

# STATEMENT OF AFFILIATION & INTENT

## GRACE LUTHERAN CHURCH OF HUNTINGTON BEACH

Adopted as of June 10, 2012

### INTRODUCTION

We, baptized members of the church of Christ, responding in faith to the call of the Holy Spirit through the Gospel, desiring to unite together to preach the Word, administer the sacraments, and carry out God's mission, do hereby adopt this Statement of Affiliation & Intent and solemnly pledge ourselves to be governed by its provisions in carrying out the work we are called to as a community of faith. In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

The profession of the Christian faith as practiced by Grace Lutheran Church is further detailed in the congregation's Statement of Faith. As a corporation in the State of California, the Congregation is governed in matters pertaining to church leadership, finances and personnel by the Bylaws dated March 18, 2012 and as amended at any time in the future. The Congregation's complete expression of organizational governance and purpose is found in all three of these documents.

### Section 1.

#### STATEMENT OF AFFILIATION

- 1.01. This Congregation is an interdependent part of the North American Lutheran Church (the "NALC") or any successor and is subject to the disciplinary rules of the NALC.
- 1.02. **This Congregation subscribes to the constitution of the NALC and will act in accordance with it.**
- 1.03. This Congregation will conduct its ministry in a manner consistent with its membership in the NALC:
  - a. This Congregation is responsible for its life as a Christian community.
  - b. This Congregation pledges its participation in the life and mission of the NALC, including the prayerful consideration of appropriate financial support.
  - c. **This Congregation shall call only pastors who are members of the NALC or otherwise are authorized by the NALC to serve.**
  - d. **This Congregation shall appoint only commissioned lay leaders who are members of the NALC or otherwise are authorized by the NALC to serve.**
- 1.04. Affiliation with the NALC may be terminated as follows:
  - a. This Congregation dissolves.
  - b. This Congregation ceases to exist.
  - c. This Congregation is removed from membership in the NALC according to the procedures for discipline of the NALC.
  - d. This Congregation, at a legally called and conducted special meeting, approves by at least a two-thirds (2/3) majority of those present and voting a resolution directing that this congregation withdraw from the NALC. If this congregation adopts a resolution withdrawing from the NALC, all provisions of this constitution binding this congregation to the NALC shall be immediately ineffective. The congregation shall promptly deliver a copy of the withdrawal resolution to the NALC general secretary.

## **Section 2.**

### **CONFESSION OF FAITH**

This congregation incorporates Article 2 of the constitution of the North American Lutheran Church confessing:

- 2.01. The Triune God – Father, Son and Holy Spirit**
- 2.02. Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior and the Gospel as the power of God for the salvation of all who believe.**
  - a. Jesus Christ is the Word of God incarnate, through whom everything was made and through whose life, death and resurrection God fashions a new creation.**
  - b. The proclamation of God’s message to us as both Law and Gospel is the Word of God, revealing judgment and mercy through word and deed, beginning with the Word in creation, continuing in the history of Israel, and centering in all its fullness in the person and work of Jesus Christ.**
  - c. The canonical Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments are the written Word of God. Inspired by the Holy Spirit speaking through their authors, they record and announce God’s revelation centering in Jesus Christ. Through them the Holy Spirit speaks to us to create and sustain Christian faith and fellowship for service in the world.**
- 2.03 The canonical Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments as the inspired Word of God and the authoritative source and norm of its proclamation, faith and life, "according to which all doctrines should and must be judged." (Formula of Concord, Epitome, Part I)**
- 2.04 The Apostles’, Nicene, and Athanasian Creeds as true declarations of the faith of the Church.**
- 2.05 The Unaltered Augsburg Confession as a true witness to the Gospel, acknowledging as one with it in faith and doctrine all churches that likewise accept the teachings of the Unaltered Augsburg Confession.**
- 2.06 The other confessional writings in the Book of Concord, namely, the Apology of the Augsburg Confession, the Smalcald Articles and the Treatise, the Small Catechism, the Large Catechism, and the Formula of Concord, as further valid interpretations of the faith of the Church.**
- 2.07 The Gospel, recorded in the Holy Scriptures and confessed in the ecumenical creeds and Lutheran confessional writings, as the power of God to create and sustain the Church for God’s mission in the world.**

