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Congregational Annual Meeting Agenda
Sunday, February 5, 2023

Call to Order

Opening Prayer

Determine Quorum

Agenda Review

Approval of 2022 Annual Meeting Minutes

President's Remarks and Introduction of Council – Blair Schrader

President – Blair Schrader	Congregational Life – Tom Satre
Vice President – John Fuls	Open – Inreach
Treasurer– Mary Soroko	Leann Giese – Outreach
Secretary: Linda Agre	Brad Giese – Worship and Music
Brian Ulrich – Finance	Youth Representative – Daniel Agre
Aaron Sufka – Personnel	Education – John Fuls
Blair Schrader – Property	

Pastor's Comments – Pastor Jake Dyrhaug

Presentation of 2023 Proposed Budget for Congregational Approval – Brian Ulrich

Council Candidate Presentation for Election

3-year terms: Personnel, Property, Inreach

1-year term: Youth Rep

Election of Synod Assembly Delegates (Virtual Assembly is February 19 at 2:30 p.m.)

Election of Conference Assembly Delegates (Conference is June 9-10 at Gustavus Adolphus College)

Announcements and Closing

Adjournment

Closing Prayer

Annual Meeting Minutes

February 6, 2022

Call to Order at 10:48 am by President Lana Weber.

Having established a quorum, President Lana Weber called the annual meeting to order at 10:48
Participants were informed that the meeting was being recorded.

Opening Prayer led by Pastor Ann

Announcement of the quorum: Voting members present: 70. Voting Members required for a quorum: 64.

Welcome and Announcements

Appointment of a Secretary Pro Tem for the annual meeting – Alicia Mages

Appointment of ballot counters for the meeting- Tim Wright, Brenda Wright, Theresa Jones, and Bruce Neubauer

Explanation of how to speak from the floor at the meeting and how voting will be done for the duration of the meeting

Agenda Review

Motion to accept the agenda as proposed.

Motion: Teresa Szymanski

Second: Kurt Zimmerman

Motion Passed

Minutes Approval

Motion to approve the 2021 annual meeting minutes as printed

Motion: Emily Zempel

Second: Blair Schrader

Motion Passed

Committee Reports

Brian Ulrich – Finance

In 2020 and 2021 the church saw a drop in revenues, but developed a conservative budget. Brian also explained that money needs to be allocated for the call committee for the search of a new pastor.

Motion: to approve the 2022 budget and allocate \$5,000 for the call committee

Motion: Brian Ulrich

Second: Leann Giese

Motion passed

Leann Giese – Outreach – It was a successful year for the food shelf, but they are always looking for volunteers

Aaron Sufka – Personnel-the council filled Linda Becker's financial position with Russ Victorian and he will be starting this week. They are still working on finding someone for Patti Goke's position.

Lana Weber –President – It's been a hard year, but she has had a great team to work with.

Mary Soroko – Treasurer - The previous financial reporting has been very detailed and she is working on more concise reporting. She will also be updating the policy and procedures and membership roster to help with the longevity of the parish. If you are willing to help with these tasks please let Mary know.

Jana Johnson – Worship and Music – Jana wanted to remind everyone that there is a lot of behind the scenes work that happens even though the services are offered virtually. Please remember the people who are doing all of this work.

Pastor's Comments

Pastor Ann - When you figure out your passions please look to the church to share your talents. She is very thankful for all of the programs (Christmas Eve in the barn, food shelf, etc) that people have been driven to continue for the church.

She prays for the new pastor and their family and the process that will happen to find this person.

Thank you to everyone who has shared their time and talents with the church.

Pastor Wayne – Thank you for the opportunity to help at Living Waters. It has been a challenging and exciting process. He is honored to be asked to help at his home church.

Call Committee Update: Jeff Moon – Jeff wanted to thank the call committee members. They have met several times and have completed a list of interview questions. They are ready to receive candidates to review. Please pray for the process and be patient as the team finds the best candidate. They received ministry profiles are going to be reviewing them this week. The committee will line up interviews according to the schedule of the candidate and the committee members.

The committee has been tasked with finding a lead pastor and that is what they are focusing on at this time. They have not been asked to find a part time pastor at this time.

New Business

Presentation of proposed 2022 Budget for LWLC Brian Ulrich

A motion was made, voted on and passed during Brian's committee report.

