadge and Watson. It was erected on the corner of Division and Bonnie Brae, across Harlem Avenue in neighboring River Forest, adjacent to the campus of Concordia Teachers College (now Concordia University). Despite the Depression and World War II, the congregation was debt-free by 1947. A new wing was added to the school in 1952.

The 1950s and 1960s were a time of steady growth for Grace. F. Dean Lueking, who had come to the congregation as an assistant pastor in 1954, became pastor in 1963, after the death of Geiseman. The church and school communities enjoyed a close relationship with Concordia, which is owned and operated by the Lutheran Church--Missouri Synod, the larger church body to which the Grace congregation belonged. Grace School served as the lab school for Concordia's teacher education program, and many faculty members and their families were members at Grace.

Controversies in the Missouri Synod during the late 1960s and 1970s led to the congregation's decision in 1978 to leave the synod and become an independent Lutheran congregation.

Through the years, God has blessed Grace with gifted leadership. Victor Waldschmidt served as principal of the school for 33 years. He was succeeded in 1980 by Gerald Koenig, who retired in 2000. Hugh W. Kress is the current principal. Paul Bouman came to Grace in 1953 as a teacher, organist and choir director. He retired in 1983, but continues to participate in Grace's musical life as Music Director Emeritus. John Folkening served as Music Director from 1983 to 2000, and Jonathan Oblander became Cantor in 2001.

From the late 1940s through the 1980s, a series of assistant pastors served the congregation for two- or three-year terms. In 1990, the congregation called its first permanent associate pastor. The present associate pastor, Phyllis N. Kersten, came to Grace in 1996. Pastor Lueking retired in 1998, and Bruce K. Modahl was called to be Senior Pastor later that year.

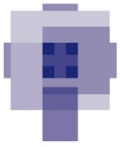


Local Church Society: Leadership, History and Heritage

Expanding ministries and the changing needs of church and school led the congregation to construct a substantial building addition, dedicated in 2001. The new building includes modern classrooms, a large gymnasium, a youth room for junior and senior high programs, meeting rooms and office space. Remodeling of the old building added rehearsal space for the music program and upgraded Fellowship Hall from part-time gymnasium to full-time meeting space.

Grace's constitution and governing structure call for wide participation from lay leadership. More than 90 individuals serve on boards and committees; many others volunteer their time and talents in the church's healing and teaching ministries and its many activities.

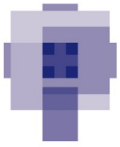
Grace Lutheran Church celebrated its centennial in 2002-2003 with lectures, recitals, concerts, meals and other special events--opportunities for giving thanks to God for a century of faithful Christian witness and service. We look forward to a future in which the people of Grace, nourished by Word and Sacrament, continue to witness to the good news of the Gospel in the congregation and in the community.



Civil Society: Community Interviews



| Person | Age | Gender | Interview Date | Type |
|--------|-----|--------|----------------|------|
|--------|-----|--------|----------------|------|



Local Church Society: Interior Interviews



| Person | Age | Gender | Interview Date | Type |
|--------|-----|--------|----------------|------------------|
| A | 3 | F | 2008-11-07 | Inside Stranger |
| B | 3 | M | 2008-11-20 | Inside Stranger |
| C | 4 | F | 2008-11-22 | Outside Stranger |
| D | 5 | F | 2008-11-07 | Inside Stranger |
| E | 7 | F | 2008-11-08 | Family Member |
| F | 4 | F | 2008-11-14 | Inside Stranger |
| G | 6 | M | 2008-11-19 | Family Member |
| H | 4 | M | 2008-11-16 | Outside Stranger |
| I | 6 | F | 2008-11-13 | Inside Stranger |
| J | 4 | F | 2008-11-26 | Inside Stranger |
| K | 3 | F | 2008-12-01 | Inside Stranger |
| L | 4 | M | 2008-12-02 | Inside Stranger |
| M | 4 | F | 2008-11-23 | Inside Stranger |
| N | 5 | F | 2008-11-22 | Inside Stranger |
| O | 5 | M | 2008-11-24 | Outside Stranger |
| P | 5 | M | 2008-11-22 | Family Member |
| Q | 4 | M | 2008-12-03 | Outside Stranger |
| R | 5 | M | 2008-12-01 | Family Member |
| S | 5 | M | 2008-11-30 | Inside Stranger |
| T | 4 | F | 2008-12-06 | Outside Stranger |
| U | 4 | M | 2008-11-21 | Inside Stranger |
| V | 4 | F | 2008-11-20 | Family Member |
| W | 6 | M | 2008-11-25 | Family Member |
| X | 5 | M | 2008-12-14 | Family Member |
| Y | 4 | F | 2008-12-05 | Outside Stranger |
| Z | 5 | M | 2008-11-08 | Family Member |

question 1

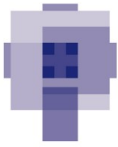
(REQUIRED) - Tell a story about how you sense God's presence and activity in this congregation.



Local Church Society: Interior Interviews



| Person | Response |
|--------|--|
| A | W; M: 2-5 Sees presence in a Sunday night small group that has been together for 3-4 years; the members pray for one another and have helped one another through times such as births and deaths and it has strengthened their faiths |
| B | W; M: 2-5 Recently there was a stewardship gathering to thank people; and people were asked to share their feelings about the church and why they give; it was a community of believers building each other up; there was a willingness to share; felt the Spirit's presence guiding the conversation |
| C | W; M: 5-10 God's presence and activity is shown in many small ways rather than in one big way; so many people do so many things, and in each of those small things God's presence is shown |
| D | W; M: 10+ Felt in communal prayers, actual worship through singing and Eucharist. High-church worship leads to intimacy with God. Confirmation -- laying of hands on son -- was very meaningful. Ringing of bells for saints on All Saints Day. Christmas Eve service and music at all services. These all touch soul and heart. Easter service was very moving, a glorious celebration. Guests see something they would like to have; they feel comforted. |
| E | W; M: 10+ Overwhelming expressions of care for people who face illness or loss. They are surrounded by care and prayer. Example: long-time member diagnosed with brain tumor. Word spread quickly. Person at fall sale gathered notes and put them in jar to be given to the member. New family with premature twins was overwhelmed with meals and concerns from people in their new congregational home. |
| F | W; M: 5-10 Her daughter was diagnosed with an illness that made her life in the classroom difficult. Several strategies were tried but they weren't working, particularly with one classmate. With prayer and support from the ESP group of other parents who have children with special needs, she was able to reach out to that student and arrive at a much better place without direct confrontation, which probably would have been much less successful. |
| G | W; M: 10+ Worship services, music is high point especially such as Christmas, Holy Week, Easter and Festival Sundays and the Bach Cantatas. Because congregation participation in singing and praising is very important. |
| H | W; M: 10+ Amount of good deeds people in congregation do every day. |
| I | W; M: 10+ We were outsiders welcomed in. Husband was in danger of being drafted to Vietnam War. He went to teach at Concordia. Needed church membership affiliation as part of ministry of religion program. Family was in process of adopting a child. Asked pastor at church for membership consideration to meet requirement. Agree without hesitation. Helped to save family, outreach was very significant. |
| J | AA; M: 5-10 Every day -- my children -- touch of the church -- chapel -- teachers -- nice, wonderful people -- it's God's touch, giving children sense of morality to do the right thing. I'm proud of what I see them getting at Grace; have a sense of God, especially from other people in the congregation. Everyone genuinely concerned -- it's not fake. God works through all of this. Serve in love -- theme. God's presence in Associate Pastor search. People are not afraid to talk about God. Everyone is open to His hand. |
| K | W; M: 10+ 11 years ago mom's group began. 13 of us. People came and went, but it is a strong group (spiritually and socially). We reach out to others. We can make a difference to others who need it. There's a reason we've |



