

ANNUAL REPORT 2021

January, 2022

MISSION STATEMENT

*We are a church centered in Christ,
inviting all into a community of worship,
nurturing all to be disciples of Jesus.
Together we reach out to make a difference here and
throughout the world.*



OUR SAVIOR'S LUTHERAN CHURCH

West Salem, Wisconsin

www.oursaviorswestsalem.org

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THE ORDER OF BUSINESS

Sunday, January 30, 2022 – 11:30 a.m.

President Jen Linse, presiding

DEVOTIONS

MINUTES of last Annual Meeting, June 13, 2021

REPORTS

1. Pastors
2. President's and Church Council
3. Committees, Ministries and Other Reports
4. Financial

ELECTIONS

- Congregation Council
 - four for three-year terms
 - one for two-year term
- Two to the Endowment Fund Committee for a three-year term

NOMINATING PROCESS

NEW BUSINESS

- Approval of the 2022 Budget - Resolution #1
- Mission Endowment Fund Resolutions #2, #3, #4

OTHER BUSINESS

CLOSING PRAYER

Our Savior's Lutheran Church
Annual Meeting Minutes
June 13, 2021

President Steve Ahles called the meeting to order at 11:02 AM. There were 38 in attendance.

Note: By constitution the annual meeting is to be held between January 15 and February 7. Due to the pandemic the meeting could not be held at that time. The constitution requires the meeting to have a ten-day notice by mail, and this date (June 13, 2021) has been publicized since the beginning of March.

Agenda: A motion was made and seconded to approve the agenda as presented. Motion carried.

Devotions: Pastor Jean led devotions.

Minutes: President Ahles drew attention to the minutes of the January 26, 2020 annual meeting, which were approved by the Congregation Council at its February, 2020 meeting.

Reports: The following reports were noted: Pastors, President and Council, Committees, Financial, and other reports.

- Eric Ender noted the value of the Mission Endowment Fund as presented in the report was current as of September 2020. Since that time, additional statements have been received, and the current balance as of now is \$502,000+.
 - A motion was made and seconded to receive the Pastors', President and Council, all committees, and the 2020 budget and all other 2020 financial reports. Motion carried.

Elections: President Ahles referenced the following nominations in the annual report on p.24. He stated after the report was printed, one additional person has been nominated for council – Tiffany Janisch. He noted that there are no nominations for Synod Assembly voting members, Sugar Creek Bible Camp, and Bethany Homes as those meetings have already gathered this year. Those elected last year remain in those positions until successors are elected, hence they served again this year.

- Congregation Council (three-year term) – Brenda Skittone and Tiffany Janisch, one position to be filled by council appointment
 - President Ahles asked for nominations from the floor for the last council position. Seeing none, a motion was made and seconded to close nominations for all council positions and to elect Brenda Skittone and Tiffany Janisch to Congregation Council, for a three-year term, as nominated. Motion carried.

- Mission Endowment Fund Committee (three-year term) – Lee Friell
 - A motion was made and seconded to close nominations and to elect Lee Friell to the Mission Endowment Fund. Motion carried.

New Business

- **2021 Budget** – President Ahles presented the proposed 2021 budget, referring members to pages 37-40 in the report. Pastor Jon noted we met the 2020 budget last year, and the 2021 budget was planned to keep within the same numbers. He stated the 2021 budget is \$1,500 less than 2020, while some of the numbers were shifted within various line items.
 - A motion was made and seconded to adopt the 2021 budget as recommended by the Congregation Council. Motion carried.
- **Audio/Visual Project for the Sanctuary** – Pastor Jon explained the reason for this project and reviewed the audio/visual project proposal as recommended by the Congregation Council, referencing the handout (attached) that was distributed. He thanked Dean Olson and Ken Isler for spearheading this project. President Ahles invited Dean Olson to answer questions.
 - A motion was made and seconded to proceed with the Audio/Visual project proposal as recommended by the Congregation Council, with the cost not to exceed \$40,000. Motion carried.

Other Business

- **Invitation** – Pastor Jon referenced his sermon and invited members to sign up to be a part of various ministries within the congregation that will take on new and exciting paths in the year to come – youth, stewardship, property, visioning (What's Your Vision?).
- **Expression of Thanks** – Pastor Jon shared his thanks and appreciation to the Congregation Council for their leadership during this past year, but especially to Steve Ahles and Tracey Beckley for serving for more than six years, allowing us to have leadership through this meeting.

Adjourn

- A motion was made and seconded to adjourn the meeting at 11:45 AM. Motion carried.

Pastor Jon closed the meeting with prayer.

Respectfully submitted,
Rev. Jean Schmidt, Acting Secretary

2021 Congregation Council Members

<u>NAME</u>	<u>TERM EXPIRES</u>	<u>TERM</u>
Jaime Fortier	2023	First
Bonnie Gensch	2023	First
Naoko Giblin (appointed to 2-year term to complete unfilled position)	2022	First
Alison Hemker	2022	First
Eric Iliff	2022	First
Tiffany Janisch	2024	First
Carolyn Karl	2023	First
Jen Linse	2022	First
Brenda Skittone	2024	First
Chad Vick	2023	First
Michelle Witte (appointed to 1-year term to complete unfilled position)	2022	First

Officers of the Church Council and the Congregation

President: Jen Linse
Vice-president: Jaime Fortier
Secretary: Carolyn Karl

Church Staff

Senior Pastor: Jonathan Schmidt
Associate Pastor: Jean Schmidt
Administrative Assistant: Kris Seeger
Director of Youth Ministry: Wendy Amundson
Treasurer: Jill Iliff
Music Director: Linda Berg
Musicians: Linda Berg and Laurie Noelke
Senior Choir Director: Eric Sorenson
Choir Accompanist: Linda Berg
Financial Secretary: Karen DeSchepper
Custodian: Josh Corning

Senior Pastor's Report

One of my favorite Biblical scholars is Walter Brueggeman, and thanks to Brueggeman, one of my favorite stories comes from Genesis. Genesis shares the story of Abraham and Sarah. They are old – really old – well beyond child-bearing age. Yet, even so, God makes a promise that they will parent a great nation. How can that be, even at their age? A miracle – God acts in their lives to bring forth a child (Isaac), keeping his promise, and assuring them of a future.

But then, in Genesis 22:1-14, God calls Abraham to sacrifice his child, to give up both child and future. Yet, God had promised ... what of that? Abraham and Sarah were too old before – now they are even older. To give up Isaac is to surrender the future. And at their age, to return to hopelessness. In real life, in a real world, that is reasonable. There is no foreseeable outcome that will work – there is no reason to expect anything else.

Yet, something happens in the story – God happens! Brueggeman, through a rather simple linguistic analysis (I won't go through it all here – if you're curious ask me, I'd love to share it with you), identifies verse 8 as the heart of the story – the very core of the message. "*God will provide*" declares Abraham! Even though he expects to lose Isaac, and then with no children, to lose his future, Abraham nonetheless is confident that somehow, in ways he cannot see or even imagine, *God will provide*.

Kind of like today.

We keep expecting, even hoping that the pandemic will finally draw to a close. And yet, like the Energizer Bunny, it just keeps going and going. Even worse, it keeps changing. Like changing the rules of the game, Covid keeps us off balance and out of a rhythm in life. We don't like the new normal, in part because the new normal keeps changing – again and again. And in that kind of world, it's hard to see a reason for hope. How can we plan for the future when we can't even get a handle on the present?

And so, like Abraham, we might wonder if God has forgotten the promises that God has made. Not about a good, happy life, filled with all sorts of joy and wonders (you know, the vacation trips, the toys in the garage, the celebrations of family and friends, a healthy frame of mind). No, the real promises – that God will be with us always, that God will fill us with life even in difficult times, and that even in difficult times there is hope for the future.

Remember verse 8. *God will provide!*

God will provide in our journeys, each of us, as we navigate a challenging world while striving to be faithful disciples of Jesus. And God will provide in our journey as a community of faith, as a gathering of disciples, gathering in community, around the gifts of Word and Sacrament. And a community, sometimes together, sometimes on our own, reaching out to make a difference in a broken and frightened world.

God will provide!

Just as God has provided. Last summer we missed a big date. We just couldn't do much with it. It was July 10 – the centennial of the dedication of our sanctuary. But what is important is not the brick and mortar structure, but what God has done for us, and through us, in those 100 years. Through epidemics, wars, economic upheaval, and the many changes in our society and culture, God has continued to be active in the life of the congregation – and the lives of disciples. Or, in other words, God has provided!