Shingles and siding replacement

Motion to replace of all the shingles and siding listed in the insurance settlement

Motion: Teresa Szymanski

Second: Tim Wright

Discussion – deductible is \$2,000 and the church will be responsible for that amount only. This amount is included in the 2022 budget.

Motion passed

Elections

The ballot was presented

3 year terms (3 open positions)

Linda Agre

John Fuls

Leann Giese (incumbent)

Clare Hansen

Christian Johnson

Darryl Torrin

2 year terms (2 open positions)

Brad Giese (incumbent)

Tom Satre

1 year term (2 open positions)

Kari Vander Hagen

Blair Schrader

Aaron Sufka (incumbent)

1 year term Youth (1 open position)

Daniel Agre

1 year term young adult (18-36) (1 open position)

No candidates available

No nominations were presented from the floor.

Nominations closed

A link to the election ballot was placed in the chat and the link was sent out to everyone to vote. Participants were given 5 minutes to cast their vote.

Great River Conference Assembly

Election of up to 6 voting members to the Great River Conference Assembly (Virtual/Online, Sun, February 27 @ 3:00 p.m.

The assembly is a way to connect with people outside of our congregation.

1. Kay Moon
2. Jeff Moon
3. Leann Giese (maybe)
4. Kevin Warzecha
5. Brenda Wright
6. Tim Wright

Motion: to accept Kay Moon, Jeff Moon, Leann Giese, Kevin Warzecha, Brenda Wright and Tim Wright to represent Living Waters at the Great River Conference Assembly –

Motion: Pastor Wayne

Second: Christin Johnson

Motion passes

Election of 3 Synod Assembly Voting Members

June 10-11, 2022 Virtual – possibly changed to just 1 day now, someone from the church will follow up with the members voted to attend.

1. Blair Schrader
2. Leann Giese
- 3.

Motion: to send Blair Schrader and Leann Giese to represent Living Waters Lutheran Church

Motion: Brenda Wright

Second: Carolyn Neubauer

Motion passed

Announcements:

Election Results

3 year terms

Linda Agre

John Fuls

Leann Giese (incumbent)

2 year terms

Brad Giese (incumbent)

Tom Satre

1 year term

Blair Schrader

Aaron Sufka (incumbent)

1 year term Youth

Daniel Agre

1 year term young adult (18-36)

No candidates available

Adjournment

Motion to adjourn at 11:43

Motion: Leann Giese

Second: Jana Johnson

Motion passed

Respectfully Submitted,

Alicia Mages

Secretary Pro Tem

Congregational Membership Report

Baptized membership at the end of 2017		1141
Baptized membership at the end of 2018		1149
Baptized membership at the end of 2019		1130
Baptized membership at the end of 2020		1140
Baptized membership at the end of 2021		1045
Baptized membership at the end of 2022		1022
MEMBERS RECEIVED IN 2022		
A. By Baptism: children (15 years and younger)	6	
B. By Baptism: adults (16 years and older)	0	
C. By transfer	5	
TOTAL MEMBERS RECEIVED IN 2022		
		11
MEMBERS REMOVED IN 2022		
A. By death	4	
B. By transfer (includes moving out of area)	9	
C. By statistical adjustment	21	
TOTAL MEMBERS REMOVED IN 2022		34
CONFIRMED MEMBERSHIP AT THE END OF 2022		868
Number of households on 1/1/2019	386	
Number of households on 1/1/2020	364	
Number of households on 1/1/2021	370	
Number of households on 1/1/2022	324	
Number of households on 1/1/2023	313	

Pastor Jake's Report, 2022

"As followers of Jesus, we seek to reach, teach and care for God's world as a welcoming and inclusive community."

As I arrived to serve as pastor at Living Waters Lutheran Church about half-way through the year, I have to say I cannot tell firsthand what all of 2022 was like, since I was not with you the whole year. But I can tell you this—this is an amazing church with all kinds of people who are joyful, dedicated servants of God in Jesus Christ. From the obvious evidence of great friendship in Christ, to the love so many have for this church, it is very apparent that God is moving in his Holy Spirit in this place and in this community of faith.