Local Church Society: Interior Interviews



| Person | Response |
|--------|--|
| | been around for 11 years. |
| L | W; M: 5-10 Music -- incredible dedication of some people to bless us with that music. Attitude at Grace: we can help -- we do it -- we get it done. Example: Thanksgiving turkeys and pies. Adult ed: comments of other people are interesting. Pastor as example of balanced person -- important in peoples' lives. Connect more with kids -- especially those who don't go to school at Grace. Sunday School: lead young families in. Women's groups are meaningful to them. |
| M | W; M: 10+ Deepest sense of God's presence at funerals at Grace. Have had many funeral experiences at Grace. Congregation overflowing with comfort, the sermons, the music, all of it together proves God is there. Gospel and sense of God's comfort is evident through preaching and service. It's a powerful experience in making God's presence known. Uses the opportunity to wrap it's arms around the grieving family and show what to do to comfort families in a Gospel centered way. Memorial garden and message there also gives feeling of God's presence. |
| N | W; M: 10+ I have been involved in Stephen Ministry for a number of years. It has enabled close relationships with other Stephen ministers. We have been able to support one another, as well as those in need. |
| O | AA; M: 10+ When our first child was born, we lived in another state. We were here for Christmas eve service, feeling blessed at the gift of a son. We felt God's presence hearing Away in the Manger during the service, and started to cry. |
| P | W; M: 10+ We had a woman who visited the church on a number of occasions. Through patience and listening, it became apparent that she was a victim of domestic violence. This encounter led to the formation of a domestic violence committee. By learning how to help her, we were able to help others in similar situations. |
| Q | H; M: 10+ People gravitate to Grace, no marketing/advertising done like at many churches. The school, relationships made and then people become members. Concordia draws people to Grace. Attraction to Grace is automatic. The community attracts people through word of mouth. |
| R | W; M: 10+ A sense of being cared for during illnesses and pregnancies over the years. Important friendships that have developed over the years. A sense of caring and vitality in the congregation illustrated by congregational dinners, building program, Oktoberfest, tent sale. The regular worship and festival worship. Generosity of the congregation illustrated in our regular giving and special efforts such as the church's response to 9/11, raising \$50,000. |
| S | W; M: 10+ Worship service -- different parts on different days. Advent services can be dark and quiet. Beautiful songs. Another example: Thanksgiving service. Passages, songs, and sermon fit together so well -- powerful sermon made you feel God's presence. Feel it in how people take care of each other. It's a place where people know when you're sick and they care when you die. Cornerstones -- a place of fun and fellowship. Visiting pastors care for elderly. How the church handles death. One member's thoughts after experiencing tragedy -- where is God in all this? The people of Grace was the answer. |
| T | W; M: 10+ You can see God working through people. I already mentioned the outpouring of support my family received when my daughter was ill. The pastors both visited us as well as a church member. Members also brought us food, called us, and prayed for us. I also see God's presence in the Maundy Thursday service during Holy Week. |
| U | W; M: 5-10 |



Local Church Society: Interior Interviews



| Person | Response |
|--------|--|
| | Vacation time -- to go to places of hardship -- unable personally to partake or allow kids to, but reports of those that do were impressive. Chicago area, Katrina, Africa. |
| V | W; M: 5-10 During a congregational meeting several years ago, the building renovation project was the topic of discussion. It was a lively discussion and the need for air conditioning was being considered. It seemed as if it would need to be dropped from the budget, when a member spoke up to say that clearly this is something that's important to the church. This is now taken care of. She offered to pay for it personally. They could feel God's presence through her action. Another example of feeling God's presence is through the music at Grace. Very moving; feels better connection with the creator through prayer and song. |
| W | W; M: 10+ So many examples. Personal interface -- the Spirit moves and is very much present. Praying church -- evident in many ways. Grace cares -- meals event. Funeral lunches, etc. |
| X | W; M: 10+ When people are in need (especially in times of illness or death) Grace rallies around those families (formally and informally). The grace community connects with them. It's a sign of God's Spirit working in church and in the people there. |
| Y | W; M: 10+ Fulfilling, inspiring. Teaching Sunday school-feel God's presence in interaction with children and ways children respond to lessons- impressed with childrens' understanding. Rewarding interaction, inspiring. |
| Z | W; M: 10+ When lost a child, the ways people were there: music, signs of love, emotional response of professionals. Was personal. Where is God in that? And it presented itself in the people who supported his family just being there, even in those people not of the congregation who showed support, God showed himself. Grace steps up, shows its purpose. |

question 2

(REQUIRED) - Describe an experience of profound worship you have had.

| Person | Response |
|--------|--|
| A | Always moved by the music, particularly at holidays and particularly Easter; the Easter after her husband's stepfather died, she and her mother-in-law were moved to tears by the Easter service music; another Easter, her brother-in-law, who is spiritual but not an active church goer, was moved to tears |
| B | The first Christmas Eve service his daughter participated in was a profound worship experience; with the holiday as a backdrop, to see her holding a candle in the procession and forming the cross at the front of the church brought back many memories; brought it full circle to see her participate the way he did |
| C | The most wonderful service is Christmas Eve because her children are involved; it is wonderful to sing well-known, moving songs and think about the birth of Christ; would like to see more joyful, praise services in addition to the contemplative services, or a better blend of those two styles |
| D | Some experienced with children-making the stoles for confirmation. Eucharist -- sitting in pew afterward. Good Friday service is particularly intimate. Grace is special in comparison with other churches, but can be taken for granted. Each service is special, has sense that it has meaning for her children. Son wants to be an usher. Children don't want to miss Easter service at Grace. Appreciate singing the Psalms. |
| E | Funeral services and Easter service. Some funeral sermons help bring to light important things we may not have known about our fellow members. Connection of funeral pall with baptism is very powerful. One person (former associate pastor) said, "If you have to die, die at Grace." One family came to on Easter service, sang "Thine the Amen," and decided to join. Have been very active ever since. Services in Fellowship Hall one summer were also intimate and worshipful. Easter Vigil also profoundly moving. |
| F | The Christmas Eve service after 9/11 gave an overwhelming sense of peace and blessing that was glorious and also fragile. Quiet pageantry with the participation of the small children. The love and depth of the |



