



South Dakota Synod  
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America



# 2021 Annual Report

Annual Meeting: January 30, 2022

**American Evangelical Lutheran Church  
401 Flynn Drive  
Milbank, South Dakota 57252**

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## A MESSAGE FROM ELCA PRESIDING BISHOP ELIZABETH EATON

Dear friends in Christ,

The last year has been one of adapting and learning. In many places we have seen vibrant and vital ministry spring forth from changes made due to the pandemic. Digital worship opportunities have introduced to our congregations people who may never have walked into one of our buildings. Many congregations have found new ways to invite people to share their generosity through online giving. And many ministries have found just how vital they are as they continue to serve alongside people in their communities.

The first chapter of James, verse 17, reminds us that “Every generous act of giving, with every perfect gift, is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow due to change.” Yes, this has been a season of change, but Scripture also reminds us that we serve a generous, steadfast God.

While we stay rooted in God’s enduring, unchanging promise, God also gives us the gifts of creativity and learning. Across all three expressions of the church we have used those gifts to serve God, love our neighbor and share the good news of Jesus Christ. In this time of change, we have opened our arms wider to meet people where they are, living into the reality that we are not defined or confined by the four walls of our buildings.

Through all this, I am so grateful for your generous sharing of creativity, time, talents and resources. All good gifts do come from God, and we are called to share and use those gifts. We have and will continue to answer that call. There is still much change and learning to come, but God’s steadfast love energizes us for the work God is still doing in the world through this church.

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

“Every generous act of giving, with every perfect gift, is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow due to change.”

*“In the beginning was THE WORD, and THE WORD was with God, and THE WORD was God. ... THE WORD became flesh and made his dwelling among us.”*



Dear partners in ministry of the South Dakota Synod,

Grace and peace to you in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit! – **Thank you** for your generosity to the ministry of the South Dakota Synod as we *journey together in Christ*. Because of your generosity and our ministry partners, hope and new life in Christ is cultivated in people and communities.

**You have made a difference in Susanne’s<sup>1</sup> life.** Susanne faces daily challenges as she roams the streets of Sioux Falls as a person who is housing insecure. But because she connected with “Church on the Street” she now has a monthly worship to look forward to and a community to connect with as she hears the good news of Christ’s love for her. On behalf of Susanne, **THANK YOU!**

**You have made a difference in Dillon’s life.** Dillon grew up on the farm and a caring church family. After his high school graduation, he set out to attend college. While the first few days were new and exciting, the excitement soon wore off, and Dillon fell in a hole of anxiety and depression, wondering if he would make it. Then he remembered the speaker from Lutheran Campus Ministry that had visited his home church one Sunday and decided to look them up on campus. Dillon still goes to college, and while life at times can still be overwhelming, he now has a community which supports him and cares for him when he is away from home. On behalf of Dillon, **THANK YOU!**

**You have made a difference in Pedro’s life.** Pedro lives in Nicaragua with his family. His family doesn’t have much, but they survived by farming a small plot and sharing a small space they call home. All that changed when first a drought and then hurricanes devastated the little the family had. His parents would prepare the little food the family had for their children, but the family would go to bed hungry each night. But because of the Lutheran Church in Nicaragua’s partnership with the South Dakota Synod and ‘Helping Kids’ Round First’, Pedro and his family received meal kits that provided much-needed nourishment for the family. On behalf of Pedro, **THANK YOU!**

**You have made a difference in Tony’s life.** Tony admits that he has made some bad choices and deserves to be incarcerated. But because of St Dysmas’ weekly worship services at the State Penitentiary in Sioux Falls and the Mike Durfee State Prison in Springfield, Tony has found new life in Christ. He hears weekly that his choices are not what defines him, but instead Christ’s mercy is for him. On behalf of Tony, **THANK YOU!**

**You have made a difference in the life of the synod staff.** As we travel the state and work with you, we see the impact your generosity makes in people’s lives. Every time THE WORD of THRUTH is proclaimed in the pulpit, washed over a person in the waters of baptism, and celebrated at the Lord’s Table we give thanks for your faithfulness. Our gathering makes a difference, because when we gather God shows up. Your witness, you showing up, and your generosity make a difference in your neighbor’s life as the community of Christ bears witness to the defeat of sin and death. On behalf of your synod staff, **THANK YOU!**

It is my sincere hope that your synod staff has made a difference in the life of your congregation as we strive to live our shared vision of journeying together in Christ. Please know that your synod staff is always happy to be in conversation with you. We are committed to show up – just let us know where, when, and why.

