Plan of Merger

For Grace United Methodist Church (Urbana, Illinois)
and Quest United Methodist Church (Urbana, Illinois)

Submitted to the respective church conferences for vote on November 1, 2015

Be it Resolved that Grace United Methodist Church and Quest United Methodist Church become one congregation on January 1, 2016, legally known as **Grace/Quest United Methodist Church** and publicly presented as: **Quest United Methodist Church: A Community of Grace.**

And be it Further Resolved that the new congregation follow these stipulations:

1. The congregation will at all times faithfully abide by and support the current Book of Discipline of the United Methodist Church.
2. Through the end of 2018, at least 1/3 of the members of the following committees will be composed of those who were members of Grace Church at the time of the merger: The Church Council, the Pastor-Parish Relations Committee, the Trustees, and the Nominations and Leadership Development Committee (or their equivalents). This stipulation may be waived for those committees and councils if there are not enough former members of Grace Church willing and able to meet the standards of service.
3. The church will provide worshippers at least one traditional and at least one modern worship service between 8 a.m. and noon each Sunday, in the church’s main sanctuary. The new church shall make a good faith effort to provide this worship variety for a period of no less than ten years from the date of the merger.
4. The chapel in the northeast corner of the education wing will be known as “Grace Chapel.” Priority for its use shall be reserved for worship services of all sorts. The room may also be used to host Christian education and fellowship. It may also be shared with adult groups who need temporary meeting space. The new church shall make a good faith effort to follow this stipulation for a period of no less than ten years from the date of merger.
5. The new congregation will receive all the assets of the two merging congregations.
6. The new congregation will be responsible for all the debts and liabilities of the two merging congregations.
7. The pastor of the former Grace Church will continue to live in the former Grace Church parsonage. The pastor of the former Quest Church will continue to receive a housing allowance set by the latest charge conference. This stipulation will remain in effect until the bishop makes a pastoral change in the new church.
8. The membership rolls and records for Quest and Grace will become the rolls and records of the new church. All those who are professing members of the two previous churches will constitute the professing membership of the new church.

9. The following committees and officers will be nominated prior to the effective date of the merger to lead the new church: Leadership Team, Staff-Parish Relations, Trustees, Finance, Nominations, treasure, financial secretary, the Lay Leaders, and lay members of annual conference.
A RECOMMENDATION TO THE CHARGE CONFERENCE AND CHURCH COUNCIL OF THE NEWLY MERGED CHURCH

FROM THE MERGER COMMITTEE

1. We recommend that the new charge conference adopt the following mission statement: *Growing a community that helps people become whole-hearted followers of Jesus and reflects God’s love to the world.*

2. We recommend that Quest’s organizational structures, including “Connect, Grow, Serve, and Go” be the foundation for organizing programs in the new congregation and that committees and groups in the new congregation use common names found in the Book of Discipline whenever possible.

3. We recommend that the new church make a good faith effort to retain the current staff of both congregations until June 30, 2016, re-organizing them as soon as possible, under the direction of the Staff-Parish Relations Committee, to maximize their benefit to the new congregation.

4. We recommend that the traditional worship service be continued at 8:30 a.m. in the sanctuary.

5. We recommend to the church council (leadership team) that they establish task forces to present to the new congregation (by June 1, 2016) recommendations on the following items:
   a. A values statement for the new congregation
   b. A membership covenant for new members
   c. A policy for taking people off the membership rolls
   d. A “leadership covenant” for those who will serve in offices, boards and committees

6. We recommend that a Finance Committee take immediate steps to integrate the financial systems of both congregations and assure that conference apportionments for both congregations are paid in full for 2015.
Merger Informational Meetings and Timeline

As the merger vote draws closer, we want to continue to help you answer any questions about the merger process, proposal, timeline or the structure of the merged church. All Questers are strongly encouraged to attend these meetings to gain a better understanding of the merger process and to receive answers to any questions they may have. The timeline for merger conversations and voting is as follows:

- **Sunday, September 6th** - Questers will receive the merger proposal document and FAQs during worship. (Please note: The merger proposal document will also be made available on the website under News: Merger.)
- **Sunday, September 6th** - Pastor Andy will answer questions on the merger at 5:30pm during the Tarr Home Group (2704 Springhill Lane Champaign, IL 61822). Childcare will be available.
- **Monday, September 7th** - Pastor Andy will visit the Shelton Home (2903 Clayton Blvd. Champaign, IL 61822) at 5pm to discuss the merger. Dinner and childcare will be provided by Ryan and Casey Shelton.
- **Wednesday, September 9th** - Pastor Andy will visit Lori Gillespie’s home (2111 Harbortown Circle Champaign, IL 61821) at 7pm for a merger discussion.
- **Sunday, September 13th** - Quest will host a Town Hall Meeting at 12pm in the sanctuary. Pastor Andy and the merger team will lead an open forum concerning the proposed merger to answer any and all questions about the merger. Please RSVP for childcare to Quest's Director of Student Ministries, Ben Royer.
- **Sunday, September 27th** - Quest will join together for one service at 10am. Following the service, at 11:15am in the worship area, all Questers are invited to voice their opinions and vote on the proposed plan of action. This is not an official vote (that will take place in November), but Quest’s leadership team wants the input and support of the congregation before moving forward. Please RSVP for childcare to Quest's Director of Ministries and Operations, Lauren Acton.
- **Sunday, November 1st** - Quest and Grace will have charge conferences to formally vote on the proposed merger at 3pm. Should the merger formally pass in both congregations, voting on the new leadership teams will take place that afternoon. Please RSVP for childcare to Quest's Director of Student Ministries, Ben Royer.
- **Friday, January 1st, 2016** - (Pending approval by both congregations) Quest Church and Grace UMC would be one officially merged church, *Quest United Methodist Church: A Community of Grace.*
Merger FAQs

Q: What is the purpose of this merger?

A: Our church leadership feels that as a merged church in this location we will be more effective in mission and ministry, have an increased witness and broader reach in our community and better reflect the body of Christ as a multi generational congregation. Simply stated, we feel we would be better together.

Q: How specifically does Quest’s mission benefit from this merger?

A: Quest gains a rich heritage of mission and ministry of the 120-year-old Grace congregation, along with the wisdom and stories from those who have gone before. In addition, for the last few years, Quest’s leadership identified permanent land and facilities as a desirable ministry tool for increased outreach and mission. This merger is a cost effective way to gain such a tool providing new short and long-term growth possibilities. This permanence also frees up the church to be more strategic about investing missionally in the surrounding area of Southeast Urbana.

Q: How specifically does Grace’s mission benefit from this merger?

A: Grace gains the joy and fervor of a younger generation and children to compliment an already close-knit community. Just as important, in merging with Quest, Grace receives the benefit of a rejuvenated mission with the opportunity to leave a legacy of ministry for Jesus in Southeast Urbana far beyond what would be possible without a merger. Furthermore, a merger shares the short and long-term burden of physically and financially supporting the facilities while also assuring its maximum usage in sharing the gospel with the community.

Q: What will be the name of the merged church?

A: Legally the new church will be known as “Grace/Quest United Methodist Church”. Publicly and promotionally the merged church will be known as “Quest United Methodist Church: A Community of Grace”. At some point in the future, the merged church could decide to change its name.

Q: Who will be our pastor?

A: From January 1, 2015 – June 30, 2016 (the rest of this appointment year), it is anticipated that both Rev. Andy Adams and Rev. Mike Smith will be appointed as co-pastors of Grace/Quest. Sometime between February and April, we expect to learn who
will be appointed to pastor this church after July 1, 2016. Our staff parish teams are recommending that Rev. Andy Adams be appointed as the lead pastor, and that needs of the new church be considered when making Rev. Mike Smith’s appointment (either to remain as an associate full or part time or not).

Q: What will the roles of Co-pastors be?