Local Church Society: Interior Interviews



| Person | Response |
|--------|--|
| | confirmands giving their testimonies at the witness service made her feel very penitent about her own shortcomings. She was humbled but grateful. |
| G | Both parents' funerals, childrens' and grandchildrens' baptisms and many of the Bach Cantatas. Just felt God's presence on all these occasions. |
| H | During Pastor Modahl's first Children's Christmas Eve Service, was ushering. Sermon completely changed outlook for Christmas season, rejuvenated, re-energized and gave peace. |
| I | Good Friday. Tenebrae Service. Go every year and Easter Vigil service are really beautiful. |
| J | Grace care experience -- visit with older woman, discovered multiple similarities. Situation where woman needed help; only by divine intervention could I have been where needed to be-- moved to a position to be a guardian angel. Answers to "why did this happen?" Sense I needed to do it. You know it's God's hand. PK's sermon, "Enough" -- having just enough. Reprioritize. Guidelines with family. Spoke about way to live. Jesus had just enough. |
| K | Baptism. On a regular Sunday welcoming a new member I remember children's baptisms. Makes me feel I'm in a good place. I love it. Ritual is significant and adds to the experience for all. Most important: our congregation is welcoming our littlest members -- not to be dismissed on important part of service. |
| L | In pursuit of something meaningful using art to promote spirituality. Example: Seeing a church on top of a mountain -- sign of affirmation. Look for signs -- helping me guide my path -- being open. Talk to people: opportunities to be open and connect with them. As a team we can achieve a lot. I see God's presence because we are brought together in a common purpose. Fight for good. |
| M | After 9/11 walked into sanctuary late at night. Eternal flame light gave a balm of healing to me. It was a place of peace when the world didn't make sense. Easter vigil service experience, feeling the Easter joy of victory. Tremendous. |
| N | Grace recently offered a service at Christmas time called Christmas Blues, a service for those who have lost someone close. It had meaning for me because of my father's death. It allowed me to meet with others and share memories. |
| O | The Christmas eve service is always inspiring. I also enjoy the pastor's sermons, which are meaningful and relevant to me. |
| P | The 8th grade witness service has been a meaningful service for me. Listening to these 14 year olds talk about how God is present in their lives gives great hope for the future. This demonstrates the importance and power of ministry directed toward young people. |
| Q | September 11 service, packed church out of nowhere, people who hadn't been here in years came. Other examples: retirement services of Pastors Lueking and Kersten; Installation of Pastor Modahl; Centennial worship service. |
| R | Christmas eve childrens' services strike me regularly as profound. The service we had after 9/11 and similarly various funeral services where we are reminded that whether we die or live we are the Lord's. |
| S | Grace funerals --you enter the church feeling sad and you leave feeling better. The funerals are uplifting for everybody -- particularly the sermons but also communion and the meal afterwards. Women of Grace put out a wonderful meal. It is the combined effort of many people and you feel the presence of God. |
| T | The Maundy Thursday service including the foot washing is always very moving as well as the Christmas and Easter services. |
| U | Music on Easter Sunday is like God is in church. Attend Thurs/Fri/Easter vigil. Time invested for all, tired, very emotional, music, processional, recessional: really feel that God is present with us. |
| V | Easter Sunday every year! First time visiting at Grace was on Easter Sunday. The music enhances the experience. Glorious! Profound -- the ultimate worship experience. Children-led Christmas service. Impressed by how they are leading us in worship. The service where we remember our own Baptism. Very special (water). Graduation service -- awesom! Witness service for confirmands. See God's work though the students. |
| W | No one does funerals better than Grace. Celebratory, triumphant music, worship history of church, basic tenets of church. Bach cantatas --fabulous. Christmas musical service -- spectacular. Should be better attended. Outstanding preaching. Can't wait to attend. |



Local Church Society: Interior Interviews



| Person | Response |
|--------|--|
| X | Easter morning service is a highlight of the year. It's a glimpse of heaven, especially the music. I look forward to it every year. |
| Y | Searching for that profound experience. Sitting w/children in balcony is a struggle to hear acoustically & monitor children's behavior. Can't recall any recent profound experience/ distractions. |
| Z | Music important; love music/powerful worship. On a capella Good Friday service, the word, lessons, sermon: strong impact. Choreography of lights and coordination of service powerful. |

question 3

(REQUIRED) - Tell about the ways people fight in this congregation. Tell about a situation where you and other people were involved in a problem at church and how it was handled.

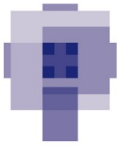
| Person | Response |
|--------|--|
| A | She cannot think of any such thing that she has been personally involved in |
| B | Has not seen concrete examples of conflicts or fights; has seen efforts to work around and avoid conflict; three years ago there was a budget shortfall; stewardship and executive committees got together to address the situation; they came up with and implemented a thankoffering; it was a good example of two groups coming together to solve a problem |
| C | Has never been involved in a fight at church; has seen a few disagreements but they have never become bitter to the point of a fight; people tend to express their views and then back off |
| D | People reach out when there's disagreement. There's no overwhelming dogmatism. In Boy Scouts, there was disagreement about what qualifies for merit badges. Those involved met together and worked it out. She doesn't see grudges held on to even if people are opinionated. People keep their eyes on the big picture. Tone is set by the pastors, who are very approachable. Part of Lutheran identity is open-mindedness, valuing of education, curiosity. Maybe a few prickly people, but not much pettiness. Communication about firing of organist was possibly demeaning. Pastor told people not to discuss the matter among themselves. |
| E | We don't always fight as well as we should. Conflict around women's group between older women and younger women. Meeting held with older women so that problem could be named and different points of view could be heard. The problem seemed to be solved over the course of a year. |
| F | There was a conflict between her and another member about babysitting for her child. Both serve in a group that prepares monthly lunches. The conflict is recognized by others in the group, but no one has taken sides. She continues to treat the other person respectfully and is hopeful that over time the bad feelings will disappear. |
| G | Don't ever remember being involved in a situation: when church pulled away from Missouri Synod and there were hurt feelings on both sides resulting from some members dissolving membership. |
| H | Board of Education when confronted with major issues that got heated, never got crude with each other. Good opportunity to reflect, prayed and sought guidance. Never made decision hastily. |
| I | Issues with making announcements. 1. Food Resources Bank -- corn left over. Wanted announcement made by Interim Pastor -- reused and issue went unresolved. 2. Service after city flood -- amplification system malfunction. Congregation member approached usher and complained and threatened to withhold tithes. Asked Pastor for assistance -- response: not my problem. Apologized. Put announcement in church bulletin. See dysfunction of communication issues. Needs flexibility and less rigid. |
| J | Indirect. Biggest disconnect is between church and school. Feeling that Pastor is not interested in running the school. Situations that could have been detrimental to church and school that were not handled by pastor. School member parents left feeling under served and unappreciated and distant from Pastor. Nightmare situation. He refused to act. Still some hard feelings. Succession planning -- older women need to make way for younger women. Don't want to lose traditions. Sale for example. Different styles. |
| K | Very unhappy school parent (church member) child was removed. Family left Grace. Handled well by pastor, teachers, principal, elders, genuine concern for family that was having a serious problem -- bigger than Grace. Everything was right in handling it. Big organization cared about this one person. |



Local Church Society: Interior Interviews



| Person | Response |
|--------|--|
| L | Discourse -- diverging views, different feelings. Example: evolution/natural design. Not been involved in other issues. Not affected. |
| M | Seen strong differences of opinion at congregational meetings, especially when new staff are being hired. Offensive statements have been made at times. Strong differing opinions on homosexuality and how to handle it. Both sides made efforts to keep their positions gospel centered. Despite this, feelings were still hurt. A response was made to try to balance things out. |
| N | When Grace was considering being a homeless shelter site, there were strong opinions for and against. This issue was dealt with through congregational meetings and smaller discussion groups. We ended up not being a site, although those interested volunteered at local sites. |
| O | We had some disagreements with the staff at the school. We felt like our son was being unfairly disciplined, and felt that race was an issue. After many conversations, the staff was offered cross-cultural training classes, which helped people be more accepting. |
| P | Typically, if a problem comes up, members are likely to complain to other members, rather than speaking to the person directly. Sometimes, members won't express the problem, and keep it to themselves, until it festers. Ultimately, love and truth can handle difficult situations among members. |
| Q | Example: Youth minister came through a basketball youth event here with another church. The argument was he was not Lutheran, lack of education, may not relate to the kids. Many arguments came from this. In the end, pros outweighed the cons and the church vote handled the problem and voted in favor of hiring him. |
| R | Fights have been few, fortunately. Dissension regarding opening up Grace as a PADS location. The argument of social ministry vs. keeping a safe environment for the school children and an already overtaxed building. It was handled with an open forum meeting which resulted in a short trial run. Dissension over choice for Associate pastor many years ago. Trying to alter the worship schedule to lengthen the time for fellowship and adult ed between services. IT was handled by using a democratic process which is not always the best. |
| S | Gossip -- poisonous -- too much of it. Have heard people say things that should not have been said or disclosed. Sometimes disagreements are not talked out. Grace is not good at closure. When the new addition was finished it was clear that there was a problem. Builders pointed fingers. We did not seek to hold the builders accountable and the congregation had to pay more money because of it. There is a reluctance to confront problems. |
| T | There used to be much more tension or feelings of judgment between church members who did and did not send their kids to school at Grace. There are lots of wonderful traditions at Grace but at times the church should be open to trying new things. Participation in the Christmas eve serve used to be only open to kids who went to Grace school but not church members who went to other schools. I'm not sure we would be members at Grace today if this issue had not improved significantly. How could you exclude members from participating in a worship service? The students at Grace are no longer all church members and the church members do not all go to Grace school. The church should be aware of this for future planning. There are times when I feel judged for not sending my kids to Grace even though I faithfully teach them about God at home and through Sunday school. |
| U | Try not to get involved in fights. Sacrestry dealing with lectern, board of worship. Inconsiderate people that think they know better than others. Don't get concerns, only feel people like this are not considerate. Don't personally get involved. |
| V | For starters, people really don't fight in her opinion. One example of some problems -- the way the Grace school principal situation was handled. He is a great teacher, but not a strong leader. Didn't handle problems effectively (students, teachers, staff, etc.) It became more apparent over time that it wasn't a good fit for Grace. Feels it wasn't dealt with appropriately. Grace is such a place of excellence, we should live up to that in all ways. |
| W | Biblical moderation for differences of opinion. Gossip. Peron/family alienated -- made it clear by withdrawing. Didn't agree w/decision. Pastor/elders reached out to address it. Sometimes can work, sometimes not. Biblical model -- brother first. If it doesn't work, bring another. |
| X | I was on the School Board when a book "Chocolate Wars" was selected by the Jr. High teacher. Controversial book, it stretched boundaries regarding sexuality and self-identity. The diversity of the community came through, the reactions were various, both against the book and encouraging the book's use. Problem was worked through, but the introduction of the book was awkward. No effort was made to show the parents the value of the book or how it could be taught through a Christian perspective. Pastor had to get involved because it blew up in the Board and Principal's face. The book was kept and presented in advance to the parents from then on. The themes and means of teaching integration into Christian ed, and alternative |