When someone first told me about this great congregation, I did what many people do nowadays—I went to the website, and earlier this year there I saw the mission statement: "As followers of Jesus, we seek to reach, teach and care for God's world as a welcoming and inclusive community." This is what it's all about. When I read these words, I begin to understand how God has done such great things here. The dedicated teams and committees, the worship, the children's and youth ministries, the outreach and missions, including an outstanding community food shelf with 50 cars coming through often weekly, the beautiful building which is so welcoming with such effective planning and use of space for ministry—all is possible because the people in this place want to reach people with God's love, teach about Jesus and the life he gives, and to care for all that God has made as good stewards of creation. It is a time of "restarting" lots of things as a congregation comes back into the patters of meeting together after the main COVID years. It has been challenging, but also a privilege to see areas of ministry coming back together gradually with people excited to bring back things like the Living Nativity and Christmas in a Barn in-person. And God is always doing a "new thing", as we read in Isaiah 43:19 . We want to keep re-connecting with people and inviting those in our midst to this faith community.

As you look through this Annual Report of Living Waters Lutheran Church, you will see all kinds of stories of faith and hope represented in these pages, as we live into those words from John 7:38, "Out of the believer's heart will flow rivers of living water."

Sincerely in Christ,

Pastor Jake Dyrhaug

2023 Proposed Budget

Revenue and Expense Summary								
Living Waters Lutheran Church								
General Fund Only								
(Excludes Restricted Rev/Exp)								
		ACTUAL						BUDGET
		2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Contributed Revenues		\$ 270,605	\$ 270,620	\$ 269,235	\$ 260,976	\$ 238,500	\$ 263,382	\$ 242,681
Fundraising		\$ 18,571	\$ 18,726	\$ 18,115	\$ 8,748	\$ 6,130	\$ 3,225	\$ 4,000
Fees		\$ 11,202	\$ 13,962	\$ 13,280	\$ 2,860	\$ 957	\$ 190	\$ 3,000
Other Revenues (Includes Rent)		\$ 51,428	\$ 48,150	\$ 46,970	\$ 43,498	\$ 43,416	\$ 37,467	\$ 45,000
Interest Income		\$ 46	\$ 49	\$ 35	\$ 20	\$ 11	\$ 11	\$ -
Total Revenue		\$ 351,852	\$ 351,507	\$ 347,635	\$ 316,102	\$ 289,014	\$ 304,275	\$ 294,681
Expenditures								
Compensation		\$ 238,883	\$ 248,606	\$ 257,119	\$ 251,263	\$ 214,949	\$ 191,400	\$ 201,283
Administration		\$ 29,376	\$ 26,862	\$ 28,210	\$ 21,295	\$ 25,759	\$ 28,076	\$ 31,452
Depreciation		\$ 25,906	\$ 25,906	\$ 25,906	\$ 24,262	\$ 24,262	\$ 24,264	\$ 24,264
Education		\$ 13,468	\$ 14,927	\$ 14,623	\$ 3,570	\$ 573	\$ 2,217	\$ 5,000
Mission Support		\$ 18,137	\$ 12,687	\$ 10,931	\$ 5,091	\$ 4,267	\$ 3,531	\$ 5,000
Worship		\$ 4,867	\$ 4,794	\$ 6,027	\$ 4,392	\$ 5,392	\$ 7,095	\$ 5,000
Property		\$ 26,636	\$ 28,956	\$ 26,100	\$ 24,326	\$ 27,151	\$ 41,528	\$ 42,220
Other Expenses		\$ 16,930	\$ 12,120	\$ 14,014	\$ 4,704	\$ 4,486	\$ 3,459	\$ 4,700
Total Expenses		\$ 374,203	\$ 374,858	\$ 382,930	\$ 338,903	\$ 306,839	\$ 301,570	\$ 318,919
Net Revenues		\$ (22,351)	\$ (23,351)	\$ (35,295)	\$ (22,801)	\$ (17,825)	\$ 2,705	\$ (24,238)
Net Revenues Plus Deprec		\$ 3,555	\$ 2,555	\$ (9,389)	\$ 1,461	\$ 6,437	\$ 26,969	\$ 26
Net Fundraising		\$ 13,901	\$ 16,068	\$ 14,877	\$ 8,032	\$ 5,077	\$ 2,386	
Mortgage Giving		2022	2021	Inc (Decr)				
January	\$ 2,588	\$ 9,050	\$ (6,462)					
February	\$ 3,553	\$ 5,923	\$ (2,370)					
March	\$ 3,963	\$ 5,988	\$ (2,025)					
April	\$ 3,518	\$ 5,090	\$ (1,572)					
May	\$ 4,649	\$ 5,250	\$ (601)					
June	\$ 2,778	\$ 6,336	\$ (3,558)					
July	\$ 5,396	\$ 5,343	\$ 53					
August	\$ 3,142	\$ 5,343	\$ (2,201)					
September	\$ 4,059	\$ 4,663	\$ (604)					
October	\$ 4,501	\$ 8,560	\$ (4,059)					
November	\$ 3,683	\$ 3,855	\$ (172)					
December	\$ 4,594	\$ 5,923	\$ (1,329)					
Total	\$ 46,424	\$ 71,324	\$ (24,900)					
Average Monthly	\$ 3,869	\$ 5,944	\$ (2,075)					
General Fund Only		2022	2021	Inc (Decr)				
January	\$ 17,018	\$ 22,748	\$ (5,730)					
February	\$ 18,672	\$ 23,858	\$ (5,186)					
March	\$ 21,688	\$ 18,092	\$ 3,596					
April	\$ 25,781	\$ 21,950	\$ 3,831					
May	\$ 22,378	\$ 17,120	\$ 5,258					
June	\$ 17,918	\$ 17,394	\$ 524					
July	\$ 25,297	\$ 16,977	\$ 8,320					
August	\$ 17,012	\$ 16,374	\$ 638					
September	\$ 27,177	\$ 21,353	\$ 5,824					
October	\$ 22,046	\$ 21,594	\$ 452					
November	\$ 26,275	\$ 15,749	\$ 10,526					
December	\$ 17,162	\$ 22,208	\$ (5,046)					
Total	\$ 258,424	\$ 235,417	\$ 23,007					
Average Monthly	\$ 21,535	\$ 19,618	\$ 1,917					
All Gifts Comparison		2022	2021	Inc (Decr)				
January	\$ 28,163	\$ 39,568	\$ (11,405)					
February	\$ 25,378	\$ 35,994	\$ (10,616)					
March	\$ 31,602	\$ 32,686	\$ (1,084)					
April	\$ 36,136	\$ 39,677	\$ (3,541)					
May	\$ 31,043	\$ 36,784	\$ (5,741)					
June	\$ 23,336	\$ 33,089	\$ (9,753)					
July	\$ 39,616	\$ 32,520	\$ 7,096					
August	\$ 47,072	\$ 27,249	\$ 19,823					
September	\$ 43,420	\$ 33,905	\$ 9,515					
October	\$ 32,002	\$ 42,374	\$ (10,372)					
November	\$ 40,942	\$ 31,862	\$ 9,080					
December	\$ 26,653	\$ 36,544	\$ (9,891)					
Total	\$ 405,363	\$ 422,252	\$ (16,889)					
Average Monthly	\$ 33,780	\$ 35,188	\$ (1,407)					