Looking forward to the continued journey,

Bishop Constanze Hagmaier

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<sup>1</sup> Names and stories are fictitious and altered to protect the individuals.

**Annual Meeting Agenda**  
**January 30, 2022**

- Call to Order
- Litany and Opening Prayer (From ELCA Churchwide Office) - On Screen
- Pastor's Report
- Secretary's Report
- Minutes from January 31, 2021 Annual Meeting
- President's Report
- Nominations and Election
- Election of Nominating Committee
  - C13.02. A Nominating Committee of six voting members of this congregation, two of whom, if possible, shall be outgoing members of the Congregation Council, shall be elected at the annual meeting for a term of one year. Members of the Nominating Committee are not eligible for consecutive re-election. (Copied from ALC By-Laws)
- Committee Reports
  - Stewardship and Finance Committee Report
  - Worship, Evangelism and Outreach Committee Report
  - Property and Management Committee Report
  - Youth and Education Committee Report
  - Sunday School Coordinator Report
  - ALC Preschool Report
  - Other Reports
  - WELCA
  - Thrivent Choice Board
  - Event Committee
  - Parish Nurse Report
  - Treasurers Report
- Adoption of 2022 Budget
- Other New Business
  - Strategic Planning Update
  - 2022 ALC Council Goals
- Adjournment /Blessing

***“And the God of all grace, who called you to his eternal glory in Christ, after you have suffered a little while will himself restore you and make you strong, firm, and steadfast.” (1 Peter 5:10 NIV)***

The book of 1 Peter was written about 30 years following Christ’s death and resurrection. The new Christian believers, scattered among the communities in the Roman Empire, were experiencing persecution and suffering because of their faith. Peter, with the help of Silas, wrote this letter of encouragement for them to stand firm in their faith during their time of suffering and to remind them that God is standing with them to restore them and to make them strong, firm, and steadfast as we read in the above verse at the very end of the letter.

We are not living in times of persecution because of our faith, but these past two years, we have lived through some times of suffering in our church due to the COVID pandemic. But as I look back at 2021, I can see this verse being played out in the life of our congregation. God, after we have suffered a little while, has started to restore us and to make us strong, firm, and steadfast. As we came to the end of 2021, I was filled with hope from the progress we had made through the year and for what was to come in 2022.

*(Now, side note, I am writing this in early January 2022, and the omicron variant surge is causing a major disruption to our life right now and it feels like all the progress we made, to move out of the pandemic and to be restored back to where we were, has been throw out the window. I am hopeful that this surge will end quickly and we will continue on our road to restoration and growth and full ministry again, of course trusting in God to be with us and guide us as He has throughout the past two years.)*

Back to the recap and the hope that has grown throughout 2021. Back in January attendance was still very low, in-person Sunday School was still on pause, and fellowship had not started either. Through the spring, we started some large group Sunday School in the Fellowship Hall where the small number of kids that were coming could spread out. We also held a mask required service once a month to give options for people to be in worship no matter their comfort level and opinions about COVID safety protocols. One of the joys of the spring, was being able to gather for Easter services this year, as we could not in 2020. We held one service in the sanctuary and one outside in the parking lot. God blessed us with a beautiful morning at the beginning of April as we gathered to celebrate the resurrection!

Fellowship started up again in June. This time is a blessing to many of you as you connect with friends and fellow members that you only see at Church on Sunday morning. The joy of the summer was re-connecting with so many of the kids of our congregation at Vacation Bible School. We were able to gather in-person and it was great to feel the kids energy and excitement of being back in the church once again. We ended the summer by finally formally welcoming all of the people who had joined our congregation in the past two years, celebrating with a very delicious pie and ice cream social!