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| Person | Response |
|--------|--|
| | book choices were all presented to the parents. This showed the evidence of diversity at Grace (liberal vs. conservative), different perspectives of Christianity are present as well as culturally differing Christian perspectives. |
| Y | Need for clarity on church's school board roles in relation to making decisions on school operations. Women of Grace: things disappearing from kitchen, mice in kitchen/ ranting on who's responsible for maintenance and security/much frustration/ no control of money-who controlled money? Administration and disbursement of funds raised by WOG? Series of frustrating, unresolved discussions/not sure how it was resolved/ frustrating, not listening to WOG, church office didn't seem to listen to concerns. |
| Z | Fight with respect for each other, usually e.g. homeless people staying overnight at Grace: difficult conversation led by congregation president/resolution not what pastors wanted but was a good process. Similar to decision of youth minister. Points of view need to be heard. On big issues there's a process based on information discovered research. School issues and school board issues process not sure has been adequate. |

question 4

(REQUIRED) - Tell a memory that gives you anxiety about the future of this congregation. Tell a memory that gives you hope.

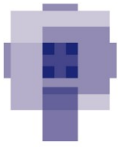
| Person | Response |
|--------|---|
| A | Has heard of a family (the friends of a friend) that left the congregation -- despite being active for many years; doesn't know the details, but found it a little unsettling that they would want to leave; saw hope in a recent young childrens' (Mustard Seeds) Halloween party; there were lots of couples and children she hadn't met before; hopeful about such life and potential friendships for her and her children |
| B | Anxiety about discussion heard from time to time that fewer members' children are attending the school and its becoming more of an academy for kids from outside the congregation; anxiety about whether this is a sustainable model if that trend continues; sees hope in that the congregation is generous when asked; hope that continues in times such as the large June budget push and special appeals |
| C | A very neat thing about the school is that so many parents went to the school themselves; this shows that the school fundamentally shaped who they are; gives hope that so many people are committed to the church community; has anxiety about the current economy that will limit peoples' ability to give and limit what the church can do across the board. |
| D | Memories of the annual push to meet fiscal obligations cause anxiety. Can we make sure we keep getting new members and that they understand the importance of stewardship? Some concern about subsidizing the school, but not an overriding concern. Memories of youth meeting about gathering in New Orleans give hope that another generation will carry on the work of the church -- even if in a different way. |
| E | Anxiety about some members who just stop coming. What can be done? Anxiety about new members who aren't integrated soon after joining, about the school (if people don't understand the benefits of a Lutheran school). Recurring memories of music, worship, congregational singing, Bach cantatas give hope. Personal memories of care given when husband was very sick. Formal give given to shut-ins by our members. |
| F | Discussions about homosexuality gave her anxiety. She accepts people for who they are and couldn't imagine being part of a congregation that had such a small heart that they couldn't accept people with differences. She feels hope every time she walks in the door. One baptism when the child was presented to the congregation, and the connection of her life with the whole congregation was so clear. The school also gives hope because it builds fundamental Christian habits. |
| G | Strongest anxiety is that we won't be able to support our missions, benevolences, and school financially as we have in the past. My hope is that we will put our trust in the Lord to guide us to do the right thing. |
| H | Haven't seen a lot of negativity. Budget deficit issues -- overall things are good. As for hope -- guess when times are tough church always found ways to meet the needs of congregation and ministries we support. |
| I | Concern about financial situation with building additions -- will it be maintained and continue to serve people on all levels. We missed the boat when we failed to have the PADS program. Bothered by church not helping people in own neighborhood. Ministry to poor needs to be emphasized more - that's what church should be about. |



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| Person | Response |
|--------|--|
| J | Anxiety: we will be a congregation that no longer has members' children in school. Stop sending kids to school. 50/50 now. School is extension of church. To preserve tradition and relationship you need to have member kids. See ti in the way people participate. Less volunteering. Hope: Christmas eve service. There's nothing we can't do as a society. Feel that Jesus's love is there. Kids are excited about participating. Brings meaning for Christmas. Focus on each other. What's important -- life, humanity, not the gifts, but the togetherness. |
| K | Financial support of school. Heard at a meeting, "I don't want to pay for someone else's kid's education." Huge anxiety -- paradigm shift in our church-school -- not about money, but philosophy -- we are there to support others. Hope: Every year new families at Sunday School or school, new people took leadership roles. Pitched in and did the work. Perpetuates all the activities, even in change. |
| L | Anxiety: None. Hope: so much. There is openness. Intellectual challenge and fact finding because it exists. Opening the box is feasible. People who are educated want to be more educated. Scholarly presence in our congregation. How do we allow for this information to come in? Does it require change? More diversity -- we are working on it. More internal tension to change how we do things. Risk of "clubby" competition among denominations. |
| M | Overheard comments from some in the community, critical of Grace. Said it's snobby, wealthy, music is very exclusive -- need a music degree to join choir or participate. Made me anxious to hear this and wondered how many others in the community feel this way. Have heard some in community say they would never join Grace because it's their perception that homosexuals are not welcomed at Grace. Hope: meeting new members, stories about how they were led to Grace and its impact on their life. Reaching out to homebound and how Gospel is incorporated hands-on. Seeing people return from growing up in the church and how that groudning has helped them in life. |
| N | An anxiety was when the pastor retired, and we didn't have someone in place. We worried about finding someone who would be a strong leader with confidence. A hope would be, with the recent retirement of a woman assistant pastor, that her successor would bring her unique style that would remain true to our beliefs and traditions. |
| O | I really don't have any anxiety about the future of Grace. When I meet someone new at church, and we strike up a conversation, and find something in common, that gives me hop that people are open to broadening their experiences. |
| P | An anxiety would be, will our children have saving faith, and not be influenced by society to lose our core beliefs. A hope would be, seeing more new, young families from diverse backgrounds interested in the lives of their children at church. |
| Q | Anxiety: some members worried to voice their opinions, not comfortable to be open in board meetings in front of certain people. Example: deficit problems -- fund raising ideas were brought up but put aside quickly, some not open to discuss new ideas. Hope: Most at Grace are open to discuss, which always gives hope to get things done. Example: P. Kersten -- argument whether Concordia would accept that, but they were open to it. Another example was having a female President of congregation. |
| R | Witnessing the struggles of a neighboring congregation related to pastoral leadership. Grace school's future faculty turnover and the need to keep the school viable. Financial support concerns for the larger congregation. Hopeful memory: The successful building campaign. The transition from Pastor Lueking to Pastor Modahl was thoughtful, a smooth passing of the baton with room for Lueking involvement to mutual benefit. |
| S | Anxiety: every fiscal year end. Wonders about future financing -- is concerned about the June crunch. Historically there has been a perception that the church met its budget through donations of a few people. This is a bad perception that inhibits giving. Also concerned that there is not universal support for the school among the congregation. Hope: There is a growing number of younger people starting with baptisms and including Sunday school, confirmation, and the junior/senior high program. From 4 weeks to 18 years of age many young people are brought to Grace. |
| T | Anxiety: Feeling a sense of judgment for not sending kids to school. Some people put me on the spot about this and questioned me about why I don't send my kids to Grace. Hope: First memory: the outpouring of support with ill family member in hospital. Second memory: the joyful voices children's choir that incorporates children from many schools. |
| U | Anxiety: A number of good people chose to walk away from Grace because of personality conflicts with other parishioners. Hope: confirmation class. Parents involved, who church community rallies around the group. Provide support to child in need. |



