



ANNUAL REPORT 2022



Evangelical
Lutheran Church
in America

A MESSAGE FROM PRESIDING BISHOP ELIZABETH EATON



Dear friends in Christ,

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

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

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

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

In Christ,

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

“Do not neglect to do good and to share what you have, for such sacrifices are pleasing to God”

(Hebrews 13:16).

Annual Report
For the year 2022
St. John's Lutheran Church
500 Third Street West Northfield, MN 55057
Telephone: (507) 645-4429

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Church Staff:

Senior Pastor: Pam Fickenschier *Associate Pastor:* Jonathan Davis *Parish Nurse:* Sally Lindell
Office Manager / Finance Manager: Leah H. Garlie *Facility Manager:* Tim Byers
Director of Children's Ministry: Julie Brehmer
Director of Ministry with Youth & Families: Emmanuel Kaghondi
Organist and Director of Worship, Music & Arts: Nathan Proctor
Children's Music Director and Early Childhood Specialist: Arielle Loy
Director of Jubilate Choir: Green Bouzard
Shared Ministry Coordinator: Angie Gehring

Statistical Report

December 31, 2022

I. Membership (<i>statistical adjustments ongoing from database project</i>)	
Baptized Membership	1712
Confirmed Membership	1394
Baptisms	7
Confirmations	9
Transferred In	30
Transferred Out/Released	1
Deceased	22
Number of Households	710
II. Church School Enrollment	
Three-year-olds through grade five	75
▪ Participants during COVID via Zoom and In-Person	50
Sixth through eighth grades	39
Ninth through twelfth grades	47
Church School teachers and helpers	12
III. Worship Opportunities During 2022	
Sunday Worship	101
Non-Sunday Worship	13
Average Sunday Attendance	182
Note: Worship services are available live on KYMN radio and livestream. Recordings are available to view on cable TV and the church website.	
IV. Pastoral Acts	
Baptisms	7
Confirmations	9
Marriages	1
Funerals/Burials	15

In Memoriam

The following members of St. John's congregation died in 2022:

Beverly Mahachek, James Bierman, James Gilomen, Howard Thorsheim, Tina Elg, Sigrid Johnson, Lois Rand, Carol Nesheim, Gertrude Swanlund, Elvin Heiberg, Duane Kringen, Dale Gehring, Charlene Albers, Carol James, Otto Reitz, Arlene Sivanich, Romulus Busa, Guenther Moesler, Elaine Feroe, Jerry Bothun, Gordon Jorgenson, Ruth Hansen

Blessed be their memory; God hold them in love until the day of Jesus Christ.

Agenda

Annual Meeting of the St. John's Lutheran Church Foundation
Sunday, January 29, 2023 / 12:30 p.m., St. John's Hall and via Zoom
Jeff McLaughlin, presiding

- a. Report of the Foundation
- b. Election of Board Members
- c. Potential Solar Energy Initiative



Agenda

153rd Annual Meeting of St. John's Lutheran Church
Sunday, January 29, 2023 / 12:30 p.m., St. John's Hall and via Zoom
Rod Christensen, presiding

- 1. Scripture and Prayer
- 2. Adoption of Rules
- 3. Adoption of Agenda
- 4. Minutes
 - a. Annual Meeting: January 23, 2022
- 5. Annual Reports of President, Pastors, Staff, Boards, and Committees
- 6. Report of Treasurer, Jane Rizzo
- 7. Report of the Audit Committee
- 8. Resolution (2023-01) Regarding Action of the Congregation Council in 2022
- 9. Presentation of the Proposed Budget for 2023, Kathy Shea
- 10. Report of the Nominating Committee, Ruthie Neuger
- 11. Elections
 - a. Officers, Congregation Council, Board Members, Audit, and Nominating Committees
 - b. Representatives to Lutheran Home of Cannon Valley Corporation (NRC): Sunday, April 16, 2023, 1:00 p.m.
 - c. Delegates to SE MN Synod Assembly: Saturday, May 6, 2023, Mankato (4 voting members plus an additional youth/young adult)
 - d. Delegates to Cannon River Assembly: Sunday, February 12, 2023, 2:00 p.m. (up to twelve voting members)
 - e. Delegates to Gustavus Adolphus College Association of Congregations: Saturday, April 29, 2023 12:00-3:00 p.m.
- 12. Appreciation for Tim Byers, Retiring Facility Manager
- 13. Resolution (2023-02) of Gratitude for all Volunteers, Staff, and Pastors
- 14. In Memorium
- 15. Presentation
- 16. Adjournment

Installation of Officers, Council, and Board Members will take place
on Sunday, February 5, 2023.

St. John's Mission Statement
Created, renewed, and empowered by God's grace,
St. John's Lutheran Church

- is a welcoming community in Christ whose mission is to
- celebrate in **Word and Sacrament** God's gracious actions for the world,
 - cultivate growth in faith,
 - encourage service and witness, and
 - proclaim Christ as the hope of the world.

Report of Rod Christensen, 2022 President of the Congregation

One of the privileges of serving as congregational president is to learn more about the many ministries happening at St. John's, and that has certainly been true for me in 2022. This was a year of ongoing growth as so many people were engaged in our collective worship, service and fellowship, re-establishing many familiar activities and starting several new ones. Many of these are described in the reports that follow.

It was especially rewarding to hear from so many people in the Planning Our Future Together sessions we held this fall. These were designed by the congregational council as an opportunity for everyone to share ideas about where we, the members of St. John's, should best focus our resources, time, and energy. The council felt this was especially important as we emerged from the harshest pandemic restrictions, and a "new normal" was still developing.

The most common theme we heard was gratitude: for our ability to worship both in person and remotely, and for how much the preaching, music, lessons, and prayers mean to us; for the fellowship we share in so many ways, sometimes learning, sometimes serving, sometimes just building relationships over coffee; for the many ways we are able to serve our communities, with special excitement about our meal ministries returning, and frequent comments of appreciation for the leadership of WELCA who provided many opportunities to learn together about racism and our response.

The responses also made it clear that there is excitement for the future: a desire to find more ways to welcome visitors, guests, friends, and neighbors into our building and congregational

life; many hopes that we can do more in response to climate change, societal injustice, and immediate needs; interest in building and strengthening our connections to other congregations and service organizations, and the desire to continue to nurture our programs so everyone can find specific ways to feel at home at St. John's.

Members of the congregation, like the council, wonder what the future may bring. No one assumes we will simply settle back into our pre-pandemic patterns, and of course the world and St. John's weren't static before the pandemic started. We know we are blessed with wonderful pastors and staff, generous and devoted members, and abundant resources, but we also know that demographic and financial challenges are realities we shouldn't ignore. While we are excited to see new opportunities being created and delighted to be joined by new members, we wonder if Sunday worship attendance will rebound to previous levels, and what it means for us if it doesn't.

Despite the challenges, I am ending my term encouraged and hopeful. It would be hard not to be when so many people care so deeply about St. John's, and feel called by faith to help build solutions to the problems in our communities, whether local and global. I believe we are open to listening to one another, and letting the Spirit guide us forward. Next year's council will take all the ideas that were collected and use them in their planning, and each of us can find the right way for us to participate in the life of St. John's.

I was also privileged to see how much care, love, and concern are shown by our pastors and staff,

and by our members, for one another. Perhaps that just seems normal to us, but it is a real blessing, and it happens all the time, in thoughtful, creative ways. It is an important part of why we are here, together, in all kinds of circumstances. Several dear members of the congregation passed away this year, and the council lost a member and friend when Dale Gehring died suddenly. We mourn their passing and take comfort in God's promises to all God's children.

Thank you to Pastors Pam and Jonathan for their patience, wisdom, and faithful leadership. Many thanks to each council member, all of whom

served with enthusiasm and care. Kathy, Jane, and Trish provided great leadership as members of the executive committee. St. John's staff members are consistently eager to help, and creative stewards of our resources. So many others in the congregation cheerfully take on responsibilities and help make so much possible; I hope you all know how much that is appreciated. I am grateful I've had the opportunity to serve in this role, and I look forward to our future eagerly.

Peace be with you,
Rod Christensen, 2022 President of the Congregation

Report of Pastor Pam Fickenscher, *Senior Pastor*

You cannot expect the unexpected.

If there's anything the past three years have taught us, it is that we do not know the future. But we only live moving forward, and so we must attempt to look into the future with hope, even when we know that it might not look like the past.

2022 began with the Omicron variant of the coronavirus still dominating our news and our minds, and it closes with health concerns still being a major factor for many people. But it is no longer the dominant factor in our life together. This has been a year of remembering again what full program looks like, even as we ponder how the future will look quite different than 2019 did. We have seen worship and Wednesday attendance gradually re-build, but some of the changes in our faith life together may be with us to stay.

Questions of the future that were there before the pandemic are still with us. They have shifted a bit, but probably more in urgency than in their very nature:

- How can we be a place where people encounter the way of Jesus as a life-giving, hope-instilling, grace-filled way of being?
- How do we equip our young people to both know the stories of faith and to listen to those who are different from them?
- How can we attend to the urgent needs of our neighbors for food, housing, and community?

- How do we discern how to manage the virtual forms of our church life even as we encourage people to return in person?
- How do we work with our ecumenical siblings in Christ to accomplish what we cannot do alone?
- How do we steward the gifts of the earth in a time of accelerating climate, especially as it concerns our facilities?
- How do we attend to the reality that Northfield continues to be a very attractive retirement community, even while the Northfield School District and both colleges anticipate enrollment declines?

In the midst of these questions, our community has also been shaken by grief numerous times this year. I am so grateful that you as a congregation display your care for one another over and over again; you are truly ministers to one another, which is how it should be.

I am grateful for **Pastor Jonathan Davis**, whose presence was deeply missed during his sabbatical. This work is better in every way when it can be shared, and his collaborative spirit makes all of us better at what we do.

Thank you to **Julie Brehmer**, who passed 18 years of service this November and continues to bring fresh creativity and enthusiasm for our little ones. She is a model of loving God in living color and crayons and stories and snacks.

Thank you to **Tim Byers**, who completed nearly 9 years of service to St. John's in 2022 and has more than earned a restful and playful retirement. For 9 years whenever we have not known what to do in our building, the answer was always, "Ask Tim." His unflappable dedication kept us warm and safe, and we are grateful.

Thank you to **Leah Garlie**, who manages machines and spreadsheets and schedules with equal aplomb. It amazes me every day that she can sit at the hub of so many of St. John's key operations and keep all of it organized.

Thank you to **Angie Gehring**, who endured great sorrow this year, yet entered back into serving this community with purpose and energy. Thanks to her capable leadership we have enjoyed a return to weekly Wednesday Night Meals as well as the beloved annual Christmas Dinner this year. We can always count on Angie to ask a pertinent and pointed question when it is most needed. As she took on additional duties this year we always knew she would be up to the task.

Thank you to Dr. **Emmanuel Kaghondi**, whose joy in the Lord is infectious and whose care for our young people shines through all he does with youth and families. Whenever we forget that "church" is a global word, he is always there to remind us that we are part of a great host of witnesses.

Thank you to **Sally Lindell**, our most compassionate and capable Parish Nurse, who week in and week out reaches out to the many people in our community who find their lives and mobility limited by health issues. She brings wisdom and a cheerful presence to all of us.

Thank you to **Arielle Loy**, whose job title should really be "Impresario of the Littlest Lutherans." We are delighted to have her back to leading those little ones singing in the Alleluia Choir, even as she also builds relationships and learning alongside Julie's work with our youngest children.

Nathan Proctor has waited yet another year to take a well-deserved sabbatical. Hardly a Sunday goes by that I don't note some small miraculous way he has tied together the texts of the day through a hymn or anthem that he has chosen, and

his care for the traditions of St. John's were on full display in this anniversary year of F. Melius Christensen's death. His new edition of F. Melius' organ works was a great contribution to the church this year.

We are pleased to officially recognize our 'bonus' church musician **David Sims**. David has often been an accompanist, cantor, or spare choir conductor in the balcony, and this fall he officially took on a role as Interim Director of the Rejoice Ringers. Thank you, David, for all the visible and invisible ways you support music in this place.

This year we said grateful thank-you's (but not good-byes) to two members who served St. John's for many years: **Zack Pelletier**, who retired after ten years leading the Rejoice Ringers, and **Christy Hall-Holt**, who is exploring a new vocation in chaplaincy after serving St. John's in shared ministry for 8 years. And as noted above we gratefully send **Tim Byers** into retirement after 9 years as our Facility Manager.

This fall we also welcomed **Green Bouzard** to our music staff as Director of the Jubilate Choir. Green brings both musical and theological depth to her work with us. It has been delightful to overhear her work with the 3rd-5th graders every Wednesday.

A special thank you to our **Personnel Committee** this year: Ruth Aaseng, Char Carlson, Greg Colby, Tracy Kochendorfer, Alan Marks, Rob Quanbeck, and Kathleen Shea. They shepherded through a long process of a new employee manual alongside three separate search processes this year. I'm very happy to report that we end the year with most of these tasks complete, even though all of them took longer than we anticipated.

I'm especially grateful this year for the wise leadership of our Church Council. Rod Christensen, Kathy Shea, Jane Rizzo, and Trish Goodrich have been a faithful **Executive Committee** that we knew would bring wise counsel to any decision. Blessings to those Church Council members finishing their service this January: **Mark Gleason and Paul Beck**, and of course **Rod Christensen**. We are all blessed to have such wise and thoughtful lay leaders.