In the Fall, it really started to feel like we had been restored and God had seen us through these 18 months of suffering the pandemic brought upon us. Sunday School returned in-person and we started serving Communion at the Altar again. The church started to fill up as attendance numbers really rose during the fall. (As you will see on the Church Statistics page, we have averaged over 190 people in worship during the fall months. These are numbers very similar to 2019, which is wonderful!) I also began meeting with our High School Youth again on a regular basis. We spend a couple Wednesday evenings together each month and it has been a joy to be with them. They are also inviting their friends to come and join us, which is awesome! Many of our other “regular” events and ministries were also able to return during the fall months. It truly has been a joy to see the church come to life again.

As we have journeyed through this pandemic and through 2021, and as we have witnessed this restoration, we also remember that ministry continued to happen during all of it. We welcomed 13 children into our Church Family through the Sacrament of Baptism. New people continue to join us and desire to become members of our congregation. Almost all of these people come because one of you invited them and shared your love of Christ and of American Lutheran with them. Thank you and keep on sharing those invitations with people in your life. The Strategic

Planning team has finally gathered and is working on developing some goals that will give the congregation some direction as to where we are headed as a community of faith.

As I reflect back on 2021, as I said earlier, I am filled with hope. Hope for how far we have come in this restoration and renewal of our congregation. Hope for what is to come for us together. I believe we may be stronger than we were pre-pandemic as we value what this congregation means to us so much more now. There is a lot to be excited about as we look to the future. So for now, I invite you to dream with me, with the Council, and with the Strategic Planning team of what God might be calling us to be, to do in the coming years.

- We have been blessed with an amazing number of young children in our midst. However, that blessing comes with a major responsibility as a church. How do we support these young families in passing on the faith to these children and create a church home for them to learn about God's love for them?
- What is next for our ALC Preschool? This program has been a tremendous blessing to our community and to us as a congregation. How do we continue to support and grow that ministry?
- In what other ways is God calling us to serve our neighbors and our community, sharing the love and blessings He has given us?
- What other dreams and hopes do you have for this congregation? What are you passionate about and how can we empower you to use those passions in ministry? I would love to hear about them or support you in making those dreams come to life in this church.

I am also filled with an incredible amount of thankfulness. In times of suffering, we can get bogged down by what is not going well or what is not happening or what we are missing and forget to see the joys and forget to give thanks for the good that is happening. Here are a few things that I am especially grateful for as I look back at this past year.

- First of all, to God, whose grace and presence has continued to hold us together and has brought this restoration upon us.
- To all of you, for your continued faithfulness and support, of both me and the congregation. The generosity of giving that we have seen in 2021 has been incredible – Thank You! I give thanks, not only for your financial giving, but for the giving of your time and talents as well. The care and concern and words of encouragement that I receive throughout the year, mean so much to me.
- To our Staff, for their work and dedication to this congregation. For almost two years, just like everyone else, we have had to kind of fly by the seat of our pants. Protocols kept changing and COVID levels in the community kept changing and so you could never plan too far ahead. Yet, they rolled with every change and kept working and doing everything they could to make ministry happen. I thank each of them for all that they do!

Now, may the God of all grace restore you and make you strong, firm, and steadfast in your faith and may He continue to do the same for American Lutheran Church.

## Pastoral Acts 2021

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### Baptisms:

- Asher Sipe February 7
- Jacksyn Johnson February 14
- Layla Hardie February 21
- Asher Brandt March 21
- Roman Fahleen May 2
- Jackson Wellnitz May 23 (Pastor Melanie Reiners)
- Quinn Mielitz July 11
- Everly Kohn August 8
- Jack Mikkelson September 12
- Allicyn Kirchberg October 10
- Berkley Junso November 14 (Pastor Melanie Reiners)
- Aspen Prisinger November 28
- Annie Prisinger December 5