Local Church Society: Interior Interviews



| Person | Response |
|--------|--|
| V | Anxiety: what to do to get better diversity. There are some things that would attract diverse individuals, however, it could change some of the ways of the church. Doesn't want the worship to change -- not only does she like it, but it's sacred. Hope: young couples, young families looking in and getting involved. Solid new membership numbers. Our church offers so many wonderful things and it's attractive to people the way it is. No need to induce significant change. |
| W | Staffing -- former choir/former assistant pastor -- didn't always get a good solution. Tremendous staff decisions -- good, fantastic, hopeful. |
| X | Anxiety: youth/adolescents leave the church but don't return. I suspect many are not connecting to a Christian community elsewhere which is a concern both for Grace and our country's Church at-large. Hope: During my involvement with the school I saw a range of families coming to the school outside of the upper middle class/affluent OPRF community. The school and church have a broader impact than on the immediate neighborhood. |
| Y | Anxiety: leadership role of church guiding school personnel decisions-school needed stronger leadership & church, school board & pastor need to provide it. School principal communications murky/need directness. Hope: love when babies are baptized/ inspiring, with own child or just as a congregation member/observer/witness. |
| Z | Anxiety: can't think of a specific memory where— How do we deal with the children? Where do good pastors and teachers come from? More concerns about the church in general than anxiety about Grace. Hope: process in hiring of youth minister-potential for divisiveness resolves in respectful manner to both sides/that reflects what we believe, what Grace says it is. |

question 5

If you were to leave this congregation for five years, without contact, what would you expect to see when you returned? What would you hope to see?

| Person | Response |
|--------|---|
| A | Moved away for three years and it was easy to get involved again; would expect to see membership grow and for there to still be many opportunities to be involved and connected; would hope that the things that originally attracted her, like music and opportunities for young families, would continue to exist; would hope that the church remains attractive to young families with a wide range of activities for young people of all ages to participate |
| B | Would expect and hope for the same thing: a diverse, vibrant and growing church and school; would also hope that the school would remain a principal focus of the church's ministry |
| C | The commitment of many people is long-term, so she would expect to see many things not change; these people are in the "third phase" of church activity of being and staying active; would hope and like to see the whole church, not just the pastors, do a better job at the first two phases, "phase one" of reaching out to the community and bringing people into the church, and "phase two" of engaging people and getting them to become active |
| D | Would expect any new pastor to be exemplary (knowledgeable about Scriptures). Would hope that worship would be same, hope for more openness to gay community, for some tolerance from the pulpit toward a range of political views. Would like to see the mission of the church maintained and see all people continue to feel welcome. |
| E | Would expect that worship might be a bit more informal than it is now. School might have teachers outside Lutheran teacher training system More members from outside Lutheran tradition. Still not many black or brown faces. Would hope for more diverse membership that matched more closely the area's population. Hope worship would continue in best of Lutheran liturgical tradition. Would expect money would continue to be problem but hope that people would learn joy of giving beyond the tithe so that ministry could expand. Expect and hope that care for each other would continue. |
| F | Would hope to see people engaged in their current jobs, but not all will be there. Hope that we will inspire others to keep filling the positions of service. |
| G | Expect to see same strong leadership we had. Hope to see traditional services and growing congregation, both in number and in spirit. |



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| Person | Response |
|--------|--|
| H | It's what I would hear -- music will always be the best. Evaluation of good works will continue to evolve. Building exterior and people will be the same. As needs of congregation changes, so will the church. Will continue to meet the needs of congregation. |
| I | Hope to see more current mission to bring in, build up, send out going strong -- robust and new membership included. Worship and music on some level; more inclusive and diverse music. Evening and Saturday services less traditional. |
| J | The church is in good hands. I would expect the same -- welcome, opening attitude, great programs -- just people would be five years older. Would like to see better working between church and school. Symbiotically. School not used to its greatest potential. Diversity in all walks of life. Reach out to different communities really adhere to church's motto to "bring in, build up" go deeper. We have so much to give. Help desperate victims of economic times. Help those around us. |
| K | I would hope to see our pastor, the same traditional style, liturgy. I would expect to see the school a healthy mix of young and old families. I'd like to see congregation more reflective of racial mix of community. I'd like to see church move forward with society's changes, tech changes, but maintain traditions that make us what we are. |
| L | Expect: a little change, but not much. Hope: open the box. Spiritual calms that pervades all (example: Korean church). Exuberant worship, long sermon, intense spirituality, of African American church would exist in our church in some way. Love our ritual, but periodically change it. Different ways to worship. Jolt. Change our behavior once in a while, it gives us the ability to extend ourselves. Multi-culture ecumenical. Tensions over big questions. Experiment with opening our eyes. One more step in diversity -- shake us up a bit -- would help all live the diversity we preach. Talk about spiritual issues over a beer. Don't let structure constrain us. |
| M | Expect: Thriving, large size, strong music program. Hope: preserved reputation in excellent preaching and Gospel-centered preaching. Welcoming, inclusive, service-based. |
| N | I would hope to see that it would be the same as it is now, with traditional worship services that are Christ-centered. I feel that I belong in this community and there is mutual caring among members. It would also be good to have contemporary services, like jazz. |
| O | I would hope to see more diversity in the congregation, the school staff, and the students. |
| P | I would expect to see a congregation known for the strengths we have now, preaching, worship, music, education and ministries. I would hope there would be greater engagement with the community at large, and that Grace would be an influencing, leading ministry. |
| Q | Expect: status quo -- same people doing all the work (on committees, movers and shakers still involved), other members not doing more in church life. Hope: more diversity, reflecting the OPRF community. Regardless of race or sexual orientation, etc. they would be ministered to. An elder who was African American or Hispanic or a minister who is openly gay. |
| R | I would expect continued vibrant worship and a vibrant school. A multitude of people contribute including lay people and church staff so the ministry is on solid footing instead of being a one man band. I would hope to see even more people in church and greater involvement in what is offered. It would also be great to see more community visibility. |
| S | Expects to see people extend their hand, hug them and say welcome back. Expect the same strengths: preaching, music, good school, youth group, Sunday school, adult ed, caring and nurturing church. Hope to see more diversity, among members, more people from immediate community. People within 5 minute drive from the church. It's easier for people to participate when they are close by. Hope to see more people at worship. |
| T | I would expect to still see a vibrant congregation of people living out the word. I would expect to see continued excellence in music, religious education, social ministry and outreach, and preaching. I would hope to see all the things I expect plus unity. I would hope to see Grace making a difference in the community and the greater world. I hope I would be welcomed back and that a lot of the same people would be there. |
| U | Expect: music, same high level. Social activity after church on Sunday. Liturgy -- high form, not dumbed down. Don't ever expect our church to change. Hope: pews more close to full. Acknowledge attendance isn't low, but opportunity to be more full. Not only on Sunday, but on weekday nights like Wednesday nights. Younger and older children and young adults attend church. |
| V | Expect: the worship services as they are today -- which is a good thing. Expect to see not as much diversity |



