

Salem Lutheran Church, ELCA

Montevideo, Minnesota

2020 ANNUAL REPORT

Meeting January 31, 2021





ANNUAL REPORT

— 2020 —

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

2020 SALEM STAFF, COUNCIL & COMMITTEES

Salem Staff

Pastor Matt Philaya
Amy Hamilton – *Office Admin.*
Kurt Hoehne – *Custodian*
Amanda Blom – *Finance Sec.*
Jackie Lindvall – *Treasurer*
Diane Schulte – *Organist*

Council

Ron DeJong– Pres. (20)
Jonathan Schiller – V.P. (21)
David Eekhoff – Sec. (23)
Kyle Goslee (20)
Steve Heggstad (21)
Stacey Hoidal (21)
Danielle Saeger (20)
Diane Schulte (20)
Bridget Johnson (23)
Samantha Seeman (23)

Nominating Committee

Leanne Anderson (20)
Kayla Brown (20)
Dave Goddard (20)

Auditing Committee

Mary Saeger (23)
Roger Tilberg (23)

Christian Ed. Committee

(Faith Enrichment)

Bridget Johnson – Liaison

Endowment Fund

Ron DeJong – Liaison
Paul Anderson (21)
Joel Boldenow (20)
Jay Brown (22)

Evangelism Committee

(Outreach & Service)

Danielle Saeger – Liaison

Green Lake Lutheran

Ministries – Liaison

Melanie Van Hon (20)

Memorial Committee

Roger Tilberg
Joel Boldenow
Carman Mills

Property Committee

Steve Heggstad – Liaison
Neil Schmidt (20)

Scholarship Fund

Jane Boldenow (22)
Merideth Brown (22)
Todd Osman (22)
Greg Schwaegerl (22)

Social Ministry Team

(Fellowship & Service)

Stacey Hoidal – Liaison
Dori Bechtle (22)
Colleen Kahler (22)
Robin Schwaegerl (20)

Stewardship Committee

(Financial)

Jonathan Schiller – Liaison
Jeff Anderson (20)
Joe Helgeson (22)
Steve Kubista (20)
Glen Moe (20)

Strombeck Cemetery

Kathy Leindecker – Sec. (22)
Tom Leindecker (22)
Kevin Nordstrom (22)
Joe Schultz (22)

Worship & Music

Committee

Diane Schulte – Liaison
Leanne Anderson (23)
Jeri Blom (23)
Dave Goddard (22)
Kurt Hoehne (23)
Kim Osman (22)

Youth (Youth & Family)

Kyle Goslee - Liaison

ANNUAL MEETING AGENDA
January 31, 2021

1. Call to order/Determine quorum
Twenty-five voting members shall constitute a quorum
2. Opening Prayer – Pastor Matt
3. Secretary's Report
Review Minutes of the Annual Meeting – January 26, 2020
4. President's Report
Introduction of the Council
Committee Reports
5. Pastor's Report
6. 2020 Year End Financial Report
7. Proposed Budget for 2021
Presentation
Discussion
Vote
8. Endowment Fund Report
9. Recognition of Retiring Church Council Members
10. Elections – Nominating Committee
11. Acknowledgements and Closing Remarks – President
12. Closing Prayer – Pastor
13. Adjournment

2019 ANNUAL MEETING MINUTES: January 26, 2020

President Ron DeJong called the annual meeting to order following worship services on January 26, 2020. A quorum was declared.

Pastor Matt Philaya opened with prayer.

Minutes were read individually by members and David Eekhoff moved to accept them seconded by Jonathan Schiller. Motion carried.

President DeJong read the Executive Committee report and thanked everyone for their contributions in the past year. He stated that we will be learning how to implement the concept of a narrative budget to help connect a line item budget to the various missions of Salem. Congregation members were urged to read the reports of the other committees.

Pastor Matt gave his report. Average worship attendance for 2019 was 82. There were 4 baptisms and 13 new members received, 9 funerals were held, and 20 members transferred away for a total new membership of 517. Pastor encouraged us to be united in our vision as a congregation even though it is not an easy process. We need to recognize the teams already created and the council needs to help them to step forward and make things happen.

Kelly Lindeman presented the proposed budget for 2020 and thanked Jackie Lindvall, Treasurer, Amanda Blom, Financial Secretary, and the Stewardship Committee for all their work. Pastor Matt has transferred his family from his insurance to his wife's insurance for a substantial savings to the congregation and is asking that the council use the savings for ministry development at Salem. A line item for \$7000 has thus been added to the proposed budget. Jonathan Schiller moved to accept the proposed budget seconded by Dave Goddard. Motion carried.

The Endowment Fund received an addition \$1561.43 in 2019. Paul Anderson reminded the members that money earned on the investments is available for distribution by application.

Dave Goddard, Kayla Brown and Leanne Anderson were recognized as retiring council members and thanked.

The Council and Committee ballot was presented. Ben Pieh moved to add David Eekhoff to the council ballot to bring the total members to the same as last year seconded by Mary Saeger. Carried. Paul Anderson corrected the Endowment Committee nominations as Joel Boldenow's term is not up until 2020. Mary Saeger moved seconded by Dave Goddard to cast a unanimous vote for the amended ballot. Motion carried.

President Ron DeJong read acknowledgements of people and events and thanked them on behalf of Salem membership. He offered continued prayers for the church, community and country through the coming year. Pastor Matt offered a closing prayer.

Paul Anderson moved to adjourn seconded by Ben Pieh. Meeting Adjourned.

Respectfully submitted, Leanne Anderson, Council Secretary

Executive Committee Report

In 2020, the executive committee included Pastor Matt, President Lance Tebben for the first half of the year (Lance had to resign due to some personal conflicts) so Ron DeJong stepped in for the second half, Vice President Jonathan Schiller, and Secretary Dave Eekhoff.

This committee would generally meet before the council meeting to set the agenda for the council meeting. Most interactions this year were done by phone due to the coronavirus.

What a year! Last year when I wrote this I was wondering if the change needed to keep Salem a vital and viable ministry in our community was going to happen fast enough. Well, it has in ways I never would have expected. First with Covid-19 shutting everything down. The learning curve of using Zoom to do our Sunday services and to be able to partner with Baxter and Saron Lutheran Churches was a blessing. We also held our council meetings through Zoom. It is amazing the things we can do with today's technology. We were able to get a much-needed new lighted sign constructed along with some signage put above our entrance doors. Our Church building finally received a new roof. A big thank you to the members of Salem who helped to make this all happen.

As we navigate our way through 2021 hopefully the vaccine for Covid-19 will be effective in preventing the disease so we can get back to doing our social ministry at Salem. Since our committees and teams were unable to meet, it was very difficult to implement any change in 2020. We will see what we can accomplish in 2021 with God's help.