We can close out 2022 with the same blessing we often begin with: "Grace, peace, and mercy are ours through our Savior Jesus Christ."

Thanks be to God,
Pastor Pam Fickenscher

Report of Pastor Jonathan Davis, Associate Pastor

*"Sweetheart, you are in pain.
Relax, take a breath.
Let's pay attention to what is happening.
Then we can decide what to do."*
- Sharon Salzberg

A person recently shared this quote from Sharon Salzberg with me. They try to keep it on them at all times – posted in their office, written down and stuffed in a wallet, or a jacket. I, too, have since decided to keep it on the desktop of my computer – for easy access.

If you take the quote line by line, I think you can broadly see the arc of the COVID Pandemic in it. Not all of us were on the same line at the same time, but my sense is that communally we are somewhere between line 3 and 4 – paying attention to what is and has happened to us as individuals and as a society, and deciding what to do next.

With the ups and downs of pandemic variants, and program going back and forth between online and in person, much of the rest of the year has been starting to feel more and more familiar to the days before the pandemic. A couple of highlights:

- In the spring of 2022, we hosted two forums on *Emotional Health – Tending to the Effects of the Pandemic*. Many thanks to **Elaine Nesbit** and **Erin Barnett** for leading us in those discussions.
- St. John's welcomed 5 new Stephen Ministers – **Ruth Smestad Anglin, Barry Becker, Carol Breimhorst, Erik and Mary Holleque**. Stephen Ministry is a critical part to the caring ministries that echo out from St. John's, which would not be possible without the faithful leadership of **Jennifer Edwins, Jo Franklin, and Barbara Wilson**.
- St. John's started up a softball team in the local Sunday Night Church Softball League! The St. John's Seraphs had a super fun first season – with some wins and few injuries! Thanks to

Steve Taggart for leading the team and **John Bade** for designing the jerseys!

- There were two summer trips for youth – one to Camp Amnicon for middle schoolers and one to Christikon for high schoolers. Many, many thanks to **Elisha Degrego** and **Betsy McLaughlin** for being adult chaperones this year.
- This fall, we saw a full re-start of Children and Youth programming, with especially the return of Children's Choir. Both **Arielle Loy** and **Green Bouzard** bring such a warm and caring presence to our young singers. The excitement in the room is palpable!
- This year, we got to start the season of Advent out just right – with the Advent Fair *indoors*! As always, **Julie Brehmer, Jill Enestvedt, and Katherine Norrie** do an amazing job envisioning a celebratory and connecting gathering, and then making it happen!

With that said, part of this year was entirely unfamiliar to me, there being a 3-month sabbatical for me from July to October. Every 6 years, St. John's offers the possibility of a sabbatical for its pastors, and it was *such a gift* and told me just how much I needed to rest. Overall, I had an incredible time spending the summer with my family, traveling to Scotland, and learning to scuba dive in the Cayman Islands. Along the way, I also started some new habits around reading, meditation, and exercise that have been keeping mind and body and spirit healthier ever since. This was truly a life-changing experience. Thank you, St. John's, for this gift for me and my family.

It's a blessing to part of this community and staff, without whom none of this would be possible. I regularly think, "How am I so lucky to have **Pastor Pam Fickenscher** as a friend and colleague in ministry?" Her patience that reassures, her wisdom that guides, and her unflappable spirit that steadies are gifts to me and

those around her each year, and this year was no exception.

Every year, **Nathan Proctor's** artful and faithful tending to the worship ministry here at St. John's is what always stands out to me. While that is still the case this year, what has stood out is the quiet relational ministry he brings to the people of St. John's – through a thoughtful gift or a personal visit or phone or email to check in on someone, or simply a particular hymn choice on a particular day that no one would notice except a particular person who would. What a gift to us.

After 18 years of ministry at St. John's, there are few people around St. John's (and Northfield) who haven't been impacted by **Julie Brehmer**. The love and care and attention she gives to the youngest ones among us has an endless shelf life, which means that after so many years, there are plenty of adults around who continue to feel her ministry towards them as well. She is, without a doubt, a minister to *all* God's children.

Emmanuel Kaghondi is just plain fun to have around – and he is adaptable, when I want to change up a plan for Confirmation or youth group at the very last minute. I see his relationships with the youth and families deepening each year, and passion and desire for making sure we are living together *as a community* is undeterred by anything that comes his way. I am so grateful to get to walk alongside him.

Sally Lindell, as our Parish Nurse, hold laughter and sorrow together in just the right way. She brings a levity and joy with her that is contagious, while also quick to offer an open heart for those who are going through any small or large crises. Like Jesus on the road to Emmaus, she accompanies the people of God in just the right way.

If you ever want a good book recommendation, ask **Angie Gehring**. Her reading list seems to be about as diverse as anyone else's I know. That may not pertain directly to her ministry at St. John's –

but it's true! I have the fortune of sharing an office door with Angie, and I am so grateful to have her nearby for a quick word of accountability, encouragement, or just something interesting that I never knew about.

Leah Garlie – you can always count on her for grace when you've missed a deadline, a listening ear when you have a hard moment, and a silly joke or story to break into a dull day. She has a way of anticipating what needs to be done in any given moment, and it's common experience to begin to ask her a favor, to which she responds with a smile, and says, "I've already done it." She anchors the office and staff in such a way that brings gifts to each person.

I don't think I am alone when I say that I am very much going to miss **Tim Byers**. Though our conversations in the morning are brief, they feel rich. Tim has always been willing to offer a helping hand or to make sure people have what they need, which is such a lovely gift on a staff. And now, I am so happy that he can spend more time with his family and enjoying much deserved rest. We are looking forward to adding **Steve Harner** to the team!

Finally, a word of thanks and gratitude for our Congregational President **Rod Christensen**. Rod has gently and bravely invited many of us into the final line of Salzberg's quote: what should we do now? Rod has offered such encouraging, empowering, and hopeful leadership this year to the staff and congregation. He has been a listening and curious ear, he has offered insight and truth spoken in love, and he has simply loved this Church with his whole heart this year. What more could anyone hope for in a congregational president? Thank you, Rod, for all you have given to us.

And thank you, St. John's, for this past year. I said this last year, and I'll say it again - I love being one of your pastors.

Pastor Jonathan Davis

Report of Angie Gehring, *Shared Ministry Coordinator*

A big heart-felt THANK YOU to ALL of St. John's members and friends who have volunteered their time and gifts during 2022!

Wednesday Night Meals: THANK YOU to a wonderful, energetic team of people who help make the Wednesday meals run so smoothly: Martha and Chris Erickson, Gerri Licke, Doug Johnson, Karen and Dale Schuette, Marilyn Calcultt, Bob and Pat Tabery, Craig Schultz, Fran Wood, Don Sahling, and Jill Enestvedt. We look forward to Scott Barvir rejoining our team this coming year. You are all such a pleasure to work with, and these meals would not be a success without your generous dedication of time, skill, and good humor. It has been a real joy to serve an average of 80 to 100 each meal, and we hope the number continues to grow!

Funeral Reception Hospitality: THANK YOU to our dedicated funeral reception volunteers this past year! Some of you offered your help at nearly every funeral reception. You are all a joy to work with, and I am so thankful that you consistently want to help. Your service is a blessing!

THANK YOU to our generous donators of treats!!! I wish I could list all of you by name here, but I do not have enough room. I cannot stress enough how important your donations have been for the success of our Sunday coffee hours, funeral receptions, community dinners, and other various events in which food is essential. So many of you eagerly sign up as soon as the need is sent out – I am truly grateful beyond words.

Table Centerpieces in St. John's Hall: THANK YOU to Judy Karlson, for her numerous hours spent gathering lovely vases, candle holders, and decor to create the gorgeous seasonal centerpieces that beautify our hall year-round. Judy is always cheerfully willing to set the tables for so many funeral receptions among other various events, and I am so grateful for her eagerness to assist!

Sunday Hospitality Volunteers (Greeters, Communion Prep and Clean-up, and Coffee Hour Help): THANK YOU to those who are

willing to assist with Sunday coffee hours, and to those who often jump in at a moment's notice to help with the dishwasher and clean-up! A special thank you to Doug Johnson, Cindy Clauson, Karen and Dale Schuette, Ted Peterson, Jim Cederberg, Pat and Herb Fick, and others who have helped so frequently and with such energy. **THANK YOU** to those who have given it a try once or twice, too. I hope you enjoyed it and will sign up again in the future. **THANK YOU** to Jill Enestvedt, Debby and David Nitz, Monica Holicky, and Judy Smith who have frequently volunteered to help with communion prep and clean-up. **THANK YOU** to Judy Smith, who has supplied our church with white grape juice used on Sundays for communion. **THANK YOU** to those who have volunteered to welcome members and visitors on Sunday mornings as friendly greeters as they enter our doors. You make such a difference by creating an inviting environment that people look forward to returning to!

Ushers: THANK YOU to ALL 35 of our wonderful ushers who create a welcoming and orderly flow to our Sunday worship services and evening vespers! Thank you for your willingness to commit to serving on a team that works throughout the year on a monthly basis and on special occasions. **THANK YOU** to Kent Rommereim for being an outstanding usher captain.

Kitchen Maintenance: THANK YOU to Ted Peterson for making sure our church kitchen is always well maintained, in order, and stocked with a good supply of coffee and clean air pots! Ted, you consistently go above and beyond in all that you do to serve our church. We are so grateful for your dedication and service! Whenever there is a need, I know I can reach out to you.

New Member Welcome Events: THANK YOU to Sandra Nyvall, Jane Rinehart, and Jo Franklin for your time spent planning and executing welcoming events that foster connection among our newest members!

Community Christmas Dinner Planning Team: THANK YOU to Kirsten Gunn, Jane Rinehart, and Jean Wakely for all of the time you

dedicated to our meetings, for shopping, distributing posters, managing the volunteer sign-up table, and spreading the word about this dinner to various media sources. **THANK YOU** to Julie Zdenek for designing the lovely Christmas Dinner posters that were hung up all over town. **THANK YOU** to Bill and Char Carlson, veterans of coordinating this meal during so many of the pre-pandemic years, for guiding us through the planning process and showing us the ropes with your advice and wisdom. Thank you for bravely sharing your personal thoughts and stories on the KYMN radio morning show, inviting all in the listening audience to this community event.

Community Christmas Dinner Volunteers: **THANK YOU** to the over 60 hands-on volunteers working diligently in the kitchen, the dining hall, and the Commons on Christmas day! It was a delight to see you all working together and connecting! **THANK YOU** to Sandra and Bob Nyvall for obtaining and picking up the colorful poinsettias given for our dinner by Judy's Floral

Design, and to all who helped set up the dining room on Christmas Eve so festively. **THANK YOU** to the over 50 people/families who donated delicious salads, hash brown bakes, pies, cookies, bars, cranberry sauce, jello, juice, and soda to complete the turkey meal. **THANK YOU** to Mary Hoff for gifting us with the Thrivent funds to pay for ALL of the turkey. **THANK YOU** to Dean Christensen, owner of the Brick Oven Bakery, for his generous donation of 250 dinner rolls. **THANK YOU** to Julie Zdenek and Emmett Norrie who performed such lovely Christmas music for all in attendance. This dinner could not have happened without all of you, and its success demonstrates the wonderful things we can accomplish as the body of Christ serving together.

May you all be blessed with peace and joy! I feel extremely blessed to know and serve with all of you!

Respectfully submitted,
Angie Gehring

Report of the Adult Ministry & Education Board

Board Members: Marilyn Calcutt (chair), Carrie Dauner, Anita Hellie, Andy Nelson, Rob Quanbeck, Robert Rendahl, and Pastor Jonathan Davis (staff).

The Adult Ministry & Education Board is tasked with fostering, supporting and overseeing the ministries of small groups at St. John's including St. John's Forum, the church library, and various other events and groups. Most of these are somewhat or fully self-sustaining and require little guidance from the board unless budgetary or other issues arise.

Carrie Dauner joined the Adult Ministry & Education Board after the 2022 Annual Meeting to bring the board back to the full membership.

In an effort to reach out to the St. John's Congregation, the Adult Ministry & Education Board continued with the sending of both Easter and Christmas Cards during 2022. The Easter card design this year for the adults was designed by Thea Hanson and 154 cards to send to St. John's members and 75 were sent to Sunday School

students. The artwork for the Christmas card was done by Katherine Norrie and this card was sent to 175 St. John's members. Our thanks to Julie Zdenek for her assistance in the card design and layout.

Softball returned to St. John's in 2022 with the organization of the team which included 18 players. They began play in May. In August we encouraged St. John's members to attend an end of the year gathering after the last game. Our thanks to Steve Taggart for helping with the organizing of the team this year and we look forward to another year of Sunday night softball in 2023.

Two speaker events happened in 2022. Joe Shaw spoke at a St. John's Forum, discussing his work in authoring several books. These books can be found in the St. John's Library. In October, with the help of Northfield Retired Educators, the first session of Out'n About: Conversations with Minnesotans was held. This is a morning with two speakers, an extended coffee break and lunch. It is

Adult Ministry's hope that these sessions will bring people together to not only learn about things around us, but to have an opportunity to come together and socialize. These sessions will be held in January, April, July, and October of 2023. Attendance at the first event was 58 people and we hope this attendance number will grow in the future.