Worship and Music Report, 2022



Happy New Year. There is much to be thankful for during this past year within music and worship. It has been a few years since choir sang in church.

They did an amazing job during Pastor Jake's installation. I am so pleased that they are singing special music once a month. A continuing thanks to the worship altar team for getting the colors correct as the church seasons change and for getting Communion ready for each service. I am thankful for the three groups leading worship. You are all so very talented. Keep sharing your gifts.

We had a beautiful sunshine morning in July for pastor Jake's first outdoor worship at LWLC. How fun was Rally Sunday to experience worship music with Mel's brass band. They looked like

they were having fun. Thank you to volunteers who came in during "Deck the Halls" and got the sanctuary prepared for the coming of Jesus' birth. Then, the singing of the beautiful cantata, How Great Our Joy. How great our joy indeed.

Finally, after two years of not having it live because of COVID, Christmas Eve in a Barn was welcomed back within our church and local community. Though it was cold, it was wonderful to get that tradition back.

The purchase of our new 5'9" Kawai baby grand piano is this year's biggest faith story within music and worship at LWLC. It was amazing to see God's hand through the process. It was a beautiful, rich sound with Pastor Jake and Janet playing it for the first time. It was love at first sound. Knowing that we did not have a planned





budget for the cost of this piano, what a brilliant and simple proposal to sell the whole piano and create a realistic and affordable fundraiser by buying either octaves or individual keys.

