



Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
God's work. Our hands.



ANNUAL REPORT

2019





A message from ELCA Presiding Bishop Elizabeth Eaton

Dear friends in Christ,

Stepping out in faith can be difficult. Martin Luther did it in 1517. The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America did it at the 2019 Churchwide Assembly. This church can be bold and daring because of our scriptural and Lutheran confessional understandings. Is it easy?

No. Do we always get it right? Probably not. Where we are in error, may God correct us.

The cross is our center. Faith, grace and Scripture alone are our guides. We are church. We are compelled by the gospel and our understanding that in Christ we have been set free to love and serve the neighbor. This loving and serving of our neighbor alongside courageous and faithful leaders is what offers hope to congregations.

Over the past 18 months we have made significant strides in our work on congregational vitality. This church has multiplied its efforts and leveraged its resources to enhance vitality in congregations. Our vision continues to evolve around strengthening our relationships with God, each other and the neighbors we serve. In this way we are addressing both local and global issues by being present in our own community and proactive with issues in the broader church.

This presence is made possible in significant ways through your giving of time, talents and financial resources to our work together. The success of our recent campaign, *Always Being Made New: The Campaign for the ELCA*, reflects the increasing

support for existing and new ministries that serve our communities here at home and others around the globe. Through regular, special and legacy gifts, \$250 million was given to support God's work. Through the spiritual practice of giving, we both acknowledge receiving God's gifts and share in God's generosity by passing on a portion to others. Together we are doing God's work in ways that we could not do otherwise.

As your congregation plans work for the coming year, I hope you will be both bold and daring, remembering God provides and desires abundant life for all. May you continue supporting God's work together with a spirit of solidarity, collaboration and generosity. We are all partners in the gospel, believing in Jesus Christ crucified and risen for the life of the world.

Stepping out in faith together,

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

"So if anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation: everything old has passed away; see, everything has become new!" —2 Corinthians 5:17

Lutheran Church of Our Redeemer

2001 Second Street NW
Watertown, SD 57201

2019 ANNUAL REPORT

Making Jesus Christ Known Through Word and Deed.

2020 Annual Meeting Agenda—January 26, 2020

Call to Order and Approval of Agenda	Terry Ulrich, Church Council President
Opening Devotions	Pastor Dan Ofstehage
2019 Annual Meeting Minutes	Amber Dahl, Council Secretary p. 3—5
Treasurer’s Report	Lee Hurlbert, Council Treasurer p. 6—9
Church Council Report	Terry Ulrich, Church Council President p. 10
Pastors’ Reports:	Senior Pastor Kent Stillson p. 11—12 Associate Pastor Dan Ofstehage p. 13
Staff and Committee Reports – (accepted as written)	p. 14—36
Presentation and Approval of the 2020 Proposed Budget	Lee Hurlbert, Council Treasurer p. 40—44
Old Business	
• Report on discussion regarding disposition of western portion of church property.	
New Business	
• Audit Committee Report (pages 22 & 23) - Kerry Stager	
• Motion for refinance church mortgage of \$391,020 at Reliabank at the rate of 3.90%. Other details: \$2,358 monthly payment for a 20 year amortization, with a 7 year balloon payment.	
• Seven (7) Delegates needed for the 2020 South Dakota Synod Assembly June 5—6, 2020 at Our Saviors Lutheran Church in Sioux Falls, South Dakota	
• Year end surplus of \$13,289 recommend dispersing 50% to Missions and 50% to Capital Improvement.	
Elections	
Adjourn	
Closing Prayers	
New Council Organizational Meeting	

LCOOR 2019 Church Council	President....Terry Ulrich	Vice President....Justin Ruesch
	Secretary....Amber Dahl	Treasurer.....Lee Hurlbert

Term Expires

2020: Shelly Alvine, Justin Hanson, Terry Ulrich, Lee Hurlbert
2021: Amber Dahl, Rachel Hauck, Justin Ruesch, Dale Even
2022: Pam Luckhurst, Todd Nichols, Mark Reishus

2020 Church Council Nominations 3 year term: Tammy Davis, Jennifer Harms, Scott Munger

2020 Mission & Endowment Committee Nominee 3 year term: Betty Chadwell
Lisa Carrico (2nd term)

2020-2021 Nominating Committee 1 year term: Barb Andersh, Curt Friedrichsen, Kari Keup

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Respectfully Submitted by Amber Dahl, Council Member

President Mark Schulz greeted attendees, declared a quorum, and called the meeting to order at 11:36am. Roger Whittle moved to approve the agenda. Seconded by Lisa Carrico. Motion carried. Pastor Dan Ofstehage led the congregation in opening devotions, with a message from Psalm 46 – Remembering that we are not God. We are the hands and feet with God leading us.

REVIEWING MINUTES

The minutes of the 2018 Annual Congregational Meeting were presented for review and approval. A motion was made by Arlene Brandt Jenson and seconded by Roger Whittle to approve the minutes. Motion carried.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Treasurer Tim Chandler presented the 2018 Financial Report.

Noteworthy: Income \$897,819.60 with expenses of \$908,552.10 resulting in a deficit of (\$10,732.50) for 2018.

Questions posed:

- Julie Rude mentioned the Care Fund dollars are not adding up or matching appropriately. She requested a review of the Care Fund specifically.
- The question was posted “How do you initiate an audit?” President Mark Schulz answered that we don’t have a set protocol but will be setting one soon.” Julie Rude responded that there was at one time something stated in the bylaws to pull three (3) months of records for review. Julie stated that when she left her position in 2013, there was a “Record Review” conducted by Hanson, Vilhauer & Raml (now VRS – Vilhauer, Raml & Snyder). Prior to that time, Julie would pull the 3 months of records and would have 2-3 financially astute volunteers from the congregation review the financials for those months. President Schulz was unaware of the bylaws mentioned and stated we would be reviewing the process and implementing an audit to be conducted very soon.
- Todd Decker questioned “Is the dedicated fund money coming in or going out?” It was answered, “It’s money coming in.”
- Lisa Carrico posed the question “Is there a reserve (or cushion) in the general bank account to ensure we have enough to cover an average of 3 months of billing?” It was answered that there isn’t a dedicated fund for a cushion.
- Darcy Nichols questioned, “Are we moving the deficit for 2018 to 2019 or is it accounted for in 2018?” It was answered that the deficit resulted and showed in 2018 and would not move to 2019.
- Arlene Brandt Jenson asked what “Payee Service” was within the Dedicated Fund. Pastor Kent explained the Payee Service was an account set up to assist Donna Hamre with her side function of paying for services for people with needs in the community.
- A motion was made by Al Christenson and seconded by Gary Grewing to approve the 2018 Treasurer’s Report. Motion carried.

Making Jesus Christ Known Through Word and Deed.

REPORTS

President Mark Schulz referred for reading the written reports by the Pastors and Committees, as printed in the Annual Report. A motion was made by Chuck Sherman and seconded by Pastor Sam Hatlestad to approve the reports. Motion carried.

PRESENTATION AND APPROVAL OF THE 2019 PROPOSED BUDGET

Tim Chandler, Treasurer, presented the budget for 2019. He referred members to the proposed budget on pages 36-40.

Noteworthy:

- After reviewing the last few years of the proposed budget and actual budget, it was determined that actual giving is at about 95% of where we can realistically budget.

President Mark Schulz asked if there was additional discussion on the budget. Questions:

- Question: On page 36, “Why were lines 1204 (ELCA World Hunger/Global Health Ministries) and 1310 (LCOOR Preschool) **not** paid out in full under Missions?”

Motion was made by Lisa Carrico and seconded by Chuck Sherman to accept the 2019 budget. Motion carried.

OLD BUSINESS:

President Mark Schulz discussed the changes to the Safety & Emergency Procedures, detailing we had Sheriff Brad Howell and a committee review and revise the procedure. The church staff is now CPR/First Aid & AED certified as well as training church leaders and volunteers on what to do in the event of an unforeseen event.

NEW BUSINESS:

President Mark Schulz led discussion on the following items:

- “Stewardship for All Seasons” led a 3-4 week special appeal for 2 needs:
 - ◊ Complete fund-raising for Sanctuary Cameras - the quote for new cameras was estimated at \$21,000 and our current giving to this project is around \$6,000.
 - ◊ Gifts to pay down church mortgage prior to refinancing in August 2019
- Discussion on selling up to 7 home lots on the west edge of the church property. LCOOR currently has 14 acres of property. The proposal is to sell up to 7 lots to reduce the debt.
 - ◊ Chuck Sherman asked what the estimated lot price would be. Justin Ruesch mentioned an estimate of \$40-50k for what other lots in the development are going for. We have approximately \$453k left on the mortgage.
 - ◊ Arlene Brandt Jenson asked if the goal was to sell lots prior to August’s refinance initiative. The answer was, “No – this is a long-term idea.”
 - ◊ Jack Holmquist recommended making a motion for discussion of selling the lots rather than the mention of it being informative. Jack made a motion for the Church Council to investigate selling the lots and consider an appeal to the congregation with a goal of debt reduction. The motion was seconded by Terry Rydell. Motion passed.

- Seven (7) delegates are needed for the 2019 South Dakota Synod Assembly (Bishop Election) May 31 – June 1, 2019 at Our Saviors Lutheran Church in Sioux Falls, South Dakota
 - ◊ Nobody in the congregation submitted names for delegates. President Mark Schulz asked members to consider being delegates as we will be electing a new Bishop.

ELECTIONS

- **COUNCIL NOMINATIONS** – Term expiring for council members are Lisa Olerud, Tim Chandler, Mark Schulz and Barb Dohrer and we thank them for their dedication and service to the Church Council. There were no new nominations from the floor, so nominations for a 3-year term are Pam Luckhurst, Todd Nichols and Mark Reishus.
- **MISSION AND ENDOWMENT COMMITTEE NOMINEE** – Gary Grewing was nominated for a 2nd term of 3 years. No discussion had.
- **NOMINATING COMMITTEE** – Mark Schulz, Bob Jenson & Ann DeSpiegler were nominated for a one-year term. No further nominations made.
- Motion to accept and approve all nominations by Karla Christensen and seconded by Barb Struwe. Motion carried.

CLOSING

Pastor Dan led the congregation in a closing prayer – Page 317 in the red hymnal.

Motion made by Chuck Langner and seconded by Kevin Luoma to adjourn the 2019 Annual Meeting. Motion carried.

2019 Council members met briefly with the following present: Lee Hurlbert, Dale Even, Amber Dahl, Rachel Hauck, Justin Ruesch, out-going President Mark Schulz, Pastor Kent, Pastor Dan, Pam Luckhurst, Todd Nichols and Mark Reishus.

- Nominations for President were made for Justin Ruesch, Lee Hurlbert and Terry Ulrich. Lee Hurlbert gracefully declined the nomination for President. Voting was conducted by the present Council members. Terry Ulrich received the majority vote. Motion to cease nominations and approve the election of Terry Ulrich was made by Dale Even and seconded by Todd Nichols. Motion carried.
- Motion to nominate Justin Ruesch as Vice President made by Amber Dahl and seconded by Todd Nichols. Motion carried.
- Motion to nominate Amber Dahl as secretary made by Justin Ruesch and seconded by Rachel Hauck. Motion carried.
- Motion to nominate Shelly Alvine and Lee Hurlbert for Treasurer. Voting was conducted by the present Council members. Lee Hurlbert received the majority vote. Justin Ruesch moved to cease nominations and approve the vote for Lee. Rachel Hauck seconded. Motion carried.
- Bank signature cards will be prepared for the executive committee (the above officers) for the February council meeting. Remove from the signature card outgoing executive committee members Mark Schulz, Tim Chandler and Shelly Alvine. Donna Hamre, Jodi Spilde and Terry Ulrich will remain on the signature card, with addition of the new executive committee officers Lee Hurlbert, Justin Ruesch and Amber Dahl.

Motion made by Justin Ruesch and seconded by Pam Luckhurst to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried.

FINANCIAL REPORT 2019

Making Jesus Christ Known Through Word and Deed.