The Adult Ministry & Education Board wanted to bring people together over the summer so three different events were planned to try to achieve this. First was an Ice Cream Social with Jeff Sauve and Gary Wagenbach as speakers and tour guides at Valley Grove Church on June 21. This was a perfect Summer Solstice evening with over 50 people enjoying ice cream sundaes and root beer floats. In July and August, plans were made for Summer Suppers. Two nights were designated and several people participated; gathering at homes for a meal and conversation. The Adult Ministry & Education Board has decided to try to have to a supper night again during the winter months to see if this would bring people together for an evening of conversation and fellowship. In August, we had a Red Barn Pizza night with several people attending. We had a beautiful night to be out and great conversations with other St. John's members.

With the help of Jo Franklin, Dawn Tommerdahl, and Debby Nitz, Adult Ministry & Education organized several sessions of conversations on the

book *Dialogue on Race*. These sessions were held once a month on a Sunday morning between services. This was well attended and fostered great conversations between all participants. Books, study guides, and other materials have been purchased by St. John's and can be used again in the future if there is a desire to do so.

The Library at St. John's continues to grow with the donations of books as well as purchases made in response to requests received. All books have been entered into the new library database and the new card catalog is now computerized. There is a laptop computer on the library desk to search for books on the shelves. Instructions for using the computerized card catalog can be found near the computer.

A Men's Bible Study was started in September to be lead by Grant Aaseng. Plans were to have this study once a month, but this study is now happening more often. If you are interested in attending check the church calendar for definite dates – usually a Wednesday at noon.

The Adult Education & Ministry Board would like very much to work with other boards and members of the congregation and welcome additional ideas for learning experiences and fellowship.

Respectfully submitted,
Merilyn Calcutt, Chair

Report of the Benevolence & Social Concerns Board

Board Members: Jerry Ugland (chair), Jo Franklin, Andrea Hoff, Nancy Moe, Cynthia Neubecker, Peter Skoglund, and Pastor Pam Fickenscher (staff).

The Benevolence & Social Concerns Board is responsible for making recommendations regarding the congregation's response to the needs and injustices of society, and for recommending distribution and allocation of the congregation's resources into the life of the community and the world through church-related and community organizations. The Peace & Justice Group, Racial Justice Group, and Mission Partner Team report to this board.

Global Mission Partnerships

In 2022, we began a new covenant commitment with Kaitlynne Larson, currently serving with IELCO, the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Columbia. Kaitlynne works with congregations providing support in peace-building, community organizing, and leadership development.

Housing Assistance

The Church Council previously approved a five-year, \$5,000 per year commitment to support the Community Action Center's Hillcrest Village Project, now complete in Northfield. Their goal is to foster a supportive community that helps families and individuals gain the resources needed

to move from emergency housing to transitional housing, and finally to affordable housing without ever having to leave home. Our commitment was completed ahead of time this year.

Other Benevolence

Disaster Relief

This year has seen many urgent appeals for relief. Because of the generosity of the St. John's congregation through budgeted resources to the Benevolence & Social Concerns Board and through designated giving by individuals, we have made donations to ELCA Disaster Relief, Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Services, Lutheran World Relief, ELCA Global Missions, and ELCA Southeastern Minnesota Synod Global Ministry to help provide relief for the following:

- U.S. Severe Storms
- Haiti Crisis
- U.S. Wildfires
- Horn of Africa Drought
- U.S. Tornadoes
- Eastern Europe Crisis Response
- Afghan Humanitarian Crisis
- Hurricane Response
- South Sudan Relief
- Middle East and Europe Refugee Crisis
 - AMMPARO Protecting Migrant Minors

Of particular emphasis by the Board was contribution for support of refugees from Ukraine.

ELCA

The major recipient of our congregational benevolence funds was the Southeastern Minnesota Synod. We also sent funds to the Cannon River Conference, Lutheran Campus Ministries at Winona State, college scholarship donations, and Southeastern Minnesota Synod small congregation support.

Local and Regional Groups

St. John's made donations to the following:

- Northfield Union of Youth
- Operation Backpack
- Laura Baker Services Association
- Northfield Retirement Community
- Three Links Care Center
- Community Action Center
- Lutheran Social Services

- Community School at Greenvale
- Rice County Habitat for Humanity
- Clean River Partners (formerly Cannon River Watershed Partnership)
- Ruth's House of Hope
- HealthFinders Collaborative

National and International Groups

In addition to national and international disaster relief donations, we supported the following groups:

- Lutheran Mideast Development
- Friends of Mwangaza
- Bread for the World

Special Offerings

Four times a year, our congregation is asked to make donations for special benevolence giving. Every year, generous responses have enabled us to offer financial support to Global Missions, Lutheran World Relief, Northfield Community Action Center Food Shelf, and ELCA World Hunger.

Meals on Wheels

St. John's members again stepped up to deliver meals during four weeks of service from mid-September to mid-October. Thank you to all of our faithful volunteers!

St. John's Peace & Justice Group

The group met quarterly in 2022. Their main activities included:

- Writing Bread for the World letters to legislators. We offered in-person letter writing in March 2022. At these sessions, we learned that many new members of the congregation are regular supporters of Bread for the World! We also promoted submitting letters electronically.
- Continued strong connections to the Joint Legislative Religious Coalition. Anne Krisnik joined us on Zoom for a review of the legislative agenda early in the year. We then helped promote Zoom meetings with Rep. Todd Lippert and Sen. Rich Draheim the week of the Day on the Hill in March.
- The Peace & Justice group supported the following organizations with monetary donations: JRLC, Community Action Center of Northfield for food access, Bread for the

Report of the Business Management Board

Board Members: Jane Rizzo (chair), Reed Hagberg, Michelle Kramer-Prevost, Jim Loe, Greg Norman, David Norman, and Leah Garlie (staff).

Please see the Report of the Treasurer on page 24.

Report of the Children's Ministry & Education Board

Board Members: Candace Godfrey (chair), Stephanie Bennett, Adam Loy, Katherine Norrie, Lynette Schroeter, Alli Skoglund, and Julie Brehmer (staff).

As we reflect on this past year, the Board is deeply grateful for the people who volunteer their time and loving energy at St. John's. Thank you for your support of children's ministry and the opportunity to serve alongside you.

Sunday Mornings

Our Sunday morning program returned to the classrooms this year! We are using the curriculum, "Whirl", from Augsburg Fortress, which explores Bible stories and extends the learning from church to home. Thank you to our wonderful volunteers teaching and leading our Sunday morning children's programs: Sue Brockman, Candace Godfrey, Siri Lindell, Arielle Loy, Cora McBroom, Jenny Nystrom, Jennifer Paulson, Amy McBroom, Melissa Pellinen, and Brian Evenson.

We reopened St. John's Nursery during Sunday morning worship services for children ages 12 weeks to 5 years. Giada Parigi, a student at St. Olaf, staffs the Nursery during the 2022-2023 school year. We appreciate the loving care she gives to our littlest ones.

Toddler Time is also back this year. Toddler Time is a once a month Sunday morning educational offering, inviting children who are 2-years-old to join our 3 and 4-year-old preschool Sunday classes. Thank you, Jenny Nystrom for leading this program.

Children worship bulletins and activity bags are available every Sunday to engage young children during worship.

As the holidays arrived, we were able to bring back the Children's Christmas program. The children were excited to learn songs and be part of the Nativity story. They did a wonderful job.

Our Sunday school offering supports the "Blessing Box" at St. John's. St. John's, along with the Northfield community, donates to and receives from the Blessing Box hygiene products and food products. Thank you for your donations.

Wednesday Programming

ROCK, *Reaching out to Christ's Kids*, is our Wednesday after school programs for children in grades K-5. The Wednesday after school bus is a blessing, transporting children from Northfield's elementary schools to St. John's for Catechism (grades 3-5), Choir (K-5) and Kid's Club (K-2). Thank you to our Wednesday volunteers, Jonah Brownlee and Eleanor Godfrey, and our choir directors, Arielle Loy and Green Bouzard, plus pastors, Jonathan and Pam and Youth Director, Emmanuel.

During Lent, our fourth and fifth grade CAT kids paired up with an adult member from our congregation to be their Prayer Buddy. Prayer Buddies pray for their child starting on Ash Wednesday until Easter Sunday. Thank you to our Prayer Buddies and families for participating.

Summer

This summer, we joined forces with Bethel, Emmaus, and St. Peter churches to once again hold family Vacation Bible School. VBS was held two Wednesday evenings in June. Then in August, the churches hosted a pool party at the Northfield City Pool. The Knights of Columbus generously provided free food from their Food Truck for all who attended.

After a few years of not offering summer camp for children, this last summer we offered “Settlers” camp at Good Earth Village in Spring Valley, MN. A few children attended and we’re hoping to encourage more to attend in 2023.

Fellowship/Events

We love the weekly return of Wednesday Night Meals, a midweek fellowship event for our community, along with Trunk or Treat, the Easter

Egg Hunt, Advent Fair, and “No School” events. Thank you to the many volunteers who help make these events happen. A special thank you to Katherine Norrie, Jill Enestvedt, and Alli Silkgund who helped organize Advent Fair.

Thank you to the Children’s Board members and the staff at St. John’s for all they do for our children at St. John’s.

We look forward to the year ahead as we continue to work together to nurture faith in our children, within ourselves, in the community and world. Children are a gift and we are blessed to share God’s love with them.

Respectfully submitted,

Candace Godfrey, Chair

Julie Brehmer, Director of Children’s Ministry

Report of the Evangelism & Communications Board

Board Members: Mark Gleason (chair), Daniel Edwins, Jill Enestvedt, Evelyn Hoover, Eric Sponheim, Chris Tacheny, and Leah Garlie (staff).

The Evangelism & Communication Boards is blessed with talented people who love the challenge of helping St. John’s spread the Good News via traditional and new media, and helping St. John’s members communicate effectively within and beyond our church community.

In 2022 ECB focused work in seven areas:

1. Hearing Assistance Technology

ECB continued its efforts to serve our hearing-impaired members, mindful of the words of St. Paul, “And so faith comes from hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ.”

- *Hearing Loop.* ECB has coordinated ongoing maintenance of and education about St. John’s Hearing Loop technology in the Sanctuary and St. John’s Hall.
- *Closed Captioning for the Deaf.* ECB has implemented live-service closed captioning, available for use on mobile phones and wireless tablets. Providing volunteer support for the technology are the following members of ECB and Faith & Health Board: Debby Nitz,

Dennis Rinehart, Eric Sponheim, and Mark Gleason

- *St. John’s Hall Acoustic Improvements.* ECB coordinated planning in 2022 for acoustic upgrades in St. John’s Hall. New sound management material will be installed in December 2022 and January 2023 to tame hall reverberation levels, resulting in improved environment for non-amplified conversation and meetings.

2. Live-streaming of Church Services

ECB works closely with the all-volunteer Audio-Visual Team to provide support for live-streaming and recording of St. John’s services. Now that St. John’s is offering two in-person Sunday services, logins to the streaming service have declined from an average of over 100 logins to an average around 50 per service. (In addition, many members access the service on radio only.) ECB thanks the A-V Team volunteers who provide video and audio services for worship and programs: Dave Zdenek, Jenny Carlson, Rob Nutt, Jon Kavanaugh, and Mark Gleason.

3. Other Live-Streaming Services

In 2021 and 2022, ECB assisted development of church policy regarding live-streaming of non-

worship events and services. The policy recommended that the church provide streaming of member-related services, including weddings and funerals. The streaming enables St. John's to communicate with members and friends who otherwise, especially during covid restrictions, would be unable to share in church community events. St. John's can also provide streaming and recording of Forum and other program events, depending on A-V volunteer availability, enabling St. John's to share its deep resources in music, arts, and education.

4. Audio and Video Upgrades

- Sound. ECB and Adult Ministry purchased new wireless microphones that will provide improved sound quality and programming flexibility for St. John's Hall. In addition, ECB initiated a study of the acoustical environment of St. John's Hall.
- Equipment. ECB, using its 2022 equipment budget, has assisted the AV team in purchasing the following items: a Chromebook to support closed-caption services, a remote control for a video camera, and a video mini-cam for portable streaming. The St. John's A-V streaming equipment is low-cost but effective, thanks to the good advice and guidance of Paul Hager (Carleton), ECB member Daniel Edwins, and A-V team member Dave Zdenek.
- AV Space. ECB has worked with Worship & Arts and Property & Grounds boards to plan for providing effective space for the AV

volunteers. As a result, the AV team has moved equipment to the east side of the balcony.

- Television. ECB has facilitated use of media funds for purchase of a television to replace the damaged one in St. John's Hall.

5. Oral Histories

ECB facilitated an oral history project in 2019, part of the church's 150th anniversary celebration, and is continuing to post edited files on the St. John's website.

6. Website Review

ECB discussed the St. John's website in 2022 and will be making recommendations for website edits and updates in 2023. St. John's has an outstanding website. Likely recommendations will likely focus on adjustments and updating of pages and materials.

7. Understanding Social Change

To inform its work, ECB members read and discussed articles related to the ongoing challenges facing the ELCA and all churches related to declining membership and declining participation in worship services. This ongoing phenomenon of social change provided a context for much of ECB's work in 2022.

*Soli dei gloria,
Mark Gleason, Chair*

Report of the Faith & Health Board

Board Members: Dennis Rinehart (chair), Pam Groves-Gaggioli, Deb Loe, Debby Nitz, Suzanne Pfau, David Sudermann, and Sally Lindell (staff).