A: Pastor Andy will be the primary Sunday morning preacher/teacher. He will also provide leadership with the administrative committees and staff team to set vision and to create and implement strategies to carry out the church’s mission. Pastor Mike’s passions fall in the “Grow” and “Go” areas of ministry thus he will lead various outreach ministries to people on the margins including Chinese internationals, the poor, veterans, and the aging. He will also be the primary organizer of pastoral care and lead or organize various Bible studies and other community formation groups.

Q: What will be the worship times and styles?

A: Quest United Methodist Church: A Community of Grace will offer three Sunday morning worship services in the sanctuary:

- 8:30am – Traditional
- 9:45am – Modern
- 11:00am – Modern

Kids Quest will continue to be offered at 9:45 and 11:00am.

Q: Will we stop doing ______________ (fill in the blank with something you love)?

A: You are likely a part of Quest or Grace because you love some element of the worship, community and/or mission of the church. For most practical purposes, the merged church will feel very similar to the way Quest and Grace have been in partnership over the last two years. Behind the scenes, our leadership, structure and finances will be integrated. We will also be working to integrate many of our ministries. The merged church leadership has no intention of removing any of the beloved aspects of either congregation (i.e. worship style; community groups).

Q: What is each church’s financial situation entering the merger?

A: This is a complicated question to answer. Grace’s financial situation is heavy on assets (6 acres of land, paid off facilities and a parsonage) with $40,000 of debt for building repairs. Quest entered 2015 with assets of approximately $27,000 net spendable cash and no liabilities. From a 2015 yearly income/expenses standpoint, as of July 31, Quest is running a surplus of roughly $25,000* and Grace is running a budget deficit of approximately $4,000.** We have an agreement that Quest would take on an additional $5,000-6,000 of unbudgeted expenses (some building and utility costs) for the rest of
2015, and that the new church would set an appropriate budget considering all income and projected expenses for 2016.

* $5,000 over prorated budgeted expenses for 2015 (in other words, Quest’s expenses have been lower in the first 6 months than will be in the last 6 months primarily because of two full-time staff hires on June 1).

** $4,000 consists of two months of apportionments not yet paid, but expected to be paid by the end of the year.

**Q:** What will be done with the current staff of each congregation?

**A:** The new church is making a good faith effort to retain the current staff of both congregations through at least June 30, 2016, re-organizing them under the direction of the Staff-Parish Relations Team, to maximize their benefit to the new congregation. Below is a preliminary structure for the church. Blue positions are full time, green are part time and orange are volunteer.
Q: Who will make up the membership of the new church?

A: Members of each church will become members of the merged church. The new church leadership team will develop and present a membership covenant on or before June 1, 2016.
Q: Who will make up our new leadership?

A: If each church votes to merge according to this plan, on September 27th, we will approve the following leadership teams:

**Leadership Team:**
Ryan Wills (chair)
Erik Kotewa
Eric Hays
Travis Miller
Joel Sanders
Nia Klein
Lauren Acton
Celina Trujillo
Brenda Husler
Jan Jones
Grace Member
Grace Member

**Staff Parish:**
Eric Kotewa (Chair)
Bob Bentz
Lisa Searing
Josh Gulley
Jennifer Rohn
Jennie Chin
Dave Mast
Quest Member
Grace Member

**Trustees:**
Eric Hays (chair)
Sean Daugherty
John Martin
JR Walag
Buddy Bartels
Brenda Husler
Bill Gladson
Ron Weidner
Stephen Haas

**Finance Team:**
Travis Miller (chair)
Liza Raquel (financial secretary)
Anne Ahrens (financial secretary)
Richard King (treasurer)
Grace Member
Joel Sanders

**Nominations Team:**
Ryan Wills
June Schwartz
Brenda Husler
Eric Hays
Lori Gillespie
Jon Kilroy

**Co-Lay Leaders:** Ryan Wills & June Schwartz

**Annual Conference Reps:** Eric Hays, Jan Jones, & Lauren Acton