General Fund

		2018	2019
Income	Promised Pledges	\$656,490.14	\$688,035.12
	Non-promised Offerings	\$160,941.80	\$156,332.21
	Loose Offerings	\$16,335.90	\$13,830.00
	Church School	\$2,132.99	\$1,982.58
	Christian Preschool	\$34,215.20	\$32,048.70
	Other	\$3,818.58	\$3,554.26
	Interest	\$313.53	\$324.88
	Designated Mission Giving	\$23,571.46	\$21,138.15
		<hr/>	<hr/>
		\$897,819.60	\$917,245.90
Expenses	Missions	\$82,204.45	\$81,620.73
	Worship and Service	\$87,480.90	\$82,803.35
	Parish Education	\$40,768.99	\$38,215.73
	Parish Youth Program	\$67,614.08	\$67,697.29
	Outreach	\$61,501.51	\$64,089.06
	Pastoral Leadership	\$227,943.13	\$230,223.58
	Church Operations	\$119,743.56	\$116,804.23
	Church Home	\$171,779.81	\$187,014.72
	Preschool	\$49,515.67	\$35,487.80
	Contingency	<hr/>	<hr/>
		\$908,552.10	\$903,956.49
	Difference	-\$10,732.50	\$13,389.41
General Fund	Ending balance	\$101,533.98	\$126,068.88

Scrip

Reliabank	\$3,781.85	\$2,541.48
Inventory	\$4,375.00	\$4,435.00
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	\$8,156.85	\$6,976.48

Care Fund

Deposits	\$4,274.54	\$10,212.01
Expenses	\$7,939.47	\$9,878.09
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Ending Balance	\$3,233.67	\$3,567.59

FINANCIAL REPORT 2019

Dedicated Fund

	2018	2019
Adult Mission Trips	-\$13.03	\$186.97
Altar Guild		\$372.25
Befriender Ministry	\$2,332.12	\$2,332.12
Bible Camp Scholarships		\$625.00
Camera Fund	\$6,285.00	\$2,157.94
Capital Improvement Fund	\$39,734.66	\$22,822.58
Coffee/Equal Exchange	\$3,371.17	\$1,817.00
Gods Work Our Hands	\$125.00	\$834.89
Handbell Choir	\$475.42	\$721.12
High School Lunches	\$4,358.04	\$3,859.02
Ladies Night Out	\$2,983.12	\$4,035.82
Legal & Accounting	\$2,717.00	\$2,717.00
Liturgical Dance	\$191.72	\$191.72
Mission & Ministry/Cong	\$6,588.54	\$4,065.54
Ministry Events	\$1,405.00	\$665.78
Music Team Fund	\$1,260.96	\$1,520.96
Payee Service Donations	\$3,831.00	\$1,521.50
Praise & Rejoice Choir	\$783.67	\$768.08
Prayer Shawl Ministry	\$766.88	\$1,159.13
Preschool Donations	\$3,023.60	\$4,453.55
Preschool Scholarship Fund	\$440.00	\$0.00
Sandwich Ministry		\$875.00
Sound System	\$937.37	\$2,157.40
Summer Faith Experience	\$4,393.05	\$2,723.34
Thrivent Choice Dollars	\$4,651.65	\$6,762.44
Use Tax	-\$36.39	\$0.00
Wednesday Meals	\$4,850.89	\$5,345.30
Winter Wonderland	\$0.00	\$0.00
Youth Ministry Ministry	\$2,949.58	\$176.86
Youth Development Fund	\$0.00	\$200.00
Interest	\$1,123.39	\$1,766.74
	\$99,529.41	\$76,835.05
<i>Dedicated Fund Ending balance</i>	\$99,529.41	\$76,858.16

FINANCIAL REPORT 2019

Making Jesus Christ Known Through Word and Deed.

Building Loan

Reliabank Dakota @ 3.57%

Payment = \$4,411.09 per month on the 15th

	Principal paid		Balance of Principal	Interest
			\$ 453,440.68	
01/15/19	\$ 3,097.05		\$ 450,343.63	\$ 1,314.04
01/31/19	\$ 6,872.00	From Debt Reduction Offerings	\$ 443,471.63	
02/15/19	\$ 3,036.20		\$ 440,435.43	\$ 1,374.89
02/28/19	\$ 3,402.00	From Debt Reduction Offerings	\$ 437,033.43	
03/15/19	\$ 3,193.20		\$ 433,840.23	\$ 1,217.89
03/31/19	\$ 3,093.00	From Debt Reduction Offerings	\$ 430,747.23	
04/15/19	\$ 3,081.69		\$ 427,665.54	\$ 1,329.40
04/30/19	\$ 1,219.50	From Debt Reduction Offerings	\$ 426,446.04	
05/15/19	\$ 3,140.60		\$ 423,305.44	\$ 1,270.49
05/31/19	\$ 973.00	From Debt Reduction Offerings	\$ 422,332.44	
06/15/19	\$ 2,943.80		\$ 419,388.64	\$ 1,467.29
06/30/19	\$ 972.00	From Debt Reduction Offerings	\$ 418,416.64	
07/15/19	\$ 4,120.09		\$ 414,296.55	\$ 1,081.20
07/31/19	\$ 1,272.00	From Debt Reduction Offerings	\$ 413,024.55	
08/15/19	\$ 3,136.68		\$ 409,887.87	\$ 1,274.41
08/31/19	\$ 888.00	From Debt Reduction Offerings	\$ 408,999.87	
09/15/19	\$ 3,108.76		\$ 405,891.11	\$ 1,302.33
09/30/19	\$ 1,042.00	From Debt Reduction Offerings	\$ 404,849.11	
10/15/19	\$ 3,243.09		\$ 401,606.02	\$ 1,168.00
10/31/19	\$ 1,272.00	From Debt Reduction Offerings	\$ 400,334.02	
11/15/19	\$ 3,175.82		\$ 397,158.20	\$ 1,235.27
11/30/19	\$ 1,863.00	From Debt Reduction Offerings	\$ 395,295.20	
12/15/19	\$ 2,412.37		\$ 392,882.83	\$ 1,998.72
12/31/19	\$ 1,862.00	From Debt Reduction Offerings	\$ 391,020.83	
				\$ 16,033.93
	\$ 37,689.35	Total from Mortgage Payments		
	\$ 24,730.50	Total from Debt Reductions		
	\$ 62,419.85	Total payments made to principal		

MISSION & ENDOWMENT FINANCIAL REPORT 2019

General Gifts Summary(acct # xxx1968 & xxx7601)

Principal as of 1/1/19	14,347.59
Accumulated Interest (YTD)	1.24
2019 Grants	-
Interest transferred from Acct # 7601	160.93
Total	\$14,509.76

Drange/Hogstad Endowment Summary(acct # xxx4545) **(75% of Gift)**

Principal as of 1/1/19	51,789.31
Deposit 75% of Hogstad Gift	18,750.00
Accumulated interest earned on acct # xxx4545	792.10
Accumulated Interest (YTD) transferred to acct # xxx0607	(792.10)
Total	\$70,539.31

Summary

Total Principal	\$85,049.07
Total	\$ 85,049.07

Timmerman Scholarship Summary (acct # xx3002 & acct # xx2718)

Principal as of 1/1/19	40,706.46
Accumulated Interest (YTD)	683.03
Expenses YTD	(2,500.00)
Total	\$38,889.49

Mission Fund Summary (Special Gifts & Memorials)

(25% of Hogstad Gift) (Acct # xx1958 & # xx607)

Principal as of 1/1/19	21,874.24
Accumulated Interest (YTD)	157.50
Interest transferred from account ***4545	792.10
Memorials Deposited YTD	8,855.00
Expenses (YTD)- Grants	(3,906.30)
Total, available to spend	\$ 27,772.54

Total of all funds

\$ 151,711.10

Memorial Funds (reflected in Missions Summary)

Designated Memorial Monies in account # xxx1958	\$1,640.00
Undesignated Monies in account # xxx1958	\$11,140.00
Total	\$12,780.00

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE COUNCIL PRESIDENT

Making Jesus Christ Known Through Word and Deed.

As 2019 comes to a close and 2020 starts a new year, the Church Council, Executive Committee, and the staff at Lutheran Church of Our Redeemer would just like to say Thank You. Thank you for your generosity and your commitment to the several Ministries throughout 2019. An example of some of the ministries are the Sandwich Ministry, Brothers and Sisters Behind Bars, Quilters, Befriender Ministry, the multiple volunteers for teaching Sunday School, Wednesday School, and Confirmation classes, it truly is a blessing belonging to Lutheran Church of Our Redeemer. Please remember that Ministries aren't just within the four walls of the church, they are out in the community as we live every day.

Matthew 25:34-40 tells us, Then the king will say to those at his right hand, 'Come, you that are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world; for I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you gave me clothing, I was sick and you took care of me, I was in prison and you visited me.' Then the righteous will answer him, 'Lord, when was it that we saw you hungry and gave you food, or thirsty and gave you something to drink? And when was it that we saw you a stranger and welcomed you, or naked and gave you clothing? And when was it that we saw you sick or in prison and visited you?' And the king will answer them 'Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me.'

2019 gave us some big challenges, one of the biggest was the parking lot. We were asked to come together as a congregation and raised over \$200,000 to do this improvement and we succeeded. I don't think many people in our congregation truly would have believed that we could have raised that amount of money, but through faith and generosity we did. Thank you.

If you were to ask me what is one of the most important things for the future of our church, I would tell you it is our youth. We currently have 142 students for Wednesday School and 134 for Sunday School. We confirmed 41 youth last year. The High School Worship Team leads music during the Lenten Services. We serve an average of 55 high school students for Tuesday lunches. Please continue to support and encourage our youth to be involved, to invite and to experience the work of the Lord.

The future of our church also holds some challenges. We do have a 15-year old building that is going to require some maintenance in the near future such as a new roof and a new boiler. As you know, how we



raise the money for these improvements is going to be a challenge but, as we did with the parking lot, I have the faith that we will be able to accomplish this large feat.

The last three years of being on the council has been an honor and a privilege and has changed my life in Christ forever. I leave you with this. As I listen to the scriptures being read or a sermon being preached, I have never heard don't be kind to people, don't give generously, judge people and expect to be forgiven without asking. So please be kind, give generously, don't judge and ask for forgiveness because we all need and want those things.

God Bless,
Terry Ulrich

Each year when we assist our 9th Graders in choosing their confirmation Bible verse, I am reminded of the verse that rattles in my head and heart regularly: 1 Peter 2:9. *"You are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's own people, in order that you may proclaim the mighty acts of him who called you out of darkness and into his marvelous light."*

I am pretty sure this was not my own confirmation verse – back in those days I would have gone for short and simple. But the 1 Peter 2 Scripture, focuses us on what matters most:

- Who we are
- What is our mission

We are God's very own people, with the mission of proclaiming Jesus Christ who has taken us from darkness into God's incredible light. Three over-looked words, "in order that", tell us God does not save us from darkness for our own benefit alone. But for the sake of others – proclaiming IN WORD AND DEED – God's goodness and grace.

"Proclaiming the mighty acts of God" is the mission of the church, not only by the preacher but by each of us every day, with and for others. The church is not merely a talking box (preaching and teaching the Good News of Jesus Christ) but it is also a mission center – doing the work of God.

Lutheran Church of Our Redeemer is slowly becoming a **mission center** and this is good! Let me point out a few ways:

- Prayer shawls and quilts are created here (and often sewn in people's homes) but they don't stay here – they go out to the places in the community and world that need warmth and prayer.
- LCOOR Preschool 4 mornings a week, teaches little ones the academic and faith lessons that will accompany those darlings back into their homes and life.
- 186 (at the moment) sack lunches are packed 3 days a week and on Sunday mornings for the Watertown Sandwich Ministry. Then, they are delivered to hungry areas in our community. This means, 1116 cookies are baked (mostly by people from LCOOR) and packed into those lunch sacks for a homemade tasty treat for the recipients in our community.
- High school youth group and confirmation do service projects in the community – we start in the church and then go out.
- 12 "Ministries of the Month" are financed here and then sent to various local and global ministries.
- The 6th annual "God's Work, Our Hands" day of service was held September 22. We began the day with worship, prayer and a meal and then went out into the community for various service projects.
- Befriender's Ministry and deliverers of Holy Communion receive the training, support and Sacraments in the church and then go out to their assigned individuals to extend our Communion ministry beyond the walls.
- Occasional mission trips to St. Dymas in Sioux Falls (prison ministry), deliveries of food to Salvation Army and Church on the Street in Sioux Falls raise funds (and food) and leaders to be a part of these ministries beyond the scope of our ministry.
- Even the worship at the lake (done for decades at LCOOR) gets us out of the church box and into the sometimes windy and sometimes wonderful world.

Making Jesus Christ Known Through Word and Deed.

We will be seeing more of this style of ministry in churches that not only survive but thrive!

- Not ignoring God's Word and Sacraments – but immersed in it.
- Not isolated from the world – but immersed in it.

Being a mission center style of ministry is not easy nor is it always clean and tidy. But it is where God is calling us – as individuals and as the church.

What follows are some particular emphases I have had in my ministry this past year.

Preaching and teaching. This is at the center of what I do as pastor. Other things are necessary, but this is where I put most of my heart. Preaching for weekly worship, funerals, assisted living homes, weddings. Teaching confirmation is hugely fun and inspiring for me, as parents and kids are together in this ministry. Men's group, Sunday School and occasionally women's group and Joy Ranch events are opportunities I cherish. I also consider my participation in Church Council to be a teaching event – as we learn together how better to be the church at this time in history.