Respectfully submitted, Ron DeJong

Memorials 2020

Beginning Balance	\$3,903.25
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Additions:

Helen Peterson - Strombeck	\$40.00
Helen Peterson	\$50.00
Myrtle Starbeck - Strombeck	\$15.00
Arlys Tilberg - Music	\$40.00
Arlys Tilberg - Bell Choir	\$50.00
Arlys Tilberg - Strombeck	\$15.00
Arlys Tilberg	\$100.00
Marlene Kimpling - Quilters	\$20.00
Marlene Kimpling - Strombeck	\$75.00
Leonard & Edna Anderson	\$200.00
Tom Fossell	\$55.00
Janis Gabbert	\$20.00
Carol Johnson	\$375.00
Total	\$1,055.00

Expenditures:

Computer Equipment	\$500.00
Total	\$500.00

Ending Balance	\$4,458.25
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Worship and Music Committee

Members of the committee were Leanne Anderson, Jeri Blom, Dave Goddard, Kurt Hoehne, Kim Osman, and Diane Schulte

The Board of Worship and Music shall supervise everything pertaining to the worship and cultural life of this congregation. The board is responsible for:

- Assisting ushers and altar guild as needed.
- Scheduling of lay readers and lay assistants.
- Arranging of communion assistants.
- Arranging for special music.
- Selecting and ordering general music supplies.
- Making decisions on worship changes.
- Assisting in the planning of special services (upon request).
- Maintaining musical instruments as needed.
- Making recommendations on sponsoring special concerts or visiting musical groups.

The planning of the Worship & Music Committee was cut short due to the pandemic. However, we began the year by planning the Lenten Services entitled, "40 Days of Giving". Each household received a Study Guide, Calendar, and either a *God's Global Barnyard Box* or a special label to create a monetary collection container at home. Each Sunday in worship a bulletin insert was provided which introduced the theme for the week, which also was described further in the Study Guide. During the mid-week services, the congregation met in the Social Hall where a meal & communion were served, and Study Guide questions/discussions held. Although the mid-week services were limited, they were well attended and deemed a great success.

In addition to the Lenten Service planning, discussions centered around fill-ins when Pastor Matt is on vacation, lay reader assignments & lay readers, and a new Paschal candle. Rather than purchasing a completed one, Pastor Matt offered to create and make one for us. Thank you, Pastor Matt.

We also want to express our thanks to organist/pianist Diane Schulte, to pianist Kim Osman, Merideth Brown who directed the hand bell choir and Kim Osman who directed the senior choir.

Thank you to members of the Worship and Music Committee for their time and effort in 2020.

If you have comments or suggestions on our worship and music ministry, please feel free to share them with a committee member.

Respectfully Submitted,
Worship & Music Committee Members

Scholarship Fund

Tom Fossell, who passed away in the fall of 2020, was the Chair of the Scholarship Fund Committee. Salem's Scholarship Fund provided a \$500.00 scholarship that was awarded in the spring of 2020.

Submitted by the Salem Office Administrator

Evangelism Committee & Social Ministry Team Report

SERVICE (also known as Evangelism Committee (Outreach Ministry Team))

In the midst of a global pandemic, Salem members continued to focus their efforts on planning and engaging in ministries of outreach, helping to fulfill the mission of extending the Gospel – in word and deed – to all people!

Here are some highlights from the past year:

- 2020 Midwinter Concert was held on Sunday, January 26. Money raised benefits the St. Martin's Fund for local financial emergencies.
- Salem's Meal Ministry 'The Table'. Our free community breakfast was held as planned on the last Saturday of month in January and February. Thanks to the determination of Tom Fossell and many other Salem volunteers, we were able to offer two drive thru breakfasts in May and July.
- After the vandalism and destruction that occurred during protests in May, Salem collected donations of food, supplies and money to help support recovery efforts in Minneapolis and St. Paul. Thanks to a \$500 kick-off match from a Salem member, we were able to raise a total of \$1240 to send to Holy Trinity Lutheran Church in Minneapolis to help fund relief efforts there.
- Pie Day at Luther Haven and Copper Glen Assisted Living looked a little different this year. With the help of Valentino's Family Restaurant, who baked the pies, and contributions from Thrivent, the residents from both facilities were still able to be treated with a slice of love from the Servants of Salem. On Tuesday, August 4, Paul & Leanne Anderson and Butch & Diane Schulte delivered 168 slices of pie to the doors of Copper Glen & Luther Haven along with a greeting card to be given to each resident for their bulletin board.

Danielle Saeger

Church Property Committee

Salem had a very good year as far as getting large projects done. Some of these have been a long time coming, but even with COVID we worked safely together and got them completed.

With targeted donations and giving from church members, the Hwy 7 sign project was the first to be completed.

Then working with insurance and contractors the shingles were replaced with a lifetime shingle.

The cross above the entrance was taken down, repaired and powder coated with a lifetime paint.

A special thanks to Council President Ron DeJong for all of his time and resources.

Council Member Steve Heggstad, Property Committee Liaison

Strombeck Cemetery

Strombeck Cemetery received memorials in memory of the following: Christoper Smith, Marlene Kimpling, Denny Lenning and Arlys Tilberg.

We received a donation from Beverly Smith.

We had two burials this past year - Marlene Kimpling & Tom Fossell.

We want to thank everyone who made a donation or sent a memorial to the cemetery. Your support is greatly appreciated.

We also want to thank everyone who helped with the clean-up and removal of trees at the cemetery this year.

Members of the Cemetery Committee are: Tom & Kathy Leindecker, Kevin Nordstrom & Joe Schultz.

FINANCIAL REPORT:

December 31, 2019 Balance \$17,125.87

Memorials 1,177.00

Donations 300.00

Interest 164.17

Total Revenue 1,641.17

2020 Mowing charge (990.00)

December 31, 2020 Balance \$17,777.04

Respectfully submitted,
Kathy Leindecker, Secretary/Treasurer

Salem Christian Education Committee Report

The Salem Christian Education Committee switched to an all-digital program through Spark, which is the program we have used in previous years. It gives us more material options and the ease of sharing it online. A lesson is posted to Salem's website each week that parents can access, print out and teach their kids at home.

Submitted by Bridget Johnson

Annual Report for 2020
Pastor Matt Philaya
January 2021

Dear Members of Salem,

Someday, someone will pull out this annual report wondering what it was like at Salem Lutheran Church during the year 2020. Here's the story from my perspective.

The year 2020 was the most unusual year as the Covid-19 pandemic presented challenges for everyone. Every business and organization had to learn to adapt, and many were unable to do so due to circumstances beyond their control. For churches like Salem, it was no different, and the change came quickly. Last March we were worshipping and eating together on a Wednesday evening for one of our Social Hall Lenten services. On Friday pastors were called to attend an emergency meeting with the county health department where we learned about the unknown severity of the pandemic. We were urged to have people avoid physical contact as a precaution. By Saturday churches were canceling worship for that Sunday out of precaution due to a statewide 'shut-down'. The decision was made to cancel Salem's worship service as well – the only option was to try to hold a service online, which seemed like a crazy idea.

I called Pr. Matt Danielson from Saron and Baxter Lutheran Churches, which had also canceled worship that weekend. We discussed the possibility of partnering for an online service the following morning, with no previous experience or time to plan for how to do it. We sent out a "Zoom link" to our members by email and through Facebook with instructions for what to do and when to do it. On Sunday morning, Pr. Matt D. and I met in the Strombeck Room and logged into Zoom, and one by one we began to see our members who had successfully made it into the online service to watch.