## **Section 3.**

### **NATURE OF THE CHURCH**

- 3.01. The Church is the universal assembly of all believers among whom the Gospel is preached in its purity and the holy sacraments are administered according to the Gospel. (Augsburg Confession VII)**
- 3.02. All power in the Church belongs to our Lord Jesus Christ, its head. All actions of this Congregation are to be carried out under His rule and authority.**
- 3.03. The Church exists both as an inclusive fellowship and as local congregations gathered for worship and Christian service. Congregations find their fulfillment in the universal community of the Church, and the universal Church exists in and through congregations.**
- 3.04 This Congregation exercises ministry within the mission of the NALC. This Congregation embodies the Church in its community and, for the sake of mission, lives in cooperative partnership with other congregations and within the other structures of the NALC. This Congregation shall share responsibility for the decision-making processes of the NALC.**

## **Section 4.**

### **STATEMENT OF MISSION**

- 4.01.** The hearers of the Gospel are a people, called and sent by God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, to be a community of faith, hope and love, who witness to Christ and His coming Kingdom before all the world.
- 4.02.** To participate in God's mission, this Congregation as a part of the Church shall:
- a. Give honor and glory to the Triune God, worshipping Him in proclamation of the Word and administration of the sacraments and through lives of prayer, praise, thanksgiving, witness, obedience and service.
  - b. Carry out Christ's Great Commission by proclaiming to all the world the Gospel of justification by grace through faith alone, according to the apostolic witness in Holy Scripture and in accordance with the Lutheran Confessions,
  - c. Preserve and transmit the Gospel faithfully to future generations.
  - d. Foster Christian fellowship and love, and extend a helping hand to humans in need.
  - e. Manifest the unity of our faith in Jesus Christ as God and Savior, and join with other Christians in prayer and action.
  - f. Nurture its members in the Word of God so as to grow in faith and hope and love, and to develop a sense of Christian vocation in daily life.
- 4.03.** To fulfill these purposes, this Congregation shall:
- a. Provide services of worship at which the Word of God is rightly preached and the sacraments are rightly administered.
  - b. Provide pastoral care and assist all members to participate in this ministry.
  - c. Challenge, equip, and support all members in carrying out their calling in their daily lives and in their congregation.
  - d. Teach the Word of God.
  - e. Witness to the reconciling Word of God in Christ, reaching out to all people.
  - f. Respond to human need, work for justice and peace, care for the sick and the suffering, and participate responsibly in society.
  - g. Encourage its members to provide appropriate financial support for the congregation's ministry and the ministry of other parts of the NALC.
  - h. Foster and participate in relationships with other congregations and structures of the NALC.
  - i. Foster and participate in ecumenical relations consistent with NALC policy.
- 4.04.** This Congregation shall develop an organizational structure to be described in the Bylaws. The Church Council shall prepare descriptions of the responsibilities of each committee, task force, or other organizational group and shall review their actions.
- 4.05.** This Congregation shall, from time to time, adopt a mission statement which will provide specific direction for its programs.

## **Section 5.**

### **MEMBERSHIP**

- 5.01.** Members of this Congregation shall be those baptized persons (a) who are on the roll of this congregation at the time that this Statement of Affiliate and Intent is adopted or who are admitted thereafter, and (b) who have declared and maintain their membership in accordance with the provisions of this Statement of Affiliation and Intent and its Bylaws.
- 5.02.** Members shall be classified as follows:

- a. **Baptized** members are those persons who have received the Sacrament of Baptism and who have been enrolled as baptized members by the Council but who have not yet made a profession of faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior. Such baptized members are entitled to the pastoral care and instruction of the Church and to participation in the Sacrament of the Holy Communion.
- b. **Confirmed** members are baptized persons who have been confirmed in this Congregation, those who have been received by adult baptism or by transfer as confirmed members from other Lutheran congregations, or baptized persons received by affirmation of faith.
- c. **Active** members of the church are persons who have made a profession of faith in Christ, have been baptized, have been received into membership of this Congregation, have voluntarily submitted to the government of this Congregation, and consistently participate in the Congregation's work and worship.

"Consistent participation in the Congregation's work and worship" is defined as:

- proclaiming the Good News,
- taking part in the common life and worship of Grace,
- praying and studying Scripture and the faith of the Christian Church,
- supporting the work of Grace through the giving of money, time and talents,
- participating in the governing responsibilities of Grace,
- demonstrating a new quality of life within and through Grace,
- responding to God's activity in the world through service to others,
- living responsibly in the personal, family, vocational, political, cultural, and social relationships of life,
- working in the world for peace, justice, freedom and human flourishing.

An active member is entitled to all the rights and privileges of the Church, including the right to participate in the Sacrament of the Holy Communion, to present children for baptism, to take part in meetings of the congregation, and to vote and hold office. In addition, a person who becomes an active member of this congregation and who is 18 years of age or older, thereby also becomes a member of the corporation of this congregation as well.