### Marriages:

- Christopher Kelly and Annavel Quintana July 24
- Lance Hamman and Brigitte Murphy August 21
- Sam Wickstrom and Kate Leddy August 21 (Pastor Tom Olson)
- Willi Pauli and Chrissy Behnke September 25
- Tanner Kohn and Ashlee Larsen October 23 (Pastor Kent Groethe)
- Braydon Berger and Monica Larson October 30

### Funerals:

- Neal Homan March 18
- Wauneta Schwandt July 23
- Shirley Olson August 3
- Suzanne Unzen October 18

### Confirmation – October 31, 2021:

- Chaxton Goldammer
- Tate Schlueter
- Noah Thompson
- Siera Wenzl
- Howie Zemlicka

### First Communion – April 1, 2021:

- Gunnar Anderson
- Laney Andrews
- Sophia Bass
- Kendra Grong
- Henry Heller
- Ramzey Hicks
- Gus Johnson
- Wesley Magedanz
- Callie Myrum
- Emily Neugebauer
- Susie Schuneman
- Matthew Unzen



## CHURCH STATISTICS AND ATTENDANCE

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	<u>2017</u>	<u>2018</u>	<u>2019</u>	<u>2020</u>	<u>2021</u>
Baptized Members	896	954	953	909	934
Average Weekly Attendance	169	178	182	xxx*	128*
% Attending Worship	19%	19%	19%	xxx*	14%*
Average Lenten Attendance	89	89	106	xxx*	51
Christmas Eve	398	392	443	xxx*	424

- *2020 in-person attendance not recorded due to COVID pandemic. No in-person church for 3 ½ months. Limited attendance remaining part of year.*
- *2021 attendance still affected by COVID pandemic. Attendance returned to near pre-pandemic levels in Fall of 2021 (192 average attendance from Rally Day through the end of the year.)*

### On-line Worship Report:

Per guidelines from the ELCA, we are to record the 1-minute views on Facebook. We add those views to any views on our website and app. Then we are to multiply the total views by 2 to account for multiple people watching on one screen to arrive at a Weekly "Attendance" Number for On-Line Worshipers.

- 2021 Average On-Line Attendance = 178
- Average On-Line Attendance for Lenten Services (Facebook Only) = 111
- Total On-Line attendance for 2 Christmas Eve Services = 380

### Membership Report

<b>Baptized Members – January 1, 2021</b>	<b>909</b>
New Members Received	24
Baptisms	13
New Members added in 2021 .....	+37
Deaths	6
Transfers Out	6
Members removed in 2021 .....	<u>-12</u>
<b>Baptized Members – December 31, 2021</b>	<b>934</b>

### New Members Received

- Jeff and Bridget Anderson, Riley, Brock
- Brigitte Hamman
- Jacob and Kaitlin Knoll, Graham, Bodie
- Tanner and Ashley Kohn
- Katie Sinner
- Hunter Pulscher
- Travis Rinehart
- Hans and Joan Sacrison
- Jackie Sipe
- Dereck and Tasha Trapp, Tayla, Ryver
- Laurie Wollschlager, Adam, Emily

### Transfers Out

- Shawn and Natasha Bohn, Raygin
- Brady Brockel
- Philip and Kristi Seehafer

**American Lutheran Church Council Meeting Minutes  
Annual Meeting – January 31, 2021**

**Call to Order**

Attendance Report: 55 voting members present in person and 3 voting members present via zoom

**Litany and Opening Prayer:** Given by Pastor Justin

**Pastor's Report:** Pastor highlighted events of the year and COVID challenges

**Approval of Agenda**

A motion was made by Doug Fraasch to approve the agenda as read. Seconded by Wally Hamman – Motion Passed

**Secretary's Report**

A motion was made by Craig Kirchberg to approve the minutes from the January 26, 2020 Annual Meeting. Motion was seconded by Carol Kirchberg – Motion passed

A motion was made by Brian Johnson to approve the minutes from the November 15, 2020 Congregational Meeting. Motion was seconded by Sandy Kathman – Motion passed

**President's Report:** Rich gave a review of the year and highlights.

**Nominations and Elections**

A call of the floor for nominations for church council was made: no additional nominations

Motion made by Mark Granquist to nominate Dave Bergan, Ryan Gruba, Heather Zinter and Amanda Grabow to a 3 year term on council. Seconded by Jeanne Krueger. Motion passed