We used our Sunday bulletins, and there was nothing for the congregations to follow along. I played my guitar and sang, and Pr. Matt D. preached, and together we led our very first online service. It was far from smooth – the internet signal was choppy, there was a strange echo that was hard to figure out, and some folks had their mics or cameras on, and everyone could hear them talking or see them eating breakfast! Could this work? Fortunately, it would only be for a couple weeks, right? I remember feeling like I was on a spaceship that had suddenly lost engine power and was stuck in orbit around the earth with no means of getting home.

It just so happened that the week prior, Salem member Jackie Lindvall had begun the process of setting up a new platform for Salem's website and database called Tithe.ly, which included a special focus on the service of online giving. With the prospect of needing to operate as a 'virtual' congregation at least for a while, we put those plans into high gear! Within a very short time we had a website platform that allowed us to send out a weekly 'eNews' to the entire congregation. Talk about timely!

The week following our first online service, the SWMN Synod staff set up an online meeting for all of the pastors in the synod. Everyone was still in shock. Some pastors had no idea how to even set up an online worship service, while others were able to simply use an existing method as their back up. The majority of us, like Pr. Matt D. and I, had improvised. There were questions like: *How are we supposed to do Communion?* or *I have a funeral coming up! What do we do?* or *How am I supposed to lead worship when there's no internet in our sanctuary?* or *How do I use Facebook live?* *How do I use Zoom?* *What even IS Zoom?*

The Salem Council made the decision to hold worship online only for a few weeks out. That seemed like it would be plenty of time – at the time. Over the following weeks and months, the decision was pushed into April, then May, then June, and finally until September. Churches struggled with what to do in the midst of the political noise about mask use and mandates restricting public gatherings. One thing was for certain – that the Covid-19 pandemic was going to shape the life of our congregation for 2020.

One group that was used to meeting at the church on a weekly basis was the *Friday Morning Coffee* group. I offered to help this group start meeting over Zoom, and although it took a few tries for some to get the hang of it, they continued to meet weekly over Zoom.

The Salem quilters had also been meeting weekly at Salem however, it was not possible for them to meet over Zoom.

The Salem council began holding meetings over Zoom.

The spring 2020 Salem Confirmation Class was postponed to the spring of 2021. Confirmation classes resumed both online and in-person in the fall of 2020, following what the schools did for distance or in-school learning.

The monthly Community Breakfast was postponed indefinitely and will resume again when possible. There were two 'drive thru' breakfasts scheduled in 2020 as an alternative.

Those who had funerals during this time were given options – they could hold a small service at the funeral home or the cemetery, or they could choose to wait until things 'opened up' again. This was an extremely difficult time for those whose loved ones died and for whom not having a funeral in the Salem sanctuary seemed an additional loss. It was the local funeral homes that were most helpful in providing alternatives during this time. The first funeral back in the sanctuary took place in October with only family members present. The more common choice became to hold the service at the funeral home due to the convenience for the family and the ability of the funeral homes to record and post the funeral services online.

We remember the following people and their families for whom this time to gather for grieving was especially challenging due to the pandemic:

Arlys Tilberg	Family only service at the funeral home.
Marlene Kimpling	Family only service at the funeral home.
Myrtle Starbeck	Family only service at the funeral home.
Marlene Oleson	Family only service at the funeral home.
Norma Miller	Family only graveside service. (non-member, mother of Salem member Angie Dolan)
Janice Gabbert	Outdoor service at Smith Park.
Tom Fossell	Family only service at Salem (after September 1)
Carol Johnson	Family only service at the funeral home.
Iona Rigge	Family only service at the funeral home.

The one baptism during this time was Brynlee Buseman, which was held at the family farm place. A baptism coming up in 2021 for Talitha Pieh is being planned to take place in the Salem sanctuary on a weeknight, with extended family attending over Zoom. This will be recorded and shared during worship on a following Sunday.

At some point over the summer, I came to accept the fact that we were not going to be worshipping together in the sanctuary as a large group anytime soon. For months I had been leading worship services online from my office, with Pr. Matt Danielson preaching, and Diane Schulte emailing me hymn accompaniments that she had recorded at home on her piano with her phone. Salem Office Administrator Amy Hamilton had transitioned successfully from creating weekly bulletins to creating weekly Power Points, to which Salem members had become accustomed to for following worship over Zoom. Those who did not use the internet could call in on their phone and listen over Zoom on speaker phone. We had even gotten to the point where a person could read scripture and prayers for worship from home over Zoom. One of my jobs as pastor (and I didn't mind it) was being worship service 'tech-support' to ensure that everyone who was willing was able to participate in worship. I had to be honest with folks and say that this was how it was going to be for a while – a long while. Pr. Matt D. and I made plans to continue our partnership through the summer.

The one thing we could not do online was sing together or speak together and hear each other. The variation in timing with internet signals made it impossible. Eventually, we started having Holy Communion virtually allowing folks attending on Zoom to use wine, juice, bread, or crackers as the elements for the sacrament.

In the late summer, it became apparent that we would need to have some sort of plan to allow folks to attend in the sanctuary again. A task force was formed to prepare a state required Covid-19 Preparedness Plan outlining our use of masks, social distancing, hand sanitizer stations, and even how the pews in the sanctuary could be taped off to ensure that folks had space around them. With this plan we 're-opened' Salem for worship in September. However, I made it very clear that the safest option was to attend worship online.

As September approached, plans for how to hold online worship in the sanctuary. The first order of business was to run almost 200 feet of ethernet cable from the office to the front of the sanctuary. This was done by Aaron Blom (and perhaps others I'm not aware of). Another issue to address was how to 'livestream' a worship service in a way that allowed people in the sanctuary and online to worship together in real time in a meaningful way. If a volunteer reader was in the sanctuary, those attending on Zoom needed to see and hear them. If that reader was at home attending on Zoom, they needed to be at least heard in the sanctuary. This was all possible except for one factor – under such conditions, Zoom creates an echo, where the audio signal continues to loop through the mics and speakers of the devices used. To address this problem, Jackie Lindvall and I sought the help of a man named Lyle Pringitz, who lives in Hutchinson, and was contracted with the city of Montevideo to help run channel 180, the local access channel.

Lyle helped us set up an audio mixer that Salem already owned in such a way that allowed us to use our sanctuary microphones both for amplifying audio in the sanctuary, as well as allowing it to be heard over Zoom. At the same time, the audio over Zoom could be heard in the sanctuary. Lyle also helped us set up a way to email a file of our recorded worship services to him for Channel 180, as well as select an affordable digital video camera that would serve our needs.

Jackie Lindvall and I figured out how to set things up so that the PowerPoint would show up not only on Zoom, but also on the large TV in the sanctuary, as well as on a monitor in front of the lectern and another on the organ. Salem was now entering the new reality of what had become known as 'hybrid worship', where people could worship together whether in the sanctuary, or online.

Since Diane Schulte would now be playing the organ and piano live in the sanctuary during these worship services, it became necessary to figure out how to properly mic the piano and organ, which took some trial and error to figure out.

Salem member Kurt Hoehne volunteered to be the person to run the PowerPoint for me during worship as well as to monitor those attending on Zoom to ensure that audio and video were coming through as necessary. Kurt patiently assisted with what was a less than ideal set up.

A new way of having fellowship had also developed – and that was to have those who chose to stay connected after the Zoom service remain online to visit afterward. We set it up so that those remaining to visit could be seen and heard in the sanctuary as well.