And what does that mean for the future? *God will provide!*

So, as we take a peek back to 2021, and then turn toward 2022, we do so with confidence: *God will provide!*

WORSHIP – as 2020 began with normal worship, 2021 did not ... and even at the end, we were still not "normal." But while our worship may not have taken on a normal form, it continues to do what it has done for over 150 years – proclaim the gospel, share the sacraments, and seek ways to connect with people. Even in a challenging time. All the while confident that *God will provide!*

- **We began the year in virtual mode** – prerecorded YouTube worship, with Zoom Communion on Sundays. We had fairly healthy numbers of views on YouTube over the first seven days each week, consistently over 100, which suggests over 200 individuals, along with 15+ on Zoom. Even our Lenten worship was watched, with about the same number of individuals as we might have expected in a more "normal" time.
- **Easter was a bit different** – we gathered in the Lion's Shelter (yes, it was a bit chilly), but over 300 came together as we celebrated new life in the risen Christ!
- **And then ... back to the building!** Starting in May we began worshipping together again, in person. We began with Saturday, Sunday, and Wednesday, but discovered that the Wednesday service did not really draw, and instead, after Covid numbers settled a bit, we added a second Sunday service. That's also where we ended the year – averaging between 75 and 100 each weekend. We Zoomed the 10:30 service, and used the Saturday service to create the prerecorded YouTube service. As live worship began, our virtual numbers dropped in half to between 100 and 120 individuals each week, keeping our overall average close to the same. Being back in the building has had some challenges, but it has worked – and we are thankful to all who have, in care for others, maintained distances, worn their masks, and tolerated open windows. We can do this together, and we can continue to be caring towards those more vulnerable because in the end we know that *God will provide!*
- **But we didn't forget the outdoors.** We worshiped at the Lion's Shelter seven times during the summer months, and again on Reformation Sunday (October 31 – complete with some costuming!). One of the summer services included Confirmation, and might have started a new tradition – a number of the families encouraged future confirmation services to be at the shelter, allowing families and extended families the space to be together in worship.

- **And then the special services ... with variety!**
 - a. Ash Wednesday – prerecorded video, but also morning and late afternoon “drive-through” ashes and communion. Around 80 joined us, even if the morning session ended at -4 degrees!
 - b. Lenten worship was prerecorded, as was Good Friday. Maundy Thursday was Zoomed.
 - c. Advent put us back in the building, but we also recorded the services and placed them on YouTube.
 - d. Christmas Eve and Day also found us in the building. With reduced capacity, we added a service. Three of the services were at capacity, the other three with some room to spare. All in all, attendance was less than half of two years ago. No surprise with the pandemic surging again. And then we were out to the farm for our Zoom service – and this time it worked (check out the video on the web site – pretty cool with the cows chiming in!).
- And finally, **pastoral events** – a few weddings, funerals, and baptisms. Several outdoors, and a few (safely) in the building, along with some tech connections to allow those who couldn’t join us to be present as well.

Worship was not the way we wanted it to be, but the Word was proclaimed, the Sacraments celebrated, people gathered (in person and virtually), the Spirit was present, and ... we discovered the truth ... *God will provide!*

Worship also experienced some “comings and goings” as Kathy Brisson stepped down as our assistant worship music leader, and Linda Berg let go of the reigns to the “Bells of Joy.” We will look forward to a bit safer and easier time in the future to gather and thank Kathy for her many years of music!

But ... what to do about the music? *God will provide* ... and God did! We welcomed Laurie Noelke as both handbell director and assistant worship music leader. Laurie has already led the bells in music, played for several weekends, and provided music at funerals. Welcome, Laurie, and thank you for joining us!

Unfortunately, the choir is not yet able to practice and sing – soon we hope! Eric Sorenson does a great job with our collection of voices – we yearn to have his leadership and their voices gracing our worship again. In the meantime, we make use of our many talented singers as they provide music for our YouTube worship services.

EDUCATION – The year began virtual and ended, for the most part, in person.

1. **Sunday School?** See Pastor Jean’s report.
2. **Confirmation classes** started on Zoom, returning to the building in May for the 6th graders, and in September for 7-9th grade. A number of times we had kids out for Covid, so we Zoomed or recorded classes, sometimes doing three classes an evening that way, so that those out wouldn’t get too disconnected. We also continued for 7th and 8th graders the “outdoor gathering,” until the weather got a bit too cool!

3. **Wednesday Bible Study** followed the same pattern – virtual, then in building, but still having a few joining us via Zoom. Hey, we are a flexible bunch!

STEWARDSHIP – Last year I said “Wow! Thank you!” This year? DITTO!!!

Again, the financial support of our ministries during the past year has remained strong, very strong. Thank you for your gifts, and for making a difference in the world around us. We have lots of stories of people who have been impacted by the ministry of this congregation over the past year, and that is due to you! So, thank you for your support!

See? *God will provide!*

MISSION SUPPORT – Yes, tough days, and yes, big challenges here in West Salem, but we haven’t forgotten that we are part of something bigger – we are part of a big world, and we are partners with others in making a difference in that world. We began 2021 expecting to support the mission of the La Crosse Area Synod, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, Sugar Creek Bible Camp, and Lutheran Campus Ministry. We did that – and we did even more than we expected, with support totaling almost \$44,000 (see the financial reports for details!).

In addition, we continued our strong giving support of the World Hunger Appeal, and through a variety of channels – Norwegian Dinner, Mission Endowment Fund, WELCA offerings – we supported numerous other missions and ministries, here in our backyard, and around the globe. Over \$25,000 to make a difference in people’s lives. We can be bold to do that because we know that *“God will provide!”*

OUTREACH – We said it last year ... and it’s still true – there were times the church building was closed, but the “church” remained open. The work of Jesus, the mission we share, continued. It continued to proclaim in a variety of ways, to a broken world, that *God will provide!*

1. The **Summer lunch ministry** was on pause this past year as the school system secured a grant, reaching a lot more kids. But ... we’re ready when needed, and will see what happens in 2022.
2. We didn’t have a **Norwegian Dinner** again this past year, but the ministry of the dinner will continue – over \$2000 gathered to share with agencies and programs that meet human needs.
3. While the building reopened, the **Care and Share Food Pantry** remained open all year, distributing food to those in need. A great job by Judy Long, Melody Schmitz, and all those who share their time with the pantry and its ministry.
4. The **Quilting Group** began meeting again in mid-2021 – and had a record number of quilts – over 300! Thanks to our quilters who gather on Wednesdays, to those who work at home, and to those who provided an abundance of materials. Proof again, that *God will provide!*
5. And of course, the **Mission Endowment Fund** never missed a beat. Our investments bore fruit, and over \$17,000 went out to meet needs in our community and around the world.

PASTORAL CARE – Finally we could be in the hospitals and nursing homes again. Visits resumed, along with home visits, as have nursing home worship services. Masks make it a bit more challenging, but we are able again to connect with those who are isolated from us, yet never forgotten.

YOUTH AND FAMILY – you can check Wendy Amundson’s report for more details, but in a pandemic world, the goal has been “connecting.” We have continued the outdoor gatherings around the fire pit. More connections are planned for this coming year, especially using Sugar Creek.

In the meantime, the Congregation Council, made up of mostly parents of kids, is having conversations about where our youth ministry needs to move in a pandemic and then post-pandemic world.

METS ... or Ministry Exploration Team ... is also looking at the changes in our world, and what they might mean to us and our ministry. A good group of mission minded folk are meeting to ponder where God is leading us as the world changes. We’ve spent some time reflecting on the needs we see around us. In a time of pandemic, relationships top the list. We are not sure where this is leading (only the Holy Spirit knows that!). We do know, however, that wherever we are called, and to whatever ministry we are called, *God will provide!* Stay tuned ...

So, where does that take us as we move into 2022? Surprisingly, this hasn’t changed all that much. Like we have for over 150 years, we continue to proclaim hope, and to be agile, to meet changing needs by changing when necessary. And we have our eyes on some ways to make that happen.

Though the pandemic has gotten in the way, we are still looking to create a new worship experience on Wednesday evenings that will be heavy on music. Can’t do that quite yet, but we continue to believe in that calling - the need is still there, and (faithfully) we still want it to happen!

We are also looking forward to our major tech upgrade. Approved by the annual meeting in 2021, we had hoped to have it in by now, but the global supply chain issues have left us without some of the major components. We are now hoping for completion in late May of 2022. We have received gifts of over \$15,000 to make it happen – maybe that’s a gift you would like to make? Be on the “ground floor” of new tech and opportunities for changing lives!

So ... 2022 is here. Now what? I wish I really knew, but I don’t. I don’t know when masks will go away, distancing will be forgotten, and all will be as it once was. Maybe never. That’s scary! But while we do not know what will come, we do know one thing, remember? ***God will provide!!***

I can also say a few other things with certainty, though to be truthful, they really all flow out of "*God will provide!*"

I can start by thanking you and expressing my deep gratitude for your support, your partnership. But while I thank you, even more **I give thanks to God for you**, for you are wondrous gifts of God to Our Savior’s and to me. So, thank you, and thank God!

Then, **I give thanks for our leadership, in a variety of expressions** – from our reopening team, to our video singers and Sunday School teachers and Corey Sjoquist, the Mission Endowment Fund committee, and to all who have shared in the mission of this congregation. And ... especially ... to everyone else whom I do not have the space to name. You are treasured gifts in our work together.

And **I give thanks for our Congregation Council**, and for their work during a challenging time, making careful, thoughtful, and prayerful decisions. And a special thanks to Jen Linse for taking on the duties of president, and to Steve Ahles and Tracey Beckley, who served into mid-year, even beyond their six years, as our annual meeting last year was delayed until June.

And **I give thanks for our staff**, who have continued their faithful work during a challenging year. I am especially grateful to Kris Seeger and Josh Corning, who we see on a frequent basis, and who are not members of this congregation, but continue to be gifts of God to me – and to us! Kris' absence for two months at the end of the year due to foot surgery reminded us just how much she does and the difference she makes. Great to have her back!

And **I give thanks for "the other pastor," (my wife)** who has been so supportive during a very wearying and draining time. Her patience and understanding, along with her gift for ministry has enriched even a difficult time as this past year.