Our faith community responded, and respond they did. In a short amount of time, we raised enough for the piano itself and more for maintenance. We love our music here at LWLC. I am blessed to be a part of it.

What would I like to see this year? In addition to the wonderful traditions that we have going on now, I would like to see more special music. Not only from our current worship leaders, but also from you. I would love to discover more hidden talents. I would love to see our children sing in front with special music during

worship. I would like to see some drama/skits to enhance our worship experience. It's something to think about.

Pastor Jake is planning on doing Wednesday worship during Lent. After Lent, would you like to see that continue? Have 1 worship service on Sunday and 1

on Wednesday night or keep the 2 worship services on Sunday like we are doing? Your prayerful thoughts and opinions will be insightful to the future of worship at LWLC.

Bradley Giese
Worship/Music Liaison



Outreach Report, 2022

"It's not how much we give, but how much love we put into giving." ~ Mother Teresa



What a great year it has been for the Outreach team. We've grown as a team in so many ways.

I thank each and every one of our volunteers for their love and dedication this past year. Some of the highlights this year were our ongoing food shelf, God's Work, Our Hands, and the Living Nativity scene this holiday season. We hope to add more events this next year to keep our team growing within the community.

The food shelf has fulfilled a great need within the community for people with food insecurities. We went from serving around 20 households

each time we were open to serving around 45-50 households now. We are able to get our food from our two partnerships at a low cost or free to us. The two partnerships we have are a Food Rescue with Kwik Trip and Second Harvest food bank. Both of these partnerships could not run without the support from the community and Living Waters Lutheran Church.

The food shelf is a great need for this community as a whole. Our group of volunteers come every Tuesday from 10 a.m.—12 p.m. to serve people in need. One story I want to share with you is our mother/daughter family from Ukraine. They speak broken English, but Terry Sylvester has been able to speak to them using Google Translate on her phone. She has taken the time to get to know them and the other families that use our food shelf each week. When I asked Terry how she describes the volunteers who help with the food shelf, she said we are a family. It's more than volunteering. It's a family who hold each other up with faith and love. This year, we have received three very nice monetary donations for our food shelf. These donations help our food shelf keep going on a weekly basis. Coborn's has given us \$1,800 dollars in gift cards to use for





food and helping others in need. We also received \$1,000 from Thrivent for collecting 500 food items. This event was done by the youth in our congregation. We also received a Mission Grant from the Southwest Minnesota Synod Endowment Fund. We received \$2,500 to use for an event that will help support our food shelf. We plan on having this event in May 2023.

We are in the process of forming a subcommittee for the planning of this event. If anyone is interested in helping with this event or helping with the planning, please contact myself or Pastor Jake. I want to thank our LWLC family for your generous giving towards our food shelf. It is greatly appreciated.

God's Work, Our Hands was a great success this year as well. We were able to order shirts to wear during the event and had numerous photos taken during as well. We did were highway clean-up, singing at Good Shepard Community, and making

fleece blankets for those in need. We hope to add different events each year.

We had our annual Living Nativity scene in the Coborn's parking lot in Sauk Rapids in December. We had a great turn out of volunteers and community members who came to see the reenactment of the Christmas Story. We loved seeing the young families and explaining to their children what was going on. The kids also enjoyed the characters and the animals by the stable. What a great event for the holidays.

As we move into 2023, we hope to add more new events for the outreach team to do in our community. We appreciate each and everyone of our volunteers who make these events possible. Lets make our community stronger. Help those in need and spread the word into the community.

Leann Giese

Outreach Liaison





Stewardship Report, 2022

The Stewardship process at LWLC was interrupted in especially the past two years as we endured the ups and downs and impact of such factors as COVID and various changes in our pastoral leadership, staff and Council.

With a great new Pastor and Office Administrator in place, a full slate of Council leadership and our congregation coming back, we are ending 2022 on a positive note and truly looking forward to 2023! With this new sense of enthusiasm across our church, our Fall of 2022 Stewardship efforts for the 2023 Church Year were an important and ultimately positive part of our getting back to being the LWLC we have all come to enjoy and support!

The New Consecration Sunday program was chosen for especially its emphasis on growing spiritually by giving in God's name to support His work. The multiple mission minutes, posters, articles and sermons inspiring such giving culminated with a joyous October meal at the church to celebrate the outcomes of Consecration Sunday commitments.