As a congregation we have worked to navigate the transitions from the challenges of the COVID peaks to a hope for return to normalcy. We have celebrated the return of some of our traditional practices, but we recognize the pandemic as an inflection point, and realize that we will need to adapt to a new normal. We appreciate the work of our pastors, our staff, the Safe Operating Task Force, and the other boards, as we find our way forward.

The mental health challenges of the pandemic have been widely noted; we were created to live in community, and the isolation and anxiety of this time have been difficult. One of our projects this year was "Life in the Time of COVID," an opportunity to reflect and write about the experience. A number of our members have participated, and you are invited to read these submissions, and to contribute if you wish. Faith & Health Board also partnered with the Healthy Community Initiative to host two Mental Health First Aid sessions in May. The 988 National Suicide and Crisis Lifeline was officially implemented this

past summer, and we are working to publicize this at St. John's.

We are grateful for the ongoing work of the Stephen Ministers and the leadership of Jennifer Edwins and Pastor Jonathan. The most recent class completed their studies in March, and included five people from St. John's and two people from Christ Lutheran Church in Faribault. If you or someone you know is going through a difficult time, a good listener could help, please let one of our pastors know.

Sally Lindell is our Parish Nurse, and she serves our congregation in many ways. She has arranged connections between people who have needs for such things as meals and drives to doctor's appointments with short term volunteers. She was present for the congregational fun run in April. She monitors the cardiac defibrillator and first aid kits to make sure that they are up to date. She coordinated multiple blood drives throughout the year. She is a warm, caring person, and has supported many of our members.

Prayers for Healing began again in August with the positive leadership of Kristin Partlo. Sue Sharrow is the leader of the Prayer Shawl Ministry and reports that the knitters enjoy their work both at

home and during their group meetings. We appreciate Pastor Jonathan highlighting this ministry during a children's message and sermon in December.

The year began and ended with collaborations between the Faith & Health Board and the Evangelism & Communications Board. We helped with the rollout of the Hearing Loop in January and surveyed the membership about their experiences with it, responding to those with questions. In December, two members of our board received training in closed captioning from Mark Gleason. If you are aware of someone with profound hearing loss or who struggles with English, please let us know.

Over the course of the year, the Faith & Health Board stocked the Blessing Box with small first aid kits and hygiene products.

I have appreciated the opportunity to work with the Faith & Health Board this year. Suzanne Pfau and David Sudermann will be leaving the board. We thank them for their service.

Respectfully submitted,
Dennis Rinehart, Chair

Report of the Properties & Grounds Board

Board Members: Steve Taggart (chair), Sue Brockman, Fred Huemoeller, Jo Ann Polley, Mark Rydberg, Terry Rydberg, and Tim Byers (staff).

2022 will be remembered for two big events for the Property & Grounds Board. The first being the sudden passing of Board Chair Dale Gehring in July. Dale is greatly missed by the board and congregation for his great leadership, giving nature, and true passion for St. John's. Second, the retirement of Facility Manager Tim Byers at the end of 2022. Tim has given so much of his time, energy, and talents to serve St. John's over his career here. His gentle nature, hard work, and wealth of knowledge will be greatly missed around the halls of St. John's.

List of Projects Completed and Major Decisions made in 2022:

- Overgrown shrubs were removed and the landscape bed was redone in the southwest corner of the church by door #1. The planting bed was redesigned and new plants were planted by Leif Knecht. Leif will monitor the plantings to make sure they continue to be healthy until they get established. Grass was planted and is growing nicely where it was needed. Dale Gehring completed the removal of the overgrown shrubs.
- Repairs were done on the AC units. New refrigerant was added to improve the efficiency and functionality of the units.
- A mini-split AC unit was installed for the theater. This will allow for this space to be

more usable in the hot spring, fall, and summer.

- The controls for the AC unit in Fellowship Hall were rewired and brought up to code. During AC work in the building, it was brought to our attention that the wiring for the controls was non-functional and needed updates. Those wiring repairs were completed.
- An area of the building was tuck-pointed by ACME. Our board appreciates the partnership with ACME and their willingness to give a discount because we piggy back work they do at Carleton each year.
- Joe Thiboeah finished the Canopy project. He installed metal panels around the entrance to door #1 and also the bridge leading from the library to the Narthex area.
- The installation of energy efficient LED lighting was installed in the Commons area outside of St. John's Hall and also in the west parking lot.

- Doug Child's painting repaired plaster in the Sanctuary. The problem area was located above the piano on the southeast wall.
- Board sponsored successful Spring and Fall Cleanup Days. About 10 volunteers along with board members spent time this spring preparing garden beds and picking up sticks and other debris left by the winter. About 30 volunteers joined this fall to pick up leaves and prepare garden beds for the winter.

The Property & Grounds Board would like to thank all it's members for their work and dedication to maintaining St. John's church. We would also like to thank everyone who has volunteered their time and talents to keeping this building in the fantastic shape that it's in.

Respectfully submitted,
Steve Taggart, Chair

Report of the Stewardship Board

Board Members: Kristy Harms (chair), Grant Aaseng, Teri Grosz, Terrence Hassanally (advisory), Judy Thompson-Reitz, Dawn Tommerdahl (secretary) and Pastor Pam Fickenscher (staff).

Goals for 2022

- Encourage engagement as we begin to gather safely in person.
- Partner with the Worship & Arts Board to imagine and sponsor an art exhibit of St. John's artists.
- Develop messaging for a successful Stewardship campaign.
- Sponsor a ministry fair to encourage member engagement.
- Acknowledge and thank individuals for their stewardship.

Appreciation Sunday in January 2022 was postponed, due to safe gathering concerns. Post-it notes displaying the thumb-print logo were distributed during the ministry fair in August and September 2022.

Stewardship messaging began in June 2022 to focus on the "Treasures Hidden in Plain Sight". Messages included information about our St. Olaf music interns, the Dobson pipe organ, Opus 51, Children's ministries, and Youth ministries, with the intention of highlighting the riches that we carefully tend.

Ministry Fair on August 28, 2022 and September 18, 2022 provided information about the ways that members can engage in meaningful ways at St. John's.

Artists of St. John's exhibit opened on November 6, 2022 for a 6 week period.

Stewardship materials were mailed to members the week of October 23, 2022.

As of January 16, 2023, a total of **212** pledges for 2023 have been received. This is one more than the 211 pledges received for 2022.

Respectfully submitted,
Kristy Harms, Chair

Report of the Worship & Arts Board

Board Members: Paul Beck (chair), John Bade, Nancy Ordahl Kmoch, Lori Skoglund, Anne Sovik, Scott Swanson, and Nathan Proctor (staff).

After the past two years of constantly changing variables affecting how we could gather, 2022 brought many of us a year of more stability as we worshiped together. No matter if you were worshipping in person, on the livestream or radio broadcast, or masked or unmasked, each week we proclaimed the Word, sang and heard music that helped open and expand the Word, and celebrated the Lord's Supper together.

A few momentous occasions from the past year:

- We continued using *All Creation Sings*, the purple supplement to *Evangelical Lutheran Worship*, over the year and learned new hymns, songs, and liturgy settings. St. John's has truly embraced our role as early adopters of this resource. David Sims, Music Development Manager at Augsburg Fortress, offered a great forum in December where we learned that we have purchased more copies of this resource than any other church in the ELCA!
- In May, we celebrated Zachery Pelletier as he ended his time leading the Rejoice Ringers after 10 years of service. Zach spent countless hours rehearsing, coordinating schedules, and moving handbells and equipment over the years. Thank you, Zach, for the ways you and the Rejoice Ringers contributed to the musical life of our congregation.
- In September, we joyfully welcomed Green Bouzard as the newest member to our music staff as the Jubilate Choir Director. Green comes with a wealth of theological and musical backgrounds and we are so happy she is part of the staff. It's exciting to hear beautiful sounds from the choir room again on Wednesday nights! Green is also a very talented violinist, sharing her gifts in worship and leading her violin studio from space at St. John's. Special thank you to Michael Morris for assisting with the Jubilate Choir this fall as well as composing new songs for that group to sing.
- This fall we again continued the tradition of St. Olaf students participating in the music ministry at St. John's through the Church

Music Intern program. These students are all at different points in their music study at St. Olaf and bring a wealth of different experiences. In the St. John's Chorale we welcomed Taylor Dirks, soprano; Abby Carter, alto; Noah Smith, tenor; Jake Olson, tenor; Ethan Jones, bass, and Will Fecko with the Rejoice Ringers. This program is made possible through generous gifts to the Alice Hanson Church Music fund. Any gifts to this fund help keep the program going forward in the future.

- After thoughtful discussions in the Worship & Arts Board, we joined a growing number of congregations starting the practice of musical reparations. This means we recognize that many of our hymns and songs sung in worship are from Black and Indigenous sources that were never acknowledged or paid for their contributions by the Church as a whole. One small way we can work to right this injustice is to make amends financially. The Board decided to start contributing an amount equal to our annual copyright license payment, around \$500, and this year we made a contribution to Hopewell Music Cooperative in North Minneapolis. This amount will fund a semester of music lessons for a student.
- In November, we partnered with the Stewardship Board for an art show in St. John's Hall. The artistic talent from church members was really incredible to see! Thank you to Kristy Harms for her organizational work and Scott Swanson for installing the artwork.
- This year we were able to offer our beautiful space for concerts by groups like the Cannon Valley Regional Orchestra, the Lyra Baroque Orchestra, and the Midland University Choir. We also hosted numerous piano recitals for local piano teachers and an organ recital this summer as part of the Northfield Noontime Organ Recital series. (I had a very joyful time offering a recital in this series that celebrated the organ music of F. Melius Christiansen.)

Some people to thank this year:

- Thank you to the A/V team and the Evangelism & Communications Board for helping us continue live-streaming worship services. This technology allows people near and far to

faithfully participate with us in worship each week. We continue to hear from people - whether in COVID isolation, recovering from surgery, or traveling - that the Word proclaimed and sung in our Sanctuary offers comfort to many outside our church walls. May we continue to always move toward ways that our worship services can be more accessible and inclusive to everyone.

- Thank you to Deb Christensen and all the members of the Chancel Guild for their work making the Sanctuary look beautiful in every season. This is especially evident in December as we watch the Sanctuary move from Advent blue to Christmas white, gold, and red. Thank you to Scott Swanson for his willingness to climb tall ladders to hang banners. Thank you also to the many members who offer flowers during the year, especially those from the garden of Pat Fick.
- Thank you to Arielle Loy for her continued musical leadership of our Alleluia Choir. It's a joy to see our young children back to rehearsing on Wednesday nights and singing for worship. Arielle also coordinated a very happy return of our children's Christmas program in December.
- Thank you to David Sims for his work leading the Rejoice Ringers this fall. We continue to search for a new director but are glad that

David could step in during this interim time. We were also able to expand our church music intern program to include a St. Olaf student, Will Fecko, who shares in conducting and ringing.

- Thank you to the many, MANY vocalists and instrumental musicians who share their gifts with our community so generously. It is truly a pleasure to coordinate and rehearse with all these gifted people. Thank you to the many who played and sang in worship in December. It was such a joyous Christmas season!
- Finally, I struggle every year to find a way to adequately say thank you to the members of the St. John's Chorale. Seeing this group of talented people is the highlight of my week and ultimately of each year at St. John's. Their willingness to participate stretches me creatively and musically as I'm always thinking of new things we can sing in worship. I cannot thank them enough for the time, energy, kindness, and trust they share with me. It was exciting this year to welcome a bunch of new singers and see them be welcomed so warmly by others in the group.

In thanksgiving for another year,
Nathan Proctor, Director of Worship, Music & Arts
On behalf of the Worship & Arts Board

Report of the Youth Ministry & Education Board

Board Members: Tamara Jackman (chair), Beret Froehle, Betsy McLaughlin, Todd Menssen, Amanda Tracy, Emily Westerback, Emmanuel Kaghondi (staff), and Pastor Jonathan Davis (staff).

The Youth Ministry & Education Board (commonly referred to as Youth Board) works with partners in the church to provide middle school and high school youth and their families opportunities for faith formation through fun, education, service, and creating a place of belonging. The work of the Board has primarily been to engage in thoughtful visioning, plan and execute enjoyable, faith-based events for youth and families and work to build relationships between youth and the rest of the St John's community.

In 2022, Youth programming kept a focus on fellowship and community, as we began re-introducing more curriculum into Wednesday night programming. We kept up with fun activities at St John's and beyond in 2022, as we moved into the time after COVID: bonfires, corn hole, outdoor scavenger hunts, kickball.....

January - We welcomed the post-COVID return of J-term programming for middle school youth in partnership with Bethel and St Peter's, giving an opportunity to engage with peers from other congregations and explore different aspects of their faith life through their choice of themed workshops facilitated by congregation members.

March - Youth Board coordinated with volunteers from the congregation to provide meals and hygiene items needed at The Key to support youth there as we have in recent years. Pastor Jonathan Davis and Tamara Jackman were blessed with the opportunity to facilitate a series of workshops for high school youth in grades 10-12 using the Our Whole Lives (O.W.L.) curriculum, discussing issues of relationships and human sexuality for the second time, having begun using this curriculum in 2020.

April - We hosted a field trip to SkyZone for middle school youth as well as ongoing programming for O.W.L. youth.