A call was made for the nominating committee

Motion made by Mary Bjordahl for Rich Krueger, Rhonda Christopherson, Jan Scriver, Dani Hicks and Mark Granquist to form the nominating committee. Seconded by Brian Johnson – motion passed

**Committee Reports**

Brief overview of each report was given by President Rich: Stewardship & Finance, Worship, Evangelism and outreach, Property and Management, Youth and Education, WELCA, Thrivent Board  
Amber Scriver briefly explained the events committee and upcoming events

**Treasurer's Report:** Rich gave a brief summary of the report

A motion was made by Wally Hamman to accept as written. Seconded by Sheila Myrum. Motion passed.

**Adoption of 2021 Budget**

A motion was made by Brian Johnson to accept the budget for 2021 as written. Seconded by Craig Kirchberg – Motion passed

**Other New Business**

**Adjournment/Blessing**

Pastor gave blessing

A motion to adjourn was made by Jan Scriver and seconded by Wally Hamman – motion passed

**Respectfully Submitted by:**

**Heidi Wellnitz: Council Secretary**

## COUNCIL PRESIDENT REPORT

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Greetings American Lutheran Congregation:

**Christ Welcomes All at American Lutheran and The Gospel of Jesus Christ calls us to be a welcoming community for all people growing in faith, love, and service.** These statements, our vision and mission statements, updated by the strategic planning committee and ratified by the church council in December are important beacons for the council as we conduct the business of the church. We see these beliefs at work daily within our congregation at American Lutheran Church and we continue to be excited about the many changes taking place at American Lutheran as we move forward and adjust to the “new normal” in our community and the world due to the Covid pandemic.

Throughout this past year, our congregation has continued to grow in faith as we fully returned to in-person worship and Sunday School. In-person worship continued to be supplemented by our Radio Broadcasts and Facebook Live Streaming which provided outreach to many who were unable to join us for worship. These are and will continue to be key outreach missions of our congregation. New members were also a key part of this worship growth as we had numerous families, single adults, and couples join us in now calling American Lutheran their church home.

As we resumed many of our activities that were put on pause during the pandemic, we saw a need to highlight for all the many areas of opportunity for participation and for service within American Lutheran. In late spring, we asked all of our committees to begin presenting short summaries during worship informing new and old members alike about the opportunity to serve. We then conducted a Time and Talent survey to better identify where members would like to serve. This then led to modifications to the Love-in-Action groups for assigning worship helpers that has been in place for many years. This process of change to fill our areas of need within the church is still underway and should be fully implemented in 2022.

The council is especially grateful for the work of Pastor Justin, all of the lay staff and the innumerable volunteers who help our church carry out its mission. We would like to thank one of the many volunteers, who is retiring from her volunteer job as church treasurer, Mary Bjordahl. Mary has served a number of years as treasurer, and we are thankful for all of her work and dedication. We were blessed to have Emily Mueller step forward to fill the duties of church treasurer. Thank you, Mary and welcome Emily!

As we look ahead to 2022, plans have begun to celebrate the 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of American Lutheran Church. What an exciting milestone for our church. We expect to have numerous activities during the year celebrating this event with the culmination occurring on Sunday September 25<sup>th</sup>. Watch for more details.

In closing, we are thankful for the blessings of this past year and excited for the future as we grow in our faith, love, and service.

**Mark Leddy, Council President**

## FINANCE COMMITTEE & STEWARDSHIP REPORT

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The basic objectives of this committee are to initiate programs for the development of good stewardship attitudes in members of the congregation – utilizing time, talents and treasures. We are also entrusted to ensure the financial stability of our congregation.