Since that time, additional Estimates of Giving Cards have continued to come in with now over 90 cards received! The majority of these givers have blessed the Lord and LWLC with giving commitments that not only meet their past levels of giving but also increased that commitment for 2023! We are grateful for these combined General and Mortgage Fund commitments of nearly \$268,000!

Just as essential to our church and programs, we are counting on/thanking in advance those many members who do not submit giving estimate cards yet and also give SO generously during the year as well! Support from these givers, while quite difficult to estimate, constitutes a critical additional \$60,000 of our budgeted 2023 General and Mortgage fund income! Yes, LWLC is blessed with other income sources such as renting space, etc., however, ultimately it is our household giving that is the key to our ability to do God's work both within and outside our church walls.

Finally, we are all reminded that Stewardship is not only a financial commitment but just as importantly our commitment to support and help with the many duties, programs and activities of LWLC.

Paul Raduns

Stewardship Team

2022 Property Team Report

Our building received some significant upgrades this year in the form of a new roof and new siding as a result of storm damage.

While we did not have any formal Property team meetings, volunteers and our Custodian, Bruce, kept the building running efficiently and performed repairs where needed. They also saw to lawn maintenance and snow removal, as needed.

A big thank-you to those who stepped forward to our call for people to shovel snow in the mornings! We are a community, and actions like this demonstrate our stewardship for our property as just one of our many gifts.

More recently, we are updating our lease with Lutheran Social Services for the house. This has been a good partnership that we both would like to continue. It is simply time for some updates to the agreement for future maintenance.

And we continue to lease part of the Life and Learning Center to the Montessori. This, too, has been a strong partnership over the years. Like us,



they are finding their way in a new world after the pandemic. We hope this partnership can continue as well.

For next year, we do need to get this group formed and functional again. This team is critical to the moving parts and details of all our property.

Finally, our gratitude to Bruce Neubauer for his years of service as our Custodian and true maintainer of our facilities for the past years. We are grateful for his service and wish him well in his upcoming retirement.

Blair Schrader

Property Team





Congregational Life Report, 2022

2022 saw LWLC continuing to emerge from the COVID-19 pandemic and return to some of our usual activities. It's hard to believe that it was just one year ago in early January when the Sauk Rapids area was experiencing an unprecedented surge of COVID-19 cases due to the Omicron variant. Based on appeals from local health authorities, we temporarily returned to online services and put a hold on in-person activities. Fortunately, this surge was short-lived. By February, we were back to in-person worship services, and by spring we had a revised congregational COVID-19 plan and a resumption of Sunday morning fellowship time and other in-person activities.

We had a lot to celebrate in June when we welcomed Pastor Jake and Stephani Dyrhaug with a reception following Sunday worship. It was great to have freshly baked cinnamon rolls again.

September brought Rally Sunday and the servant projects of God's Work, Our Hands. At the September council meeting, representatives from the Calvary Partner Network presented their program to revitalize worship and church activities. We will be considering joining this network in 2023.

We had a beautiful fall afternoon in October for the return of our annual hay ride at the Pederson farm. In addition to the hayride, we enjoyed hot dogs, cider, yard games, and a bonfire.

Looking ahead to 2023, we will be reinstituting our monthly servant teams. The congregation has been divided into seven groups and each group will supply the Sunday morning worship positions for a month at a time. You will be contacted by your servant team leader before your month. Not only will this ensure our worship positions are filled, but it will challenge us all to try new ways to serve. As mentioned above, we will also be evaluating the Calvary Partner Network as a program to revitalize our congregational life. Stay tuned!

God bless,

Tom Satre

Council Liaison

2022 Personnel Report

Hello Living Waters Family, and God's Blessings on you all!

As you all well know, LWLC has been working through a time of significant change, and we have turned the corner in many ways. Because of the many changes, this has been an active year from the Personnel side. We have successfully onboarded several key staff members, and each immediately began making contributions to the missions we all share.