May - We planned fundraising to support our commitment to CYAN, the union of queer youth in Northfield. Sadly, CYAN disbanded and in the end, those funds were no longer needed. What comes next to meet the needs of queer youth in Northfield is yet unfolding.

June - Outdoors Scavenger Hunt + Service project - we had 3 MS youth from St. John's. They joined Youth from other churches, and school supplies were collected to be sent to Senegal. Youth had fun together!

July - MS Amnicon Trip - 8 youth +2 Adults and HS Christikon Trip - 14 youth + 4 Adults were great for both chaperones and youth.

August - SonShine III: Romans & Christians at St. John's with Bethel and UCC youth, approximately 35-40 very enthusiastic youth attended. The High School lock-in was a big success of youth-led programming, with a bouncy house, a talent show, movies, and sleep-over at church.

September - Youth and Children's boards co-hosted the Welcome breakfast to kick off the start of the programming year...and the power went out as we were preparing the meal for the congregation. Volunteers from both boards did an excellent job of responding creatively to this setback and pulled off a great meal. Special thanks to Adam and Arielle Loy for making the meal complete with coffee, which surprised and delighted many.

October - Youth Board has started sending out birthday cards with cupcake gift cards to all youth. We have added an additional 30 minutes of "Ubuntu" ("community") time at the end of Wednesday night programming for youth who would like more time for fellowship after the formal programming has ended. It was clear that, after COVID, youth are especially needing time to just be together.

December - We hosted a new event, a Christmas party for youth, which was well attended and enjoyed by many youth, with hot chocolate, cookie decorating, games, and fun. As we do each year, youth went caroling in the community.

Many thanks to Youth Board members who have given their time and talents; to St. John's staff, for their planning, leadership, and support; and to the congregation who have contributed directly and indirectly to connect with and support our youth. Thanks also to St. John's middle schoolers and high schoolers who have attended and in some cases led and inspired Youth events. Without all of you, the Youth Board's mission could not be realized.

Peace,
Tamara Jackman, Chair

Report of the Audit Committee, *Julie Becker, Bill Rizzo, and Mark Ulmer*

January 2023

St John's Lutheran Church
500 Third Street W
Northfield, MN 55057

Re: Financial Review

The Audit Committee consisting of Julie Becker, Bill Rizzo, and Mark Ulmer has done periodic reviews of the financial records of St. John's Lutheran Church for the year ending December 31, 2022.

In our opinion, we have found the financial reports and transactions in balance as disclosed in the Annual Report to the congregation.

We believe the procedures with the Sunday morning counters, two signatures on checks written of \$2,500 and over, as well as other transactions have been followed as prescribed.

Payroll is prepared through the Reese Winter accounting firm with all payments to staff and withholding transfers made electronically.

We extend our thanks to Leah Garlie for making all the financial records available for our review and all those who have served as counters throughout the year.

Sincerely,

Julie Becker
Bill Rizzo
Mark Ulmer

Report of the Treasurer, *Jane Rizzo*

The church finances continue to be guided by thoughtful management from the council, pastors and staff, as well as thoughtful and generous donations. This culture of stewardship on both sides of the financial equation is so important in supporting the ongoing mission of the church. The details of the 2022 results and the proposed 2023 budget are given below and on the following pages.

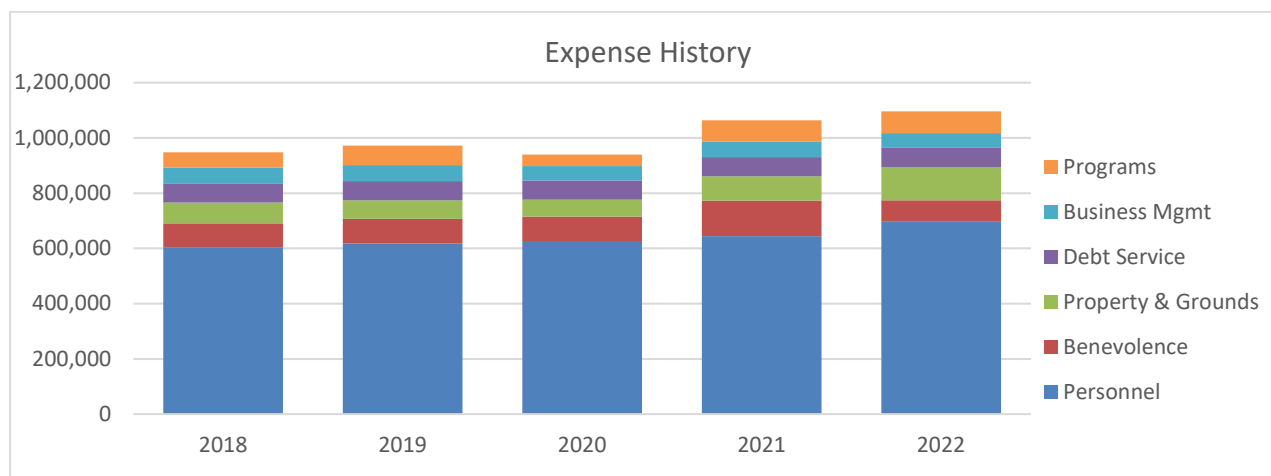
2022 Budget Results

We ended 2022 with a deficit of \$19,708 (or 1.8% of budget), primarily due to a variance in offering and gifts. While the income we received was similar to 2021, it was less than budgeted. Our benevolence giving from the operations was less than budgeted due to confusion about process, but total benevolence remains strong (details on the following pages). As we shared in prior communications, our utilities expense has been growing quickly based on rising rates. We exceeded budget by nearly \$15,000. This expense has increased by 65% over the last three years, from \$39,187 in 2019 to \$64,778 this year.

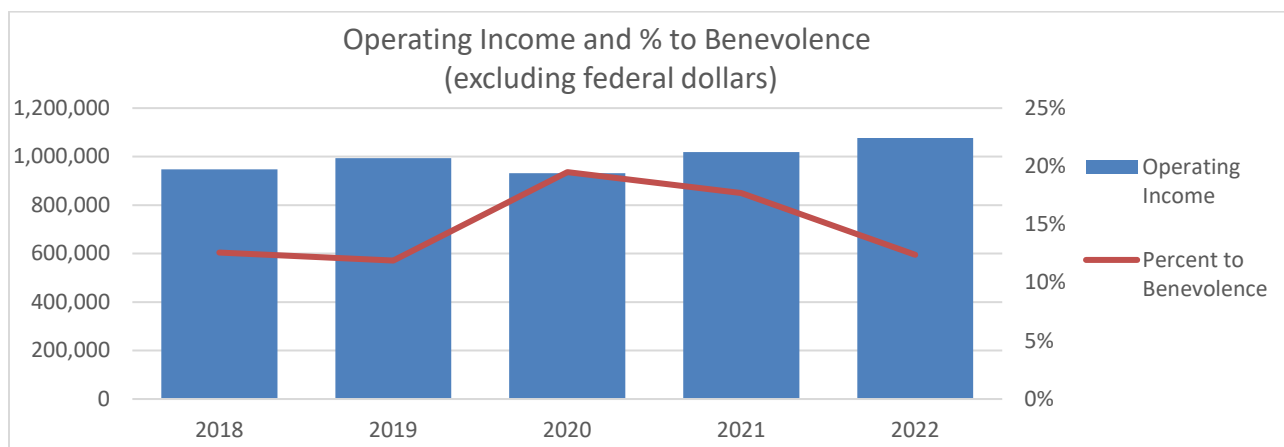
	2022 Budget	2022 Actual	Higher / (Lower)
Offering & Other Gifts	977,000	932,989	(44,011)
Other Income	141,100	143,395	2,295
Total Income	1,118,100	1,076,384	(41,716)
Personnel	696,280	696,996	716
Benevolence	94,170	77,321	(16,849)
Property & Grounds	106,200	120,622	14,422
Mortgage Servicing	69,600	69,600	-
Business Management	57,500	53,352	(4,148)
Programs	79,350	78,201	(1,149)
Total Operating Expense	1,103,100	1,096,092	(7,008)
Operating Income / (Loss)	15,000	(19,708)	(34,708)

2022 In Context

Consistent with prior years, Personnel continues to be our largest expense at 64% of actual expense in 2022. Total expenses have grown an average of 3.2% annually over the last five years.



Operating income (excluding the federal assistance dollars in 2021) has grown at an average of 2.8% annually over the last five years. Benevolence was higher than average in 2020 and 2021 due to Grace Overflowing gifts. Note that the percentage of benevolence (12.4% in 2022) includes use of donor-designated gifts that are not included in the operating budget.



Balance Sheet

Total cash assets at the end of the year were \$459,465 compared to \$581,934 at the end of 2021. Total designated and restricted funds total \$471,950 at year-end; this includes \$123,277 in funds restricted by the council for operating reserve, insurance reserve, and facilities and equipment. These restricted funds will be reduced by the operating deficit to cover this year's loss. The remaining reserves of \$103,577 total 9.4% of our operating budget, a little shy of the general "rainy day" rule of thumb of 10%. Council will be discussing ways to replenish this fund over time. Council has also encouraged boards to proactively manage their respective designated funds to help with programming and further benevolence giving.

Grace Overflowing

The Grace Overflowing campaign officially ended in 2020, but Council continued to allocate funds from the campaign balance. Projects funded this year include: completing St. John's pledge to CAC's Hillcrest Village housing project, repairs to several door canopies, and ongoing tuckpointing. The remaining balance in the capital fund has been allocated by the council to fund the acoustics project in St. John's Hall. The remaining balance in the benevolence fund (\$3,477) will be allocated by council as needs arise.

Mortgage Debt

The remaining mortgage balance is \$157,470 at a fixed rate of 3.875%. The mortgage is scheduled to be paid off in July of 2025.

The following documents are included in the Annual Report for your reference:

- Comparative Financial Statement (2023 budget proposal and the prior five years of actuals)
- Comparative Balance Sheet (Five years of year-end balances)
- Designated Funds Balance (2022 activity and year-end balance)

Thank you to the Council for their prudent spending and management of funds throughout the year. And thank you to Leah for keeping track of the financial details and providing reporting for Council to make informed decisions.

Business Management Board Activities

This year the Business Management Board reviewed several of the church's financial procedures: the work of the Audit Committee, the Financial Policies & Procedures manual, the budget development process, and the offering counting process. The Board found the processes and procedures to be in good order, and made only small recommendations for improvements. The Board also discussed funding for the church archives, participated in the discussions about strategic directions for the church and tabled at the ministry fairs. Continuing into 2023, the board is researching the use of PayPal / Venmo for donations and developing guidelines for building usage.

Respectively submitted,
Jane Rizzo, Treasurer

St. John's Lutheran Church Comparative Financial Statement

	2023 Budget	2022 Actual	2021 Actual	2020 Actual	2019 Actual	2018 Actual
Income	1,102,790	1,076,384	1,205,786	931,768	993,130	947,848
Expenses						
Personnel	717,943	696,996	644,821	623,688	617,839	602,592
Adult Ministry and Education	4,200	3,251	2,812	2,693	3,858	3,485
Benevolence and Social Concerns	83,420	77,321	128,372	91,473	88,528	88,253
Business Management	48,650	53,352	57,034	52,160	58,703	56,281
Childrens Ministry and Education	6,925	7,179	4,923	4,227	6,765	7,083
Evangelism and Communication	12,400	12,115	12,112	12,450	10,475	9,832
Faith and Health	500	1,173	738	621	254	352
Property and Grounds	105,500	120,622	87,345	61,085	67,435	75,059
Stewardship	4,100	4,213	3,991	4,096	3,837	3,556
Worship, Arts & Music	15,750	19,606	11,644	12,869	22,066	17,375
Youth	15,700	21,538	13,257	3,917	17,108	11,865
Other Expenses	16,350	9,125	26,839	510	6,160	2,062
Mortgage Servicing	69,600	69,600	69,600	69,600	69,600	69,600
Total Operating Expense	1,101,038	1,096,092	1,063,487	939,389	972,628	947,395
Operating Surplus (Deficit)	\$ 1,752	(\$ 19,708)	\$ 142,299	(\$ 7,621)	\$ 20,502	\$ 453
 Donor-Designated Benevolence	 35,000	 63,458	 104,075	 111,809	 33,613	 35,270
Total Income	1,137,790	1,139,842	1,309,861	1,043,577	1,026,743	983,118
Total Benevolence	118,420	140,779	232,447	203,282	122,141	123,523
Benevolence as a % of Income	10.4%	12.4%	17.7%	19.5%	11.9%	12.6%

St. John's Lutheran Church Year-Over-Year Budget Comparison

		2022 Budget	2023 Budget	Change	
INCOME	Offering & Other Gifts	977,000	984,500	7,500	Small increase in offering
	Other Income	141,100	118,290	(22,810)	2022 included use of Grace Overflowing funds
	Total Income	1,118,100	1,102,790	(15,310)	
EXPENSE	Personnel	696,280	717,943	21,663	Adjustments based on Personnel Committee study
	Benevolence	94,170	83,420	(10,750)	Reduction based on lower income
	Property & Grounds	106,200	105,500	(700)	Excludes capital, includes increased utilities exper
	Mortgage Servicing	69,600	69,600	-	
	Business Management	57,500	48,650	(8,850)	Reduced printing and supplies purchases
	Programs	79,350	75,925	(3,425)	Reduction based on lower income
	Total Operating Expense	1,103,100	1,101,038	(2,062)	
	Operating Income / (Loss)	15,000	1,752	(13,248)	