Working with staff. We have a highly committed and skilled staff. I seek to support them in their ministries as well as challenge them in finding new ways to be effective leaders in the great ministry God has given us.

Stewardship. We had the focus of "Expanding Our Vision 2020". We had great leaders who worked hard for the sake of the mission of the church. The full report is on pages 28 and 29 in this booklet.

Concreting our parking lots. With all the wet last spring, the ailing east parking lot became ruts and mud. The stewardship committee again worked hard in articulating the need. And the congregation responded. I don't think anyone of us expected we would raise the entire amount for this huge project during the summer months, but we did! \$227,000 was raised. Praise God.

Pastor Kent Stillson
Senior Pastor



Sacrament of Holy Baptism

PASTOR DAN OFSTEHAGE'S REPORT

"For in him we live and move and have our being" Acts 17:28

I thank God for the witness to the Gospel of Jesus Christ that Lutheran Church of Our Redeemer has done this last year. As the body of Christ, we gather together for **worship** four times a week. Worship is a vital part of what we do as a community of faith. We take time out of our hectic weeks to sing, to pray, to confess, to hear words of forgiveness, to practice the sacraments of baptism and communion, to hear God's word of grace read and preached, and to support one another in the mission that we share. Worship is just the beginning of the ways that we **"Make Jesus Christ Known Through Word and Deed."**

I am grateful for the **ministry** that we share. From quilting to prayer shawls to bible studies and book clubs, from Men's Lunch and Women's Circles to Church School to Deeper and Coffee and Conversation, **there is always a gathering of people** of faith who come to support one another and to be the presence of Christ for one another doing the ministry, the work of the church. This last year we have opened our doors to Watertown Sandwich Ministry so that they have more space to create the meals that are shared three times a week with folks in our community. This is not our ministry alone, but one that is shared with many volunteers from a variety of church backgrounds throughout the Watertown community.



Chapel Time with the Pre-K Students

This last year a new ministry began. Twice a month a group of young adults gather together at different locations for conversation and fellowship anchored by the love of God and the promise of the Holy Spirit.

I am excited to see what the new year has in store for Lutheran Church of Our Redeemer. As we listen to the movement of the Holy Spirit, where will we be in a year? What new things might we try? Where is God leading us in this place at this time? The possibilities are endless.

In Christ,
Pastor Dan

Making Jesus Christ Known Through Word and Deed.

Baptisms – Child (32)

Lainey Ryan Nuttall
 Emersyn Jayne Lambert
 Conrad James Rossman
 Zayden Franklin Thompson
 Beckham Gene Wahl
 Charley Shelsta Hogue
 Beckett Alexander DeFea
 Joie Jane Lenyx Siegfried
 Bridger Emrick Miles
 Jayden Jacob Determan
 Kori Jo Fischer

Rowen Dean West
 Gabriella Mae Stein
 Alexas Rae Larsen
 Easton John Hoverstadt
 Gus Henry Jenc
 Lakyn Michelle Farkas
 Rylee Jean Cordell
 Cali Jo Marie Pieschke
 Georgia Leigh Meyer
 Mia Mary Determan
 Sawyer Ray Hooth

Helena Rose Dahl
 Connor Kruse Wells
 Braidon Michael Larsen
 Ty John Schulte
 Beckett Lauren Thomas
 Thomas Daniel Anderson
 Phoenix Charles Dolney
 Mya Lynne Pieschke
 Avalyn Rose Masloski
 Ivy Kay Leichtenberg

Baptisms – Adult (1)

Whitney Jane Determan

Confirmed – Youth (41)

[October 27, 2019; 8:30am] (19 People) [October 27, 2019; 10:30am] (22 People)

Dylan Jon Anderson
 Savannah Margaret Dobberpuhl
 Brooklyn Jean Gronau
 Gabrielle Kathryn Hibbert
 Troy Joseph Kneeland
 Hannah Grace Landmark
 Kate Elisabeth Luken
 Emily Rae Miller
 Kendall Josephine Paulson
 Cloey Danielle Beving Phillips
 Ryan Michael Riddle
 Chandler Troy Scott
 Logan Allen Stimson
 Jesse Thomas Werner

Brayson Wayne Bohling
 Emmilia Marie Ebsen
 Carter Douglas Hansen
 Kaylee Marie Holt
 Kaydence Brianna Kohlhoff
 Stephen Thomas Lechner
 Addy Jo McGillivray
 Austin David Ninneman
 Elijah Selmer Peterson
 Izack Christopher Redfield
 Allison Grace Rokusek
 Amber Jolie Simonton
 Madelynne Brooke Storm
 Jaida Lynn Young

Trevor Lee Crook
 Ava Skyy Gardner
 Luke Ryan Hansen
 Samantha Marie Keup
 Bradyn Marlin Lamb
 Jack Robert Lenox
 Carter Timothy Miller
 Aidan James Oien
 Katherine Kelly Pfaff
 Hannah Laura Reiner
 Dillon Richard Schroeder
 Madyson Leigh Steen
 Alexandra Joe-Tora Thonvold

Deaths/Funerals/Memorial Services (26)

Evelyn Agnes Halonen
 Elden F. Hemme
 Mary Alice Fisk
 Sonya Kaye Benson
 *Julie Ann Jungen
 Robert "Bob" V. Pierson
 Dwayne Awdrey Blocker
 Dorothy Minnie Rukstad
 John Calvin

*Myron Milton Gauger
 *Cathryn Ann Borgen
 *Sharon K. Gill
 Goldie Arleen Larson
 Kathryn Ann Hibbert
 *Jean Evelyn Lundy
 ■ Hazelle Larson
 *Nancy A. Hauck
 *Brady Gene Black

*Joseph Lee Bailly
 David Richard Vick
 Sandee Sue Pederson
 Ronald Richard "Ron" Hutt
 Ardis "Ardy" Susanna Sweezo
 *Dr. Terry Lee Seeman
 Eldon Dean Petersen
 Mary Adeline Hatlestad

New Members Received (21 Households [48 People])

[April 7, 2019] (11 Households; 25 People)

Ryan Damm and Haley Tschetter
 Jeff & Jenna Feldmeyer and children Kylie, Noah & Mason
 Jake Hanson and Emily Wall
 Elizabeth Herman
 Jason Jatón
 Kyle & Shelby Kraemer and daughter Ella
 Brandon & Amanda Larsen and children Braidon & Alexas
 Sharon Peterson
 Patrick & Donlynn Rice
 Corby Shelsta *(was listed in 2018 Annual Report)*
 Lee & Kaylee Tol and son Jaxson

[October 27, 2019] (4 People)

Ava Skyy Gardner <i>Confirmed Youth</i>	Kaylee Marie Holt <i>Confirmed Youth</i>
Bradyn Marlin Lamb <i>Confirmed Youth</i>	Jaida Lynn Young <i>Confirmed Youth</i>

[November 17, 2019] (10 Households; 19 People)

Jacob & Whitney Determan and children Jayden & Mia
 Deanna Ericsson
 Jamon Harberts & Alisha Wersal
 Ron & Sheila Moehring
 Darline Morrow
 Wilbur & Julaine Selzler
 Lincoln Swenson
 Pam Van Gilder
 Vanessa Victor & Ellen Burns and children Tina Victor-Burns & Cecilia Victor-Burns
 Eleanor Wiesner

Marriages (11)

Baylee Rayn Krause & Grant Douglas Lukonen
 Aleese Byer & *Jordan Tollakson
 Emily Taylor Binger & Christopher Paul Hagen
 Elizabeth Marie Herman & Anthony Lester Fryer
 Kali Gottsleben & *Brett Denman
 *Hannah Jo Wangen & Miron Willmot Fisk IV
 *Alexis Anne Noeldner & Alex Kindopp
 Haley Marie Tschetter & Ryan Kurtis Damm
 Faren Leigh Barber & *Todd James Stark
 Meagan Lynne Hardee & *Jason Norgaard
 Emily Wall & Jacob Hanson

* = Non-member ▪ = Associate Member

Making Jesus Christ Known Through Word and Deed.

Members Removed by Request [9 People]

Myron & Lory Retzer

Earl, Deb & Robert Cass

Scott & Kerri McMahon and adult children Dylan & Carissa

Members Removed [1 Person]

Megan Olson joined the Roman Catholic faith April 2019

Members Transferred Out (12 Households [30 People])

Brady & Leeann Diercks and children William and Lucy

To: First Lutheran Church, Brookings, SD ELCA

Eric & Amber Negaard and child Brynlee

To: Hosanna Lutheran Church, Watertown, SD NALC

Jared & Angela Terhark and children Nora, Evie and Charlie

To: Bethlehem Lutheran Church, Vienna, South Dakota ELCA

James & Jennifer Fisher and children Gabriella, Athena and Emmalyn

To: St. Martin's Lutheran Church, Watertown, SD WELS

Deb Sundem

To: Palisade Lutheran Church, Garretson, SD ELCA

Lisa Determan

To: Grace Lutheran Church, Watertown, SD ELCA

Boston Bayles (child)

To: Lutheran Memorial Church, Pierre, SD ELCA

Curtis Greiner

To: Emanuel Lutheran Church, Milbank, SD LCMS

Paul & Kathryn Macek

To: St. Philip the Deacon Lutheran Church, Plymouth, MN ELCA

Brady Valberg

To: Hosanna Lutheran Church, Watertown, SD LCMC

Bob Jenson & Arlene Brandt-Jenson and Kristin Jenson

To: Spirit of Joy Lutheran Church, Sioux Falls, SD ELCA

Mark & Amy Schulz and daughter Evelyn

To: Bethlehem Lutheran Church, Fergus Falls, MN ELCA

Membership Statistics

Year Ending 2018: **Year Ending 2019:**

Baptized: 3339

Baptized: 3358

Confirmed: 2429

Confirmed: 2458

Average Weekly Attendance

2018: 645

2019: 618

EMERGENCY & SAFETY PROCEDURES

Our First Aid kits and fire extinguishers (located throughout the building) and the AED (located next to the church office) continue to be monitored and supplies replenished as needed throughout the year.

The Lutehran Church of Our Redeemer Safety Emergency Guidelines were adopted by the church council on May 8, 2018. The Church Safety Task Force (Comprised of Sherriff Brad Howell, Shelly Alvine and Twila Schmitt) reviewed and revised the Safety Emergency Guidelines for Lutheran Church of Our Redeemer during 2018.

“Clean Up” kits have been placed in the vestry and education wing for use in emergencies.

Church staff is CPR/First Aid and AED certified though the American Heart Association, with plans in place for regular refresher trainings.



In effort to be good stewards of our resources, we have begun using real dishes and silverware during our Wednesday Family Meal to reduce waste. We have had wonderful response with volunteer “Heros” dishwashers.



Wednesday evenings we serve anywhere from 100—150 meals. This includes church school students, families and adults. It is a busy night full of activities and this meal provides a chance for families to come together for a quick bite to eat between work/school and evening church activities.

EDUCATION COMMITTEE REPORT

Making Jesus Christ Known Through Word and Deed.

Submitted by Christy Crook

Committee Members: Nikki Landmark, Dana Stimson, Gwen McGillivary, Denise Schmahl, Julie Kneeland, Kjersten Fisk, Robyn VanMeeter, Terry Ulrich, Pam Luckhurst (Council Liaison)



Palm Sunday—Church School Children Singing

Church School:

	2018/19	2019/20
Sunday:	152	134
Wednesday:	155	142
Total Enrolled:	307	276

Teachers, Substitutes, Music Leaders, Resource Room Attendants, & Misc. Volunteers: 50+

We are using *Spark* Curriculum from Augsburg Fortress with online access to resources for Preschool-4th Grade and Old and New Testament for 5th/6th Grade with Phil leading large group then they split into their classrooms.

Church School Offerings of \$1982.58 were collected and designated towards the Mission of the Month along with VBS \$357.04.

- January: \$219.77 Nicaragua Partner Ministry
- February: \$164.11 to Lutheran Outdoors
- March: \$298.12 to ELCA World Hunger
- April: \$179.14 to LCOOR Christian Preschool
- May: \$123.00 to Pine Ridge Ministry
- June: \$357.04 VBS Offering to the Pach Program and ELCA World Hunger
- September: \$262.67 to Lutheran Campus Ministries
- October: \$286.08 to Cameroon Partner Ministries
- November: \$332.93 to One Roof Program (Salvation Army)
- December: \$116.76 to LCOOR Care Fund

Pass the Faith:

Some Grades attend a Pass the Faith Event with their parents. 2nd Grade takes First Communion classes, 3rd Grade receives and studies the Bible, 4th Grade does a service project, and 5th and 6th Grade take part in worship and acolyte training.

First Communion:

32 students participated in the First Communion instruction classes. Class was held Thursday evening prior to Maundy Thursday. They received their First Communion on April 18, 2019 during the Maundy Thursday worship service.