**d. Inactive** members of the Church are those persons who have not participated actively in the church's work and worship for a period of one year or more. An inactive member is entitled to all the rights and privileges of an active member except the right to speak in the meetings of this Congregation and to vote and hold office. When the Council identifies a member as inactive, the Council will communicate with that member, inviting her or him to return to active participation in the life of the Church. An inactive member who remains inactive for two years or longer can be removed from the membership rolls by the Council at their next membership review.

e. **Affiliate** members of the church are those person who are an active member of another church of this denomination or of another denomination or Christian body, who is living here temporarily and has presented a certificate of good standing from the appropriate governing body of that church, and has been received by the Council as an affiliate member. An affiliate member is entitled to all the rights and privileges of an active member except the right to vote and hold office.

**f. Non-Members** are those persons who are not members of this congregation by baptism, confirmation or the decision to become a member of the active membership roll of the congregation. Non-members are entitled to the following privileges:

- All persons are welcome to participate in the life and worship of this Church.

- All baptized persons, whether children or adults, even though they have made no profession of their faith in Christ, are entitled to participation in Holy Communion, to pastoral care and instruction of the Church.
- Confessing members of other Christian churches may participate in the Sacrament of Holy Communion and may present children for baptism.

- 5.03.** All applications for confirmed membership shall be submitted to and shall require the approval of the Church Council.
- 5.04.** It shall be the privilege and duty of members of this congregation to:
- make regular use of the means of grace, both Word and sacraments;
  - live a Christian life in accordance with the Word of God and the teachings of this congregation and the NALC; and
  - support the work of this congregation and its ministries and structures through contributions of time, abilities, and financial support as biblical stewards.
- 5.05.** Membership in this congregation shall be terminated by any of the following:
- death;
  - resignation;
  - transfer or release;
  - disciplinary action by the Church Council; or
  - removal from the roll due to inactivity as defined herein. Such persons who have been removed from the roll of members shall remain persons for whom the Church has a continuing pastoral concern.

## **Chapter 6.**

### **ORGANIZATIONS WITHIN THE CONGREGATION**

- 6.01.** All organizations within this congregation shall exist to aid it in ministering to the members of this congregation and to all persons who can be reached with the Gospel of Christ. This congregation believes that ministry teams, boards and organizations which are currently ministering to and on behalf of the congregation, as well as those which will be proposed in the future, exist as a direct result of the call of the Holy Spirit on the lives of the members of this congregation to action in the Kingdom of God. As outgrowths and expressions of this congregation's life, the ministry teams, boards and organizations are subject to the oversight and direction of the Church Council. This congregation at its meeting shall receive reports concerning the membership, work, and finances of these ministry teams, boards and organizations.

## **Chapter 7.**

### **DISCIPLINE OF MEMBERS AND ADJUDICATION**

- 7.01.** Denial of the Christian faith as described in this Statement or the constitution of the NALC, conduct grossly unbecoming a member of the church of Christ, or persistent trouble-making in this congregation are sufficient cause for discipline of a member. Prior to disciplinary action, reconciliation will be attempted following Matthew 18:15-17, proceeding through these successive steps:
- private admonition by the pastor,
  - admonition by the pastor in the presence of two or three witnesses, and
  - citation to appear before the Church Council.

If, for any reason, the pastor is unable to administer the admonitions required by a. and b. hereof, the president (if the president is not the pastor) or vice president shall administer such admonitions.

## **Chapter 8.**

### **AMENDMENTS**

**8.01.** Amendments, additions or alterations to this Statement may be proposed by active members or by the Church Council. Said amendment, addition or alteration must be presented in writing to the Council. At the next Council meeting, the Council will take action on the proposal and, if the Council approves of the amendment, addition or alteration, the Council shall then present it for a vote to the Congregation at a legally called meeting. The Congregation must be notified at least 4 weeks in advance of the meeting, and the announcement of the meeting shall follow the Congregation's normal methods as set forth in the Bylaws. Any amendment or substitution to this Statement must be approved by a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote by all active members present at a legally called meeting. If approved, upon the close of the meeting the amendment, additions or alterations will take effect.

Sections 1.02, 1.03(c) & (d) and Section 2 may not be amended or altered in any form or fashion pursuant to Grace Lutheran Church's decision to affiliate itself with the North American Lutheran Church and its subsequent subscription to the NALC Constitution and to the NALC Confession of Faith.

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