St. John's Lutheran Church

Comparative Balance Sheet

As of December 31

	2022	2021	2020	2019	2018
Assets					
First National Bank-Checking	225,401	348,610	343,736	186,877	239,837
Premier Bank-CD's	205,435	205,435	205,435	205,000	200,000
ELCA Investment Account	-	-	-	-	83,251
ELCA Certificate	28,679	27,939	26,693	26,600	26,233
Total Cash	459,515	581,984	575,864	418,477	549,321
Prepaid Expense	-	-	-	4,067	-
Land/Building/Equipment	4,876,443	4,876,442	4,876,443	4,876,443	4,876,443
Total Assets	5,335,958	5,458,426	\$ 5,452,307	\$ 5,298,987	\$ 5,425,764
Liabilities and Fund Balances					
Accounts Payable	-	-	-	-	15,862
Accrued Payroll Taxes	(12)	-	-	1,134	4,673
Continuing Education Payable	-	17,521	12,878	7,618	6,367
Notes Payable-Energy Loan	-	-	-	-	-
Designated Fund Balances & Reserves	471,950	414,782	555,604	386,807	504,878
First Mortgage	157,470	219,699	275,703	347,019	402,114
Total Liabilities and Fund Balances	629,408	652,002	\$ 844,186	\$ 742,578	\$ 933,894
Equity in Church Property	4,706,550	4,806,424	\$ 4,608,121	\$ 4,556,409	\$ 4,491,870
Total Liabilities / Fund Balances & Equity	5,335,958	5,458,426	\$ 5,452,307	\$ 5,298,987	\$ 5,425,764

St John's Lutheran Church
Designated and Restricted Funds
December 2022

	Year-to-Date			
	Beginning <u>Balance</u>	YTD <u>Receipts</u>	YTD <u>Expense</u>	Current <u>Balance</u>
DESIGNATED FUNDS				
Adult Ministry & Education				
Archives	-	2,000	1,022	978
Library	632	1,500	686	1,446
Benevolence & Social Concerns				
Bread for the World	-	-	-	-
CAC-Financial Assistance	-	-	-	-
CAC-Food Shelf	407	7,661	8,068	(0)
CAC-Viking Terrace	-	3,130	3,130	-
Community School at GVP	-	-	-	-
Disaster Relief	150	100	250	-
ELCA World Hunger	450	3,370	3,820	-
Habitat for Humanity	-	220	220	-
Healthy Community Initiative	-	-	-	-
Laura Baker Services Association	-	-	-	-
Lutheran Schools in the Holy Land	-	1,000	1,000	-
Lutheran World Relief	310	9,270	9,580	-
Malaria Campaign	-	1,000	1,000	-
Mission Support	-	2,175	2,175	-
Northfield Retirement Center	-	-	-	-
Refugee Resettlement	-	-	-	-
<u>Three Links Care Center</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>
Total Benevolence & Social Concerns	1,317	27,926	29,243	(0)
Children's Ministry & Education				
Children's Ministry	1,527	-	762	765
Blessing Box	93	120	66	147
<u>Sunday School Offering</u>	<u>669</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>669</u>
Total Children's Ministry & Education	2,289	120	828	1,580
Children & Youth Ministries				
Children and Youth Bible Fund	3,800	-	800	3,000
Youth & Children's Activities	5,349	700	300	5,749
Total Children & Youth Ministry	9,149	700	1,100	8,749
Evangelism & Communications				
Audio / Visual	700	750	763	688
Faith & Health				
Called to Serve	855	-	-	855
Faith & Health	396	50	-	446
Prayer Shawl	-	-	-	-
<u>Stephens Ministry</u>	<u>5,720</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>1,360</u>	<u>4,360</u>
Total Faith & Health	6,971	50	1,360	5,661
Worship, Music & Arts				
Alice Hanson Education Fund	12,272	3,626	5,755	10,143
Arts & Environment	150	-	-	150
Chancel Guild	2,911	-	-	2,911
<u>Music Fund</u>	<u>20,883</u>	<u>16,890</u>	<u>6,000</u>	<u>31,773</u>
Total Worship, Music & Arts	36,216	20,516	11,755	44,977
Youth Ministry & Education				
Kathy Mroz Youth Fund	5,036	1,472	2,000	4,507
The Key	312	150	-	462
<u>Torch Program</u>	<u>166</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>150</u>	<u>16</u>
Total Youth Ministry & Education	5,514	1,622	2,150	4,985
Pastoral Staff				
Emergency Funds	8,099	7,670	13,015	2,754
Continuing Education	-	23,921	6,358	17,562

St John's Lutheran Church
Designated and Restricted Funds

December 2022

	Year-to-Date			
	Beginning Balance	YTD Receipts	YTD Expense	Current Balance
DESIGNATED FUNDS				
Church Council				
2021 Budget Surplus	-	143,355	44,873	98,482
Acoustic Improvements	-	22,110	-	22,110
Prepaid Pledges-2022	27,153	139,110	166,263	0
Prepaid Pledges-2023	-	15,060	-	15,060
Capital Projects	11,558	2,430	10,471	3,517
Columbarium-Niche	19,399	3,600	-	22,999
Columbarium-Courtyard	7,500	2,600	272	9,828
Education Fund	2,312	-	1,912	400
Grace Overflowing - Benevolence	13,369	108	10,000	3,477
Grace Overflowing - Capital	57,239	432	36,262	21,409
Memorials-Undesignated	30,691	6,900	10,000	27,591
Payroll Protection Loan	25,795	-	8,600	17,195
Pilgrimage Antiracism Workshop	-	-	-	-
Seminary Fund	2,523	-	1,000	1,523
Sunday Signer	-	-	-	-
Thrivent Choice Gifts	4,819	1,221	1,000	5,040
Member Gift - Capital	5,603	-	-	5,603
Member Gift - Benevolence	11,207	-	11,200	7
Total Church Council	219,168	336,926	301,854	254,241
Receptions				
Receptions	1,557	11,076	9,499	3,134
Pass-Through Items				
Augusta Victoria Hospital	95	-	-	95
Book Reads	(11)	120	-	109
Debt Reduction	-	525	525	-
Easter Cards	-	-	-	-
Easter Garden / Poinsettias	(92)	1,297	1,233	(28)
Hymnal Supplements	-	-	-	-
Lenten Book Read	(148)	-	-	(148)
Miscellaneous	-	2,141	250	1,891
St. John's Foundation	-	6,095	6,095	-
Summer Youth Trips	-	7,840	7,840	-
WELCA	50	6,175	6,225	-
Total Pass-Through	(106)	24,193	22,168	1,919
Total Designated Funds	291,505	458,970	401,801	348,673
RESTRICTED RESERVES				
Insurance	5,000	-	-	5,000
Facility & Equipment	36,738	-	-	36,738
Kitchen Equipment	16,539	-	-	16,539
Operating	65,000	-	-	65,000
Total Restricted Reserves	123,277	-	-	123,277
Total Designated + Restricted Funds	414,782	458,970	401,801	471,950

Report of the Budget Committee, *Kathy Shea*

The Budget Committee thoughtfully compiled a budget for 2023, based on planned stewardship from the congregation and past and current budget patterns. We also discussed needs for the next few years. The overall budget for 2023 is similar to the budget for 2022.

Resources - Income

We are thankful to have a strong resource base and thank the congregation for their generosity. Giving has been strong throughout the pandemic and during this last year.

1. Offerings: Pledges for 2023 are 4% higher than for 2022. Based on past years, we estimate the total offering budget to be 129% of pledges. We are conservatively estimating the total offering income to be 1% higher than in 2022, at \$966,500.

2. 2021 surplus: COVID pandemic support from the federal government led to an additional \$142,000 of income. As announced last year we propose to spend the surplus evenly over the next three years until the mortgage is retired.

3. Reserve Funds

a. Designated Funds – these are donations to specific projects or ministries. Because they are given for assigned purposes, there are only spent as intended. We are using designated funds as part of the budget income where appropriate. For example, money for Music Interns comes from the Alice Hanson Education Fund and money for children's bibles comes from the Children & Youth Bible Fund. Our goal is to spend about 1/3 of the fund in a given year. A number of these funds continue to receive donations.

b. Foundation Funds – The St. John's Foundation was established as an endowment with funds invested to attain higher returns. The returns are used to enhance the ministry of St. John's, providing funds for additional projects and benevolence. In the 2023 budget, \$35,000 income comes from Foundation Funds. About half of this amount is allocated to benevolence and scholarships for seminary/college, with other needs to be determined by the Church Council.

c. Restricted Funds – these are emergency funds and total about 10% of our annual budget. This year we plan to spend \$19,700 of restricted operating funds to make up the deficit for 2022. This leaves our restricted funds at 9.4% of total budget.

Expenditures

Four areas comprise 88.5% of the budget.

1. Personnel – this is our largest expenditure and is budgeted to increase 3% over the 2022 budget. It is important to provide our staff with salary increases to help with increased living costs. In addition, the church is now fully staffed with new hires in Facility and Choir Director positions, and the Shared Ministry and Welcome Ministry positions were reconfigured into one position.

2. Property & Grounds – a 1% decrease in budget. The amount budgeted includes a 30% increase in utilities and a 50% increase in grounds upkeep. It does not include capital projects such as tuckpointing, narthex lighting and west parking lot improvement. Council will discuss how to address these future needs.

3. Benevolence – an 11% decrease in budget. Benevolence is a major part of the mission of St. John's, and is given in more than one way. We estimate at least \$35,000 will be given in pass-through funds that are not part of the budget, keeping our benevolence at about 10% of income. The Grace Overflowing Fund allowed us to make larger benevolence contributions during the past three years.

4. Mortgage – the amount budgeted remains the same. The plan is to pay off the mortgage by July 2025, providing \$69,600 annually for other uses.

Summary

We have proposed a balanced budget for 2023 and still have some flexibility to respond to changing needs. We also have a strong foundation for the next several years. Our deficit this year was 1.8% of the total budget, a relatively small amount and we have restricted funds to make up the difference. In maintaining our mission/program goals, we had to eliminate capital projects for building improvements from the budget. Council welcomes your input and ideas about meeting our program needs and maintaining/enhancing our facility through projects such as solar panels, tuckpointing, roof repair, and parking lot paving.

Committee Members: Kathy Shea, Jane Rizzo, Kristy Harms, Tamara Jackman, Dennis Rinehart, Steve Taggart, Pastor Pam Fickenscher (staff), Leah Garlie (staff)

Minutes

152nd Annual Meeting of St. John's Lutheran Church, Northfield, MN

January 23, 2022

Ruth Dahl called the meeting to order at 12:37 p.m.

1. Pr. Pam Fickenscher led us in the devotions printed in the 2021 Annual Report.
2. Ruth Dahl asked Pr. Jonathan Davis to explain the processes for those voting via zoom.
3. Jane Rinehart moved to approve the proposed agenda. Duane Engstrom has seconded the motion. The motion carried.
4. Jeff McLaughlin moved to approve the 2021 Annual Meeting minutes. Will Schroeer seconded the motion. The motion carried.
5. Dennis Rinehart made the motion to approve the Annual Reports of President, Pastors, Staff, Boards, and Committees. Dawn Tommerdahl seconded the motion. The motion carried.
6. Jane Rizzo presented the Treasurer's Report. The full report can be found on page 22 of the 2021 Annual Report. Reed Hagberg moved to approve the Treasurer's Report. David Nitz seconded the motion. The motion carried.
7. Ruth Dahl presented the 2022-01 resolution regarding action of the Congregation Council in 2021. Jeff McLaughlin moved to accept the resolution. Ruth Anglin seconded the motion. The motion carried.
8. Report of the Audit Committee found on page 30 of the 2021 Annual Report. Dennis Rinehart made the motion to approve the report of the Audit Committee. Seconded by Deb Christensen. The motion carried.
9. Rod Christensen presented the Report of the Budget Committee, found on page 25 of the 2021 Annual Report. The main spending obligations noted by the Budget Committee were as follows: personnel, property and grounds, benevolence, and the mortgage. The key resources to cover expenses were noted as follows: offerings, a surplus from 2021, and reserve funds. More details can be found on page 25 of the 2021 Annual Report. Duane Engstrom made the motion to approve the 2022 budget. Jane Rinehart seconded the motion. The motion carried.
10. David Nitz presented the Nominating Committee Report.
11. Jane Rinehart nominated Judy Thompson-Reitz for a 3-year term on the Stewardship Board. The motion carried.
12. Suzanne Pfau moved to approve the ballot. Rob Quanbeck seconded the motion. The motion carried.
13. Ruth Dahl presented opportunities for members of St. John's to represent the congregation at the following events:
 - a. SE MN Synod Assembly Saturday, May 7: Kristin Partlo, Suzanne Pfau
 - b. Lutheran Home of Cannon Valley Corporation, TBD for 2022: Jane Rinehart
 - c. Cannon River Assembly, Sunday, February 13, 2:00 p.m., via Zoom: Rob Quanbeck, Dawn Tommerdahl
 - d. Gustavus Association of Congregations on April 30, 2022: Cheryl Buck, Kari Johnsrud, Eric Johnsrud

14. Proposed Constitutional Change. Ruth Anglin made the motion to approve the proposed constitutional change on page 34 of the 2021 Annual Report. Kristin Partlo seconded the motion. The motion carried.
15. Jane Rizzo moved to approve the proposed amended bylaws (see redline next page). Dennis Rinehart seconded the motion.
16. A friendly amendment suggested that the new ELCA language of “rostered leaders” replace “pastors” in #5 and #6. Barbara Eaves moved to accept the amendment. Motion carried.
17. Ruth Dahl presented the 2022-02 resolution regarding Gratitude for all Volunteers, Staff, and Pastors in 2021. Dawn Tommerdahl moved to accept the resolution. Debbie Nitz seconded the motion. The motion carried.
18. In memoriam, Pr. Fickenscher read aloud the names of members of the congregation who passed away in 2021. Pr. Fickenscher offered a memorial prayer.
19. Pr. Fickenscher acknowledged council members’ service, and 2021 President Ruth Dahl’s service this past year.
20. Mark Gleason made the motion to adjourn at 1:54 p.m. The motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,
Suzy Taggart, Secretary

C13.04. A Personnel Committee of seven members of this congregation shall include the president-elect and six members appointed jointly by the president and the **Senior Pastor**. The term of office of the six **appointed** members shall be two years, three members to be appointed each successive year. No member may serve more than three successive terms.