EDUCATION COMMITTEE REPORT

Christmas Program:

Light A Candle

The Program was held Sunday, December 15th, 2019 at 9:30 AM and Wednesday, December 18th, 2019 in place of WOW Worship for preschool through 6th grade.

Adult Studies:

- MomLife woman's group meets monthly.
- Women's Bible Study meets weekly on Wednesdays during the school year.
- Adult Bible Study is held between church services in the Chapel on Sunday mornings during the school year. This is led by one of the pastors.

Vacation Bible School:

VBS was held at the end of May/beginning of June. We had a blast learning & discovering in 2019 with ***To Mars and Beyond!*** Ages 4-2nd Grade. Around 100 kids and 50 volunteers!! VBS was held for 3 Nights, (Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday) from 5:30-8:30pm. Glory to God, who is able to do far beyond all that we could ask or imagine by his power at work within us! Ephesians 3:20. Meals were provided. The children concluded their week with singing for their parents at Closing Worship on the last night! The offering total for the VBS was \$357.04 with half the offering going to the Area Pach Program and half to ELCA World Hunger.



V.B.S. Story Time

NeSoDak Church Camp:

Christy Crook took 9 (nine) 3rd—5th graders, during the week of July 14-19, 2019, to the Lutherans Outdoors Camp NeSoDak up by Waubay, South Dakota.

Day Camp:

Day Camp was a more affordable opportunity for some students to attend camp, and experience for those not ready to stay overnight. It was held June 24th to June 29th for grades that finished 3rd -5th. Around 36 Kids attended. This camp was done by Phil, Christy and many other volunteers; they did a full week of Bible Study, Arts & Crafts, Service Projects, Worship and Songs. Registration fee was \$60.00.



Sidewalk Art on Kemp drawn by our Day Camp Kids

Scouting Religious Classes:

Nineteen (19) youth attended the five (5) different levels of classes in January 2019. These youth and group leaders helped greet, usher, acolyte and assist with Holy Communion in worship at the 8:30am service on Scout Sunday, February 3, 2019. During worship, they were presented with the medallions and certificates that they had earned.

EVANGELISM & MISSION COMMITTEE REPORT

Making Jesus Christ Known Through Word and Deed.

Submitted by Twila Schmitt, Welcoming & Caring Ministries Coordinator

Committee Members: Pam Raeder, Nyla Bergan, Dave Johnson, Ken & Renae Madison, Buck Crouse, Deb Munsterman, Pastor Kent Stillson, Amber Dahl (council liaison) and Twila Schmitt.

Missions of the Month:

These ministries are supported not only by your donations, but by the “noisy can offerings” and the church school offerings. We are truly making a difference in our community, our nation and the world. LCOOR supported the following organizations as our Mission of the Month in 2019:

- January – Nicaragua Partner Ministry
- February – Lutherans Outdoors of South Dakota
- March – ELCA World Hunger
- April – LCOOR Christian Preschool
- May – Pine Ridge Lutheran Lakota Shared Ministry
- June – St. Dymas
- July – Nicaragua Youth Retreat
- August – Pueblo de Dios (People or Community of God)
- September – Campus Ministry
- October – Pastor Elisabeth Johnson (Cameroon Partner)
- November – One Roof – Salvation Army
- December – LCOOR Care Fund
- Ongoing – Watertown Sandwich Ministry



Decorating sandwich bags for the Watertown Sandwich Ministry

Throughout the year, the LCOOR congregation was also involved in outreach in the following areas:

Watertown Sandwich Ministry (Hunger Free Codington County):

A faithful group of volunteers, including many from LCOOR, prepare 180-190 sack lunches (up from 165 in 2016) and deliver them Monday, Wednesday and Friday. During 2019, the Watertown Sandwich Ministry operation moved from the Salvation Army location to LCOOR as a preparation site. Many of our congregational members continue to bake cookies -- a special treat for those receiving the sack lunches. LCOOR, as well as other organizations from the community, give financial support to the ministry. (100% of all donations go directly to purchase food.)

Kathy's Karts: Our on-going mission to keep the shelves filled at the Salvation Army Food Pantry sees “Kathy’s Karts” filled with food and delivered on a regular basis. Formerly known as our Community Carts, “Kathy’s Karts” were re-named as a tribute to Pastor Kathy Hibbert who had a strong passion in feeding the hungry. (Thanks to AJ Sherrill who frequently delivers the donated items to the Salvation Army.)

Angel Tree:

More than 100 tags were delivered to LCOOR in December 2019 for this Salvation Army project. Each angel tag has the name and details for Christmas gifts for a child in the community. Generous families and individuals selected all 100 tags and brought back bags filled with wonderful gifts for children in need in our community.

Winter Wonderland:

We are very pleased to be represented in the 2019 Parade of Lights and also the Winter Wonderland display at City Park this season. Thanks to the creative families that donated time to build the display, march in the parade and set up at City Park.



Yardwork Fun during GWOH.

Worship at St. Dysmas

Inmates hear the gospel from the Pastor but experience the gospel through outside visitors. The key to St. Dysmas' dynamic and vibrant worship and congregations success is this link with outside visitors. Lutheran Church of Our Redeemer has the privilege to worship with the men of St. Dysmas twice a year. 2019 dates were April 18 and October 10.

God's Work – Our Hands 2019:

We are blessed to have our 6th Annual "God's Work. Our Hands" in the books in 2019. More than 200 people were involved on Sunday, September 22, with projects both inside and outside the church walls. Service projects filled multiple areas of our church building -- cookies were baked and more cookie kits were assembled for the Watertown Sandwich Ministry; hygiene kits were put together for Pine Ridge; teen kits were assembled by our youth for Church on the Street and sewing projects were completed for Global Health. Also during the afternoon, teams went to Joy Ranch, tackled road ditch cleanup and worked on a Codington County Museum project. Others branched out in neighborhoods around town to wash windows, replace smoke detector batteries and build relationships.

The number of people reached by "God's Work. Our Hands" is tremendous. Here are a few highlights:

- 150+ cookie ingredient kits for Watertown Sandwich Ministry
- 49 dozen cookies baked for the Watertown Sandwich Ministry
- 48 newborn kits assembled for Global Health (96 diapers were sewn!)
- 55 hygiene kits packaged for Pine Ridge
- 65 Caring Casseroles assembled
- 150 Teen Kits assembled for Church on the Street

Many thanks go to Paige Sullivan and Lynn Langer who spent hours of time ahead of September 22 coordinating projects and recruiting volunteers.

'Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.'

Matthew 25:40

FINANCE COMMITTEE REPORT

Making Jesus Christ Known Through Word and Deed.

To: LCOOR Church Council

From: Finance Committee (Brooke Bohls, Lisa Carrico, Kerry Stager, and Toby Wishard)

Date: March 29, 2019

Re: Internal Audit of Church Finance

The Finance Committee has conducted an internal summary audit of the finances and records of Lutheran Church of Our Redeemer. Based upon our review of the records, we found that funds were properly accounted for in the check registers and deposit records and contained backup documentation identifying the nature of the purchases and approvals.

We did find instances of human error when transposing the financial data from the Shepard Staff software to the excel spreadsheets. However, the amount of human error was nothing out of the ordinary that you would find in the workplace and position of this kind.

There is a separate person, Jodi Spilde, conducting reconciliations of the bank statements and there are checks and balances in place when counting the offerings and logging that information into the accounting system.

That being said, the Committee when reviewing the records, is offering the following recommendations for consideration by the Council to streamline processes and minimize unnecessary redundancies:

1. **Training through webinar and other economical resources for Shepard Staff.** We believe that the software may have a lot of potential as an accounting system if explored to create customized reports that may be of benefit to the Council and the church as a whole. If custom reports can be generated through the software rather than re-entering the data into an Excel spreadsheet, it would minimize the level of human error.
2. **Training in Excel.** If the business manager can attend or receive additional training in Excel, then the business manager would be able to understand the formulas in the spreadsheets better which again would assist in reducing human error.
3. **40 hour workweek.** Initially we were recommending an increase in hours for the business manager to a normal FT 40 hour workweek. This would allow the business manager to have sufficient time to double check and cross check the reports and data entry. After talking with Pastor Kent, we realized that the church budget and finances is not conducive to an increase in the workweek so in an effort to accomplish the goal, we would recommend that the business manager's schedule change at certain times during the month for periods when there is heightened accounting activity (such as days before the Council meeting, or days when payroll is generated) so that the business manager has adequate time to double check/cross check the reports and entry of data.

FINANCE COMMITTEE REPORT

- 4. Quarterly Reports and W-2s generated by accounting firm.** As a check and balance on the payroll and benefits. We would recommend that an outside third party generate the quarterly payroll reports and W-2s at the end of the year. This would allow for some checks and balances without additional work since the reports have to be done anyway.
- 5. Company-wide (Church) credit card with cards issued to certain staff members.** A lot of the duplicative record keeping is dealing with reimbursements to staff members when they purchase items with their own money (cash/credit cards) and seek reimbursement or using charge accounts. If there was a company credit card for the church with certain staff having their own card on the master account, then the business manager is just paying one bill and attaching the receipts to that credit card bill. The bill itself would break out the purchases under each person's designated card number. This would streamline the process and minimize error.

If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact Pastor Kent or any member of the Finance Committee: Brooke Bohls, Lisa Carrico, Kerry Stager, and Toby Wishard. Thank you for the opportunity to serve the members of LCOOR.



We come together for food for the body and food for the soul. High School Lunch, Men's Lunch and First Saturday Meal honoring our Faithful Generations



MISSION & ENDOWMENT COMMITTEE REPORT

Making Jesus Christ Known Through Word and Deed.

Committee Members: Gary Grewing (Chairman), Mike Madsen (Treasurer), Lisa Carrico (Secretary), Karen Amundson, Kevin Luoma and Jennifer Harms. Pastor Kent Stillson is an ex-officio member.

The Mission and Endowment Fund was established by a resolution of the Church Council on January 12, 1988, and was called The Trust Fund. A by-law change approved at the 2014 Annual Meeting of the congregation changed the name to “The Mission and Endowment Committee”.

The purpose of the Mission and Endowment Committee is to provide a vehicle for accepting donations to Lutheran Church of Our Redeemer. Memorials and planned estate gifts received by LCOOR go into the fund. Earnings from the Endowment Fund are transferred into the Mission Fund one time annually and grants that benefit LCOOR ministries can be awarded.

In 2019 the Mission and Endowment Committee funded 9 ministries & missions of LCOOR. Because of the generosity of the Drange Endowment and many others, \$3,504.00 in grants were awarded.

Grants awarded in 2019 include:

- Handbell Choir (\$100)
- Redeemer Ringers (\$100)
- LCOOR Preschool (\$156.30)
- High School Youth Music Team (\$200)
- Prayer Shawl Group (\$325)
- Altar Guild (\$400)
- Quilting Group (\$500)
- Sound & Projection Team (\$925)
- Watertown Sandwich Ministry (\$1,200)



Redeemer Ringers led by Bev Splinter

We are grateful for the generous financial gifts that continue to support the work of Jesus Christ through the people of Lutheran Church of Our Redeemer.

The committee also administers the Leonard and Ardell Timmerman Scholarship Fund.

Two \$500 scholarships were awarded as directed by the Timmerman family.

The 2019 recipients were:

- Parker Schmidt
- Thomas Wishard

PRESCHOOL COMMITTEE REPORT

Submitted by Nikki Landmark, LCOOR Preschool Director/Teacher

Each child's individual personality is what makes teaching so much fun. We enjoy sharing the Bible stories and songs along with introducing the child to early literacy skills, math skills, and building their social skills. Our Classroom Bible verse is "Teach children how they should live, and they will remember it all their life." Proverbs 22:6

We were blessed to have 21 children enrolled in the Spring Semester (Jan.-May), and 14 children enrolled in the Fall Semester (Sept.-Dec.). The Pre-Kindergarten class meets on Monday thru Thursday from 8:30-11:30am. This class is for 4 & 5 year olds and the cost is \$130.00 a month. The curriculum focuses on helping children become aware of the uppercase and lowercase letters in the alphabet and how to correctly write the letters. We practice correctly writing the child's first and last name. We also work on shapes, colors, and numbers. We help the child build good socialization skills and direct them into the development of key classroom-life skills.

Committee Members: Justin Ruesch, Dana Stimson, Jamie Tarbox, Jenna Feldmeyer, Michelle Leitheiser, Nicole Deutsch, Nikki Landmark, and Wendy Kruger (LCOOR Preschool Paraprofessional).

We held a winter fundraiser in April where Soulful Creations came in and painted "Champ the dog" with some of our students and church members. Our profit for that was \$190.00. For the spring fundraiser we tried something new. We still sold Rada Cutlery which brought in \$1,227.85. The other fundraiser we did was the Giving Wall, which brought in \$1,680.00 The students sang the first Sunday in April to help kick off the Giving Wall. The amounts earned in the fundraisers were used to further LCOOR preschool. A special **thank you** to the members of our congregation for your purchases and for your giving. Thank you for your support.