And finally, **I give thanks for my wife ("the other pastor")** for her presence in my life ... this past year, and for over the many years of our life together. And then **Rebecca, my daughter, too**. Together, they are incredible gifts of a gracious God. Proof yet again, that God does ... and *God will provide!*

But most of all, ***I thank Jesus for the love and grace that sustains, heals, and empowers us*** to be what we are called to be – faithful disciples, who do "God's work with our hands." Always in the confidence that *God will provide!*

Pastor Jon

Associate Pastor's Report

Where to start? We all had such high hopes of 2021 being the year where we could get back to our old ways of doing things, back to "normal." But, alas, 'twas not to be. When that time finally does come, all these "new" things will have become our "normal." We continued to learn during this last year, honing skills we were forced to learn in 2020, and finding they are now just a part of the fabric of what we do.

Worship continued to be virtual as we began 2021, and by then it had become our new routine. When there was talk about re-opening, the thought was almost overwhelming. It would have been 15 months of only talking to a camera, and then to have people in person staring at you again brought great anxiety. Of course, when we actually were able to be together again, it felt so good to see people (if only the twinkle in their eyes), to have a conversation, to again feel the community around us.

Not everyone was happy with the way things started out as we began to gather back in the building, with all of the restrictions and precautions recommended by the re-opening team and council, following the advice of the scientists and schools and our colleagues. But if we hadn't been cautious, we wouldn't have been able to be together at all. I guess it came down to, what were we willing to do to help protect each other and ourselves. Were we willing to put up with a small bit of discomfort, inconvenience, and selflessness in order to be together? It was especially important we needed to do everything possible to stay safe until all (including the youngest of our children) were able to be vaccinated.

As the year wore on, we continued with the precautions for the sake of others. It seemed any time we were able to take one step forward, something would come up and cause us to take two steps back. But we persevered and persisted, and all of the challenges and inconveniences didn't seem so bad, and over time they became part of the routine.

By the time summer came, I had recorded two Sunday school lessons every week for a solid 18 months. It was time for a break. We entrusted Vacation Bible School to Wendy Amundson and Eric Iliff. We tried to be creative and safe ... we tried to involve families rather than just kids ... we did it outside at the Lion's Shelter on two Sundays in July and two in August following worship. Knowing all of the work Wendy and Eric put into this, we were extremely disappointed with the lack of participation. My guess is that VBS may have run its course and there is no longer a need for this ministry at this time.

It felt good to get the kids back into Sunday school in the fall, even if we had to do things drastically different. Because of the potential number of kids and cramped space, in order to keep the kids safe, we split them into two groups so we could keep distanced. It had been so long since I saw their smiling eyes and felt their energy and enthusiasm! I still remember that fateful Sunday in March of 2020 when I had to tell them there would be no more Sunday school for a while. These kids were so perceptive – they could see the emotion I was having trouble hiding and they gave me hugs and made me pictures (that are still on my filing cabinet). Who knew it would be so long until we would gather again. I also think our "old" teachers missed the kids as much as I did, and the "new" teachers have jumped right in and embraced them, too.

Over the summer we got good at packing things up and moving over to the Lion's Shelter for worship twice a month. The weather cooperated most of the time, and more people felt comfortable coming together because it was outside. We had Affirmation of Baptism (Confirmation) worship over there and families seemed to prefer that venue as more of the congregation could participate in the service and the confirmand's families could sit together comfortably rather than being cramped and restricted in the sanctuary. It went over so well the class of 2022 has requested we have it at the Lion's Shelter again this year. Perhaps another new tradition coming out of the pandemic.

We had to be creative with holiday/festival worship services this past year.

- ♥ It started on Ash Wednesday. With temperatures close to zero, Pastor Jon and I were out in the parking lot in the early morning and early evening distributing ashes and sharing communion with folks in their cars. It was a really neat experience, despite the cold, because we got to see people in person for the first time in over a year. We also handed out pieces for an Easter mosaic that folks were invited to color and return. The finished, joint-effort was revealed on Easter morning.
- ♥ We celebrated Easter outdoors at the Lion's Shelter, again with cold in the air, but our spirits were lifted as we were able to gather together as a community and celebrate the risen Jesus. Pastor Jon also recorded his Easter sermon for the pre-recorded video standing on the shore of Lake Neshonoc as the sun was rising – an awesome sight!
- ♥ By the time Christmas came, we had been worshiping in the building with limited numbers for seven months and it was important to celebrate Christmas in person, too. So, in an effort to try to accommodate as many as we could, knowing full well we couldn't handle the 700+ we usually have, we added a fifth service, along with the pre-recorded and Zoom services. And, the best part of Christmas Eve was trying to Zoom a service at the barn again ... and this time, it worked! Pastor Jon and I, along with Arlan and Sandra Holthaus, sat in the barn, among the hay, in the dark of night, bathed in soft light, with the cows serenading us in the background, listening to Eric sing "O Holy Night", hearing the Christmas story, celebrating Holy Communion, and raising our (battery) candles as we sang "Silent Night." It was cold that night (but nowhere near as bitter cold as 2020), but our hearts were warmed in the moment.

At the end of the year I did go back "to the good old days" when I found myself sitting in Kris' chair doing the secretarial work for two months while she recovered from foot surgery. It was fun to do those tasks again, to know I hadn't forgotten how, and it was even better to welcome Kris back so I could go back to ministry.

Even in the midst of the darkness, challenges, and uncertainty, there were (and continue to be) signs of new life here in this place ... babies were baptized, people who have not been around for quite some time have reconnected virtually, new families are joining us and becoming active in the life of the congregation, the handbell choir has been resurrected under a new director (Laurie Noelke), our "seniors" have learned to navigate technology (and done quite well!), ministry has reached across the country as people have joined us for on-line worship from coast to coast. Finally, in 2022, after

many delays and snafus, we are especially looking forward to getting the new tech project (that was approved at the Annual Meeting in June) installed and up and running ... once again there will be a learning curve for all of us, but we anxiously anticipate it will be worth the wait.

With things opening up a bit late summer, our family took our first vacation in two years. It was only a week, but it felt so good to get away. We chose places where we could be outside, enjoying the beautiful scenery, and getting some much-needed exercise and rest. We were able to connect with friends and family, and it was good! In the fall, Pastor Jon and I took a weekend away to knock off one of my "bucket list" items – going to a Nebraska Cornhuskers football game. My Dad was on my mind most of the time, and the memories of my childhood back on my grandparent's farm came flooding in. I can't describe the feeling being there, soaking it all in, and being at the game. It didn't hurt that it was one of the three games they actually won last year!

As I look to the new year, I am cautiously optimistic that I can take my long-awaited sabbatical that was to happen in 2020. Perhaps the activities, the "doing", may end up being different than initially planned, but the "theme" of going back to my roots, doing things that I used to enjoy but haven't done in decades (sewing, cooking, reading), and intentionally reconnecting with family and friends that I don't normally see, will still be the focus. Hopefully this will also be a time for self-care for both Pastor Jon and me, as these last couple of years have been exhausting, at times overwhelming, and depleting.

Our staff has weathered the storm, gone above and beyond to make sure all continued to run smoothly this last year. Thank you to ... Kris Seeger for keeping the office running and the Pastors organized, and for all of the "little things" behind the scenes that you do so well ... Josh Corning for keeping things clean with all of the new protocols, and getting things set up for ever changing events once we re-opened ... Linda Berg for helping to make music happen for worship and all of the recording sessions ... Wendy Amundson for coming up with new ways to connect with our confirmation kids and children ... Jill Iliff for making sure the finances were always in order ... Laurie Noelke for joining us to direct the handbell choir and serve as a musician for worship ... Karen DeSchepper and Eric Sorenson for being at the ready when the time comes to count and sing.

We thank Kathy Brisson for all of her years (decades) of service as a musician for worship and funerals. During the summer, Kathy shared her plans to retire. When it is safe, and when we can party, we will celebrate Kathy's ministry among us and send her forth with Godspeed. Thank you, Kathy!!

Thank you to those volunteers who stepped up and took on new projects and did them faithfully, especially Carolyn Karl delivering the DVDs to our shut-ins every week, and Dean Olson for all of his tech work. Thank you to those who signed up to usher when we were at the Lion's Shelter and back in the building, the choir members who recorded music for worship each week, the re-opening team for their thoughtful, wise counsel and guidance, the congregation council members (past and present) for their stamina and leadership.

We thank all of our members and friends who continued to support all of the ministries of this congregation with your presence watching the worship, attending worship, praying for us, and financially supporting the work within our walls and outside in the world. Together we will get through this, having learned a lot, and having been made stronger and more agile.

And last, but certainly not least, thank you to Pastor Jon and Rebecca, without your love, care, and support I never could have made it through.

We give thanks to a good and gracious God, who has been with us every step of the way, and who is there waiting to meet us and walk with us through whatever is to come as we move forward in this new year.

Blessings in our ministry together,

Pastor Jean

**** * * * * * **** * * * * * **** * * * * *

MINISTRIES

Worship Helpers – Another year without others being able to be a part of worship – lector, acolyte, communion assistant, altar guild. We have been so thankful for all of you who have helped in the past and look forward to the time when you can once again be part of the ministry of worship.