Deleted: pastor

D. The Personnel Committee shall:

1. Elect a chair from its **appointed** membership annually. The chair's main functions are to plan meeting agendas with the senior pastor and to convene and oversee committee meetings.

2. Meet at least quarterly on notice from the chair.

3. Provide advice and counsel to the senior pastor on matters concerning staff **members** and Personnel Policies.

4. Provide support for staff members by meeting with each staff **member** at least once each year to discuss matters of mutual concern related to employment, working conditions, and Personnel Policies. Individual discussions will be held in confidence. The president-elect will compile themes and share them with the personnel and executive committees. The Executive Committee will hold a similar meeting with **rostered leader**.

Deleted: person

Deleted: each pastor

5. Recommend and advocate needed changes in staff support to the Congregation Council.

6. Receive and approve an annual report from the president-elect and senior pastor regarding salary and benefit ranges for staff **members** and **rostered leaders**. In addition, the president-elect and senior pastor will record their specific deliberations and rationale, to be shared with each new president-elect and senior pastor. Individual compensation information will be kept private to the greatest possible extent.

Deleted: pastors

7. Review Personnel Policies and recommend revisions as needed to align with legal requirements and best practices.

Resolution 2023-01

Whereas, our congregation is aware that the Congregation Council acts as the custodian of our material assets, and

Whereas, the Council has conducted the affairs of the congregation in accordance with the Constitution, Bylaws, and resolutions of this congregation, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that St. John's Lutheran congregation, in annual meeting assembled, endorse the actions of the Council during the 2022 fiscal year and express thanks for the Council and officers for their leadership.

Resolution 2023-02

Whereas, the church is people called by our Lord to proclaim the Gospel in word and in deed, and to support one another and serve society in Christ's name, and,

Whereas, this congregation of God's people is led by particular persons in many positions of responsibility (congregation officers, board members, ministry team members, leaders of organizations, church school teachers, ushers, choir members, and many other people serving with their gifts in our ministry), and pastors, and staff; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that we, St. John's Lutheran Church, in annual meeting assembled, express our gratitude to these persons and to our entire church staff for their efforts in our behalf during this past year.

Minutes
Annual Meeting of St. John's Foundation
January 23, 2022

1. Jeff McLaughlin called the meeting to order at 12:34 p.m.
2. Dennis Rhinehart moved to accept the minutes from the 2021 annual meeting. Dawn Tommerdahl seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.
3. David Nitz made the motion to adjourn. Phil Eaves seconded the motion. The motion carried.
4. The agenda concluded at 12:37 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Suzy Taggart

St. John's Lutheran Church of Northfield Foundation, Inc.

2022 Annual Report

The purpose of the Foundation is to support the ministry of St. John's Lutheran Church in perpetuity by providing funds to extend its ministry beyond its normal church budget, to support its initiatives in the local Northfield community, and to invest in leadership for the future of the Church. Since 1989, the St. John's Foundation has provided a legacy giving opportunity for those who want their gifts to provide both current and ongoing value.

In 2022, the Foundation Board allocated \$34,000 to help fund special projects at St. John's. This represented approximately 4% of the beginning asset balance in 2021 (one year off-set). Funding by the Foundation was designated to specific projects identified by the Church Council.

The Foundation's asset balance at year end was approximately \$791,616, down from a balance of \$970,000 at the end of 2021. New gifts to the foundation were not enough to cover declines in domestic and international equity markets, which constitute the majority of our investments.

The Foundation Board takes a long-term view when it comes to investment practices and reviews our investments and asset allocations on a quarterly basis. We believe we are well-positioned for sustainable growth over the long-term.

During our more than 30-year history, the Foundation has received more than \$491,000 in generous donations and contributed more than \$455,000 to the church. We hope to achieve two important milestones in the near future: reaching a million dollars through future gifts and portfolio performance, and returning more resources to the congregation than we have received in contributions.

In 2023, we plan to complete our first in-person acknowledgement event for past and future donors. If you have included the Foundation in your estate planning, we would welcome the opportunity to thank you in person. If not, we would welcome your prayerful consideration as you make your future plans.

We will also be seeking new ways of supporting congregational mission and goals.

On behalf of the entire Board, thank you for your generous and continued support of the Foundation.

Respectfully Submitted,
Jeff McLaughlin, President

Current Board Members: Grant Aaseng, Julie Becker, Mike Berthelsen, Cheryl Buck, Dan Franklin, Jeff McLaughlin, John Ophaug, Jane Rizzo, Chris Weber. Ex-Officio: Pastor Pam Fickenscher

ST. JOHNS CHURCH OF NORTHFIELD FOUNDATION, INC

TREASURER'S REPORT

December 31, 2022

	<u>2020</u>	<u>2021</u>	<u>2022</u>
PORTFOLIO BALANCE (Beginning)	\$ 785,363	\$ 850,800	\$ 970,102
Gifts Received	12,445	8,920	6,070
Income/Gains/Losses	82,924	143,339	(149,144)
Expenses	1,932	1,957	1,922
Disbursements	<u>28,000</u>	<u>31,000</u>	<u>33,490</u>
PORTFOLIO BALANCE (Year End)	\$ 850,800	\$ 970,102	\$ 791,616

DISBURSEMENTS TO ST. JOHNS COUNCIL

St. Johns Fund	\$ 19,265	\$ 21,471	\$ 23,577
World Mission Fund	195	212	-
Youth Fund	1,109	1,210	1,200
Music Fund	887	967	1,051
Building & Property Fund	1,629	1,777	1,800
Media Fund	989	1,079	1,172
Community & Social Ministry Fund	413	451	490
Soli Seminary Fund	1,073	1,171	1,280
ELCA College Scholarship Fund	<u>2,440</u>	<u>2,662</u>	<u>2,920</u>
TOTAL	\$ 28,000	\$ 31,000	\$ 33,490

INVESTMENTS:

Cash	5.02%	1.23%	3.79%
ELCA Investments	2.35%	2.06%	2.53%
Cash Value Life Insurance	6.46%	5.66%	6.94%
Mutual Funds	<u>86.17%</u>	<u>91.05%</u>	<u>86.74%</u>
TOTAL	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%

Julie Becker, Treasurer

St. John's Lutheran Church of Northfield Foundation Gifts

2022

We acknowledge all who have supported the St. John's Foundation with deepest gratitude.

IN MEMORY OF:

Duane Benson	Ronnie Anglin & Ruth Smestad Anglin, Cora Scholz, Jo Ann Wolff
Howard Thorsheim	Ross & Nancy Amundson, Fred & Joan Asche, David & Martha Brown, Dave & Cheryl Buck, Jim & Judy Cederberg, Cindy Clauson, Phil & Barb Eaves, Jennifer Edwins, Greg Norman & Bonnie Jean Flom, J.A. Fuchela, David & Patricia Halsor, Joan Halvorson, Darlene Hand, Charles & Anita Hellie, Erik & Mary Holleque, Marjorie Huseeth, Ronald & Carol James, Lowell & Barbara Johnson, Ed & Barb Kuhlman, Marilyn Matta, Bruce & Audrey Moe, Dagfinn Moe & Lydia Quanbeck Moe, Leone Larson & Thomas Moen, Lowell Luhman, Heribertha Mbele, Alice Nasby, Jane & Richard Nelson, Pamela Nerhus, Robin & Becky Ness, Kristin Partlo & Karl Nelson, John & Patsy Ophaug, Paul Peterson, Ted & Tricia Peterson, John & Louise Quam, Rob Quanbeck & Dawn Tommerdahl, Mark & Terry Rydberg, James Schlichting, Joe Shaw, Anne Sovik, Marnie Thompson, Mariann Tiblin, Mark Ulmer & Jo Ann Polley, Lois Wambheim, Elden & Solveig Zempel
Tina Elg	Dave & Cheryl Buck
Robert J. Johnson	Ronnie Anglin & Ruth Smestad Anglin
Sigrid Johnson	Ronnie Anglin & Ruth Smestad Anglin
Karen Swenson	Ronnie Anglin & Ruth Smestad Anglin
Gloria Knutson	Ronnie Anglin & Ruth Smestad Anglin
Vern Faillettaz	Ronnie Anglin & Ruth Smestad Anglin
David Halvorson	Ronnie Anglin & Ruth Smestad Anglin
Carole Nesheim	Ronnie Anglin & Ruth Smestad Anglin
Beverly Lundeen	Ronnie Anglin & Ruth Smestad Anglin

St. John's Lutheran Church of Northfield Foundation Gifts 2022

We acknowledge all who have supported the St. John's Foundation with deepest gratitude.

IN MEMORY OF:

Jim Bierman Ronnie Anglin & Ruth Smestad Anglin

Avy Sherve Ronnie Anglin & Ruth Smestad Anglin

Robert Scholz Ronnie Anglin & Ruth Smestad Anglin

Fred Gonnerman Ronnie Anglin & Ruth Smestad Anglin

Brynhild Rowberg Ronnie Anglin & Ruth Smestad Anglin

Margaret O'Leary Ronnie Anglin & Ruth Smestad Anglin

Richard Dahlin Ronnie Anglin & Ruth Smestad Anglin

Lois Rand Wil Brosz

Carole Nesheim Marilyn Jacobson, Luther & Bonnie Peterson

Greg Kes Luther & Bonnie Peterson

Dale Gehring Duane Engstrom

Duane Kringen Wil Brosz

Arlene Sivanich Julie Thorsheim

Otto Reitz Julie Thorsheim

Jerry Bothun Julie Thorsheim

OTHER GIFTS: Charles & Shirley Anderson (in honor of Duane Kringen), Frank Brust, Dave & Cheryl Buck, Dan & Jo Franklin, Patty Lindell, Bob & Joyce Rendahl

St. John's Women of the ELCA

Annual Report 2022

All women at St. John's Lutheran Church are included in the membership of this organization. They are invited to "Act Boldly in Faith" which is the theme of the national WELCA organization. Our local St. John's group took the theme one step further with "Bold Actions for Courageous Conversations." We hope to be God's hands, feet, and voice as we listen to people's stories, communicate with our community, and work for social justice.

The 2022-2023 St. John's WELCA Board as follows:

- President - Jean Wakely
- Vice President – Position Open
- Secretary - Janet Lotegeluaki
- Treasurer - Jennifer Edwins
- Faith Development / Discipleship - Pam Groves-Gaggioli and Mary Hoff
- Education/Justice - Kathy Schuurman, Jo Fanklin, Dawn Tommerdahl, Alison Kavanaugh
- Missions / Stewardship - Jane Rinehart and Cindy McBroom
- Publicity - Julie Zdenek
- Board Member to the Cannon River Conference - Marilyn Calcutt

Education/Justice Committee:

Courageous Conversations featured the following topics:

- Courageous Conversations have been recorded and are accessed through <https://stjohnsnorthfield.org/congregational-life/women/programs/>. All programs for 2022 were on Zoom, and they included:
- **February** – *Sinner & Saint*, by Pastors Pam Fickenscher and Jonathan Davis
- **March** – *Anti-Racism Activism through Community - Engaged Art*, by Cecelia Cornejo
- **April** – *TORCH and NCCC Past, Present and Future*, by Sarah Lee & Tessa Kiesow
- **May** – Visit to He Mni Can - Barn Bluff, Red Wing
- **September** – *Mental Health: Trauma and Resilience*, by Andrea Smothers, LICSW.
- **October** – *Abortion: What Should We Do?* by Jeffrey D. Nelson, M.D. His book by the same name has been donated to the church library.
- **November** – *Two Communities: Creating Space to Heal*, by Nicky Buck champion for bridging the Prairies Island and Red Wing communities, Michelle Leise, Community Engagement Facilitator of Red Wing, and Maggie Chichosz, Community Engagement Facilitator for Goodhue County Health and Human Services. This was a follow up to the WELCA bus tour of Barn Bluff / He Mni Can burial ground in Red Wing.
- In 2023, conversations will be hybrid and meet in St. John's Hall. It is reported that many of our audience members are not from St. John's. This is good news as we are reaching out into the community.