Learning can be so much fun!

We also continue having Chapel Time with Pastor Kent or Pastor Dan once a month. The students look forward to this. The students also made handprint Christmas cards for the confirmation students to hand out at Christmas visiting. We had a Christmas program for the Pre-K students in December. We had treats and fellowship afterwards. Fun was had by all.

Thank you to our Thrivent Financial for Lutheran members who directed their Choice dollars to our preschool. \$2,841.00 was donated. Also, thank you to those using SCRIP.....\$1,290.05 in proceeds were transferred over to the preschool. The preschool was the Mission of the Month in April, \$2,301.75 was given. Thank you so much!!

We thank the parents (and grandparents) for bringing their children to our preschool.

God's blessings to you all in 2020.

PROPERTY COMMITTEE REPORT

Making Jesus Christ Known Through Word and Deed.

Respectfully submitted by Chuck Langner, Committee Chairman

Committee members: Pam Raeder, Doug Alvine, Allen Rude, Chuck Langner, Jerry Rieber, Tim Peterson, Custodian Adam Lauseng, Council Liasons Dale Even and Mark Reishus.

The Property Committee thanks the many members who gave countless hours to keep our property in order. Many chores are taken care of by these volunteers such as mowing, making Sunday morning coffee, landscaping and flowers, setting up and working events and many other chores taken care of by volunteers. Thank You!!

This year was a busy year for the property committee. Minor repairs were needed on shingles and flashing as the shingles are starting to show the age and wear.

A decision was made to buy a new snow blower as the old blower had been repaired as much as it could so there were several bids received and the committee decided to go with the Arien Snow Blower.

Dead trees were removed from the islands in the parking lot and replaced with shrubs and grasses. That will be continued next year.

It was brought to the property committee to look at selling the land on the west side of the property. It was sent back to the council where they set up a committee with property members on the committee. The council also asked the property committee to move some of the trees to show where the property line would be if the property was sold. There were 10 trees moved.

Much of the time was spent on the parking lot on the east side of the property. It has been patched for several years, and after the late snow storm in April, it wasn't usable and it could not be repaired. After looking at different options it was decided that the only option was concrete. Bids were received and sent to the council. Several information meetings and temple talks were had to keep members informed on what was happening. The Stewardship Committee did a great job on raising funds as over \$226,000 was raised. There was an over run on the projected costs as extra fill had to be brought in. Also the parking lot south of the church was sealed to keep it maintained as it was well overdue. Special thanks to Tim Peterson for all the work he put in as he was the lead person on this.

A priority list for the next 5—10 years was also put together on projected items for future action and sent to the council. The total costs for those projects is approximately \$430,000.

The Property Committee will continue to keep everyone informed of what is ahead to keep the church a welcoming site.



Maintaining the church property during God's Work. Our Hands day.

CEMENTING OUR WELCOME

Summary

Income:

Total Money pledged for Concrete	\$227,678.00
Total Deposited as of 12/31/19	\$226,503.00
Left to collect:	\$1,175.00

Expenses:

Cones used for collecting pledges	\$37.05
Glacial Lakes Asphalt	\$15,306.15
T & J Parking Lot Maintenance	\$1,470.00
Kyle's Concrete Construction	\$190,638.09
Deutsch Excavating	\$30,119.04
Clausen & Sons Construction	\$3,722.16
Professional Landscaping & Lawn Irrigation	\$1,234.70
	\$242,527.19

Expenses exceeded income by \$16,024.19 on this parking lot because of the unforeseen expense of 28 side-dumps of fill in wet spots. This was needed to provide proper slope for the newly poured concrete. The overate was paid from the Capital Improvement Fund.



Parking lot after the late spring snow storm

Making Jesus Christ Known Through Word and Deed.

Respectfully submitted by Todd Decker

John 1:46: “Come and See” is what Philip said to Nathanael when he had found Jesus. Their lives forever changing that day, following the one who gave his life for us and providing us an example of unconditional love and giving.

How have we SEEN God’s work in 2019 with stewardship?

- \$22,000 was raised with God’s blessing for (3) HD sanctuary cameras which have provided improved video and recording of events for our congregation and families to share.
- Repairing our “Welcome Mat” Cementing Our Welcome was a fundraiser used to replace the east asphalt parking lot with a concrete slab. The south asphalt parking lot was patched, sealed and restriped. The southwest driveway and service truck entrance was replaced with concrete. Our families’ donations and God’s blessings provided \$227,678 needed to complete this project to help our church home stay “Welcoming”.
- Our congregation was provided monthly with “Ministry Spotlight” during our worship times to inform them of how their financial giving and God’s blessings were working in our church and community.

I would like to thank our committee for the dedication, love and their gifts they gave this past year in helping God’s work be fulfilled in many ways!

Stewardship Team: Justin Hanson (council liaison), Al Lawrence, Grant Titze, Sandy Albertsen, Cathy Zubke, Carla Peterson, Jack Holmquest, Tammy Reiber, Todd Decker, Pastor Dan Ofstehage and Pastor Kent Stillson.

As we begin our Expanding Our Vision 2020 year we thank you, our church family, for your continued financial and personal gifts! Please prayerfully consider the [Simply Giving](#) or [Online Giving](#) opportunities for your contributions which help our ministries have a consistent and predictable income. God Bless...



How many books ARE in the Bible?
Confirmation Camp at NeSoDak



Come and See

John 1:46

2019 Statistical Report on “Expanding Our Vision 2020” results

- A total of 351 giving units (husbands and wives or single persons) completed *Statement of Intent Cards* this year.
- A total of 164 of these giving units increased their financial commitment above their last year’s amount.
- A total of 351 giving units filling out *Statement of Intent Cards* committed a total of \$756,440.00.
- Based on last year’s giving records, we can expect to receive \$141,681.00 during the coming year from people who have consistent giving patterns during the past twelve months but did not submit a *Statement of Intent Card*.
- Based on the average total of loose offering during the past three years, we can expect to receive \$16,000 during the coming year from that source.
- Church income from non-donor sources such as interest, rentals, pre-school and fees \$35,270.00.
- This gives us a grand total of \$949,391.00 anticipated income for the next twelve months.
- The total income for our general operating budget during the last twelve months was \$917,245.90.

WELCOMING & CARING MINISTRIES REPORT

Making Jesus Christ Known Through Word and Deed.

Submitted by Twila Schmitt
Welcoming & Caring Ministries Coordinator

Lutheran Church of Our Redeemer's Welcoming & Caring Ministries during 2019 were lead by Twila Schmitt. The groups, committees and ministry areas covered under Welcoming & Caring Ministries include:

Welcome Center Teams, Sunday Morning Helpers, BeFrienders, Care Committee, New Members, Newborn Baby Visits, Hospital & Home Visits, Prayer Chain, Prayer Shawl Group, Quilters Group, Fellowship Committee, Mission & Evangelism Committee, Faithful Generations, Grief Group, God's Work-Our Hands, Caring Casseroles and Women's Bible Study.

"Be joyful in hope; patient in affliction; faithful in prayer." Romans 12:12

With more than 1,000 church families at LCOOR, we have a lot of folks to keep in our prayers. Through our varied ministries (and building relationships) we strive to keep in touch with as many folks as we can on a regular basis to help with life's challenges as well as to join in celebrations.

Here are a few highlights from the various Welcoming & Caring Ministry areas:

BeFriender Ministry – We currently have 21 active BeFrienders who provide a listening ear and companionship to the lonely, shut-ins, homebound, those dealing with life issues or those in need of company.

Caring Committee – Paula Orthaus and Sharon Brandsrud continue to coordinate a team of volunteers who send cards of congratulations, encouragement, sympathy, get well and children's birthday cards and more to LCOOR members and friends. This group also organizes baking cookies for New Member families.



Book Club

Fellowship Committee – This group organized a variety of events and activities for LCOOR, including serving at a New Member brunch on April 7, 2019. This year's Ladies Night Out on November 11, 2019



Ladies Night Out

drew a full house (320 women & a few men) for a fun evening of fellowship with entertainment by The Looney Lutherans. The men of the congregation again assisted the Fellowship Committee in serving the event.

Caring Casseroles – Since September 2018, our Caring Casserole ministry has provided a tangible way for our members to care for each other. For the past two years, casseroles have been assembled as a God's Work Our Hands project. The casseroles continue to be well-received as they have been delivered to a variety of households including: new parents, folks who have had recent surgeries, recently widowed spouses and foster families.

Care Fund – Through the generosity of our members, funds are available to assist others in need. We continue to grant requests throughout the year, with our largest focus being in December. Blessings to all who make this possible!

Wednesday Women's Bible Study – Our Wednesday evening bible study resumed – and grew – this past fall under the leadership of Sue Garness. (The initial room proved to be too small, so the group moved into The Chapel.) Following the initial 6-week study, the group continues to meet and share leadership responsibilities.

Prayer Chain Ministry – The prayer chain is always ready to be activated. Prayers are forwarded both through an email list and telephone list. Prayer requests can be made by calling the church office. Thanks Mary Jo Manzey & Marilyn Chapman, co-chairs.

WELCOMING & CARING MINISTRIES REPORT

75+ Celebration – A Faithful Generations 75+ dinner was held on September 7, 2019 following the Saturday evening worship service. The Fellowship Committee planned the meal which was served with assistance of high school youth in the Great Hall. Bookmarks handcrafted by Dianna Lambert were gifted to each person who attended.

Sunday Morning Helpers – This dedicated group makes sure the Lutheran lifeblood (coffee) is ready and waiting for Sunday morning worshippers! They also set out trays of goodies which are appreciated by all ages.



Prayer Shawl Group

Faithful Generations Worship – A monthly afternoon Holy Communion worship service in the Chapel, followed by a time of fellowship, has been held during “good weather months” to serve our Faithful Generation members who have a difficult time attending weekend worship services.

Prayer Shawl Ministry – The Prayer Shawl Ministry, organized in April 2007, continues to bring love and comfort to many through shawls knit and crocheted by members of the group both at home and also meeting twice a month at the church. A notable addition has been the Prayer Square Ministry. Pocket-size squares are packaged with a prayer and are also available at the Welcome Center for anyone to give. Shawls continue to be blessed regularly during worship services throughout the year. Shawls are shared monthly with Prairie Lakes Hospice, LCOOR graduating seniors in May and many others needing comfort and support.

Welcome Center Teams - We are fortunate to have a dedicated group of smiling folks who take turns at the Welcome Center each week. They are available to answer questions, direct people to locations, assist with sign ups, take information and sell SCRIP. And most importantly, they greet everyone with a smile!

Overall, 2019 was an amazing year in the area of Welcoming & Caring Ministries at LCOOR. I would encourage all of you to reach out and get to know members of your church family. We have some pretty amazing people here! Please remember that opportunities to become involved exist in any of the areas mentioned. In addition, if you see a need that we are not currently meeting, let's visit about getting something started in 2020!



Quilting Group

Meals on Wheels – Julie Rude continues to serve as LCOOR coordinator for the Watertown Community Meals on Wheels program, overseen by the Interlakes Community Action Program. LCOOR delivers meals one week out of a 10-week rotation.

New Members – Our congregation continues to formally welcome new members in April and November. A Christianity 101 Class is held prior to each “welcome.” An orientation brunch, hosted by the Fellowship Committee, was held between Sunday Services.

New Baby Ministry – In an effort to support and encourage our young families, LCOOR presents new parents with the gift of an embroidered baby blanket made by a member of our congregation, “God Loves Me” bible, a Christian music CD and brochure on baptism shortly after the birth of their child. It's wonderful to have the time with these young families.

Road Ditch/Adopt a Highway Project – Each spring and fall, Al & Pam Rader continue to organize a group of volunteers who clean a two-mile stretch of Highway 20 by removing garbage and other debris.

WOMEN OF THE ELCA REPORT

Making Jesus Christ Known Through Word and Deed.

Respectfully Submitted by Doris Stowe

Lutheran World Relief Projects

for 2019 were as follows

We shipped:

- 248 quilts
- 7 personal care kits
- 31 bars of soap
- \$424.96 was collected in the 'Gas Can' to help with shipping costs!
- 80 school kits
- 23 baby care kits
- 5 fabric kits



Rolling Lefse

Rummage & Bake Sale receipts were \$2,568.30. A big thank you to all the help given to prepare, work and pack up after the Rummage Sale. The men who came with pick-ups to carry the remainder to Good Will. The women of the church will not be organizing the rummage sale in 2020, however, the High School Youth will be taking this on as a fundraiser.

Lefse

Thank you to all who came each week to prepare and fry the lefse.

Global Health Ministries

Hospice Kits—New Born Kits—Rolled Bandages—Pillow Cases—Baby Blankets

Funerals Served

The women served 15 funerals in 2019.