Attendance in the sanctuary remained just a few people through fall and into winter, but at the same time I had not encouraged folks to attend in person unless they really needed to be present in the sanctuary. The important thing to note here is that a majority of Salem members were not yet ready to be in the space together simply due to the unnecessary risk of exposure to Covid-19. I did not want to discourage that precaution, and so I wanted to be very clear that *attending online was still attending*. On an average Sunday, there have been over 30 devices connected on Zoom.

Our typical worship highlights of the fall and winter months could not take place as normal. There was no Rally Sunday. Sunday School per se was arranged so that parents could download weekly materials to

teach their children at home. There were no scheduled Milestones for the kids in various grades. The Santa Lucia Festival, normally held in December, was recognized in a photo slideshow of past festivals at Salem and a nice video clip of musicians Ross Sutter, Cheryl Paschke, and Marya Hart. Ross even joined us for the online service and stayed afterward to visit during virtual fellowship! There was no Sunday School Christmas Program. There was no in-person Christmas Eve service.

In place of the traditional Christmas Eve Service, Diane Schulte and I put together a pre-recorded online service in the form of a Power Point. This included all of the elements of our usual Christmas Eve service, including the carol sing beforehand, a children's message with the story of the Baby Jesus, and even a virtual candlelight singing of *Silent Night*. This was made available on the Salem website, but we also offered a time to watch and worship together at 5:00PM on Christmas Eve for those who wanted.

Once in a while someone asks me, with the best of intentions: *Pastor, when will we have 'church' again?* The truth is, we never stopped. I never stopped. In fact, I have not missed a Sunday, not even through my vacation time, since this all began last March. Those who want to attend worship in person have been able to do so since September. Our hybrid model is here to stay.

There won't likely be a single day when everyone is told: *Okay, we can all go back to normal now!* A transition back to anything isn't necessarily going to be BACK, it will be FORWARD. Salem Lutheran Church had a challenging year in 2020. However, the challenges we faced together became opportunities. The Holy Spirit has led us through it in such a way that the forced changes have made us better prepared than ever to follow Jesus together as Salem Lutheran Church into the future. Thank you, God, for bringing us through 2020, and thank you members of Salem for your patience, flexibility, and support for your congregation!

Pr. Matt

Two things to mention briefly:

- In 2021 the Salem Lutheran Church Constitution will be in a process of revision with guidance from the SWMN Synod. This is to include mandatory updates as well as a review of processes and procedures. More information will be provided to the congregation throughout the year with a plan to vote on any changes in January 2022.
- The 150th Anniversary of Salem Lutheran Church (includes former Strombeck Church) will be in 2023. Please contact Jackie Lindvall if you would like to be a part of a committee to help plan Salem's observance of this important milestone in our ministry.

Worship Attendance (for all services) Average Statistics

- 2020 82 (Estimate based on online participation)
- 2019 82
- 2018 90

Membership Statistics 2020

New Member Sunday, November 22, 2020

- Jeremy Hamilton
- Cory & Danielle Olson, Connor, Charlie, Zanielle

Baptisms

- Brynlee Buseman

Funerals

- 3/17/2020 Marlene Kimpling
- 4/17/2020 Arlys Tilberg
- 4/30/2020 Myrtle Starbeck
- 5/2/2020 Marlene Oleson
- 8/22/2020 Janis Gabbert
- 9/8/2020 Thomas Fossell
- 12/3/2020 Carol Johnson
- 12/27/2020 Iona Rigge

Membership

Total Membership as of December 31, 2019 517

Gains

Children Baptized		1
Received by Transfer	5	
Received by Affirmation of Faith	1	

Losses

Deceased		8
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Total Membership as of December 31, 2020 516

	2017	2018	2019	2020	2020 Budget	2021 Budget
INCOME						
STEWARDSHIP - PLEDGED & UNPLEDGED	\$ 161,379	\$ 148,010	\$ 157,376	\$ 140,472	\$ 169,744	\$ 164,116
CASH (UNDESIGNATED)	\$ 1,541	\$ 1,244	\$ 1,527	\$ 523	\$ 1,500	\$ 500
MATCHING GIFTS				\$ 11,290		
DOLLAR FOR DOLLAR MATCH						
TOTAL	\$ 162,920	\$ 149,254	\$ 158,903	\$ 152,285	\$ 171,244	\$ 164,616
LENT	\$ 909	\$ 1,013	\$ 901	\$ 664	\$ 1,000	\$ 1,000
EASTER	\$ 853	\$ 461	\$ 595	\$ 520	\$ 700	\$ 700
THANKSGIVING	\$ 340	\$ 255	\$ 427	\$ 200	\$ 350	\$ 350
CHRISTMAS	\$ 700	\$ 1,205	\$ 1,425	\$ 1,645	\$ 1,200	\$ 1,500
TOTAL	\$ 2,802	\$ 2,934	\$ 3,348	\$ 3,029	\$ 3,250	\$ 3,550
TOTAL OFFERINGS	\$ 165,722	\$ 152,188	\$ 162,251	\$ 155,314	\$ 174,494	\$ 168,166
ENVELOPES	\$ 68	\$ 84	\$ 45	\$ 72	\$ 50	\$ 50
MISC INCOME	\$ 150	\$ 29	\$ 71	\$ 55	\$ 75	\$ 50
TOTAL	\$ 218	\$ 113	\$ 116	\$ 127	\$ 125	\$ 100
TOTAL INCOME	\$ 165,940	\$ 152,302	\$ 162,367	\$ 155,442	\$ 174,619	\$ 168,266
EXPENSES						
SYNOD	\$ 6,000	\$ 6,000	\$ 6,000	\$ 6,000	\$ 6,000	\$ 6,000
GREEN LAKE BIBLE CAMP (DUES)	\$ 600	\$ 600	\$ 600	\$ 600	\$ 600	\$ 600
LAC QUI PARLE CONFERENCE	\$ 200	\$ 200	\$ 200	\$ 200	\$ 200	\$ 200
SYNOD ASSEMBLY	\$ 310	\$ 615	\$ 635	\$ -	\$ 650	\$ 650
TOTAL	\$ 7,110	\$ 7,415	\$ 7,435	\$ 6,800	\$ 7,450	\$ 7,450
PASTOR'S SALARY	\$ 40,217	\$ 42,219	\$ 40,127	\$ 45,684	\$ 45,684	\$ 47,339
HEALTH & LIFE	\$ 25,486	\$ 20,355	\$ 21,652	\$ 12,479	\$ 13,044	\$ 12,576
HOUSING ALLOWANCE	\$ 18,000	\$ 18,000	\$ 18,000	\$ 18,000	\$ 18,000	\$ 18,000
FICA - PASTOR	\$ 4,557	\$ 4,607	\$ 4,447	\$ 4,872	\$ 4,872	\$ 4,998
PENSION	\$ 6,277	\$ 6,483	\$ 6,483	\$ 6,483	\$ 6,600	\$ 6,480
CAR ALLOWANCE	\$ 1,413	\$ 638	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 1,500	\$ 1,500
TECHNOLOGY TOOLS	\$ 1,000	\$ 667	\$ 1,000	\$ 1,000	\$ 1,000	\$ 1,000
CONTINUING EDUCATION	\$ 1,148	\$ 1,635	\$ 747	\$ 31	\$ 1,500	\$ 1,500
TOTAL	\$ 98,098	\$ 94,604	\$ 92,455	\$ 88,549	\$ 92,200	\$ 93,393

