Dear Grace Family,

Although the delivery of the pastors' letter came as a surprise to me, it was amidst a season of expected change. Grace is the combination of its congregants. We have chosen to make our church and our ministry a focus on our lives, but as we all know our lives are not static, and neither is the evolution of the church. Even though this may not be the change most hoped for, I believe, just as the pastors do, trust in the Spirit will lead all of us to a bright future. God provides and we serve in faith.

Presidents seldom know when a pastoral vacancy may occur, but I, along with most of you, have seen several vacancies. We just celebrated our church's 100th year anniversary. That history is filled with celebratory landmarks throughout, most of which we naturally group by pastoral terms. Even as we celebrate the tremendous growth and achievements Pr. Gregg and Pr. Rachel shared with us, I am confident that with the aid of the Holy Spirit and provision of God, we will find and welcome our next pastoral steward to lead us in our ministry.

Just as we are not the first members of Grace to experience a pastoral transition, neither are we the only congregation in this position. I have served on two call committees with many of you, and I have faith in the process and the experience of the Synod Office in leading churches through it. The Synod will help us find supply pastoral leadership for worship and pastoral care, or perhaps an interim pastor if available. As we have done in the past, we will discern who we are as a congregation and what we need from our next pastor. We will determine who will serve on the Call Committee and abide together in faithful prayer for God's guidance.

For now, we have a little more than one month remaining with Pastor Gregg and Pastor Rachel. Let us celebrate together what we've accomplished with them since November of 2018. We have come a long way as a congregation since their arrival and have plenty of reason to give thanks and praise to God for the many ways we have welcomed all people, grown together in faith, and joined God's work in our community. We will miss the pastors as they accept their new call, but our Mission as God's people continues. It will be our continuing commitment to our mission and our strategic plan that leads our next pastor to envision themselves serving with us, so let us not take even one step back from what God is calling us to do here at Grace.

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In closing, I invite you to join me in a prayer for our congregation:

We give you thanks, O God, for the ministry we have shared with our current pastors. As we prepare to release from them this call, bless our conversations with them. Remind us that you send leaders for particular times and places, and that you will continue to be faithful, providing leaders for Grace. Keep us true to the mission you set before us and make us ready to respond when the Spirit stirs in our hearts, that we may rejoice in the new thing you are doing. Preserve your people here at Grace and bless us, that we may be a blessing to all. We ask this in the name of the Risen Christ, who is with us always. Amen.

Justin Anderson
President, Congregation Council