

GROWING with GRACE Community Garden By-laws

The purpose of the By-laws are to guide the Growing with Grace Community Garden Team.

Article I – Name

The name shall be ***GROWING with GRACE Community Garden***.

Article II – History and Mission

History:

In 2012 two lots adjacent to Grace Lutheran Church were purchased with funds bequeathed to the church. The funds were donated with the intention of purchasing adjacent property whenever it became available. At a congregational meeting, members expressed interest in developing the space into a community garden.

Mission:

At Grace we strive to be good neighbors, as well as good followers of Christ. In our efforts to reach out to those in our immediate community our goal is to provide a resource for both local community members as well as Grace Members to grow their own gardens. Our hope is that this will result in increased positive interactions among community members, and be a way to serve the community.

Article III – Membership and Annual Rental Fees

1. Membership is open to any Household or Organization located in Nicollet or Blue Earth County that agrees to subscribe to the By-Laws and Garden Contract of GGCG.
2. “Household” means one or more individuals who define themselves as a household.
3. “Organization” means a nonprofit, government or business entity.
4. “Membership” refers to all the members of the Household or Organization who are gardening cooperatively on one assignment plot.
5. Membership shall run from January 1 through December 31 of each year, but members may join at any time during the year that there is an available garden plot. Returning members who pay their Annual Rental Fee by January 31 shall be given priority over new members. Annual Rental Fees are set out in the GGCG Garden Contract.

6. Membership shall be selected according to the following criteria:
 - a. At least 50% of the plots shall designated for community or non-members of Grace. This ensures that we keep to our mission and keep a mix of church and community members. If, however, there are not enough community requests to fill 50% of the plots, remaining plots may be designated to church members.
 - b. Priority will be given to community members based on physical proximity to the church (again, serving our neighbors).

Article IV – Elections and Officers

The Community Garden Team shall consist of 5 members which shall consist of a Coordinator, a Treasurer, a Registration/Plot Manager and 2 other at-large members, all elected by the general membership. Committee members' terms shall run for one year from November 1 through October 31. All positions are on an unpaid, volunteer basis.

Elections of team members shall be held at the fall General Meeting with each Membership having one vote for each elected office. Members must be present to vote.

The Committee shall perform the following duties and others as determined by the Committee or the Membership: purchasing and paying for supplies; recruiting gardeners; keeping records of membership and rental fees; assigning plots; communicating with gardeners; calling meetings; offering gardening education sessions; budgeting; handling major disputes and violations of the Garden Contract.

The Coordinator shall be responsible for the day to day running of the garden, including being available to gardeners as an information resource; organizing work days; handling minor disputes and violations of the garden contract; maintaining tools; and calling meetings. The Coordinator shall be a member of Grace Lutheran Church.

The treasurer shall work with Grace Lutheran Church administration and the Finance Team to determine procedures for depositing garden fees, processing reimbursements; expenses etc.

The Registration/Plot Manager will be responsible for collecting application and contracts, keeping track of fees paid, and assigning plots.

The At Large members will be responsible for organizing clean-up and kick-off days.

Article V – Meetings

1. General meetings shall be held twice a year, once in the spring and once in the fall, time and place to be announced by the Team a month in advance. The spring meeting shall take place between 03/01 and 04/30. The fall meeting shall take place between 09/01 and 10/31. Special meetings to accommodate guest speakers or otherwise benefit the organization may be called at any other time with at least three weeks prior notification to the membership.
2. The Team shall hold a board meeting within three weeks prior to a regularly scheduled general meeting.
3. Official decisions shall require a simple majority of the Team members. Decisions may be made by e-mail or electronic polling.
4. When deemed appropriate by the Team, a decision on an issue may be referred to the general membership for a vote.
5. At general meetings, decisions shall be made by a simple majority of the Membership present, except for amendments to the By-Laws and the Garden Contract

Article VI – Amendments

These By-Laws and the Garden Contract of GGCG may be amended at any general meeting when approved by a simple majority of the Membership present. Prior to the vote, notice of the changes along with a written copy of the changes, shall be given to the Memberships. This must be done a minimum of two weeks before the meeting at which voting on the changes will take place. The changes will be read to the members before the vote.