Lefse Time!

Treasurer's Report Submitted by Sandy Peterson, Treasurer

Balance 1/1/2020 = \$2,644.26

Rummage Sale (\$2,568.30) Proceeds given

- \$642.10—LCOOR Youth
- \$642.10—Sandwich Ministry
- \$642.10—Beacon Center
- \$642.10—Global Health Ministries

Mini-Advent Fair and Lefse Sale (\$3,453.00) Proceeds given

- \$1,151.00—Sandwich Ministry
- \$1,151.00—Church on the Street (Sioux Falls)
- \$1,151.00—LCOOR High School Lunch

Other Gifts Given During 2019

- \$1,000.00—LCOOR Church Debt Reduction
- \$949.05—Care Fund
- \$430—Salvation Army "One Roof Project"

WORSHIP & MUSIC COMMITTEE REPORT

Respectfully Submitted by Robbyn Givens
Worship & Music Coordinator

O come, let us sing to the Lord; let us make a joyful noise to the rock of our salvation! Psalm 95:1

There are a multitude of individuals willing to share their talents. LCOOR's music ministry provides opportunities to serve with the Praise & Rejoice Choir, Handbell Choir or as part of the adult or youth Worship Teams. Adults and teens are also invited to be a part of brass, woodwind or string ensembles, to serve as vocal or instrumental soloists or ensemble members. Organ, piano and keyboard musicians share their gifts at each worship service. Church school children have special musical opportunities several times each year, as well.

There are many other ways to serve in worship at LCOOR, too. Many have served through drama, liturgical dance, as acolytes or as Children's Church leaders. Many people serve as head ushers and sound and projection team members at LCOOR's four weekly services and during additional festival worship services and events. Altar Committee members assist with communion and keep our altar area clean. Volunteers share their gifts decorating the sanctuary and our church building for special worship services and to celebrate the seasons.

Each member of the congregation is encouraged to participate through Faith & Care. Every year in this report we continue to talk about and see our members' lives become more and more busy. We continue to struggle to get people to commit to serving at worship. As has been mentioned before, sixty volunteer opportunities are available at worship during a communion week, a few less during a non-communion week. Although families are only asked to serve once every 13 months, finding the needed volunteers remains difficult. The Worship & Music Committee continues to discuss and look for better ways to call our members to service.

It has been an exciting, faith-enriching year at Lutheran Church of Our Redeemer. Here are some highlights:

- Saturday evening worship continues at 5:30 p.m. each Saturday. On the Saturday before the first Sunday of the month the service is pastor-led. Those attending this service have been blessed with Jack Holmquest providing the message on the third Saturday of each month. All other services are lay led. There is also a dinner served on that first Saturday of the month. On Saturdays that are lay-led, the congregation receives video-taped sermon messages from the previous week's Sunday service. A dedicated group of lay leaders help to facilitate many aspects of this service. Jack Holmquest has provided the message on occasion on Sundays and Wednesdays.



Handbells played at the Watertown Figure Skate Club Ice Show.

- *Faithful Generations* is a communion service and fellowship time offered monthly at 2:30 p.m. on the second Thursday of each month. It was recognized that mornings are sometimes difficult for some of the elderly members of our congregation to get out and about. Because of this they don't often get to worship or receive Holy Communion. *Faithful Generations* allows them to receive communion, hear a message, sing a couple of hymns and share in a time of fellowship each month. This service was offered on the second Thursday of each month, June through October.
- Special music is provided by several groups and individuals throughout the year.

WORSHIP & MUSIC COMMITTEE REPORT

Making Jesus Christ Known Through Word and Deed.

- **Lenten Series: *Questions Jesus Asked***
Pastors Kent Stillson and Dan Offstehage, Pastor Keith Garness and Jack Holmquest all proclaimed the word throughout Lent focusing on those scriptures highlighting questions Jesus asked and the questions we are asked in response to these questions. Jesus teaches us to examine the questions and reinterpret what we thought we already knew...to open the hearer up to a new thing. Over 30 high school youth served through the Lenten Youth Music Team, leading Lenten worship each week. Lent ended with a group of 12 men and one woman sharing the story of Jesus along with musicians and singers as our mostly second graders shared in their first communion on Maundy Thursday. We hosted a Good Friday Tenabrae service and finally three worship services on Easter Sunday. Many, from the Lenten Youth Music Team to the handbells, choir and brass musicians all played a part in celebrating Christ's resurrection throughout the weeks of Lent and Holy Week. There were 1,211 in attendance on Easter Sunday.
 - From Memorial weekend to Labor Day weekend the congregation continues to worship at Memorial Park on Lake Kampeska. Song leaders lead hymns for worship accompanied by keyboard and often guitar. Worship Team members also led worship at least once each month.
 - The WOW (Word on Wednesday) worship service continues to grow on Wednesday evenings. This family-friendly service is currently the second largest service at LCOOR (with an average attendance of 204), second only to the 8:30 a.m. Sunday service.
 - Three vibrant worship teams lead at the Sunday 8:30 a.m. service and Wednesday 6:30 p.m. services. Thanks go to our Team leaders, Jim Miller, Julianne Decker and Robbyn Givens. Jim Miller retired from leadership in November. The three worship teams were combined into one team at that time. Musicians now can sign up online for the services they are able to help lead. We hope that this format will help to alleviate burnout of
- our musicians and give these volunteers a chance for time off, as well.
- The Praise & Rejoice Choir, under the direction of Arlene Brandt-Jenson through the month of May and Tera McDonnell beginning in September, and the Handbell Choir, under the direction of Bev Splinter, continue to uplift the congregation and share the good news of Jesus Christ. Arlene Brandt-Jenson retired and moved away from our community in May after directing the Praise & Rejoice choir for 22+ years.
 - We are blessed with capable pianists/organists. If others are out there hiding, please let us know!
 - The Sound & Projection Team saw a few changes this year. A fund-raising effort was made to raise necessary funds to install a new digital three-camera system in the sanctuary. Over \$17,900 was raised to purchase the new system. It was installed by Tricorne Audio & Video in June. A good number of Team members were trained on the new system at that time by a Tricorne representative. There is a bit of a learning curve and it takes time to get comfortable with how the new system works. There have been some hiccups, but Tricorne has been great working with us to correct the bugs in the system and learn how to better utilize the tools we've been given.



Holy Communion

WORSHIP & MUSIC COMMITTEE REPORT

- Graphics are seen before each service and during announcements on the worship screens in the sanctuary, as well as on the TVs in the Gathering Space. These graphics let members know what is going on and how they can get involved.
- The Redeemer Ringers are a handbell choir comprised of middle and high school-age youth. Bev Splinter leads this group of enthusiastic ringers as they learn to play handbells and chimes and come together as a cohesive musical group.
- Thanksgiving Eve worship with Holy Communion, was offered at 12:15 p.m. this year on November 27th. There were 63 in attendance.
- Four Christmas Eve services were offered as usual at 1:30, 3:30, 5:30 and 10:00 p.m. Brass, organ, piano, flute and guitar accompanied the Christmas carols and more during the services. A contemporary Worship Team again led at the 1:30 p.m. service. We were fortunate to have individuals from all three Worship Teams represented in this special Christmas Worship Team. The Praise & Rejoice Choir, Handbell Choir, individual vocal and instrumental soloists were also part of the special musical selections at each of the services. There were 1,593 people who worshipped and celebrated the birth of our Lord on Christmas Eve in 2019!
- The LCOOR Summer Fishing League has been gathering people around fish and fellowship for over 11 years. Memories are a little sketchy as to when the League began and there were a couple of years of hiatus, as well. This year nine teams comprised of 29 fishermen and women hit the local waters each Wednesday from June 5th through July 24th to see who could catch the most walleye and other fish. Those earning bragging rights this year were Tim Chandler, Burt Andersh and Neal Larsen in the walleye category and Greg Dubois, Brian Bak and Dave Satter in the 'other' category.



Praise & Rejoice Choir

- Longest Night worship. *The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it.*

John 1:5

As a way of acknowledging that the joyous season of Christmas can also be difficult, we offered a *Longest Night* service on December 21st, the day of the year with the longest stretch of darkness. It was a time to slow down and gather around scripture, song, prayer and one another and to light candles for the hurts in our hearts. The 60 people in attendance felt healing in the glow of prayer and candlelight.

- Advent Series: *The Making of A Savior*. This sermon series took us on a journey as we anticipated and were amazed while walking alongside those who first heard the good news of the birth of Jesus as told in Luke's Gospel.

The Worship & Music Committee serves in an advisory capacity to, and in partnership with, Lutheran Church of Our Redeemer's pastors and worship leaders.



Worship at Memorial Park

YOUTH MINISTRIES REPORT

Making Jesus Christ Known Through Word and Deed.

Respectfully Submitted by Philip Lickei, Youth Director

2019 has seen new ministry opportunities created, and existing ministries re-imagined. As many of you know, youth ministry is fluid and constantly evolving. No two youth are the same, no two ministry programs are the same and no two school years are the same. The only constant is the building of relationships. No matter how many programs we offer, or how many youth participate, letting the youth know that they matter, are loved and are extremely important to the life of the church is and always will be my top priority! So as you view the 2019 report, please keep in mind that through these ministries important relationships are being built, youth are discovering the gifts God has given them and in turn are sharing their gifts with those in the church and community.

In a nutshell, here is what 2019 looked like...

- High School Deeper (Average Attendance 30-35)
- High School Lunch (Average Attendance 65-70 Jr. / Sr. and adults)
- High School Coffee & Conversation at Gather (Average Attendance 10-12)
- 7th / 8th Grade Confirmation (80 Confirmation Students and 14 Small Group Leaders)
- Confirmation Christmas Visiting (10 Homes Visited)
- HS youth group Christmas caroling at StoneyBrook Assisted Living
- Lutheran Outdoors Summer Camps
- High School Mission Trip to Cincinnati, OH (16 Youth / 4 Adult Leaders)
- Lenten Youth Music Team (35 Youth / 6 Adult Leaders)
- 5th/6th Grade Church School (65 students / 10 adult small group leaders)
- 5th & 6th Graders participating in the church Christmas program
- MS/HS Youth Assisting with VBS
- Day Camp 35 youth / 15 adult small group / activity leaders
- Sandwich Ministry (6-10 volunteers every Sunday morning)



High School Mission Trip
Cincinnati, OH



7/8 Grade Christmas Visiting



High School Deeper

- Salvation Army Ministry Projects (Tie-Blankets & Angel Tree)
- Hosting the Illini 4000 group from University of Illinois
- HS youth serving the "Faithful Generations" meal
- HS youth creating "Teen Kits" for Church on the Street in Sioux Falls



Friends in Christ,

Grace and peace to you in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit!

Little did I know last year, at this time, as I was writing my annual pastor's report to the congregation where I served as the administrative pastor that this year, I would be writing an annual report to all congregations of the South Dakota Synod as the Bishop. Now, a little over 120 days into this new call, I am still filled with a deep sense of gratitude for having been granted this humbling opportunity. Thank you for your trust, grace, and support.

Looking at the life of the synod in 2019, I would like to thank Bishop Emeritus David Zellmer and his associates, Bishop Bill Tesch and Deacon Susan Marone once again for their fine leadership the past twelve years. These were difficult times for the church, but your previous administration did an outstanding job in maneuvering through the difficulties and setting a new course for being church in South Dakota.

I hope to continue this legacy of excellence in leadership. Therefore I called two very gifted associates to lead with me. Pastor Renee Spichal Larson accepted the position for Candidacy, Congregation, and Rostered Minister Accompaniment and Pastor Jonathan Steiner accepted the call to serve as the synod's Director for Evangelical Mission and Associate to the Bishop for Outreach and Stewardship.

For the first time in our synod's history, we will be having staff representation in Rapid City. Pastor Jonathan Steiner's office in Rapid City will be located at "The Garage", an office co-op in downtown Rapid City. When in Rapid, stop on over and check it out!

This Fall, my staff and I traveled the state to stop in all seven conferences for our "Listen, Learn and Care" events where we listened to your joys and challenges as we are being church in South Dakota together. We also learned from each other and gathered insight to determine how we can care for each other. These events were vital for the direction of our work together over the next five years. Please send a strong representation to the **synod assembly at Our Savior's in Sioux Falls on June 4-6, 2020** to hear about the future of how we are church together in South Dakota and around the world.

I am also delighted to invite you to join the celebration of the 50th anniversary of the ordination of women, the 40th anniversary of the ordination of women of color, and the 10th anniversary of the ordination of our LGBTQIA+ siblings. Please take advantage of the many opportunities commemorating these historic milestones throughout 2020.

Last but not least, I would like to thank you for your faithfulness to the Gospel and it's proclamation. As our rural areas are shrinking, our agricultural communities are facing serious difficulties from this past year. Even though our state is seeing these challenges, in the midst of death, decline, and decay, you continue to faithfully proclaim the good news of Christ's death and resurrection. Thank you! God is faithful and with us always.