	2017	2018	2019	2020	2020 Budget	2021 Budget
SECRETARY SALARY	\$ 10,415	\$ 11,748	\$ 12,034	\$ 6,197	\$ 10,500	\$ 6,375
ORGANISTS SALARY	\$ 6,200	\$ 4,500	\$ 7,300	\$ 1,200	\$ 6,700	\$ 6,700
CUSTODIAN SALARY	\$ 9,800	\$ 9,800	\$ 10,094	\$ 10,094	\$ 10,094	\$ 10,094
FINANCIAL SECRETARY	\$ 500	\$ 500	\$ 500	\$ 500	\$ 500	\$ 500
TREASURER	\$ 500	\$ 500	\$ 500	\$ 500	\$ 500	\$ 500
FICA-SECRETARY	\$ 840	\$ 899	\$ 921	\$ 474	\$ 683	\$ 488
FICA-CUSTODIAN	\$ 750	\$ 750	\$ 772	\$ 772	\$ 772	\$ 772
FICA-ORGANISTS				\$ 69		\$ 513
TOTAL	\$ 29,004	\$ 28,696	\$ 32,121	\$ 19,807	\$ 29,749	\$ 25,942
SUBSTITUTE PASTORS	\$ 350	\$ 1,087	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 500	\$ 500
CHOIR MUSIC	\$ 67	\$ -	\$ 70	\$ -	\$ 100	\$ 100
ALTAR GUILD	\$ 569	\$ 1,445	\$ 956	\$ 120	\$ 1,000	\$ 500
OTHER WORSHIP	\$ 1,629	\$ 1,527	\$ 1,256	\$ 562	\$ 1,500	\$ 1,000
SANTA LUCIA			\$ 71	\$ 300	\$ 1,000	\$ 1,000
MINISTRY DEVELOPMENT				\$ -	\$ 7,000	\$ 5,000
TOTAL	\$ 2,614	\$ 4,059	\$ 2,353	\$ 982	\$ 11,100	\$ 8,100
CHRIST IN OUR HOME	\$ 192	\$ 256	\$ 288	\$ 216	\$ 300	\$ 300
SUNDAY SCHOOL	\$ 1,474	\$ 1,006	\$ 1,179	\$ 1,107	\$ 1,300	\$ 1,300
CONFIRMATION INSTRUCTION	\$ (3)	\$ 70	\$ 1,241	\$ 619	\$ 500	\$ 500
YOUTH MINISTRY/JLYO	\$ 26					
ADULT & NEW MEMBER EDUCATION		\$ (75)	\$ 80	\$ -	\$ 80	\$ 80
TOTAL	\$ 1,689	\$ 1,257	\$ 2,788	\$ 1,942	\$ 2,180	\$ 2,180
ADVERTISING	\$ 394	\$ 611	\$ 460	\$ 129	\$ 500	\$ 400
OFFERING ENVELOPES	\$ 493	\$ 427	\$ 407	\$ 382	\$ 400	\$ 400
OFFICE SUPPLIES/REPAIR	\$ 4,279	\$ 5,364	\$ 5,231	\$ 4,249	\$ 5,000	\$ 4,000
POSTAGE	\$ 1,273	\$ 1,037	\$ 991	\$ 745	\$ 1,050	\$ 1,000
MISCELLANEOUS	\$ 289	\$ 65	\$ 95	\$ 31	\$ 100	\$ 100
VANCO CHARGES		\$ 214	\$ 205	\$ 126	\$ 270	\$ -
TECHNOLOGY EXPENSE				\$ 2,889		\$ 2,500
TITHELY CHARGES				\$ 273		\$ 400
TOTAL	\$ 6,728	\$ 7,719	\$ 7,389	\$ 8,824	\$ 7,320	\$ 8,800
TELEPHONE	\$ 1,413	\$ 1,779	\$ 1,874	\$ 1,082	\$ 1,320	\$ 1,320
HEAT	\$ 3,226	\$ 4,120	\$ 4,316	\$ 3,410	\$ 4,500	\$ 3,825
ELECTRICITY	\$ 6,393	\$ 7,494	\$ 6,934	\$ 4,236	\$ 7,500	\$ 6,375
WATER & TRASH	\$ 1,521	\$ 1,516	\$ 1,504	\$ 1,456	\$ 1,600	\$ 1,600
SNOW REMOVAL	\$ 854	\$ 1,458	\$ 1,281	\$ 845	\$ 1,500	\$ 1,500
WORKER'S COMP	\$ 1,199	\$ 255	\$ 1,719	\$ 468	\$ 900	\$ 802
PROPERTY INSURANCE	\$ 5,398	\$ 6,403	\$ 6,261	\$ 5,136	\$ 6,500	\$ 6,179
SUPPLIES	\$ 692	\$ 732	\$ 755	\$ 626	\$ 800	\$ 800
TOTAL	\$ 20,697	\$ 23,756	\$ 24,642	\$ 17,259	\$ 24,620	\$ 22,401
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$ 165,940	\$ 167,506	\$ 169,183	\$ 144,163	\$ 174,619	\$ 168,266
NET INCOME (EXPENSE)	\$ -	\$ (15,204)	\$ (6,816)	\$ 11,278	\$ -	\$ -

2020 Assets and Liabilities

Cash	Ending Balance Dec 2019	Income	Expenses	Other Cash Receipts	Other Cash Disbursements	Ending Balance Dec 2020
General	-3917.94	155,441.64	-144,163.32	39,384.18	-39899.94	6,844.62
Building	3964.36			2,370.37	-2507.72	3,827.01
Roof	0.00			36,449.51	-30715.00	5,734.51
Memorials	3903.25			1,055.00	-500.00	4,458.25
The Table	890.99			252.50	-796.55	346.94
Capital Improvements	3604.01				-500.00	3,104.01
Thrivent Choice Dollars	0.00			427.00		427.00
SOS Fund	4329.39				-599.64	3,729.75
Camp Scholarship Fund	113.12					113.12
Stewardship Fund	1507.82					1,507.82
Sr Scholarship Fund	10156.00			100.00	-500.00	9,756.00
Chimes Fund	1069.50					1,069.50
Youth Fund	2544.22					2,544.22
Chili Fund	2885.79			2,204.06	-4207.62	882.23
Endowment Fund	1270.00			2,360.00	-3630.00	0.00
Bell Fund	250.00					250.00
Property Projects	6398.85			1,802.00	-8003.57	197.28
Total Cash In Bank	38,969.36	155,441.64	-144,163.32	86,404.62	-91,860.04	44,792.26
Other Assets	Ending Balance Dec 2019	Earned Income	Gifts			Ending Balance Dec 2020
Endowment Fund	32565.82	280.72	3630.00			36,476.54
Edward D Jones	862.74	-141.54				721.20
CD for Carillon Repair	3229.75	17.76				3,247.51
Total Other Assets	36658.31	156.94	3,630.00			40,445.25
Liabilities	Ending Balance Dec 2019	Withheld	Donations	Payments		Ending Balance Dec 2020
FICA Taxes	862.94	2630.58		-2985.42		508.10
Flex Withheld	0.00	1200.00		-1200.00		0.00
Insurance Withheld	0.00	444.72		-444.72		0.00
Disaster Relief	200.00			-200.00		0.00
Hunger Appeal	175.59		80.00	-255.59		0.00
To Be Reimbursed:						
Backpack Program	55.80					55.80
St Martins Fund	116.13		127.13	-243.26		0.00
Strombeck	45.00		65.00	-95.00		15.00
Salem Shirts	-31.00		31.00			0.00
Giving Tree	0.00		50.00			50.00
Computer	0.00		500.00	-500.00		0.00
40 Days of Giving	0.00		580.00	-580.00		0.00
Insurance - Roof	0.00		31175.75	-31175.75		0.00
Holy Trinity	0.00		940.00	-940.00		0.00
Technology Grant	0.00		1560.00	-1290.71		269.29
Total Liabilities	1424.46	4275.30	35108.88	-39910.45		898.19