Local Church Society: Interior Interviews



| Person | Response |
|--------|--|
| | as we would hope for. Hope: worship liturgical and high praise, NOT: watered down and simplified. Not bending towards pop culture. Continued flow of new families, ranging in all ages. Young people as new leaders. And, lots of familiar faces! |
| W | Expect -- a lot of friends still there. Stable congregation. Worship still the same. Liturgical, biblical. No happy clappy. Hope -- more diversity, which has increased in last couple years. New faces. |
| X | Expect and hope for same things: More diversity (age, race, ethnicity, prior Christian experience.) This is a necessity if the church is to thrive. The community around us is more diverse. Young Christians tend to not identify themselves with a denomination and may not come to Grace since we identify ourselves as Lutheran. Challenge is: How to keep the best of Grace/Lutheran traditions (gospel focused worship, strong preaching, music and welcoming community) while reaching out to those who do not identify themselves as Lutheran to become more diverse. The school is a key. It's more diverse and reflects the community better than the church. Church needs to use the school more to reach out to parents, use the school as an evangelism focus. Also need to focus on the outreach opportunities. If we don't try to diversity like this, the path we may take is towards an older, diminishing church body. |
| Y | From personal experiences of out-of-town family member attending Grace, didn't feel welcomed. Hope for a sense of welcoming, reaching out. Maintain aesthetics of church interior. Strength is music, sometimes seems overdone, too lengthy, especially for parents w/small children. Too much ritual, and especially length of service-scale down, more discreet- Affects/limits participation in other church activities. Affects all ages and different worship traditions & backgrounds. |
| Z | Expect to see what's there now, and that would be hoped to see. Hope to see a bit more diversity, reflection of community. In 5 or 10 years do this process again: take the pulse of the congregation, Get in touch |

question 6

Describe this congregation to someone new and tell how they would be nurtured here.

| Person | Response |
|--------|---|
| A | It is a large congregation with a nice mix of ages, backgrounds and types of people; lots of families that she has shared her experiences with; size of congregation is sometimes intimidating, but there are smaller groups that offer opportunities to get involved; need to seek them out, but those small groups are very nurturing and faith-renewing |
| B | Dynamic suburban church and school; strong Lutheran heritage but inclusive; large but not a megachurch; nurturing starts with new member class in which you learn about the church and Lutheran heritage; continues with mentoring and small groups; focus in on involving new members in committees and other organizations |
| C | Congregation has many different activities; people can find things of interest to them; it has many warm, committed people who are true to their faiths and committed to good works; it is a large congregation that is mixed and diverse in things such as age and wealth; nurturing comes in different ways such as visitations, healing in services and bible studies; people can find a way to be nurtured. |
| D | Broad number of ages and life stages. Not particularly racially diverse but diverse in viewpoints. Moderate. Nurturing depends on level of one's involvement and interest. Nurturing through community of prayer. Very traditional, high church, but special because of members' curiosity. Someone could be nurtured depending on what he or she was seeking. Church offers something that everyone can connect to. |
| E | Congregation knows its mission statement and lives it out -- in its worship, which is traditional and grounded in the best of the Lutheran tradition. Thinks not just of itself but looks outward to others. We nurture new members and all our members through worship and at Eucharistic table. Incredible nurture also received through involvement of members and care for each other (meals, phone calls, cards). By giving of ourselves, we are nurtured -- through many opportunities. |
| F | Very diverse membership -- conservative base but liberal-minded and welcoming. Very welcoming to a Japanese exchange student who came with them. "Don't ask, don't tell" philosophy on homosexuals but they are welcome. We are thrilled to have others worship with us. Example of sermon on the place of Jewish people in our church: What better place for a Jewish person to find the way of life in Christ than here? Our church is high church: "more Catholic than Catholic". Proud of our church and our music. |
| G | Family congregation cares about one another: looks out for and helps one another. Many staffing supports to |



Local Church Society: Interior Interviews



| Person | Response |
|--------|--|
| | meet all needs. |
| H | Music is phenomenal, enjoy sermons. Congregation is warm and welcoming. Group to meet many special needs. Only race is not an issue. |
| I | Grace very traditional Lutheran church offers best that Lutheran faith has to offer. Congregation is well educated. Hasn't done concerted efforts to reach out to community. Liturgy is real strength; level of preaching and music program well above average. |
| J | Welcoming, people are excited, open about new people. Supper shuffle great way to meet people. People talked about how to get involved. "Lueking touch" -- next door. Not of Lutheran tradition/spiritually searching. Talking with Dean education, worldly and spiritual. Way of framing existence in daily life. Meaningful ways to serve can testify feels strengthened. |
| K | Lutheran -- old in the community, not the people, but it has history and tradition. A positive tradition in worship, liturgical based, young families, schools, always reaching out, lots of ways to be involved, new and old. Not stodgy. Welcoming. |
| L | Intellectual group that is generally open to discussing difficult topics and to get themselves a good foundation of information before making a decision if any decision is made (example: church and war; church and gays.) Avant-garde in a lot of ways. Older generation very open to listening to new opinions. Created a forum for honest and open discussion. Congregation members who have knowledge participate without fear. Strength. |
| M | Large, traditional Lutheran, Independent. High regard for excellence in preaching and Gospel-centered preaching. High priority in education, children, and music. Wide variety of working committees. Many ways to get involved and connected in addition to non-committee service (i.e. choir and Sunday school.) Attention to serve people going through hard times. |
| N | Grace is an independent Lutheran church. It has a rich tradition of traditional worship services and a talented music program. It does a good job of caring and nurturing through Stephen Ministers, Choirs, Health group, and the school Grace cares for the congregation and the larger community. |
| O | Grace is an accepting Christian community. It is founded in a traditional, German background, although they are open to other cultures and ideas. People who seek spiritual nourishment based on Christ and the Bible will find Grace exceptional. |
| P | Grace has numerous places to find a home. It offers traditional worship services, and has a great music program, health ministry and Christian education. There are plenty of opportunities to serve, although initially it may seem hard to get involved. Grace nurtures through the word and sacrament in worship. |
| Q | Different ministries, Grace good about getting people involved. New members class, show people what there is to offer through ministry fair. Supper shuffle helps people create relationships. |
| R | A real active congregation, multi-generational with new people all the time. urban area brings professional and people of all stripes. There are opportunities to participate through ushering, choir, lectors. Adult and youth education programs are good. Music is a major aspect of the congregation's life. During the week there is basketball, Bible studies, fellowship for various groups, Scouts, choirs, bell choirs, helping with bulletins. |
| S | Traditional Lutheran church, liturgical, large congregation that emphasized good preaching, singing, and care for congregation and broader community. The congregation works to get people involved. For example: wife who recruited to a committee he served on another service team recruited to church construction crew. Crew also served in Katrina missions trips which appealed to all age groups. |
| T | It's a special place. People are genuine -- they live what they believe. It's a place where you feel comfortable. It's a very caring congregation. My daughter was hospitalized when she was young, and the pastors visited, people brought food, started a prayer chain, and gave my daughter a prayer shawl. My daughter was touched by it. I know the women's choir was also praying for her. All of this and the fellowship was overwhelming in a good way. They have something to offer for every generation: children's programming, youth groups, choirs, and cornerstones for more elderly people. A person will feel nurture if they get involved no matter what his/her gift is. |
| U | Vibrant community takes its responsibility as a church seriously. Attendance, liturgy. Things happen during the week, not on Sunday. Obvious great pride in history. Positive. If you take initiative to become involved, people are welcoming, will be looked after. Get involved with board, shuffles, etc., you will be seen. |