As we began to worship in person again, having someone here to usher and greet the folks was extremely important, especially as the pastors were busy getting things ready for the service (cameras and computers set up, getting communion ready, tying up loose ends). The “job” for the ushers changed a bit as they became the front-line workers, greeting folks, sharing hand sanitizer and masks, signing people in, and distributing the bulletins. No more collecting offering or ushering up for communion. It has been a slow process getting new people to step up and assist with this vital ministry ... hint, hint!! We are grateful to those who volunteered week in and week out, often at the last minute to get us through this last year – *Wendy Amundson, Larry & Connie Blunck, Phil & Judy Gilbert, Jon & Maryrose Hetland, Jim, Ruby & Sawyer Kerkman, Brenda Skittone, and Dennis & Sprain.*

Home Communion Ministry – Delivering communion and visiting our shut-ins has not been an option these last many months due to the restrictions. They miss the visits, and those delivering communion miss the conversations, and so do the pastors.

Prayer Ministry – It is amazing how many times we hear people share how they truly believe the power of prayer has impacted their lives. We continue to have a dedicated group of people on the *prayer chain* who receive prayer requests from Pastor Jean via email each week (and sometimes more often) and who then lift these petitions up in prayer. The list this year has been long, with many petitions being of such a nature that they stay on for an extended period of time. We are grateful to this group of pray-ers who work on behalf of the community gathered here. We welcome others to join us ... in the comfort of your own home, on your own schedule, doing God's work.

Senior Ministry – We have been on hiatus as a committee for almost two years now, but ministry does continue and we look forward to the time we can be together again and move forward with our plans for increased ministry with this age group. We have missed our monthly gatherings (Bible study and food) with "our" group at Salem Terrace. For now, the holiday and birthday cards continue to be sent to our "over 80" folks, DVDs of weekly worship are delivered to the homebound, and our Sunday school children are once again able to connect with their "adopted grandparents" with cards and pictures.

College Ministry – Over the last year+ we feel like we have lost track of many of our college students, not sure where they are these days with classes having been virtual or hybrid or in person?? As fall of 2021 began, we reached out to parents to share the whereabouts of their students, and at Christmas time, Pastor Jean sent a note and gift card to those students whose addresses we had received. We are hoping to be able to rebuild this ministry as time goes on. It is important to keep in contact with our young adults and let them know their faith community is here for them and that they are not forgotten especially in these most challenging times.

Vacation Bible School – We tried something new this year for Vacation Bible School. Eric Iliff and Wendy Amundson spent countless hours preparing for an outdoor VBS experience, offered two Sundays each in July and August after 10 AM worship at the Lion's Shelter. Perhaps it was the times we are in, or perhaps this ministry no longer fills a need for our young children, but the turnout was abysmal and very disappointing. Those who were here had fun, and we were glad they could join us. However, at this time there are no plans to offer VBS in the future. Maybe replace it with an Explorer's Day Camp experience at Sugar Creek??

Sunday School –

After being apart for well over a year, we really wanted to get our kids back in the building, but we needed to do so safely. Because of the potential number of children in our program, and the fact they couldn't be vaccinated yet, the only way to get them in safely (masked and distanced), was to split them up. Classes began in October, with the PreK through 2nd grade coming on the first and third Sundays of the month, and the 3rd through 5th grade coming on the second and fourth Sundays. It isn't ideal, and it creates a challenge for families with kids in both age groups, but our families and teachers have made it work. Also, because we didn't know how many children to expect in kindergarten or pre-k since these kids have never had the opportunity to be in Sunday school yet, we combined the two classes for this year. We were so excited to see the large number of kids in pre-K joining us for the first time!

Giftng of Bibles was different again this year. We continued to give a *Frolic Bible* to those who were baptized. Rather than giftng the Bibles during worship, the 4K children were given their *Whirl Story Bible* in class on the first day. The Pastors offered the Bible Workshop on several occasions for our 3rd and 4th graders, and the children were able to take the Bibles home that day rather than having a special giftng in worship.

In the fall, the Pastors offered multiple sessions of First Communion instruction for our 6th graders (and any 7th graders who also missed it last year). They were not able to make bread for worship, but Angie Hemker joined us to help the students make the cups they used for their first communion. We then offered two special worship services on Sunday evenings for the students to receive communion for the first time. Our hope is to get back on track and have First Communion instruction for our current 5th graders in spring of 2022.

The Sunday school Christmas program, "*Do Not be Afraid*", was once again a prerecorded video. The children were recorded safely at different times, mostly outside or in their homes. Pastor Jon then put all of the pieces together to create a cohesive program (thank you for all of the hours of work!!). The video was shared during mid-week Advent worship, as well as on-line. Great job all!

Our Sunday school classroom grandparent program is off to a slow start this year, but we are getting our kids reconnected with their grandparents by sharing cards and notes. We hope by fall of 2022 to be able to get them together in person.

We are grateful to our Sunday school teachers who were eager and ready to connect with their students, no matter how we were able to get them together. Thank you ...

Sunday School Staff 2021-2022

Pre-K & Kindergarten: Erin Hebrink, Kamryn Kane
1st Grade: Lindsey Gilberts *3rd Grade:* Stacey Sjoquist
2nd Grade: Amanda Vick *4th Grade:* Mariette Stefferud
5th Grade: Eric Iliff

Worship and Education Participation for 2021

The pandemic that began in March of 2020 led to the suspension of in-building worship and education, and forced us to be agile and creative. The various worship opportunities created in 2020, continued into 2021. In May of 2021, we were able to introduce limited in-person worship opportunities, in the building and at the Lion's Shelter. While we are aware that numbers do not tell the whole story (again this year!), they do give us a snapshot of what our worship and education life was like, and a sense of the vitality of our ministry together.

Total participants in "face to face" weekend worship	2,932
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Ash Wednesday parking lot	80
Thanksgiving	29
Advent	67
Christmas Eve/Day	318

Total estimated participants in weekend virtual worship	7,744
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YouTube videos	7,378
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*3689 views per seven-day period, two participants per view – industry standard
Average weekly participants - 142*

Ash Wednesday	216
Lent	1,134
Maundy Thursday	88
Good Friday	140
Advent	240
Christmas Eve	306

Zoom worship	366
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Average weekly participants - 7

Maundy Thursday	17
Thanksgiving	12
Christmas Eve	35

Total Christian Education in-person participants for 2021

Sunday School	57	<i>(October – December 2021)</i>
Confirmation	80	
Bible Study	16	<i>(includes Wednesday study and WELCA Ruth Circle)</i>

Pastoral Acts

Baptisms

Maddox Michael Spah
Lyriq Alaina Kumbier
Ronan James Gresens
Kaia Quinn Giblin
Norah Eileen Herman
Isabella Cornelia Ann Hafner
Bennett Gregory Vike

Confirmations

Siri Anderson
Mia Bahl
Derek Bores
Adelyn Burt
Haley Chandler
Sophia Clements
Scarlet Fullwood
Elizabeth Hesse
Jesse Howell

Carson Hundt
Jonathan Iliff
Ella Janisch
Nicholas Jones
Reice Kammel
Mya Koudelka
Nolan Langrehr
Keaton Linse
Celia Mitchell

Makenzie Murphy
Ian Nickles
Sydney Niemeier
Elliott Sjoquist
Amanda Vick
Brandon Wiese
Samuel Williams
Jack Witte
Riley Wuensch

Funerals

Leona M. Friske
Carol Jean Reed
Arnold Dean Johnson
Robert Joseph Knutson

Alice Marie Pfaff
Alice Ruth Hesselberg
Larry John Indahl
Judith LaVonne Peterson
Russell A. McClintock Sr.

Marriages

Allyson Bottem & Oscar Engh
Sophia Wilker & Jarret Tietz

Residents of Nursing Homes & Assisted Living Facilities

(as of December 31, 2021)

Mill Street Manor

Arlan Gilbertson

Lana Helgeson

Cristi Johnson

Salem Terrace

Eva Farris

Rich & Mary Storandt

Vernon Manor - Viroqua

Alice Gums

Onalaska Care Center

Eleanor Lee

Springbrook - Onalaska

Valgean Anderson

Doris Yeske

Home with a Heart - Muscoda

Lydia Ferguson

Hillview – LaCrosse

Larry Larson

Bob Olson

Nominations

Congregation Council

Four to elect to a three-year term

- Jen Linse
- Alison Hemker
- Naoko Giblin
- *Nomination from the floor or council appointment*

One to elect to a two-year term

- Michelle Witte

Endowment Fund Committee

Two to elect to a three-year term

- Jeff Rich
- Melody Schmitz

2022 LaCrosse Area Synod Assembly Voting Members (June 10-12, 2022 in LaCrosse or virtual??)

Four to elect to a one-year term

- *Nomination from the floor or council appointment*
- *Nomination from the floor or council appointment*
- *Nomination from the floor or council appointment*
- *Nomination from the floor or council appointment*

Delegates to Sugar Creek Bible Camp

Two to elect to one-year term

- Mike Larson
- *Nomination from the floor or council appointment*

Delegates to Eagle Crest Communities (formerly Bethany Lutheran Home Corporation)

Two to elect to one-year term

- Larry Blunck
- Jim Michelson

President's Report

We went into 2021 with the hope our world would return to some kind of "normal" after the challenges of 2020. While 2021 did not go as expected, Our Savior's Lutheran Church continued to plan for worshiping as a community - knowing there would be changes along the way to keep each other as safe as possible. Over the summer, for those who felt comfortable, we returned to worshiping together in the building (with windows open, social distanced and masked) and several Sundays we worshipped in the Lion's Shelter. I must say, I quite enjoyed listening to the birds sing as we worshipped together. During our fall and winter months we continued to gather for worship (windows open, social distanced and masked) – and provided the opportunity to bring people together via recorded worship, online communion, and our zoom service on Sundays. OSLC continues to be creative in spreading discipleship to our church community and beyond (further than we would have ever imagined prior to the pandemic).