SALEM LUTHERAN CHURCH ENDOWMENT FUND COMMITTEE
ANNUAL REPORT TO THE CONGREGATION
JANUARY 2021

...enhancing the mission of SLC

...expanding a vision of stewardship

...responding to important needs and new ministry opportunities

Your SLC Endowment Fund exists for the purposes listed above. In 2020 grants were awarded in support of youth attending Bible camp and in support of SLC office computer hardware.

...invitations and thanks

In 2021 we invite Salem member groups or individuals to consider requesting financial support of their efforts to enhance, expand, or respond to opportunities in ministry. Our story and grant application form are found on the SLC website under the MEMBER RESOURCES tab in the ENDOWMENT folder.

We invite your gifts to the Salem Endowment Fund in any size and at any time. We are grateful for both the generous legacy gifts of our founders and for the faithful periodic offerings earmarked for the Endowment Fund given with regular offerings—over \$2000 in 2020. THANK YOU.

Thanks to Joel Boldenow for his vision and leadership as he completes his elected term.

...and the numbers

Assets of the SLC Endowment Fund are held in the ELCA Endowment Fund and in the ELCA Mission Investment Fund. Periodic offerings earmarked for the SLC Endowment Fund are held in the SLC general fund until transferred to the Endowment Fund in June and December of each year.

Account Balances

ELCA Mission Investment Fund	\$1,927.00 (12/31/19)	*\$3,566.77 (11/30/2020)
ELCA Endowment Fund A	\$31,465.89 (12/31/19)	\$32,909.77 (9/30/2020)

2019 Grants

Bible camp	\$200	*Report submitted prior to audit and receipt of 2020 year end reports from ELCA MIF and the ELCA Endowment Fund A.
SLC office computer hardware	\$500	

Respectfully submitted,

Jay Brown, Joel Boldenow, and Paul Anderson

Pr. Matt, Ron De Jong, SLC Council Liaison

2020 Congregational Report

Green Lake Lutheran Ministries

It's hard to avoid cliches such as, "a year like no other" and/or using the word "unprecedented" when asked to describe anything about 2020. But they are also accurate expressions when we at Green Lake Lutheran Ministries look back on a year that pushed us in productive and inspiring, but also painful and exhausting ways.

The bottom line: We feel absolutely blessed to have been given the opportunity to serve God and others amidst a year that stretched our understanding of call and vocation – while also naming that we mourn the loss that comes with the cancellation of traditional programming and significant financial hardship.

Program Ministry

"How can we be helpful to congregations and families?" That simple question, asked by Mandy Severtson, our Associate Director back in March, directed the program team's work this entire year. And although traditional summer camp ministry was cancelled, numerous program options were offered to families and congregations at no cost. Below I have provided just a small sampling of what our program year looked like. It was a fantastic year!

One example of nontraditional programming was, "We are the Church – Together and Apart", a virtual VBS curriculum, used by dozens of congregations across the entire country! This full curriculum provided interactive worship services, crafts, outdoor activities, games, devotions, and so much more - in a package specifically designed for kids, at home!

Another impactful opportunity to serve was found in the creation of free downloadable "pulpit supply worships." The worships are a blend of traditional and camp settings, made available for use by any congregation in need. Whether used to stay connected with outdoor ministry traditions or used on a Sunday that additional worship coverage was needed, it is fun to have such a direct connection with so many people in a world where face to face connections are difficult.

And lastly, our Dinner Theater was pushed virtual in 2020. When it became apparent that an in-person event was unlikely, staff and volunteers sprang into action to keep the show's tradition alive. A script was written, we purchased a green screen and other video equipment, the show was filmed safely in small parts, and editing commenced! And as a final nod to the tradition of *dinner* theater, a to-go meal was offered. All said, over 300 meals were served, 110 dozen of homemade bars sold, and 200 show links were purchased. With donations included, approximately \$30,000 was raised! Or best year ever!

Financial Position

Overall, we are projecting revenue to be down \$1.1 million or 65% versus our budget in 2020. To overcome the deficit, operational expenses were cut, staffing cuts were made, a small amount of reserve funds were disbursed, we received a PPP Grant, and a special emphasis on fundraising was made.

As of the writing of this report, our year end financials are not yet finalized, but it is safe to report that we will finish this financial year in a strong position given the circumstances. We are so thankful for the gifts we have received from incredibly generous and supportive donors and congregations. We absolutely wouldn't be in the position we are, without the generosity of this wonderful world!

Water's Edge Campaign

We continue keeping our long-term goals on the forefront of our minds and work plans amidst a year full of distractions. Pre-campaign work continues! Master site plans for all three camps are being honed and we are eager to take designs to the next phase of detail. The process is taking a bit longer given the circumstances of 2020 and also based on our interest in polish and precision of idea and concept. We expect to bring our next phase of the campaign to larger audiences in the Spring of 2021 with hopes that the campaign is formally launched soon after.

Outlook

I authentically believe that Green Lake Lutheran Ministries will be needed like never before in the year ahead. When we turn the calendar, will we all of a sudden have a full schedule of retreats? Will summer camp numbers rebound to the 10-year high mark reached in 2019? No and no. The year ahead isn't going to be easy! But as this world comes out of isolation, as we reconnect with those things that make us physically and spiritually healthy, and as we purposefully seek out community, the brand of faith formation, exploration, and celebration that happens at summer camp or as part of a retreat at one of our three camps, will be just the thing that this exhausted and hurt world needs.

Closing

The format of this report doesn't allow near the space needed to process the entire year nor thank all that contributed to its success. I have found myself overcome with emotions over a dozen times this year in response to the kind gestures, profound support, and incredible generosity of this network. So many congregations shared incredible gifts this year. So many individuals went above and beyond with their support.

I couldn't be more confident with the trajectory of this organization and sincerely thank you for partnering with us this year and far into the future!

Gratefully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Travis Aufderheide', with a stylized, flowing script.

Travis Aufderheide
Executive Director
Green Lake Lutheran Ministries



“What will serve the Gospel now?”

2020-2021 Annual Report

+Bishop Jon Anderson



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

In the Old Testament, Ezra's third chapter tells the story of God's people beginning to rebuild after the deep losses of a time of exile in Babylon. We have been living through a much less damaging pandemic but it has made this text one of my favorites for this year because it names both the grief and the joy of God's people.