Local Church Society: Interior Interviews



| Person | Response |
|--------|---|
| V | So many ways people can be nurtured at Grace. In worship -- people have "pew communities". Beyond worship, there are subgroups with common interests, such as gender -- romeos, women's groups; for couples -- supper shuffles, Bible studies, mom's groups, special needs groups. Wide range of options. Even for those that don't elect to be involved, there are people that will reach out and nurture those individuals. Personally, the School provides nurturing. Children's lives are molded by School. |
| W | Very open congregation. Didn't grow up at Grace (18 years). Big ten sale -- year long event. Quick introduction to members. Another person welcomed and reached out to new people. Ownership -- find ways to connect many avenues -- school, committees, fall sale. |
| X | Lutheran community and school, rich worship experience, strong education tradition, strong preaching, liturgical worship style, outstanding worship, caring community. Nurturing through the things above. However, one needs to seek nurturing out. One may not be able to walk right in and be nurtured unless you are a self-starter and reach/seek it out. |
| Y | Past experience in explaining big place - that's good. Many people to support many opportunities to get involved. School child gives strong connection to church community, presents opportunities to meet other parents, get acquainted build sense of fellowship/community |
| Z | Big/different collections of people/may take time to acclimate, find a fit/ strong sense of community/strong solidarity-support, recognize one's faith/vibrant intellectual aspect, excellent music, excellent preaching. Fine school but not essential to send children to school. Tradition of tithing, supporting benevolences. Increasingly growing in diversity, but room for growth-good direction/ This process is an example of ways congregation challenges itself to grow |

question 7

What tells you God is present here in worship?

| Person | Response |
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| A | |
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Local Church Society: Interior Interviews

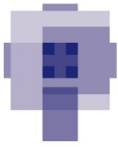


| Person | Response |
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| W | |
| X | |
| Y | |
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question 8

Tell how people participate in the life of this church.

| Person | Response |
|--------|--|
| A | People participate in small groups such as choir and bible studies; because church is so large; there are many opportunities to participate; senior pastor does a very good job of recognizing peoples' talents and helping people make connections and find opportunities |
| B | People participate mostly by volunteering their time; some do that more than others; you see many of the same faces doing many different tasks; many opportunities to participate such as ushering, altar guild, choir, helping with Sunday School, service projects and committees |
| C | Different people are in different places in their faith life; some come to Sunday services only; others are more involved in the church's ministry and community; some people are there to receive, be nurtured and have their faith lifted up; others are there to do God's work and act; everyone is a combination of both. |
| D | Can participate in countless ways: as a social activist, in youth group, Boy Scouts, adult education, service in worship (deacon, music, altar guild). Participation will vary depending on life stage. Loving environment, fairly harmonious. People don't get bogged down in disagreements. Different political views among members (homosexuality, Scriptural authority), but we have a pragmatic philosophy. |
| E | Some participate because they know their interests and talents and plug in immediately. Others become involved after they are asked. Our constitution may be unwieldy, but it does offer many opportunities (about 150) for involvement. Service on stewardship committee, supper shuffles, adult education. people are encouraged to start groups and are supported in those efforts. |
| F | Many ways to participate and serve those in community who are less fortunate (e.g. Christmas gifts for unwed mothers, women of Grace sale provided 25,000 to benevolences, meals for Cornerstones, Grace care -- meals show how much people care, Stephen ministries); care for each other in times of need (eg. funeral lunches). Volunteering at school, her daughter's involvement in school prepares her for life. |
| G | So many opportunities for individuals to use talents that God has given us ranging from singing in the choir, Women at Grace, ushering, working on boards and committees, Stephen ministry, and many more. |
| H | So many activities and groups. People here have such a sense of community and it builds. Foundation of |



Local Church Society: Interior Interviews



| Person | Response |
|--------|---|
| | sub groups builds sense of community. |
| I | People participate in many and various ways. Almost everyone is connected by committees or personal and intimate relationships. Source of relationship not apparent. Participate on more informal levels. Taking advantage of support groups that meet regularly, ushers, Stephen ministries. |
| J | Everything. You can't not participate. Grace care, boards, etc. There's something for everyone. There's no way you can't serve. Grace Care -- cook and visit with people. so much fun ministering to people. Everybody serves in different ways. Once you get on the list as a volunteer, you're on the list forever. Brings you satisfaction. |
| K | Cyclical process. New members -- often observe but see ways to participate. Social ministries or activities. People want to do things for others -- also fellowship -- bring kids -- become leaders themselves -- reach out to others themselves. Crucial is a connection with a current member to bring people in and get them involved. |
| L | Challenge: participation is difficult at times. Younger people particularly. Participation is not as active as they would like. Meeting people is difficult. Lots of choices, but less unity in activity. Overwhelming. Challenge has to do with size. Participation is not as easy as I would like. I would like a system to help people identify their vocation in the church. How can we identify the talents and desires? Facilitate and bring out talent and vocation. Mini-community within church exists. Functional or deeper? Idea: open breakfast on Sundays -- people spoke to whole group. More emphasis on whole rather than separate cliques. Talk about anything. Builds community. Arrangement of tables key. Family centered events. dance events. Having a good time together. family retreat/cap. Get kids to see church as their community. |
| M | Emphasis on regular worship and worshipping together. Hospitality is a rich tradition (meals, receptions, celebrations for special church occasions.) Serving together (i.e. Uptown Ministry, Women of Grace, making others aware of volunteer opportunities in the community.) Homebound ministry reaches to those in need. Fellowship events; Oktoberfest, social events. |
| N | Members participate through worship services, the choir, bible study, the retired men's group, cornerstones, and the worship committee and boards. |
| O | Activities are always going on at Grace. There are a variety of small group ministries aimed at the well-being of members. There are plenty of opportunities for adults. |
| P | Members participate through worship, small group ministries, Bible study, Women of Grace, and a variety of volunteer opportunities that serve members, students, and the community. |
| Q | Different ministries, various committees, supper shuffle, building relationships through these. |
| R | Choirs include adult, children, and handbells. Men's groups include fix-it group, basketball. Women's groups include Bible studies. Care ministry -- meals to family during major illness. Crafts fair and ongoing preparations for that. Funeral service lunchons. School families -- sports, music, plays, committee meetings -- 100 peopel involved in various groups. Supper shuffles -- make new acquaintances over a shared meal. Lectoring and ushering. |
| S | 1. We start in the worship sanctuary. It is intimate in many ways. Communion, sharing the peace, beautiful music, praying for each other, collectively listening to powerful sermons. 2.Go beyond the worship service. There are many ways to serve and a range of commitment levels so that people can start to be involved without being highly visible or deeply committed. 3. Try to take care of each other. Various supports groups. Taking food/visitations to people. Because of these activities the unchurched can feel welcome as well. |
| T | People use their God-given talents to service the many different ministries. Among my friends they use the talents of music, teaching, and care for the world in choirs, confirmation class, and social ministries, such as the Women of Grace annual sale. People tend to be active in this congregation. People skilled with computers are helping out with the church website. |
| U | Congregation dominated by joiners and doers (participation comes naturally). Not just the same people doing it all (unlike some churches). Educated community. Give something to get something back. |
| V | Many opportunities for people to participate. Worship -- usher, choir, reading, greeter (I came from a church where involvement was limited, so makes Grace even more special.) Social ministry -- mission outreach -- sandwich making, food pantry. Participate in community beyond our own needs. Young people -- teach Sunday school, confirmation, choir, youth groups. It's like raising the next generation of future leaders of the church. |