We may not be exactly where we wanted when we hoped and wondered about 2021 – but just as 2020, OSLC successfully made it through another year of pandemic challenges because of you. You have continued to be so generous in giving to the general fund throughout the year. Our 2021 budget was spot on in some areas and not quite on target in other areas - but, in the end we continue to remain in the black. Thank you!

Thank you to the Pastors Jon & Jean for all the time and energy you put toward your continued work to bring meaningful worship to our congregation - whether we are worshipping at home or in person. Your dedication to keeping us informed of updates, changes and God's word has been critical to the success of keeping us moving forward together.

OSLC is also fortunate to have dedicated staff, volunteers, church council and committee members who keep the doors open and keep us organized, keep our space clean and functioning, plan for the future of our church and who continue to bring us beautiful music for our scripture reflections, special music, and hymns whether we be in person or virtual. It is a gift to have people who are invested and believe in the God's Work, Our Hands mission.

Who knows what 2022 will hold for us amid the pandemic? What I do know is that the OSLC community will continue to worship together, whether at home or in church, and our worship will unite us together in celebration, thoughtful conversation and help us grow in our discipleship of Christ.

Sincerely,
Jen Linse, Congregation Council President

Worship Committee

The Worship Committee did not meet in 2021. We will see what 2022 holds for us!

Submitted by, Linda Berg

Music Ministry

Music is an important part of the ministry of our congregation. Music is one of the ways we can communally express our faith in the God who deserves the highest praise.

Music was incorporated into the worship videos by recording individual vocal soloists as song leaders. The Bells of Joy met in spring 2021 and recorded several pieces to be used as special music, and then again late in the year under new director Laurie Noelke to provide special music during Advent. The SOS Band played for Gospel on the Green at the Lion's Shelter in August. Mulders Nursing Home extended an invitation for carolers in December, and nine (masked) members of the Senior Choir roamed the hallways singing Christmas carols on December 6. The guitar group continued to meet to keep up their skills.

Submitted by, Linda Berg

Confirmation Youth

2021 has been a difficult year to keep the youth engaged. One event that we have been able to maintain is the outdoor gathering by the firepit. Each grade brings something different to the gathering with conversations among each other or conversations with me. I very much enjoy getting everything set up with a snack table and a nice roaring fire. I look forward to continuing the outdoor gathering to help keep these kids connected.

A special thanks to Steve Ahles for providing the wood for the firepit.

Wendy Amundson
Youth Director

Lutheran World Relief School Kits

We had such a wonderful turn out of donated supplies to meet our goal of 100 stuffed backpacks. On October 6th, the 8th grade girls came to the church to assemble 100 school kits, and they were able to get this accomplished in record time. On October 9th, Carolyn Karl, Kamryn Kane, and Bennett, Collin, & Harper Fennigkoh, along with myself, loaded three vehicles with the school kits and the quilts made by the quilting ladies, and we drove them to Good Shepherd in LaCrosse where there were three semi-trailers ready to receive all the boxes from the surrounding churches. Bennett and Collin were able to go into the trailer to help carry the boxes to the back of the trailer and organize the boxes that were left inside the door. This whole experience for everyone was amazing; to see everyone come together to support such a wonderful cause.

Special thanks to Jim Michelson for helping donate 32 extra stuffed backpacks which made our grand total of 132 that we donated.

Thank you to everyone who helped to make this happen.

Submitted by: Wendy Amundson

Summer Lunch Program - Feed Our Children - West Salem

Members of Our Saviors,

The Feed Our Children report is very short this year. As everything else the past two years, COVID-19 has altered the typical way things have run in the past. 2021 was a "pause year" for us. We did not meet in person, prepare or serve meals. We did not put out a call for help or any of our regular seasonal activities. This was due to the fact that government funding made it possible for the school district to provide lunches AND breakfasts EVERY week day through the summer. Our committee will meet again in the spring after the district comes to a decision on their plan for summer.

We are on call to serve again if needed. We appreciate all of the help and support we have had in the past from this congregation and the entire community.

Respectfully,
Angie Hemker
Feed Our Children, Summer Lunch Program

Community Care & Share Food Pantry

Our hope in 2021 was that we would return to normal at the food pantry. No more taking orders over the phone and then delivering food to them while they waited in their car. No more masks and rubber gloves.

In part, our prayers were answered in 2021. Those using the pantry now enter through the alley door, register, walk down the hallway, receive what they need, and then exit out the East Avenue door. Everyone still wears a mask, but at least we can carry on a private conversation.

One thing was very disappointing. The numbers using the food pantry were down. This was pretty common among most of the food pantries in the area. We aren't sure why, but our guess was due to several things. There was the stimulus money a lot of people receive; increase in food stamp dollars; people staying home with their children and not having to pay for day care; more businesses, schools, organizations, and individuals providing food.

The pantry saw an increase in the amount of food, personal items, and dollars received, and the number of volunteers helping out. Those using the food pantry began increasing late in the year.

Please let people know that the food pantry is open every Saturday from 10:00 a.m. till noon, serving residents from Bangor, Barre Mills, Melrose, Mindoro, Rockland, and West Salem.

Judy Long, Board Member

ELCA World Hunger

ELCA World Hunger - World Hunger committee raised \$1,901 through donations and the sale of Christmas tree ornaments this year. One thousand dollars of this amount was earned through June Dairy Day credits given to us for organizing the June Dairy Day Fun Run and Outreach committee designated it for World Hunger. Please continue to remember World Hunger as an option when gift giving or with memorial monies. We pray for a world where all people are fed.

God's work, our hands!
Judy Gilbert

Outreach Committee

After 2020, we were hopeful to return to the good work of the Outreach committee. The West Salem Business Fair was cancelled so we weren't able to share the mission of Our Savior's with the West Salem community.

We decided to hold the June Dairy Days Fun Run, VIRTUALLY! There was a learning curve with this type of run. We had 25 participants - complete with fun run T-shirts! Food Trucks took the place of the church pork stand.

After much discussion, we decided to host our annual Community Corn Roast. Anticipating fewer neighbors coming to the Lion's Shelter, we decreased our corn cob count to 500 and went on to have a beautiful community event, being safely outdoors and socially distanced.

Our hope is to be back to our events, full-on in 2022!

We appreciate all who volunteered and attended our events!

Thank you!
Judy Gilbert

Social Committee

The Social Committee engages in several ministries throughout the year – Gospel on the Green, tree trimming, and coffee fellowship.

Coffee hour – For the safety of all, coffee hour remains closed due to Covid restrictions. We look forward to the time we can gather again for coffee fellowship!

Tree trimming – Thank you once again to Jeff & Melissa Haldeman for decorating the sanctuary and the trees on the altar, with a little help from their friends – Carla & Carlie Burkhardt and Wendy Amundson!

Gospel on the Green – We had outdoor worship services at the Lion's Shelter twice a month throughout the summer, including Confirmation and the Annual Meeting, as well as Easter and Reformation, in order to worship safely and together. Gospel on the Green was "technically" August 29th.

Mary & Martha Prayer Shawl Ministry

As we look back at the past year of this ministry, we see a small group of 4-6 members knitting and/or crocheting "shawls of comfort" from their homes and turning them in to one of the pastors to be given to numerous people in need of being wrapped in the love of our Savior, Jesus Christ, as well as the love of Our Savior's Lutheran Church.

Due to the changes needed to keep members safe during this 'Time of Covid', the gathering together to make these shawls was not possible, but in spite of changes, the ministry continues! We still are able to provide shawls for a variety of occasions: illness, hospitalization, shut-ins, adult & non-infant baptism, those suffering grief, parents of high school graduates. A gift of numerous shawls is made each year to Lakeview Health Care Center & Dialysis Units at local medical centers.

Prayer shawls are available for anyone - not only members of this congregation. If you are aware of anyone who needs the comfort of being wrapped in this love, please notify one of the pastors.

We continue to gratefully receive monetary gifts for purchasing yarn, and gifts of yarn for making these shawls.

We continue to look forward to being able to gather as a group, but until that is a safe practice for all we will continue providing shawls that we make at home.

Praying for all to stay healthy & safe.
Blessed Be! Carol Wittenberg

Mailing Crew

We thank Connie & Larry Blunck, Carolyn Karl, Vernetta Moe, Velma Schmidt, and Marion Twite-Stensven for helping put the newsletter together in November and December in the absence of Kris in the office. As 2022 comes along, perhaps this group can reconvene safely on a regular basis. Their help is invaluable.

Mission Endowment Committee

In 2021 the Mission Endowment Committee was able to distribute \$17,300. Our Endowment Fund has allowed Our Savior's to distribute in excess of \$222,500 since being established in 2002.

Donations are always welcome. We receive gifts as memorials, bequests, wills, and honoring birthdays and anniversaries.

Each year the committee thoughtfully discusses and decides where our donations should go, utilizing the guidelines set by Our Savior's church council. We always entertain ideas for new groups or activities that could use our support. This year our focus was on giving locally and supporting endeavors close to home.