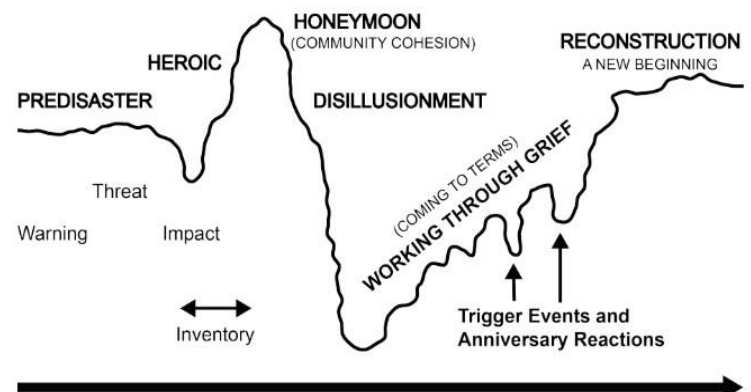
¹⁰ *When the builders laid the foundation of the temple of the Lord, the priests in their vestments were stationed to praise the Lord with trumpets, and the Levites, the sons of Asaph, with cymbals, according to the directions of King David of Israel; ¹¹ and they sang responsively, praising and giving thanks to the Lord, “For he is good, for his steadfast love endures forever toward Israel.”*

*And all the people responded with a **great shout when they praised the Lord**, because the foundation of the house of the Lord was laid. ¹² But **many** of the priests and Levites and heads of families, old people who had seen the first house on its foundations, **wept with a loud voice** when they saw this house, though **many shouted aloud for joy**, ¹³ so that the people could not distinguish the sound of the joyful shout from the sound of the people's weeping, for the people shouted so loudly that the sound was heard far away.”*

That is the state of my heart as I think back through the journey of the last year. I want to weep and lament for the ways our lives and communities of faith have been damaged by the virus, by our own choices, and by the choices of people around us. I want to weep for the lives lost, friends who have or will leave us, and fears about the uncertainty of the future. I also want to shout with praise to God for leading us through this season and getting us to this point nearing the end of our wrestling with this virus. Looking forward I have concerns and fears, but I have a deeper confidence that trusts God is with us and guiding us through this wilderness. Like God's people in troubled times in the past, I trust God will work in the lives of people, congregations, and synod to grow us stronger and more faithful through this time of struggle.

We will soon need to imagine the reconstruction process after this slow unending disaster. Like God's people struggled coming out of the wilderness during the Exodus, we will have our challenges in what will be a delayed, messy, and likely confusing process of returning to in-person ministry, worship and congregational life that will unfold unevenly in time and across our synod.

Emotional Life Cycle of Disaster



We have new gifts for this part of our journey that have been developed and discovered. I give thanks for the muscles grown. We have grown more comfortable discerning and deciding as God's people. These skills will bear fruit for decades. I give thanks for the many adjustments and innovations we have made that will serve the Gospel now and after the virus' threat has ended. The learning and capacities will not be lost. I give thanks for the many lay people who have stepped forward and our ministers, too. Most of us could never imagine we could do what we have done. We have not gotten everything right, but God has kept leading us, protecting us, inspiring us to forgive and to execute new strategies for all forms of ministry – worship, faith formation, youth ministry, pastoral care, serving our neighbors – to safely navigate this time of the virus. In the coming days, weeks, months, and years we are called to work together to build a better “normal” for our lives, families, congregations, communities, and world. It will take faith and hope. God will inspire us to love, have courage, and practice forgiveness in the coming year.

God's Spirit inspired our imaginations, called us through a wilderness of challenges and opened our eyes to revelations in this apocalyptic time. An “apocalypse” is literally “an uncovering.” It reveals or uncovers our brokenness – personally, communally and in the systems of our shared life. Yet, there has been an equal or even greater uncovering of our assets, capacity, willingness to reform our life together for the sake of the Gospel and to protect the most vulnerable in our communities and congregations. In the coming year congregations and leaders will continue to be called to...

“Listen to God, each other, ourselves, and the World.

Reconnect with God's story and God's faithfulness.

Define the challenges we are facing.

Reframe our expectations and goals.

Cultivate new ways of being the church through spiritual practices and innovation.”

-Luther Seminary Faithful Innovation Project

I invite you to join me in the balcony and look at our life together as a synod for a bit. It has been something, this past year. The challenges, growing pains, threats have been many and hard. The opportunities, learning and transformation have been stunning. Even as we move forward, make more exciting discoveries, and learn new ways, we also need to be aware of people's various emotional and spiritual journeys. In this season of uncertainty, tension, and conflict, we will need to monitor and pace our plans for the future. We can both plan and move forward, while attending to the folks who are grieving and struggling with the deep change of the past and coming days. As I shared in the past, four great questions are:

What is lost? What is left? What is possible?

What will serve the Gospel now?

Most people have been focused on navigating their personal lives, keeping their businesses going, and living in a reality where we cannot relate to each other in normal ways - both in our families and our communities. Your synod staff has likewise worked hard to sort out how to do our work in Zoom and other electronic forms of communications. We have had to develop capacity and competency using new tools that help us collaborate and sustain the core of your synod's functions. Reconciliation ministry has been a place of major investment of energy. At the same time we have encouraged and sought to grow people to serve in their congregational roles, some as rostered ministers. We have sought to answer our calling to “equip” by supporting congregational life. Transitions have been more challenging and needed more attention. Pr. Dee Pederson and a team of people have encouraged mission through initiatives like our two churchwide grants, which were deployed to love our neighbors in need and encourage hunger ministries. Task groups have gathered around themes like faith formation, racial justice networking, and thinking about “Growing Young” in our congregations in this time. We have also sought to share

information about the virus and best practices from across our synod and church. I will not list off all the great work of your synod staff team, but I could. I am thankful for each member of your synod staff and governance.

People often talk about the synod like the synod is your bishop, but I know the truth. It is a team of committed and caring people who each bring their gifts to our shared-life with a confidence that “together, by God’s grace, we have all that we need.” This team also includes our council, deans, conference chair people and conference ministers. The word “synod” means to be on the road walking together. At the deepest level it includes all the baptized ones who have cared for siblings in Christ in neighboring congregations and in proclaiming the Good News by what they have said and done. As I looked through our calendar for the past year thinking of the journey, deep gratitude washed over me for all the ways God has worked through the faithful to care for God’s Church and God’s world.

Your synod office is thankful for your ongoing generosity and support. Your support of your congregation and your larger church has been heroic, noticed and appreciated.

I am remembering and giving thanks to God for 17 years of walking together on the road of faith and through this chapter of the synod’s history. It has been something. It has been a great challenge and an amazing privilege to serve in this way.

We are thankful for the servants who have served your synod in many ways. This year we particularly want to express gratitude to our whole synod staff and governance system. We will miss Conference Minister, Pr. Joyce Graue, who retired. I also want to express deep gratitude and appreciation for the sacrificial love so many lay leaders have shown in this crisis. We all give thanks for the next generation of people who have and will step forward to serve in and guide our synod, including someone who will serve as the next bishop.