To God be the glory,

Bishop Constanze Hagmaier
South Dakota Synod, ELCA



LUTHERANS OUTDOORS IN SOUTH DAKOTA

CONGREGATIONAL REPORT 2019

Highlights from Paul Hanson, Executive Director

Lutherans Outdoors has enjoyed another wonderful year of providing life-giving and faith-growing experiences to thousands of individuals. We thank you for your continued support of this important ministry that your congregation owns.

Some highlights of 2019...The Atlantic Mountain Ranch site was able to be sold this past November. A near-retirement couple purchased the 160 acre site to build precious family memories for years to come. The site had last seen campers during the summer of 2013.

A Line of Credit in the amount of \$ 750,000 was able to be paid. Operating losses over the past few years had caused the use of the line of credit. Proceeds from the AMR sale was not used to pay this debt.



KLEIN RANCH

Klein Ranch is updating the People Barn this spring, each bunkhouse will be getting new bunk beds with storage space for each camper's belongings as well as a freshening up of paint and lighting.

This past summer, Klein Ranch served 108 campers.

Teri Geyer continues serving as the Klein Ranch Camp Director. This has been her fifth summer working for LO in this role along with her Kairos studies as she continues her quest to be an ordained minister. She has been with Lutherans Outdoors since 1992.



OUTLAW RANCH

Outlaw Ranch is excited to announce the hiring of a new Program Director, Paige Mangan! If you have been to youth or family camp recently, you should recognize her as a five-year staff member, from 2014 to 2018. During this time, Paige worked as a Camp Counselor, Adventure Counselor, and Adventure Program Coordinator, along with other roles as needed. Outlaw Ranch has been close to Paige's heart since 2001 when her family first became campers.

This past summer, Outlaw Ranch served 764 on-site campers and 322 Day Campers at local congregations.

Matt Rusch continues to serve Outlaw Ranch as the Camp Director. He has been in this position for 6 years.



NESODAK

As we look forward to the future of summer camping at NeSoDak, we look at the recent years of growth and attendance in programs for all ages of youth and families. In 2017, we began the renovation process of Damascus into the new camp store and the interiors were renovated to accommodate more campers and guests. The next phase of this project is to renovate the bathroom and shower facilities. Adding a second shower facility through renovations will increase the number of showers and bathrooms available and also add a safer facility for campers. It will also provide a shower station for campers and guests to rinse off after spending time at the beach.

This past summer, NeSoDak served 808 on-site campers.

Jake Hanson continues serving as the Director of NeSoDak. He has been with Lutherans Outdoors since 2015.



JOY RANCH

One of the highlighted programs at Joy Ranch is the equine and equestrian experiences available to all ages and all abilities. Safety continues to be a top priority when it comes to all experiences with horses and horse programs. In an effort to continue to strive to be a barrier-free facility, there is a need to repair, replace, and add new wagons to the Joy Ranch equipment. Adding a hydraulic brake system to all wagons for safety purposes during the process of loading and unloading guests in case of an emergency is a top priority. Joy Ranch also has a need for a wagon or people hauler to safely load and carry a wheelchair while allowing adequate seating for care givers and staff to assist individuals while participating in a wagon ride.

This past summer, Joy Ranch served 671 campers.

Jake Hanson continues serving as the Director of Joy Ranch. He has been with Lutherans Outdoors since 2015.



2019 Annual Report to Congregations

LSS: A New Vision for a Second Century of Service

As LSS prepares to enter its 100th Anniversary year of celebration, a new vision statement was recently incorporated—All people in South Dakota will be healthy, safe and accepted. This new vision was created to reflect what we hope for all people in South Dakota. The services offered by LSS contribute to achieving this vision. It is a succinct and clear statement that complements and supports the mission and values of LSS. Why we chose these specific words:

HEALTHY

Our work has a direct impact on individuals' and families' well-being—physically, mentally and financially. LSS has specific services that focus on mental and financial health, however we also coordinate the physical well-being of children and youth in residential care, foster care, independent living services and many other services.

SAFE

LSS listens, guides and offers coping tools to allow children, adults, and families to heal and grow after abusive and traumatic experiences. This includes LSS Behavioral Health, Residential Services for Children & Youth, Foster Care, Arise Youth Center, Independent Living, and Childcare & Education services to name a few. We want all people in South Dakota to be free from injury, free from abuse and neglect, and to be safe in their homes and work environments—physically and emotionally.

ACCEPTED

Through our actions, advocacy and work, it is our hope that all people feel accepted, loved and valued. This is vital to a person's sense of wellbeing and existence. LSS works to restore or build family relationships in an environment that is non-judgmental and non-discriminatory. We want dignity and respect for all people; we love our neighbor and welcome the stranger. This includes all LSS services. Prime examples include the Center for New Americans, Re-Entry Services, Mentoring, Adoption, Pregnancy Counseling, and Kinship Services.

LSS touched the lives of those we **serve 45,781 times** last year. We strive to care for, support and strengthen those who are in need, bringing a future filled with hope—a future of success to people of all ages, families of all kinds and communities of all sizes.

*"It was you who made a big difference in my life.
You showed me that I matter.*

That is something I can never thank you enough for."

— youth, Residential Services for Children & Youth and Arise Youth Center

I want to express gratitude on behalf of all those we serve. We sincerely appreciate your support and partnership. Every kindness and resource that we receive is utilized in serving others. For more information on LSS services and those we serve, visit www.LssSD.org.

Betty Oldenkamp, President/CEO

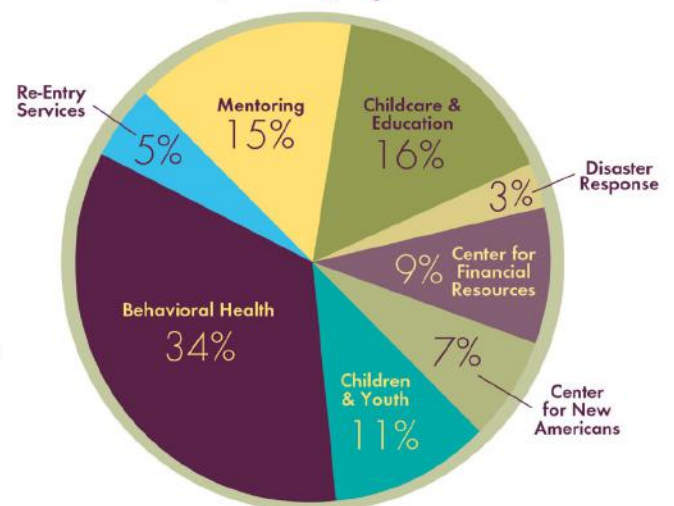
Our Mission

Inspired by God's love, we care for, support and strengthen individuals, families and communities.

Our Vision

All people in South Dakota will be healthy, safe and accepted.

How Your Gift Served



2020 PROPOSED BUDGET

Making Jesus Christ Known Through Word and Deed.

INCOME:	Budget 2019	Actual 2019	Proposed 2020
Promised	762,916.00	688,035.12	\$756,440.00
Non-Promised	120,681.00	156,332.21	\$141,681.00
Loose	16,000.00	13,830.00	\$16,000.00
Church School	2,500.00	1,982.58	\$2,000.00
Christian Preschool	34,000.00	32,048.70	\$30,000.00
Other	3,270.00	\$3,879.14	\$3,270.00
TOTAL	939,367.00	896,107.75	\$949,391.00
Mission of the Month Designated Givings		21,138.15	
		917,245.90	

EXPENSES:	Budget 2019	Actual 2109	Proposed 2020
<u>Missions</u>			
<i>Partners in Mission</i>			
1101 St. Dymas	1,000.00	1,000.00	\$1,000.00
1102 Pine Ridge	1,000.00	1,000.00	\$1,000.00
1104 SD Lutherans Outdoors	1,000.00	1,000.00	\$1,000.00
1105 SS Mission Outreach (paid out to Missions)		1,982.58	
1108 Companion Synod - Nicaragua	1,000.00	1,000.00	\$1,000.00
1110 Lutheran Campus Ministry	1,000.00	1,000.00	\$1,000.00
1114 Nicaragua Youth Retreat	1,000.00	1,000.00	\$1,000.00
1201 ELCA & SD Synod Mission Support	43,000.00	43,000.00	\$43,000.00
1204 ELCA World Hunger/Global Health Ministries	2,000.00	2,000.00	\$2,000.00
1205 Pueblo de Dios - SF	1,000.00	1,000.00	\$1,000.00
1207 LCOOR Pre-School	1,000.00	1,000.00	\$1,000.00
1209 Salvation Army - One Roof	1,000.00	1,000.00	\$1,000.00
1211 Mission Partners - Cameroon	1,000.00	1,000.00	\$1,000.00
1212 LCOOR Care Fund	1,000.00	1,000.00	\$1,000.00
1213 Sandwich Ministry	2,500.00	2,500.00	\$2,500.00
1214 Brothers & Sisters Behind Bars - Watertown			\$1,800.00
	58,500.00	60,482.58	\$60,300.00
Mission of the Month Designated Givings Paid out		21,138.15	
		81,620.73	

2020 PROPOSED BUDGET

	Budget 2019	Actual 2019	Proposed 2020
<u>Worship & Service</u>			
<i>Salaries</i>			
2101 Organist/Pianist	11,520.00	10,645.00	\$11,520.00
2102 Choir Directors	8,320.00	8,035.52	\$8,320.00
2106 FICA	2,134.00	1,971.24	\$2,219.00
2107 Worship Coordinator	40,973.00	40,973.04	\$42,612.00
2108 Benefit Package	2,347.00	2,347.00	\$2,557.00
2109 Health Insurance Stipend	8,226.00	8,226.00	\$8,226.00
2110 Continuing Ed/Robbyn & Choir Director	550.00	415.00	\$550.00
2112 Sound and Projection Team	1,530.00	500.00	\$1,530.00
<i>Music</i>			
2201 Instrumental/Contemp. Team Music	300.00	178.65	\$300.00
2202 Sr. Choir Music	500.00	411.12	\$500.00
2203 Handbell Music	300.00	300.00	\$300.00
<i>Miscellaneous</i>			
2301 Bulletins/Devotionals	1,500.00	1,443.42	\$1,500.00
2303 Copyright/Sundays & Seasons	2,500.00	2,374.18	\$2,500.00
2305 Nursery Supplies	100.00	0.00	\$100.00
2307 Festival Decorations/Visuals	600.00	372.30	\$600.00
2310 Special Worship Programming	300.00	0.00	\$500.00
<i>Altar</i>			
2401 Altar Supplies	1,500.00	2,084.62	\$1,500.00
<i>Equipment- upkeep/repair</i>			
2501 Pianos	1,500.00	1,500.00	\$1,500.00
2502 Misc. Equipment, Repairs	3,050.00	999.66	\$3,000.00
2503 Sound System	3,027.00	26.60	\$3,000.00
Total	90,777.00	82,803.35	92,834.00
	Budget 2019	Actual 2019	Proposed 2020
<u>Parish Education & Programs</u>			
<i>Salaries</i>			
3100 Education Coordinator	25,000.00	25,000.08	\$26,000.00
3102 FICA	1,913.00	1,974.33	\$2,382.00
3103 Health Insurance Stipend	800.00	799.92	\$5,141.00
3104 Benefit Pkg			\$1,560.00
3108 Continuing Ed	400.00	227.58	\$400.00
<i>Curriculum</i>			
3200 Elementary School Activities	1,500.00	198.56	\$500.00
3201 Church School	9,500.00	6,389.05	\$9,500.00
3202 Vacation Bible School	3,000.00	902.19	\$2,500.00
3204 Adult Bible Study	400.00	400.00	\$400.00
3205 Bibles	2,500.00	1,996.02	\$2,500.00
3207 Equipment	750.00	328.00	\$750.00
Total	45,763.00	38,215.73	51,633.00

2020 PROPOSED BUDGET

Making Jesus Christ Known Through Word and Deed.