Members of the Endowment Committee: Carl Wallace, Eric Ender, Linda Arentz, Lee Friell, and Melody Schmitz.

This year the money was distributed as follows:

LaCrosse Warming Center	\$1,000
New Horizons	\$1,000
St Claire Health Mission	\$1,000
Sleep in Heavenly Peace	\$1,000
Our Savior's Sugar Creek Campership Fund	\$1,840
Sugar Creek Bible Camp	\$2,000
ELCA World Hunger	\$2,000
OSLC Capital Improvement	\$3,460
Afghan Resettlement Project	\$4,000
Total	\$17,300

Respectfully Submitted,
Melody Schmitz-Chairperson

Mission Endowment Fund

2021 Financial Report

Assets

ELCA Endowment Fund Pooled Trust (337.50864 shares)	\$517,512.00*
* Share value as of September 30, 2021 @ (\$1,533.33)	
River Bank Money Market Checking Balance	\$10,814.14
River Bank Easy Checking Balance	\$8,311.00

[Balance in Checking Accounts as of January 8, 2022]

Income

Money Market Checking Interest	\$37.41
Contributions	\$440.00
ELCA Endowment Fund Pooled Fund Dividends	\$17,315.12

Expenses

Distribution (as detailed in Committee Report summary)	\$17,300.00
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Submitted by Eric Ender,
Financial Secretary

WELCA

Ruth Circle – Ruth Circle met monthly on the 3rd Monday morning from April to December in homes, discussing “Just Liberation Is For Everyone; The Holy Spirit, and Advent Women”. In 2022 we'll be studying The Kingdom of God. All women of the congregation are welcome.

Connie Blunck, Chairwoman

Norwegian dinner -The Norwegian dinner was cancelled yet again in 2021 due to the COVID 19 pandemic. Over \$2,100 dollars was raised from congregational donations, and will be distributed in 2022. We hope to restart the Norwegian dinner in 2022.

Asset Report – 2021

WELCA Account

Account #	Account Name	End of year Balance
Assets	WELCA – Union State Bank Checking	\$548.33

2021 FUND REPORT						
WELCA Account						
			Beginning Balance 1/1	Income	Expense	Ending Balance 12/31
3.88.100	WELCA General Fund Balance*		\$401.84	\$320.00	\$349.51	\$372.33
3.88.200	Norwegian Dinner Fund Bal		\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
3.88.300	Ruth Circle Fund Balance		\$0.00	\$1,076.00	\$900.00	\$176.00
*General Fund includes funerals, ministries (prayer shawl, baby quilts, quilting), and other miscellaneous income and expenses.						
2021 Recipients - Ruth Circle						
	New Horizons		\$100.00			
	Lutheran Social Services		\$100.00			
	Lutheran Campus Ministry		\$100.00			
	Lutheran World Relief		\$150.00			
	Sugar Creek Bible Camp		\$50.00			
	WS Community Assistance		\$100.00			
	LaCrosse Area Synod WELCA		\$100.00			
	WELCA Katie's Fund		\$100.00			
	Children's Vision		\$100.00			
	Total Donation		\$900.00			
2021 Recipients - Norwegian Dinner						
In the absence of a Norwegian Dinner and the profits that are donated, the congregation was once again invited to make contributions to be distributed in the spirit of the dinner. Over \$2,100 was collected to be distributed in January 2022, and will be reported in the 2022 Annual Report.						

2020 Recipients - "Norwegian Dinner" Match*					
ELCA World Hunger		\$1,000.00			
Lutheran Disaster Relief		\$500.00			
Quilt Shipping		\$500.00			
Lutheran Social Services		\$1,000.00			
Sugar Creek Bible Camp		\$1,000.00			
Coulee Council on Addiction		\$1,000.00			
New Horizons		\$1,000.00			
Salvation Army		\$1,000.00			
St. Clare Mission - Sparta		\$1,000.00			
LaCrosse Warming Center		\$1,000.00			
Sleep in Heavenly Peace		\$285.00			
	Total Donation	\$9,285.00			
*These monies were distributed from the Church general checking account.					

Dorcas Sewing Circle Financial Report

This report was not available at the time of this printing.

Asset Report – 2021 Youth Account

Account #	Account Name	End of year Balance
Assets		
1.77.000	Youth – Union State Bank Checking	\$29,522.27
Liabilities		
2.77.700	Pass Through Accounts	0.00

2021 FUND REPORT							
Youth Account							
				Beginning Balance 1/1	Income	Expense	Ending Balance 12/31
3.77.100	General Fund Balance			\$20,134.03	\$3,468.88	\$13.00	\$23,589.91
3.77.200	Scrip Card Fund Balance			(\$8,616.69)	\$17,429.25	\$14,000.00	(\$5,187.44)
3.77.300	Student Fund Balance			\$14,861.46	\$2,188.54	\$6,937.95	\$10,112.05
3.77.350	World Hunger Fund Balance			\$633.00	\$374.75	\$0.00	\$1,007.75
3.77.400	Flamingo Fund Balance			\$335.00	\$0.00	\$335.00	\$0.00
3.77.402	Peach Fund Balance			\$2,546.00	\$12,437.00	\$14,983.00	\$0.00
3.77.500	Mission Trip Fund Balance			(\$3,065.72)	\$3,065.72	\$0.00	\$0.00
2021 Pass Through Accounts							
Youth Account							
				Beginning Balance 1/1	Income	Expense	Ending Balance 12/31
	Sounds Like Love			\$10.00	\$0.00	\$10.00	\$0.00
	General Pass Through			\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00

2021 Our Savior's Scrip Card Sales Report

Thank you to Pastor Jon, Pastor Jean and Kris for continuing to sell the cards during "COVID times".

- Sales were the lowest on record in 2021

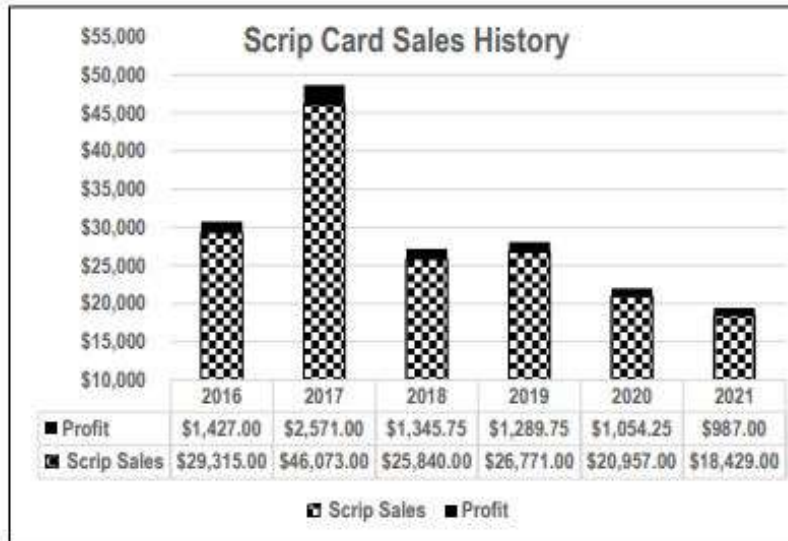
Summary/comments:

- Woodman's continues to be the best seller
- Culver's was added to the offering in November and appears to be selling well and the profit margin is 10%!
- Festival will be dropped when remaining cards are sold
 - Profit is only 3% and we are required to pay shipping to have cards delivered. We can no longer pick up at local Festival store.
- Kwik Trip - sales continue to drop.

Kwik Trip	Sales	Change
2021	\$ 2,515	\$ (470)
2020	\$ 2,985	\$ (2,286)
2019	\$ 5,271	

- Suspect we are competing with other organizations (school) who are selling
 - These cards require additional monitoring as they lose value if not used within one year
- Ship Shape car wash - \$0 sales last two years

2021	Sales	Profit	Profit Margin
Culver's	\$ 445.00	\$ 44.50	10%
Festival	\$ 675.00	\$ 20.25	3%
Kwik Trip	\$ 2,515.00	\$ 125.75	5%
Kwik Trip Car Wash	\$ 144.00	\$ 64.00	\$16 per card
Woodman's	\$ 14,650.00	\$ 732.50	5%
Total	\$ 18,429.00	\$ 987.00	5.36%



Thank you for support of the Youth and World Hunger programs.