2021 was a year that showed the commitment of our ALC members to support the mission of the church. Your offerings have kept us financially strong. Members have been diligent in bringing their offerings to church, dropping them off at the office or mailing them. More members are using either their bank ACH or our Church App for online giving. Offerings for the year 2021 totaled \$276,833. Of that, \$45,700 was sent on to provide support for our partner organizations: Lutherans Outdoors, the ELCA Tornado Disaster Relief fund, the local “It Only Takes A Spark” cancer program and our budgeted benevolence to the SD ELCA Synod, Lutherans Outdoors, SD Lutheran Campus Ministry, St. Dymas and the local ICAP office. We used the proceeds from the annual Pancake Feed to help with ALC Bible Camp registration fees. The Noisy Offering totaled an additional \$1,571 and was sent off to ELCA Good Gifts program to aid families in developing countries.

The Finance Committee, by name and definition, is focused on the finances of the church. However, our Committee and the entire ALC Council understands that EVERYONE at American Lutheran provides support - and that support includes the offerings of TIME and TALENT as well as financial support. **THANK YOU** for your commitment to the many ministries of American Lutheran Church.

For members who have Thrivent insurance or investments, we encourage you to continue directing your Thrivent Choice Dollars to either American Lutheran Church or the ALC Preschool. The Thrivent Card Action Teams continue to provide monies for special needs and projects. Thank you for all who apply for cards and direct their choice dollars to ALC. If you have questions or need assistance with either program, please contact Carol in the church office, or inquire at your Thrivent office.

Effective 1-1-2022, American Lutheran Church has a new Treasurer. Emily Mueller has graciously volunteered for this position, replacing Mary Bjordahl. We thank Mary for her years of service.

After many years of quality service with Great Western Bank, the Council has opted to move our banking business to First Bank and Trust. The Finance Committee and the Treasurer will complete that action in the next few weeks. Also in 2022, we will be looking at developing a comprehensive gifting policy to address estate and other larger gifts.

If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact the Finance committee members listed below.

**Submitted by Finance and Stewardship Committee Members:  
Mary Bjordahl, Nancy Hansen, Dave Bergan**

## **WORSHIP & EVANGELISM & COMMITTEE REPORT**

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We have tried our best this second Covid year to continue the traditional activities of American Lutheran Church:

- We continued to have worship in-house, on-line and on the radio. In January we began weekly communion. Individual communion sets were available at the Church or to take home. To try to meet the needs of as many of the congregation as possible, we designated the first Sunday of the month as “mask” Sunday where it was mandatory to wear a mask to attend.
- In February we began having coffee at the coffee counter in the narthex for all to enjoy before and after Church or “to go”, and we began coffee fellowship in the fellowship hall in May.
- April brought spring and Easter. On Easter Sunday we held an indoor worship at 9:00 and a 10:45 worship outdoors. With the weather improving it was decided to hold an outdoor service one Sunday a month throughout the summer. We returned to the Celebration of Holy Communion at the Altar at the end of July.
- We held a new member Sunday in August for the first time in a year and a half. Thirteen family groups joined our Church that day. By the end of summer we were fully operational and began in-house Sunday school after Rally Day in September. We had a float in the Homecoming Parade and started Grown-up movie night in October.
- American Lutheran continues to arrange volunteers to deliver meals on wheels two or three times a year, and hosts the Red Cross Bloodmobile in the fellowship hall whenever it is requested.
- Once we were fully back and operational, we were in need of volunteers to serve before, during and after worship. An email and/or hard copy of a survey was sent out with a description of the ways to fill the volunteer roles. Once the surveys had been returned, the openings were filled with names for each volunteer spot. We realize this new way of filling the duties needed for each Sunday is taking some getting used to, but know it will be successful in the end. If you haven't let the office know if you would be willing to serve, it's not too late. Please prayerfully consider helping if you can.