Local Church Society: Interior Interviews



| Person | Response |
|--------|--|
| W | 2 levels of participation. Personal level, and event/committees. Be careful that people don't crawl through the woodwork. Constantly needs work, ongoing. Diversity -- great talent (positive) can be offputting too. Need to be careful to continue work. Consciousness of where people are. Will someone notice if they're gone. Elders -- opportunity to do better. |
| X | Sunday worship, service opportunities available thru Grace, Christian education classes, social outreaches, school and informal connections/friendships made in the church and school communities. |
| Y | Participation w/friend in Women of Grace and gained appreciation of that organization history & tradition of service/benevolences/outreach to sick, homebound. Cornerstones meals/outreach to uptown & holiday meal/funerals meals huge effort/ Stephen Ministry/choirs/Sunday School demonstrates parent support Christmas concert and children's service/cantatas Adult Ed/video/Boards & Committees/Grace Family Night/being at worship |
| Z | Don't know all the ways. More than personally aware of. Church service/adult ed/music/small groups/school/athletics/opportunities for volunteerism/Stephen ministry/services to ill/shut-ins/special services for families with loss/forums to address issues/challenges facing the congregation/ social events, e.g. Oktoberfest |

question 9

Tell about the learning opportunities here.

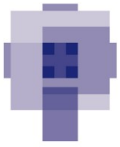
| Person | Response |
|--------|---|
| A | There are wide variety of adult education opportunities; there are often things in the bulletin that look interesting to her, but she hasn't been able to participate because she has small children; she is looking forward to participating |
| B | Principal learning opportunity is the school; that is why his family joined the congregation, to have worship and school at the same place; attending services is also a learning opportunity through the sermon, hymns, lessons and fellowship afterwards; adult education series is also a great resource; library is also a great resource; librarian directs people to new reading materials |
| C | There are a variety of learning opportunities; for children, the school is wonderful and embodies Christian values; there is also Sunday School and Vacation Bible School; for adults, there are bible studies and adult education between services. |
| D | For adults: adult education program (esteemed professors of theology), book club, film club, endless opportunities. For youth -- confirmation, scout troops top notch, among the best around for both youth and adults. Members can learn by serving and volunteering. |
| E | Adult education is one of the jewels -- talented speakers in and outside of congregation. School is a major mission for our congregation. Much learning in youth groups. Learning (formal and informal) about music and liturgy and worship -- why we do what we do. Our worship is becoming unique. Learning for parents in adult education. Bible studies every Sunday morning and for men and you moms during week. Instruction through preaching. Many committee meetings start with Bible study. |
| F | Breadth of speakers in adult education -- understanding of Bible, learning about people of other faiths. Through watching others' lives of service she learned how to get along better with others. |
| G | We have learning opportunities for everyone from ages ranging from Sunday School 3 year olds through 8th grade, confirmation instruction, adult education, programs with a variety of talented individuals conducting classes on Sunday mornings. every Sunday sermon is a learning opportunity. We never know all there is to know about God. |
| H | Adult education programs; traditional bible study; world renown speakers on various topics are tremendously accomplished; adult education program covers political, social justice, personal and family issues. Grade school is top notch. |
| I | Different learning opportunities. Adult education is really excellent. People have opportunities by participating in congregation by offering to serve in different capacities. Coming into congregation new members required to attend ministry fair to learn about various ministries of church. Concerned childrens' sermons discontinued. |



Local Church Society: Interior Interviews



| Person | Response |
|--------|--|
| J | Everyday is a learning opportunity because of the different people you meet. Sunday School teacher. 4 years. Not as steeped in religious education as I'd like to be. Have learned through Sunday School and mentoring. Priority is adult ed/ Learning is there and you have to take advantage of it. Inspired to read Bible more. |
| K | Adult ed is so good. With so many choices. At a high level that challenges intellectual people that are already well-informed. Book group, movie group, Sunday school, high school, grade school. There's something for everybody. Baptism. New member group. |
| L | Great. So many wonderful talks, seminars. Children: Sunday School is marvelous. Enjoy teaching. Primary focus should be fun -- connected with learning. Use all of your senses. Music, too. Adults: more challenging forums. Challenge us to reach a higher level in all aspects. Not just giving. Do something every day to better the world. What is our mission? Locally? Action. Pastor prodding us. Motivational role. Blog. Ideas. |
| M | More adult education here than at other churches. (Wide range of topics; Ed committee has a great depth of talent to draw from for teaching and preaching.) Saturday opportunities (parenting classes, trip presentations.) Grounded and structured Sunday school program, much improved since years past. Confirmation program. |
| N | Learning opportunities include adult education, Sunday school, the day school, and Bible study groups. |
| O | Learning opportunities are available through adult education, lecture series, and a variety of speakers on topics that are current and relevant. There are exceptional programs through the youth ministry, Sunday school and confirmation. |
| P | Learning opportunities include adult education, new member classes, Christian day school, service groups and service/ministry trips. |
| Q | Various. Adult ed class every week; Bible studies during week; Romeos -- group for older men to meet each other; Uplift -- for those dealing with a loss, can relate to others with similar crisis in their lives. |
| R | Mid-week Bible studies, cornerstone Bible studies for older adults, Sunday adult education and Sunday school for children. On a give Sunday there are multiple options to fill different learning styles. Bible study, theological lecture, practical applications of Christian values such as social ministry, parenting, interpersonal, and political issues. |
| S | The learning opportunities are wonderful. The Sunday school program is fantastic. The rotational model allows students to learn the same story using different types of intelligences over 5 weeks. For example, the students might act out a story on one week and cook something related to the story in the next week. Adult ed programming has great speakers and very relevant topics. |
| T | Adult ed offerings are unbelievable. Over time, really quality sessions. Presenters are top notch professors. Always impressed. Sermon quality: educative preaching. |
| U | Adult education -- year after year diverse and stimulating offerings. Grace offers the expected opportunities for learning such as Bible studies, but in addition there's the unexpected which is so enriching. For example, the lecturers, guest speakers, and the research that B shared. Religion and Lit -- able to explore literature through past and current topics. Fascinating. Also, learning through supper shuffles. Has participated for years. Learn about different cultures, connect with other members, learn about others' faith journey provides continuous learning. |
| V | Adult ed -- incredible! Why doesn't everyone go? Cornerstones -- all have an element of learning and growth. School -- gives people opportunity for learning. Preaching -- very sound. Romeos. |
| W | Sunday morning preaching (Pastor's sermons are outstanding), Sunday Christian education classes, at the school -- fine educational learning opportunities for children and families. |
| X | Sunday school/First Communion lessons beneficial structured process/Confirmation/ Parent workshops on building character/Grace Family Night breakout sessions for parents & children Grace school provided moral grounding-moral compass |
| Y | Church services itself a learning opportunity, intellectual nature, lessons read w/meaning/ adult ed. Forums on important issues. This Cong Discovery process. When he has taught, when serving on boards & committees, it was an opportunity to learn |



Local Church Society: Interior Interviews

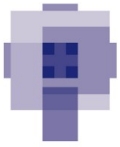


question 10

Tell about how you and others feel about the changes in this community in the past 3-5 years.

| Person | Response |
|--------|----------|
| A | |
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question 11

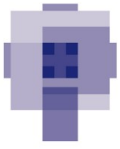


Local Church Society: Interior Interviews

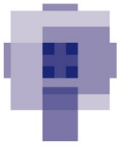


Tell about how you and others feel about the changes in this congregation in the past 3-5 years.

| Person | Response |
|--------|----------|
| A | |
| B | |
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| I | |
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Civil Society: Symbols, Rituals and Metaphors



Local Church Culture: Mission, Vision, Values

mission statement

Bring in, build up and send out for Jesus Christ.

vision and values

symbols, rituals and metaphors



Reflections



theological reflections

civil society reflections

team reflections

future reflections