Prepared by Linda Arentz

Submitted by Scrip Team Members

Linda Arentz
Tracy Skrentny
Jan Wee

2021 Budget Report						
2022 Proposed Budget						
	2021 Budget	2021 Actual	2022 Budget	\$ Change	% Change	
General Envelope	182,000.00	182,020.10	216,000.00	34,000.00	18.68%	
Loose	2,500.00	956.35	1,500.00	(1,000.00)	-40.00%	
Electronic Giving	110,000.00	101,255.00	102,000.00	(8,000.00)	-7.27%	
Initial	350.00	649.00	400.00	50.00	14.29%	
Advent	900.00	520.00	900.00	0.00	0.00%	
Christmas	7,500.00	2,880.00	7,500.00	0.00	0.00%	
Lent	1,000.00	1,000.00	1,000.00	0.00	0.00%	
Ash Wednesday	500.00	715.00	500.00	0.00	0.00%	
Holy Thursday	250.00	190.00	250.00	0.00	0.00%	
Good Friday	300.00	85.00	300.00	0.00	0.00%	
Easter	2,500.00	2,485.00	2,500.00	0.00	0.00%	
Thanksgiving	500.00	415.00	500.00	0.00	0.00%	
Thrivent Choice Dollars	2,000.00	989.00	1,000.00	(1,000.00)	-50.00%	
The Lutheran	100.00	290.00	250.00	150.00	150.00%	
Interest-General	5,000.00	5,442.16	8,900.00	3,900.00	78.00%	
Sunday School Reg	0.00	295.00	350.00	350.00	n/a	
VBS Registration	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00%	
Johnson South Rent	6,600.00	5,500.00	6,600.00	0.00	0.00%	
Parsonage Pooled Trust	7,900.00	8,287.44	8,200.00	300.00	3.80%	
Other	0.00	344.00	0.00	0.00	0.00%	
Budget Income	329,900.00	314,318.05	358,650.00	28,750.00	8.71%	
Prepaid	\$38,320.00	\$38,320.00	\$10,200.00	(28,120.00)	-73.38%	
TOTAL Income	368,220.00	352,638.05	368,850.00	630.00	0.17%	
EXPENSES						
La Crosse Synod	32,000.00	34,000.04	32,000.00	0.00	0.00%	
Campus Ministry	3,000.00	3,181.00	3,000.00	0.00	0.00%	
Sugar Creek	2,500.00	3,289.96	2,500.00	0.00	0.00%	
Food Pantry	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00%	
Community Assistance	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00%	
Causeway	800.00	800.00	800.00	0.00	0.00%	
WS Fire Dept	400.00	400.00	200.00	(200.00)	-50.00%	
Mission Total	38,700.00	41,671.00	38,500.00	(200.00)	-0.52%	

Salary, Senior	57,663.00	57,663.00	60,500.00	2,837.00	4.92%
Benefits, Sr Pr	26,277.00	26,276.64	27,996.43	1,719.43	6.54%
Housing, Sr Pr	13,890.00	13,890.12	13,890.00	0.00	0.00%
Cont Ed, Sr Pr	800.00	380.00	800.00	0.00	0.00%
Books, Sr Pr	300.00	126.62	300.00	0.00	0.00%
Synod Mtg, Sr Pr	400.00	395.92	400.00	0.00	0.00%
FICA Sr Pr	4,184.00	4,184.16	4,184.00	0.00	0.00%
Senior Pastor Total	103,514.00	102,916.46	108,070.43	4,556.43	4.40%
Salary, Assoc Pr	39,500.00	39,499.92	40,000.00	500.00	1.27%
Benefits, Assoc Pr	20,181.00	20,181.24	21,622.51	1,441.51	7.14%
Housing, Assoc Pr	10,725.00	10,725.12	10,725.00	0.00	0.00%
Cont Ed, Assoc Pr	800.00	380.00	800.00	0.00	0.00%
Books, Assoc Pr	300.00	102.80	300.00	0.00	0.00%
Synod Mtg, Assoc Pr	400.00	255.00	400.00	0.00	0.00%
FICA, Assoc Pr	3,231.00	3,230.64	3,231.00	0.00	0.00%
Assoc Pastor Total	75,137.00	74,374.72	77,078.51	1,941.51	2.58%
Office Secretary	26,750.00	22,963.88	26,750.00	0.00	0.00%
Directory, Youth/Fam	10,750.00	1,149.00	10,750.00	0.00	0.00%
Music Coordinator	4,368.00	4,368.00	4,500.00	132.00	3.02%
Organist	12,600.00	9,931.00	14,700.00	2,100.00	16.67%
Choir Director	5,568.00	0.00	6,000.00	432.00	7.76%
Maintenance	10,000.00	6,678.83	10,000.00	0.00	0.00%
Treasurer	4,576.00	4,575.96	4,713.00	137.00	2.99%
Counter	1,900.00	1,108.31	1,957.00	57.00	3.00%
Dishwasher	450.00	0.00	450.00	0.00	0.00%
Employer FICA	5,888.00	3,909.58	6,106.23	218.23	3.71%
Lay Salaries	82,850.00	54,684.56	85,926.23	3,076.23	3.71%
Conference/Conv	800.00	760.00	800.00	0.00	0.00%
Property Insurance	5,000.00	4,682.00	5,000.00	0.00	0.00%
Worker's Comp	2,100.00	952.00	1,500.00	(600.00)	-28.57%
Pulpit supply	500.00	506.88	500.00	0.00	0.00%
Administration	8,400.00	6,900.88	7,800.00	(600.00)	-7.14%

Postage/Petty Cash	2,200.00	2,431.00	2,500.00	300.00	13.64%
Office Supplies	3,000.00	1,886.53	2,750.00	(250.00)	-8.33%
Copier Expense	1,200.00	567.15	1,000.00	(200.00)	-16.67%
Office Equipment	250.00	82.76	250.00	0.00	0.00%
Online Support	1,110.00	835.29	1,100.00	(10.00)	-0.90%
Auto Expense/Mileage	2,500.00	903.08	2,000.00	(500.00)	-20.00%
Internet/Telephone	3,100.00	2,856.87	3,100.00	0.00	0.00%
Office	13,360.00	9,562.68	12,700.00	(660.00)	-4.94%
Gas-church	3,800.00	3,290.89	4,000.00	200.00	5.26%
Electric-church	7,000.00	4,792.48	6,000.00	(1,000.00)	-14.29%
Water/Sewer-church	900.00	899.64	900.00	0.00	0.00%
General Maint/Repairs	10,000.00	7,042.49	10,000.00	0.00	0.00%
Green Thumb	400.00	317.52	400.00	0.00	0.00%
Building	22,100.00	16,343.02	21,300.00	(800.00)	-3.62%
Outreach Committee	750.00	883.21	1,000.00	250.00	33.33%
Lutheran Subscription	400.00	374.49	400.00	0.00	0.00%
Senior Ministries	250.00	139.66	250.00	0.00	0.00%
OWLS	100.00	0.00	100.00	0.00	0.00%
Outreach	1,500.00	1,397.36	1,750.00	250.00	16.67%
Parish Activities	600.00	359.48	600.00	0.00	0.00%
Social	600.00	359.48	600.00	0.00	0.00%
Stewardship Comm	100.00	0.00	100.00	0.00	0.00%
Envelopes	1,300.00	1,187.79	1,300.00	0.00	0.00%
Electronic Giving	1,200.00	1,102.28	1,200.00	0.00	0.00%
Stewardship	2,600.00	2,290.07	2,600.00	0.00	0.00%
Music Supplies	550.00	137.85	550.00	0.00	0.00%
Worship Supplies	3,300.00	3,073.96	3,300.00	0.00	0.00%
Devotional Materials	550.00	445.50	550.00	0.00	0.00%
Copyright Fees	1,385.00	1,344.00	1,385.00	0.00	0.00%
Wednesday Worship	5,500.00	0.00	5,500.00	0.00	0.00%
Worship	11,285.00	5,001.31	11,285.00	0.00	0.00%

Sunday School	2,800.00	805.88	2,500.00	(300.00)	-10.71%
Confirmation	500.00	888.41	800.00	300.00	60.00%
Vacation Bible School	500.00	71.22	0.00	(500.00)	-100.00%
Education	3,800.00	1,765.51	3,300.00	(500.00)	-13.16%
Youth Program Support	1,000.00	103.75	750.00	(250.00)	-25.00%
Sugar Creek Campers	2,400.00	3,150.00	2,650.00	250.00	10.42%
College Student Support	650.00	300.00	650.00	0.00	0.00%
Family Ministries	250.00	206.35	250.00	0.00	0.00%
Youth	4,300.00	3,760.10	4,300.00	0.00	0.00%
TOTAL EXPENSE	368,146.00	321,027.15	375,210.17	7,064.17	1.92%

Asset Report – 2021

Church Accounts

Account #	Account Name	End of year Balance
<i>Assets</i>		
1.00.200	Interest Checking Account	183,857.58
1.00.608	ELCA Pooled Trust – General*	369,933.53
1.00.609	ELCA Pooled Trust – Parsonage*	<u>244,543.60</u>
<i>Total Assets</i>		\$798,334.71
 <i>Liabilities</i>		
2.00.200	Federal tax deposit	701.84
2.00.300	State Withholding tax	282.97
2.00.900	Pass Through Accounts	<u>3,600.60+</u>
<i>Total Liabilities</i>		\$4,585.41

*These balances are as of November 30, 2021 based on the statement from ELCA Endowment Pooled Trust. The December 31, 2021 numbers will not be available until 23 business days in to January/February. The numbers will be updated once they are received to reflect the correct ending balance of 2021 and will show on the 2022 annual report.

Update to 2020 Annual Report Asset Report -

1.00.608 ELCA Pooled Trust – General –	
End of Year Balance reported in 2020 Annual Report	\$320,172.91
Interest as of 12/31/20 added in February 2021	\$31,082.14
Actual End of Year Balance (12/31/20)	\$351,255.05
1.00.609 ELCA Pooled Trust – Parsonage –	
End of Year Balance reported in 2020 Annual Report	\$211,649.47
Interest as of 12/31/20 added in February 2021	\$20,546.77
Actual End of Year Balance (12/31/20)	\$232,196.24

+Includes \$1,890 Lutefisk Dinner Donation Challenge to be distributed in January 2022. Also includes monies designated for a 2022 College Scholarship and Sugar Creek Campership Support donations.