I am confident the coming election process will not only open space to discern who will serve as the bishop, but also provoke a deep and meaningful conversation about our synod’s mission field and what kind of leaders and vision will best serve God in the coming chapter of the Southwestern Minnesota Synod’s life. We trust we are called into God’s preferred and promised future, **Embracing God’s Mission and Equipping God’s People - Equipping Congregations, Engaging Leaders, and Enhancing Local and Global Mission.**

I invite you all to join me in being available to read scripture daily, pray for God’s guidance in your life and practice our faith in daily callings in life. I currently am reading a chapter a day in the New Testament. Yesterday, this text showed up.

“Grace and peace to you. We always thank God for all of you and continually mention you in our prayers. We remember before our God and Father your work produced by faith, your labor prompted by love, and your endurance inspired by hope in our Lord Jesus Christ.

For we know, brothers and sisters loved by God, that he has chosen you.” -1 Thessalonians 1

A helpful prayer:

O God, where hearts are fearful and constricted, grant courage and hope. Where anxiety is infectious and widening, grant peace and reassurance. Where impossibilities close every door and window, grant imagination and resistance. Where distrust twists our thinking, grant healing and illumination. Where spirits are daunted and weakened, grant soaring wings, and strengthened dreams. All these things we ask in the name of Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. (Evangelical Lutheran Worship, p. 76)



A message from

ELCA Presiding Bishop Elizabeth Eaton

Dear friends in Christ,

This year has been a challenging one! The COVID-19 pandemic has changed the church and society. We have had to shift the ways we engage in ministry from a focus on in-person worship and meetings to livestream worship, virtual meetings and gatherings in the parking lot. We have had to shift to teaching children at home and working from home. We have not been able to travel to see friends or relatives or to celebrate life events. This has also been a time to address economic and social justice issues, to shift our thinking and our way of life.

In times such as this, our baptism in Christ makes a difference and makes us different. Like Christians before us, we recall that God is faithful to God's promises and God's people. We see that God enables us to connect with one another even when

we are separated. Shifts in the world invite us to be innovative in how we do God's work and reach out to all ages in making disciples. We see that God is at work not only in our buildings but beyond them as well. We have found new ways to serve our neighbors and reach those in need.

As we experience this time of uncertainty, we sense something new emerging. In many places there are new strategies and renewed energy for ministry, often generated by emerging leaders. We have developed a framework to build on, and now is the time to engage in hard work together. As you do in your congregation, we want our collaborative efforts to be both faithfully thoughtful and sustainable. We want to build up the body of Christ today and for the future. *some prophets, some evangelists, some*

Looking across the church, I am grateful for your generous giving of time, talents and resources. Yes, God does continue to bless us! God will provide both relief from life's struggles and hope for a stronger church, God's church. We do not need to know how the future will unfold. As members in the body of Christ, we need only trust that God is with us and will provide.

Building up the body of Christ together,

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

"The gifts he gave were that some would be apostles, pastors and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, until all of us come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to maturity, to the measure of the full stature of Christ. We must no longer be children, tossed to and fro and blown about by every wind of doctrine, by people's trickery, by their craftiness in deceitful scheming. But speaking the truth in love, we must grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ, from whom the whole body, joined and knit together by every ligament with which it is equipped, as each part is working properly, promotes the body's growth in building itself up in love." —Ephesians 4:11-16

ANNUAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING OPENING LITURGY

In the early verses of Ephesians 4, the apostle Paul writes to the Christians in Ephesus, a city on the Aegean Sea at the mouth of a river and at the intersection of three trading routes. The letter was written about ten years after the church had started. During the early years of this congregation, Jews and Gentiles from several ethnicities and nationalities had come together to form “one body.” Paul was aware that they had done well and commended them for their faith and love.

The word “one” appears more than seven times in the first four verses. This reflects the importance Paul gave to being called into the “unity of Christ.” He wanted to note that, although many of the church members came from far off, there is “one Lord, one faith, one baptism.” This oneness reflects God’s gift of reconciliation in Christ.

A second emphasis from Paul was that, as believers, they were to “bear with one another in love.” This would require humility, gentleness and patience as each of them practiced their faith. It would require tolerance to “maintain unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.”

A third emphasis was that each person had been given gifts by God and that these gifts were given to increase the whole. Because the Ephesian church was a young congregation and its members were just beginning in their faith journey, their understandings were often tossed to and fro. But as they grew in faith, each person contributed to building up the body of Christ.

The fourth and final emphasis was that by “speaking the truth in love,” each person must grow into Christ. This means taking time to learn about one another and their gifts. Knowing these gifts, we can do God’s work both within and beyond the faith community. When there are decisions to make or relationships to reconcile, we know to begin with prayer and reflection, always desiring to speak the truth in love — not for our own benefit but for God’s glory, that we might become more complete.

As our members and friends gather today, whether face-to-face or online, we are reminded of our calling into “unity in Christ.” We come from many places and work in many contexts, and yet we recognize “one Lord, one faith, one baptism.”

Whether new to a worshipping community or further along the journey, we realize that humility, gentleness and patience are required both in the good times and especially in times of uncertainty and struggle. God wants us to be more complete through our work. Christ provides the way. The Holy Spirit is with us for guidance and courage. Each of us has been given the gifts to be complete, and through our faithfulness we will grow stronger and work together as one body.

Let us pray: Lord, let the words of the apostle Paul dwell in us deeply. May we embrace the reconciling power of oneness with Christ. May this oneness guide our congregation as we live into the new realities of these times. As we meet new partners in ministry, may we take time to get to know them with patience, humility and love. Help us to see how sharing our gifts will make your work easier and more fulfilling while bringing all of us closer to Christ. May the blessings you give each day strengthen us to a living, daring confidence in your grace. Amen.

2020 SALEM LUTHERAN CHURCH ACKNOWLEDGES

As Salem Lutheran Church has reviewed the 2020 program year and is preparing for and entering 2021, it wishes to acknowledge the following.

1. That we thank God for his everlasting, steadfast love, for His Son, for His gifts of the Spirit, and for His daily blessings.
2. That we recognize and thank all members who have given of their time and talents over the past year and that we encourage all members to faithfully and prayerfully serve the Lord Jesus Christ through his church.
3. That we give thanks for Pastor Matt and his family for their dedicated service to our congregation.
4. That we thank the following Church Council members who have completed their current term of office: Ron DeJong, Kyle Goslee, Dani Saeger, and Diane Schulte
5. That the Church Council will continue to work with all the teams as they seek to serve our members, the un-churched, our community and the rest of God's world.
6. That we will continue to support our youth in an effort to provide education and a connection that is rooted in the Christian faith. In addition, we will continue to support and encourage our Christian Education staff, teachers, parents and students as they continue to faithfully carry out this ministry.
7. That, as servants in a shared ministry, we continue to support and grow the Servants of Salem program. Our prayer is that all members of Salem would feel welcome and involved in a way that matches their abilities and desires.
8. That we offer special thanks to all the musicians and vocalists who have served our church in the past year; Kurt Hoehne and family, custodians, Jackie Lindvall, Treasurer; Amanda Blom, Financial Secretary; Amy Hamilton; Church office administrator and to Carol Westberg, Ruby Flickinger, Ardy Eekhoff, and Diane Schulte for their time in the church office.
9. That we express thanks to the congregation for their financial support of Salem's ministry and for the faithfulness shown by their giving of time and talents. We are grateful to the families who gave to Salem through wills and memorials.
10. That the Salem Lutheran Church Council will be empowered to approve the minutes of the annual meeting.

2020