	Budget 2019	Actual 2019	Proposed 2020
<u>Parish Youth Program</u>			
<i>Salaries</i>			
4100 Youth Director	43,752.00	43,752.00	\$45,502.00
4102 FICA	3,976.00	3,976.32	\$4,110.00
4104 Benefit Pkg	2,625.00	2,625.00	\$2,730.00
4105 Health Insurance Stipend	8,226.00	8,226.00	\$8,226.00
4106 Continuing Ed	500.00	0.00	\$500.00
<i>Youth</i>			
4201 Sr. High Activities	500.00	286.16	\$500.00
4202 Middle School Activities	500.00	357.74	\$500.00
4204 Elementary Youth Camperships	2,000.00	2,000.00	\$3,000.00
<i>Curriculum</i>			
4301 Curriculum/Confirm.	500.00	639.15	\$500.00
4302 6th Grade Confirmation Camp	2,000.00	2,000.00	\$3,000.00
4303 Camp Counselor Scholarship		0.00	\$1,000.00
<i>Youth & Family</i>			
4504 Wednesday Meal Coordinator	2,100.00	1,868.74	\$2,100.00
4505 Tuesday Noon Youth Meals	2,000.00	2,000.00	\$2,000.00
Total	68,679.00	67,731.11	73,668.00
	Budget 2019	Actual 2019	Proposed 2020
<u>Outreach</u>			
<i>Evangelism</i>			
5102 Advertising	2,000.00	2,000.00	\$2,000.00
5103 The Lutheran Magazine	150.00	0.00	\$150.00
5104 Evangelism Supplies	200.00	161.86	\$150.00
5105 Hospitality	400.00	268.17	\$400.00
5106 Befriender Ministry	1,000.00	65.11	\$500.00
5107 Nursery Packets	500.00	189.29	\$500.00
5108 Gods Work Our Hands	1,000.00	530.67	\$1,000.00
5110 Senior Ministry	750.00	330.83	\$750.00
<i>Fellowship</i>			
5201 Supplies	1,500.00	0.00	\$1,000.00
<i>Stewardship</i>			
5301 Materials & Supplies	2,000.00	2,038.22	\$2,000.00
5303 Stewardship Drive	3,000.00	2,741.39	\$3,000.00
<i>Miscellaneous</i>			
5402 General Synod Assembly	1,300.00	1,264.94	\$1,300.00
<i>Health & Wellness</i>			
5404 Wellness Expenses/AED	250.00	0.00	\$250.00
<i>Salaries</i>			
5501 Welcome & Caring Coordinator	41,200.00	41,200.08	\$42,848.00
5502 Benefit Pkg	2,060.00	2,060.04	\$2,571.00
5503 Health Insurance Stipend	7,210.00	7,210.08	\$8,226.00
5504 FICA	3,152.00	3,703.38	\$3,907.00
5505 Continuing Ed	500.00	325.00	\$500.00
Total	68,172.00	64,089.06	71,052.00

2020 PROPOSED BUDGET

	Budget 2019	Actual 2019	Proposed 2020
<u>Pastoral Leadership</u>			
<i>Senior Pastor</i>			
6101 Salary	57,087.00	57,087.12	\$59,370.00
6102 Housing Allowance	23,152.00	23,152.08	\$24,078.00
6104 Health Coverage/Pension	39,186.00	39,186.36	\$40,753.00
6105 Continuing Ed	1,300.00	1,300.00	\$1,300.00
6107 Social Security Offset	6,138.00	6,138.00	\$6,384.00
6109 Professional Expenses	1,700.00	1,556.41	\$1,700.00
<i>Assoc. Pastor</i>			
6401 Salary	41,894.00	41,893.93	\$43,570.00
6402 Housing	16,758.00	16,758.00	\$17,428.00
6404 Health Coverage/Pension	31,695.00	31,695.24	\$32,963.00
6405 Continuing Ed	1,200.00	370.00	\$1,200.00
6407 Social Security Offset	4,486.00	4,486.08	\$4,665.00
6409 Professional Expenses	700.00	473.37	\$700.00
<i>Miscellaneous</i>			
6301 Watertown Ministerial Assoc.	100.00	100.00	\$100.00
6302 Pastoral Conferences	3,500.00	3,100.47	\$3,500.00
6303 Pastors' Mileage	3,000.00	2,081.52	\$2,500.00
6306 Guest Preaching Pastor	1,000.00	845.00	\$1,000.00
Total	232,896.00	230,223.58	241,211.00
	Budget 2019	Actual 2019	Proposed 2020
<u>Church Operations</u>			
<i>Secretarial Salaries</i>			
7101 Salary/Administrative	34,386.00	34,386.00	\$35,761.00
7102 Salary/Business Manager	26,848.00	26,848.08	\$27,922.00
7103 FICA (Jodi)	3,260.00	3,238.89	\$3,365.00
7104 FICA (Donna)	2,683.00	2,683.00	\$2,765.00
7105 Continuing Ed	600.00	154.34	\$600.00
7106 Benefit Pkg (Jodi)	2,063.00	2,063.04	\$2,146.00
7108 Health Insurance Stipend (Jodi)	8,226.00	8,226.00	\$8,226.00
7109 Benefit Pkg (Donna)	1,611.00	1,611.00	\$1,675.00
7110 Health Insurance Stipend (Donna)	8,226.00	8,226.00	\$8,226.00
<i>Office Operations</i>			
7201 General Supplies	9,500.00	8,248.82	\$9,500.00
7202 Computer/Lease/Support	5,000.00	5,008.35	\$6,000.00
7203 Prairie Coteau Conference Dues	700.00	654.60	\$700.00
7204 Telephone/Internet	4,400.00	3,945.74	\$4,000.00
7205 Postage	6,500.00	4,597.76	\$6,500.00
7206 Office Equipment Maintenance	6,000.00	3,006.57	\$3,500.00
7207 Office Equipment	1,000.00	800.05	\$500.00
7208 Staff Mileage	750.00	522.00	\$750.00
7211 Bank Charges	2,300.00	2,550.17	\$2,500.00
Total	124,053.00	116,770.41	124,636.00

2020 PROPOSED BUDGET

Making Jesus Christ Known Through Word and Deed.

	Budget 2019	Actual 2019	Proposed 2020
<u>Church Home</u>			
<i>Mortgage</i>			
8101 Mortgage (principal paid)	52,934.00	37,689.35	\$28,300.00
8102 Mortgage Interest		16,033.93	
<i>Custodial Salaries</i>			
8201 Salaries	14,119.00	16,193.81	\$17,000.00
8203 FICA	1,080.00	1,238.83	\$1,300.00
8210 Janitorial Services	16,530.00	17,478.48	\$18,000.00
<i>Custodial Supplies</i>			
8301 Cleaning Supplies/Misc.	3,500.00	3,500.00	\$3,500.00
8302 Paper Products	2,500.00	2,495.96	\$2,500.00
<i>Grounds Maintenance</i>			
8401 Supplies/Services	3,500.00	3,500.00	\$3,500.00
8402 Maintenance of Equipment	1,500.00	1,498.00	\$1,500.00
8404 Snow Removal	8,000.00	12,659.50	\$10,000.00
<i>Building Maintenance</i>			
8502 Painting	500.00	500.00	\$500.00
8504 Maintenance	15,000.00	15,735.52	\$15,000.00
8505 Equipment	2,000.00	2,000.00	\$2,000.00
8506 Utilities	42,000.00	40,633.80	\$42,000.00
8507 Insurance	17,454.00	15,857.54	\$16,190.00
8508 Capital Improvement			\$10,000.00
Total	180,617.00	187,014.72	171,290.00
	Budget 2019	Actual 2019	Proposed 2020
<u>Christian Preschool</u>			
<i>Salaries</i>			
9101 Director/Teacher	18,555.00	18,555.12	\$19,297.00
9102 Teacher Assistant	8,360.00	6,569.75	\$8,360.00
9103 FICA	1,419.00	1,835.46	\$1,892.00
9104 Continuing Ed	600.00	0.00	\$600.00
9105 Benefit Pkg	1,113.00	1,113.00	\$1,158.00
9106 Substitute Teacher	400.00	404.25	\$400.00
9107 FICA - Assistant	640.00	532.89	\$640.00
9108 Health Insurance Stipend	5,429.00	5,437.84	\$5,429.00
<i>Supplies/Equipment</i>			
9201 Supplies	1,500.00	799.49	\$1,000.00
9202 Equipment	400.00	0.00	\$200.00
<i>Advertising</i>			
9401 Newspaper/Radio	300.00	240.00	\$300.00
Total	38,716.00	35,487.80	39,276.00
 Grand Total	 908,173.00	 903,956.49	 925,900.00
Recap:			
Actual 2019 Income		917,245.90	
Less Actual 2019 Expenses		903,956.49	
Income less Expenses		13,289.41	

Litany

- L. Gathering together as God's people in this place, may we always be aware of your presence in our midst.
- C. Lord, may we always be aware of your presence.
- L. Knowing that the Word is our light, may we continue to grow in our scriptural and confessional understandings.
- C. Lord, may our minds continue to grow in your word.
- L. Recognizing that stepping out in faith is not easy, we ask that you give us strength, O Lord, to listen and be bold and daring.
- C. Lord, give us the patience to listen and the strength to be bold and daring.
- L. While we strive to know ourselves and your will for us, may we build our relationships with our brothers and sisters in Christ.
- C. Lord, help us to build faith-filled and healthy relationships with others.
- L. Recognizing that we are often the ones asking, "And who is my neighbor?," may we open our eyes, ears and hearts to all those in the community in which we live.
- C. Lord, may we always be open to those in the community in which we live.
- L. Recognizing the importance of Moses, the prophets and disciples, may we work together to accompany and raise up leaders for your church.
- C. Lord, may we have the insight, encouragement and skills to raise up courageous leaders.
- L. Recognizing the many gifts you have entrusted to us, may we use these gifts to do your work in the world today.
- C. Lord, may we use the gifts entrusted to us to do your work.

God of Tempest, God of Whirlwind

1 God of tem - pest, God of whirl-wind, as on Pen - te -
 2 God of blaz - ing, God of burn - ing, all that blocks your
 3 God of earth - quake, God of thun - der, shake us loose from
 4 God of pas - sion, God un - sleep - ing, stir in us love's

cost de - scend! Drive us out from shel - tered com - fort;
 pur - pose, purge! Through your church, Christ's liv - ing Bod - y,
 leth - ar - gy! Break the chains of sin a - sun - der,
 rest - less - ness! Where the peo - ple cry in an - guish,

past these walls your peo - ple send! Sweep us in - to cost - ly ser - vice,
 let your flam - ing Spir - it surge! Where de - ceit con - ceals in - jus - tice,
 for earth's heal - ing set us free! Crum - ble walls that still di - vide us;
 may we share your heart's dis - tress. Rouse us from con - tent with e - vil;

there with Christ to bear the cross, there with Christ to bear the cross!
 kin - dle us to speak your truth, kin - dle us to speak your truth!
 make us one in Christ our Lord, make us one in Christ our Lord!
 claim us for your king - dom's work, claim us for your king - dom's work!

Text: Herman G. Stuempfle

Music: John Hughes

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- L. Let us pray. As we strive to be your church of the present and the future, may we nurture a spirit of collaboration and solidarity. May we all be partners in sharing the gospel and believing in Jesus Christ crucified and risen for the life of the world.
- C. Amen.

Beyond the Wall: Making All Things New



When have you discovered newness in life through Christ? Did you have to step out in faith to do so? Perhaps you had to let go of your will and accept God's will. This

is a major turning point in the faith journey of many people. There are examples in Scripture about Job (Job 29-30), Elijah (I Kings 19:4-14), Mary Magdalene (Luke 8:1-2) and the women at the tomb (Luke 23:55 – 24:5). Consider the story of the rich young man (Matthew 19:16-26, Mark 10:17-31, Luke 18:18-30). He approached Jesus with a simple question: "What must I do to inherit eternal life?" Jesus replied, "Go, sell what you own, and give the money to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven." When the young man heard this, he was very sad and walked away, because he was very rich. Given the choice, he found it difficult to forsake wealth in this world for the promise of God and eternal life.

Sometimes there are barriers or walls that complicate trying something new or stepping out in faith. What walls or barriers have you encountered? Consider the story of Zacchaeus (Luke 19:1-10), who wanted to witness Jesus preaching but was too short to see past the crowd. After Zacchaeus climbed a tree, Jesus called out to him and invited himself to lunch in Zacchaeus' home. We know what Jesus said to Zacchaeus,

and he was a different person afterward. He had changed from wanting wealth and success in this world to desiring significance through a life of faith. When have you, or your congregation, chosen success over significance? Perhaps when using numbers or the size of your facilities as a measure. Moving toward significance usually means sacrificing success. In what areas of ministry is your congregation seeking significance today?

Stepping out in faith may be a personal choice for a short time but usually involves accompanying others. As members in the body of Christ, we are not called to meet our own needs alone. The Great Commission (Matthew 28:16-20) calls us to go beyond our barriers and bring the message of Jesus Christ to others. This helps us grow beyond a Christian enclave to become servants of Christ and a serving community. In what ways has your congregation moved from an enclave to a servant community?

Overcoming barriers and walls to make things new involves stepping out in faith. It means shaking loose from lethargy and moving out from sheltered comfort. In the process we break the chains of sin that hold us back and divide us from making us one in Christ. When we share in the distress of God's heart to do the kingdom's work, we are in tune with God's will, choosing significance over success and becoming a servant community. This is when we feel the vitality of our faith and the power of the Holy Spirit. May you experience this newness in Christ in and through your ministry.