2021 Fund Report

			Jan 1	2021	2021	Dec 31
			Balance	Income	Expense	Balance
3.00.000	General Fund		\$139,644.02	\$324,989.86	\$321,390.57	\$143,243.31
3.01.100	Building Fund		\$14,133.77	\$0.00	\$3,595.42	\$10,538.35
3.01.102	Facility Needs Fund		\$5,827.16	\$14,060.00	\$2,412.99	\$17,474.17
3.01.103	Cap Improvements		\$5,975.12	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$5,975.12
3.01.104	Emergency Fund		\$5,020.25	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$5,020.25
3.01.105	Equip Repl Fund		\$1,156.23	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$1,156.23
3.01.200	<i>New Facilities/Programs</i>					
	3.01.201	New Fac/Programs	\$45,900.80	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$45,900.80
	3.01.202	Youth Program	\$5,771.14	\$1,365.00	\$0.00	\$7,136.14
3.01.300	Building Centennial Fund		\$20,929.13	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$20,929.13
3.02.102	Johnson House South		\$3,414.24	\$3,550.00	\$4,770.71	\$2,193.53
3.02.103	Market Gain-ELCA PT Parsonag		\$232,196.24	\$14,842.01	\$2,494.65	\$244,543.60
3.03.100	<i>Memorial/Bequest Fund</i>					
	3.03.101	Bequest	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
	3.03.102	Memorial Fund	\$43,063.16	\$190.00	\$0.00	\$43,253.16
	3.03.103	To Be Designated	\$2,310.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$2,310.00
3.04.101	Eggen Seminary Scholarship		\$7,463.96	\$597.00	\$0.00	\$8,060.96
3.04.102	Eggen-Anderson Camper Fund		\$2,328.12	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$2,328.12
3.04.103	Meyer/Lewis Scholarship Fund		\$3,983.80	\$318.00	\$0.00	\$4,301.80
3.04.105	Marking Scholarship Fund		\$19,957.31	\$1,636.00	\$600.00	\$20,993.31
3.04.106	Michelson Scholarship Fund		\$54,988.08	\$4,511.00	\$1,850.00	\$57,649.08
3.04.107	Moe Scholarship Fund		\$1,564.82	\$125.00	\$0.00	\$1,689.82
3.04.108	Piper Scholarship Fund		\$500.00	\$500.00	\$500.00	\$500.00
3.05.101	Dir-Youth/Family Salary Fund		\$4,646.67	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$4,646.67
3.05.102	Sabbatical Fund		\$6,027.20	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$6,027.20
3.05.103	Medical Reimbursement Fund		\$2,000.00	\$0.00	\$1,493.90	\$506.10
3.06.101	Choir Fund		\$2,616.64	\$1,035.00	\$0.00	\$3,651.64
3.06.102	Confirmation Bibles Fund		\$1,641.68	\$0.00	\$467.30	\$1,174.38
3.06.103	Disaster Relief Team Fund		\$2,135.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$2,135.00
3.06.104	Education Fund		\$2,517.97	\$500.00	\$0.00	\$3,017.97
3.06.105	Coffee Fellowship Fund		\$864.66	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$864.66
3.06.107	Green Thumb Fund		\$1,858.13	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$1,858.13
3.06.108	Music Fund		\$1,674.77	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$1,674.77
3.06.109	Senior Ministry Fund		\$1,136.65	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$1,136.65
3.06.110	Social Fund		\$2,523.89	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$2,523.89
3.06.111	Youth Ministry Fund		\$8,593.21	\$240.00	\$0.00	\$8,833.21
3.06.113	Summer Lunch Fund		\$1,743.60	\$400.00	\$0.00	\$2,143.60
3.06.114	Youth Mission Scholar Fund		\$1,886.12	\$994.98	\$0.00	\$2,881.10
3.06.115	Confirmation Fee Fund		(\$567.67)	\$15.00	\$0.00	(\$552.67)
3.06.116	Long Education Fund		\$3,142.38	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$3,142.38
3.06.117	SEP Resource Fund		\$200.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$200.00
3.06.118	PLC Fund		\$520.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$520.00

3.06.201	Administration-Bequest Fund	(\$262.86)	\$0.00	\$0.00	(\$262.86)
3.06.202	Outreach-Bequest Fund	\$5,501.74	\$125.00	\$0.00	\$5,626.74
3.06.203	Stewardship-Bequest Fund	\$1,748.03	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$1,748.03
3.06.204	Worship Fund	\$297.53	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$297.53
3.06.301	Library Fund	\$1,944.38	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$1,944.38
3.07.101	Market Gain-ELCA PT General	\$74,135.44	\$22,452.27	\$3,773.79	\$92,813.92
	Total Funds				\$793,749.30
	Total Liabilities				\$4,585.41
	Total Liabilities and Fund Balance				\$798,334.71

Ministry Giving – 2021 (Via Pass Through account)

Ministry Supported	Amount
ELCA World Hunger	2,159.00
Care & Share Food Pantry	590.00
Lutheran Social Services	652.90
Lutheran Campus Ministry	260.00
LWR School Kits	151.51
Lutheran Disaster Response (includes 2021 Sunday School offering - \$134)	532.46
Accounts with balances held over	
Lutefisk Dinner Donations	1,890.00

**Note: The disbursements for the \$9,285 "2020 Lutefisk Dinner Challenge" can be found on page 32 of this report.

RESOLUTIONS

RESOLUTION #1

Recommended by the Congregation Council

Resolved, that the proposed budget for 2022 in the amount of \$375,210.17, including mission support and salaries, be adopted.

RESOLUTION #2

Recommended by the Congregation Council

Resolved, that the Resolution Establishing Our Savior's Lutheran Church Endowment Fund (amended January 28, 2018) be amended to read as follows:

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that effective with the adoption of this resolution, for all undesignated special gifts (such as bequests ~~and memorials~~), not less than 70% shall go to the Fund and the remainder will be designated by Church Council.

RESOLUTION #3

Recommended by the Congregation Council

Resolved, that Section I, Paragraph 7 of the Plan of Operation established by the Resolution Establishing Our Savior's Lutheran Church Endowment Fund (amended January 28, 2018) be amended to read as follows:

7. The Committee shall not permit income to accumulate unreasonably after the principal balance of the Fund exceeds the amount of ~~\$750,000~~ **\$1,500,000**, but shall use it with all reasonable diligence to accomplish the purposes for which this Fund has been established.

RESOLUTION #4

Recommended by the Congregation Council

Resolved, that Section III, Paragraph 4 of the Plan of Operation established by the Resolution Establishing Our Savior's Lutheran Church Endowment Fund (amended January 28, 2018) be amended to read as follows:

4. Each fiscal year the Committee shall ~~distribute~~ **recommend to the subsequent Congregation Annual Meeting the distribution of** the earned income for the year, not to exceed 6% of the net asset value of the fund as of September 30. This distribution shall be in accordance with the following three categories...

ANNUAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING OPENING LITURGY

Litany

Today our congregation gathers in prayer and hope to begin another year of ministry. We bring with us the memory of a year like no other, even as we move into a future that we cannot yet imagine. Yet even now, as in every age, God is our refuge and strength. In times of plenty and want, in times of conflict and peace, in times of growing and pruning, we remember:

God has called us for such a time as this.

We remember the past year with lament and gratitude. We have lost so much, and so much still feels uncertain. We have also witnessed God's hand at work in new and unexpected ways. We delight at hidden seeds bearing surprising and wonderful fruit. When our own resources fail, when we cannot predict the future, when we must rely on God alone, we remember:

God has called us for such a time as this.

We celebrate this moment and the many ways God has held us together as a community. We give thanks for the gift of our church building and the welcome it provides, even as we bless God for the marvel of technology and the new bonds of connection it makes possible. When our bodies need sanctuary, when our minds need expanding, when your grace must transcend our limitations, we remember:

God has called us for such a time as this.

We look ahead to the road we will travel together this year. We anticipate and receive with joy the new gifts God's love has planned. We pray for the grace to let go of what has served its holy purpose. When we are trailblazers or followers, when we are seekers or visionaries, when we must walk by faith and not by sight, we remember:

God has called us for such a time as this.

And so we pray: Grace our meeting, O God, with the gift of your Holy Spirit: the Spirit who has guided the church from the beginning, the Spirit of our risen Lord Jesus, the Spirit who sends us as healers and restorers of your beloved world. You are the source of our life together. You are the rock and cornerstone.

You have called us for such a time as this.

God of the Fertile Fields

1 God of the fer - tile fields, sha - per of
2 We would be stew - ards true, hold - ing in
3 As grows the hid - den seed to fruit that
4 God of the coun - try - side, dear to the

earth that yields our dai - ly bread; forth from your
trust from you need, all that you give; help us in
serves our need, so your reign grows. Let all our
Christ who died to make us one: we pledge our

boun - teous hand come gifts your love has planned,
love to share, teach us like you to care
toil be used, no gift of yours a - bused,
lives a - new in faith - ful love to you.

that all in ev - 'ry land be clothed and fed.
for peo - ple ev - 'ry - where, that all may live.
no hum - ble task re - fused your love be - stows.
Guide all we say and do. Your will be done.

All Creation Sings #1063

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**O God,
you have called your servants
to ventures of which we cannot see the ending,
by paths as yet untrodden,
through perils unknown.
Give us faith to go out with good courage,
not knowing where we go,
but only that your hand is leading us
and your love supporting us;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen. (ELW, p. 317)**