- Early last year, Russ Victorian assumed the Financial Secretary position. Under the mentorship and support of Linda Becker, he is thriving in the position and a welcomed member of the staff.
- Ellarry Prentice has made the Office Coordinator position her own and is putting her journalistic skills to noticeable use in our publications and communications. We were successful in reducing the Office Coordinator role to a more manageable bite by sharing some of the duties with the Church Technologist position. Patti Goke left very thoughtful and detailed information that hopefully eased some of the transition for both positions.
- We are entirely grateful to have Chris Kiewel managing the Technologist position, ensuring our digital presence is executed well (and ensuring that we avoid any fines for copyright infringement). His attention to audiovisual materials is very noticeable.
- Janet Anderson continually provides professional accompaniment. She has reengaged the choir and built up worship teams, helping us offer praise in music and word.
- Jullian Euteneuer is a fantastic addition to the music team and we thank her for her excellence. Both she and Janet, and occasionally Pastor Jake, really make the new piano sing!
- Certainly not last or least, Bruce Neubauer, will be retiring (again) as soon as we have his backfill in place and operating. We appreciate his efforts in creating and nurturing the Custodian position – paving the way for the next Custodian. That person will need support and time to grow into the role. As I write, interviews for the best candidate for the position are underway.
- All the new staff have meshed well with Pastor Jake, especially as most of them make daily discoveries about how our congregation and the building operate.

Looking to the future, our council and congregation will need to continue prayerfully exploring areas of growth. I thank the entire congregation for embracing and supporting all of our excellent staff members.

In 2023, I'd like to challenge each member of our congregation to best appreciate the staff by offering your time and talents, in addition to your appreciation.

God's Peace!

Aaron

Aaron Sufka

Council Liaison

Adult Choir Annual Report, 2022

The first exciting “happening” was the acquisition of our new six-foot Kawai Grand Piano and the selling of our five-foot grand. The fundraiser was divided into 88 keys at approximately \$40 a key or \$240 an octave. In one week the piano was completely paid for, and our existing piano was purchased by a family! It was so exciting to see the Lord working in this process!

Choir was resumed this fall after a two-year hiatus due to COVID concerns. Each week, starting in September, we added new people to the choir. We rehearse twice a month and sing once a month. As a result of more people joining, we were able to cover parts for our Christmas musical, “How Great Our Joy.” With narration and song, the choir told the Christmas story in an inspiring and creative way on December 18th of this year. It was a great success.

In January we restarted rehearsals, keeping to two rehearsals a month. We will sing for Ash Wednesday as well as Sundays in February, March and April. We are also preparing a cantata for Palm Sunday entitled “God so Loved the World,” an inspirational musical with narrative telling the story of Jesus’ suffering, death and resurrection.

Our choir is always open to and seeking out new members! If you have even the slightest interest in singing, join us and see what God can do where a few are gathered. We want to grow our choir and our ministry in song. Future plans include combining with other area choirs for a special event.

Respectfully submitted,

Mrs. Janet M Anderson



A MESSAGE FROM PRESIDING BISHOP ELIZABETH EATON



Dear friends in Christ,

We have seen many changes throughout the years and throughout the world. Sometimes we've been left yearning for the days when things didn't feel so complicated. Other times, we have seen something new happen and have asked, "Why did this take so long?" The church has been through its own changes as well. Some of these have left us wishing for simpler times while others have us waiting for even more to come about.

But, dear church, God still is unchanging. God's love is still the foundation on which the church was built. While we have seen many changes, both in the world and at the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, the eternal love of God and the good news that dwells with Christ's death and resurrection continue to provide hope for everyone. This is why our mission remains steadfast, whether that is through our traditional mission work in places near and far or from new ventures and visions that encourage us to think of different ways to reach even more people.

The writer of Hebrews reminds us: "Do not neglect to do good and to share what you have, for such sacrifices are pleasing to God" (13:16). That could not be truer in the work we have been doing in each expression of the church. Your gifts continue to benefit the good work of spreading the good news throughout your communities, your synods and the whole church. We are all answering the call to continue to do good work with the help of your support, whether that is through your resources, your time or your talents.

I am grateful for your generous support of each expression of the church. God calls all of us to continue to do the good work, and you continue to answer that call. We also continue to join you in that call and will remain true to looking toward God's unchanging promise. There is still much change and learning that will come before us, but God's steadfast love energizes us for the work God is still doing in the world through this church.

In Christ,

The Rev. Elizabeth A. Eaton
Presiding Bishop
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

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(Hebrews 13:16).