WELCA Book Club

All members and friends are welcome to join. Contact Dawn Tommerdahl for 2023 dates and times. Books are selected by club members and have included the following for 2022:

- White Too Long, by Robert P. Jones
- I Hotel by Karen Tei Yamashita
- Trust Women: A Progressive Argument for Reproductive Justice by Rebecca Todd Peters
- The 1619 Project: A New Origin Story by Nikole Hannah-Jones starts January 2023

Faith Development/Discipleship Committee

- Welcomed the St. Olaf Leader Scholarship Program students - with gifts, prayer books and shawls, invitations, snacks, and cookies.
- Organized Christmas cookie boxes to 50 senior St. John's members.
- Organized two Welcome Coffees for new women members.
- Participated in the Advent Fair with a WELCA Table.
- Participated in St. John's New Members Coffee following church services.
- Delivered the WELCA booklet to all new members.
- Helped with Christmas Dinner sign-up and church photo directory.

Stewardship/Missions Committee

Publicity:

- Created the Women's Page for the Voice and E-Voice Newsletter.
- Created posters for Courageous Conversations.
- Created poster for the Christmas Dinner.
- Organized and created the WELCA Yearbook.
- Updated the Women's bulletin board.

Quilts & Kits:

Delivered quilts and kits to the Global Health Ministries warehouse and stayed to volunteer. The CAT school children helped pack the school kits for LWR.

204 Total Quilts:

- 120 to Lutheran World Relief (LWR)
- 36 to Global Health Ministries (GHM)
- 4 to Rice County Habitat for Humanity
- 19 to CAC Operation Joy
- 22 to Three Links Care Center
- 3 sold to support the quilting ministry.

Kits to LWR:

- 200 school kits
- 105 personal care kits
- 51 baby care kits
- 14 fabric kits

Knitting:

- 10 hats to Operation Joy
- 38 children's sweaters, 4 hats, 1 knit blanket to Knit for Kids (World Vision)

Other Donations to Global Health Ministries:

- 32 knit baby blankets
- 27 twin flat sheets
- 73 pillowcases
- 4 medical white coats
- 250 rolled bandages

The Cannon River WELCA Conference of the Southeast Minnesota Synodical Women's Organization was held in Rochester, MN in September. It was the 35th anniversary of the Synod. Four women went from St. John's, not all were board members.

Respectfully submitted by,
Jean Wakely, WELCA President and Jennifer Edwins, Treasurer

WELCA Annual Report 2022
Budget 2022

	Year Total		Year Total	Available
Beginning Balance	\$7,218.66			
	Revenue	Expenditure	(Bud+CO+Rev-Exp)	
Operating Funds				
Offerings: Circle Meetings	\$600.00	\$5,873.33		\$5,873.33
Offerings: General Meetings	\$1,100.00	\$0.00		\$0.00
Gifts	\$200.00	\$10.00		\$10.00
Subtotal: Offering Revenue	\$1,900.00	\$5,883.33		\$5,883.33
ELCA International Student Scholarship Fund	\$100.00			\$0.00
Synod Contributions (10% of Annual offering)	\$475.00	\$475.00		\$0.00
To be allocated or carryover to 2023	\$400.00	\$400.00		\$0.00
Triennial Convention	\$100.00	\$0.00		\$100.00
Community Support	\$300.00	\$300.00		\$0.00
Biennial Southeast MN Synod Conv.	\$100.00	\$100.00		\$0.00
Biennial Delegate support		\$0.00		\$0.00
Spring Conf. Assembly Offering	\$100.00	\$100.00		\$0.00
LWR Baby Care Kits		\$0.00		\$0.00
LWR Personal Care Kits	\$100.00	\$100.00		\$0.00
LWR School Kits		\$0.00		\$0.00
LWR Quilts		\$0.00		\$0.00
Hospice Kits—Global Health Ministries	\$100.00	\$0.00		\$100.00
Worldvision Sweater Postage	\$100.00	\$73.16		\$26.84
Gather Magazine for library	\$19.95	\$19.95		\$0.00
General Meeting items		\$0.00		\$0.00
Honorariums	\$750.00	\$0.00	\$450.00	\$300.00
Miscellaneous	\$150.00		\$67.02	\$82.98
TORCH	\$200.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$200.00
Subtotals: operating	\$2,994.95	\$5,883.33	\$2,085.13	\$3,798.20
<i>Note: Operating revenue is itemized in lines 6-9, Operating expense in lines 11-28. Line 29 combines these, and the "Carryover to 2023" is \$1,900.00.</i>			Available:	\$6,984.15
Designated	Yr Tot Revenue	Yr Tot Expend	Available	
Thrivent unspecified	\$0.00	\$0.00		\$0.00
Quilts & Kits	\$150.00	\$161.37		\$0.00
Thrivent Choice Prayer Shawl	\$0.00	\$0.00		\$0.00
Coffee	\$1,216.00	\$1,412.70		\$173.42
Thistle Farms products	\$366.00	\$519.96		\$37.42
Thank offering (November)	\$0.00	\$0.00		\$0.00
School Kits LWR	\$266.37	\$899.14		\$1.46
Baby Care Kits	\$104.00	\$320.78		\$258.17
Personal Care Kits	\$300.00	\$504.19		\$73.76
Quilting supplies and Postage	\$2,246.00	\$1,517.67		\$1,533.34
Events (St. Olaf Lunch, Red Wing trip)	\$2,319.95	\$2,312.96		-\$0.01
Lydia Circle Library Fund	\$0.00	\$0.00		\$0.00
Ruth Circle Augusta Victoria Hospital Jerusalem	\$12.00	\$0.00		\$12.00
Mary Circle Service Project Personal Care Kits	\$0.00	\$0.00		\$0.00
Elizabeth Service Project	\$173.00	\$0.00		\$199.00
Carryover to Triennial Convention	\$0.00	\$0.00		\$1,240.00
Torch	\$0.00	\$0.00		\$0.00
Subtotals: Designated	\$7,153.32	\$7,648.77		\$3,528.56
TOTAL = Carryover + Operating + Designated	\$1,900.00	\$13,036.65	\$9,833.90	\$10,412.71



Southeastern Minnesota Synod



At our 2022 Synod Assembly, we gathered under the theme *Imagine: Endless Possibilities in God's Grace*. As we live into the future God has for us, we see what we had once only imagined start to take shape in concrete ways.

This year has brought a new way of meeting the needs of congregations in transition as we have explored various models for pastoral ministry. Most prominent among them is what we call a Bridge to Settled model. This new model allows congregations to work with a Bridge pastor (different than an intentionally trained interim) while forming a call committee and engaging in the call process with the understanding that both the pastor and congregation are open to transitioning from the Bridge into a settled call. It is not the right model for every congregation, but it has greatly benefited many.

We have also seen a gentle uptick in individual congregations exploring partnerships of all kinds. Some congregations are forming new joint parishes, others are working together to meld two part-time calls into full-time work for a single candidate, and still others are merging weekly confirmation classes. More and more of our congregations are realizing the profound benefits and joy of collaboration.

It has been fun to walk alongside folks as they lead their congregations into new ways of being the People of God in their community in this time and place.

As 2023 approaches, I remain ever hopeful for all that the Spirit will continue to do in and through us as the Southeastern Minnesota Synod. Looking ahead to our next Synod Assembly, I am excited to announce that we will be joined by Drs. Susan Brower and Matt Bloom. Drs. Brower and Bloom will give us tools to understand our communities as they are presently and as they are projected to be. They will also explore ways congregations can ignite flourishing in the communities to which they are called.

I am excited to continue imagining alongside each of you as we discern what God is doing in our midst and calling us to do. What a wonderful time to be the church together for the sake of the world.

In Christ,

Rev. Regina Hassanally

Bishop Regina Hassanally

www.semnsynod.org





Northfield Retirement Community Annual Report to Corporate Congregations

2023 Annual Meeting

We look forward to welcoming the delegates from your congregation on

Sunday, April 16

1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.

900 Cannon Valley Drive ~ Northfield

Dear Friends,

Last year at our annual meeting, we were of course unsure about what 2022 would hold. We were, however, certain that we would meet 2022's challenges with the same dedication, hope, and faith with which we weathered the difficulties of 2020 and 2021. Although our industry and NRC still face major issues we will touch upon briefly in this report, 2022 brought good news to NRC.

Opening Our Doors

After nearly two and a half years, we safely (and in accordance with Minnesota Department of Health and CDC guidelines) dispensed with formal visitor screening. We now ask only that individuals refrain from entering if they have respiratory or other symptoms. Not so different from past best practices!

In addition, we have relaxed NRC rules concerning personal protective equipment such as masks and shields. Masks are now optional for everyone *unless* the Rice County transmission rate is high.

Residents rejoiced as we at last flung wide the doors of the NRC chapel on Reformation Sunday to begin worshiping in person again. We continue to maintain safe distancing and when required by the transmission level in Rice County, wear masks.

Activities, Visits, and Volunteer Opportunities

To the delight of all, many much appreciated group activities, such as Bible study, congregate dining, and special events, have resumed. Residents also look forward to visits from their home church clergy and friends/volunteers. We are offering volunteer opportunities to the broader community as well.

Changes to the Campus

Because of COVID and staffing shortages, we closed three units in 2021: Cardinal, Northwood Pines, and Southview Suites. Since then, with the help of the NRC Vision Committee, the Board of Directors has been examining how best to meet today and tomorrow's resident and community needs for housing and services. The board continues to investigate the re-use /reconfiguration of these units along with the types of future services to offer the community.

Ongoing Challenges: Staffing and State of Minnesota Reimbursement Rates

Staffing shortages are harming Minnesota elders who need care. According to a University of Minnesota study, in 2022 Minnesota nursing homes reported the largest staffing shortages in the nation. And now there are more than 20,000 unfilled positions throughout Minnesota. A recent survey by the Long-Term Care Imperative showed that in October 2022, 11,000 Minnesotans were refused admission because of a lack of staff.

Ongoing Challenges: Staffing and State of Minnesota Reimbursement Rates (continued)

What are we doing about this critical situation? The issue stems in large part from the reimbursement rates set by the State of Minnesota. These rates directly affect the compensation levels of our health care workers. NRC is not alone in dipping into our reserves to enable us to hire and retain qualified caregivers; others have closed their doors. In 2023, we must lobby the state legislature to improve the reimbursement system and to invest in eldercare. We hope you will join us in this crucial effort to serve the elders in our community and state with the dignity, care, and respect they deserve.

Generous community support, our outstanding staff, and the dedicated leadership of our Board of Directors inspire great confidence for the future despite today's challenges.

We look forward to welcoming your delegates to our annual meeting when we will share additional information about our activities with you. In the meantime, we thank you for your ongoing prayers for our residents and staff, your referrals of potential residents, staff, and volunteers, and for your financial support.

With all best wishes for a blessed Christmas season and for the new year,



Tom Nielsen, LNHA, LALD
President and Chief Executive Officer

ANNUAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING

OPENING LITURGY

Spirit of God, Descend upon My Heart

Recognizing that our faith is a living, busy, active and mighty thing, may the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with each of you.

And also with you.

Teach us to love you with all our heart, soul, mind and strength.

Receive our prayer, O God.

Descend on our hearts, that we may love others in the ways Jesus loves us.

Receive our prayer, O God.

Empower us to be enthusiastic in pursuing your vision for our congregation.

Receive our prayer, O God.

Move us to engage issues in our community in Christlike ways, and to pursue deep and authentic relationships with those with whom we serve and partner.

Receive our prayer, O God.

Strengthen us to face the barriers we encounter in doing your work, learning to work with others amid disagreement.

Receive our prayer, O God.

Give us the ability to adapt to the cultural, economic and social changes that occur in the neighborhoods we serve.

Receive our prayer, O God.

Guide us to be a healthy congregation that learns from its failures as well as its successes and offers wisdom to others.

Receive our prayer, O God.

As we strive to become the church that we proclaim to be, raise up leaders who focus on the gospel of freedom, forgiveness and reconciliation as given to us through God's indescribable act of love in the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Renew us daily in our baptism, that we may discover vitality in our relationships with you, each other and those we serve in the world.

Amen.

The musical score is written for four-part harmony (Soprano, Alto, Tenor, Bass) in G major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. It consists of four systems of music, each with a vocal line and a piano accompaniment line. The lyrics are written below the vocal line. The score includes a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a common time signature (C). The lyrics are: 1 Spir - it of God, de - scend up - on my heart; 2 I ask no dream, no proph - et ec - sta - sies, 3 Have you not bid me love you, God and King; 4 Teach me to love you as your an - gels love, wean it from earth, through all its puls - es move; no sud - den, rend - ing of the veil of clay, all, all your own, soul, heart, and strength, and mind? one ho - ly pas - sion, fill - ing all my frame: stoop to my weak - ness, strength to me im - part, no an - gel vis - i - tant, no op - 'ning skies; I see your cross; there teach my heart to cling. the bap - tism of the heav'n - de - scend - ed dove, and make me love you as I ought to love. but take the dim - ness of my soul a - way. Oh, let me seek you and, oh, let me find! my heart an al - tar, and your love the flame.

Text: George Croly, 1780-1860

Music: MORECAMBE, Frederick C. Atkinson, 1841-1897

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Through your generosity, God is at work across the ELCA. A portion of your offering, called Mission Support, advances the ministry of our church, helping the ELCA nurture Christian community, raise up leaders, serve our neighbors and strive for justice. Read stories and learn more at [ELCA.org/SOFIA](https://elca.org/SOFIA).



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in America