**Submitted by Worship, Evangelism & Outreach Committee Members:**

**Peg Dohrer, Amber Scriver, Amanda Grabow**

## PROPERTY & MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE REPORT

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- Steeple Tower lighting was upgraded to an LED light. (Englestad Electric)
- Copper tees were installed in all sewer vents to prevent being plugged by frost. (Dakota Plumbing)
- Replaced fascia on south car port, south awning and above picture windows. Fascia was also replaced above NE entrance. (Protect Roofing)
- Caulked air inlets on steeple tower. South stained glass window was also caulked. (Protect Roofing) Will need to look at the remaining windows and inlets in the spring to determine if caulking is needed.
- We have received an estimate to paint the church. (Franzen Decorating) Given the cost we will look into painting sections that are in need of attention.
- Hasslen Construction working on a proposal to install new siding on church.
- Hasslen Construction is working with a design engine to come up with a design to replace our current organ air inlet screens.
- Will be looking for a hot water heater that will supply the north sink in the kitchen. Water takes way too long to heat up given the distance it needs to travel.
- SE door window was replaced. (Brians Glass)
- Currently working to find a duct cleaning service to clean out the furnace and duct that supplies the pre-school.
- Carpet and Tile cleaning. Will be scheduling a late spring cleaning of fellowship hall.

**Submitted by Property and Management Committee members:**

**Mike Cordingley and Ryan Gruba**

### YOUTH

#### **Confirmation**

5 freshmen were confirmed on October 31, 2021. The 2021-2022 Confirmation Class includes 15 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade youths. Each of the 8<sup>th</sup> grade students also works with an adult mentor from our congregation. The confirmation youth did several outreach/service activities during the year, including Souper Bowl of Caring Food Drive, helping with the Grant County Christian Service Council Food Giveaway and helping pack the quilts and school kits for shipping to Lutheran World Relief.

#### **ALC High School Youth Group**

The High School Youth Group meets on the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesdays of each month. Each evening includes supper, activities, and devotions. There have been 10-15 youth attending. The group has done a lot of fun activities including a photo scavenger hunt, swimming/cookout at Pastor's camper/campground, Air Madness Trampoline Park, pumpkin carving, game nights, and a Christmas gift exchange. They also did a Trick or Treat night to help fill the local food pantry and helped set-up the Mitten Tree at Christmas.

#### **ELCA National Youth Gathering**

The ELCA holds a National Youth Gathering every 3 years. The gathering scheduled for July 2021 was rescheduled for July 24-28, 2022, in Minneapolis. We currently have 4 youth signed up to attend. The event will be held in the Minneapolis Convention Center and the US Bank Stadium. Please continue to support the youth as they work to raise the funds to attend.

#### **Pray-ers for Youth**

An adult is anonymously matched with each of the ALC youths when they are confirmed. That adult commits to praying for their youth until they graduate from high school. They include them on their daily prayer list and remember them occasionally with cards for special occasions or with notes of encouragement. Emily Mueller leads the group. If you would like information, please contact Emily.

#### **South Dakota Lutheran Outdoors Camps**

15 youth attended camp this summer. A "Keep the Campfires Burning" campaign was also done this year to support the camps.

### ADULTS

**Women's Bible Study** meets on Wednesday mornings in the Library.

**Men's Breakfast Group** meets on Thursday mornings.

**Wine, Women & the Word** started again this fall with one gathering. There are plans to continue with more dates.

**Page Turners Book Club** is a group led by Janelle Kelly. They started up again this fall. Janelle provides books to the group from the state library. The group consists of members from Parkview Methodist and American Lutheran Church. They meet once a month. There was so much interest that they added a second group!

**Sunday Education /Adult Forum** is a newly organized forum held on the second Sunday of each month. This new Adult Education opportunity presents a different topic or speaker each month. We are looking forward to growing this education opportunity in 2022.

**Submitted by Youth & Education Committee members:**

**Heidi Wellnitz, Josh Schmeichel, Heather Zinter**

## CHRISTIAN EDUCATION COORDINATOR REPORT

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We started 2021 off continuing virtual Sunday School. On January 31, we started meeting as a group in the Fellowship Hall. This allowed for social distancing. The lessons included a video and worksheet. The lessons



were also available to view online.

On Palm Sunday, the Sunday School kids had an Easter Egg hunt throughout the church. A variety of crafts were also available for the kids to create. This event was made possible using a Thrivent Action Team card.



On April 1, during the Maundy Thursday service, twelve 3<sup>rd</sup> graders received their first communion and were presented with Adventure Study Bibles.

The Sunday School kids practiced and performed hand bell selections during church services in May.

We wrapped up the 2021 spring session of Sunday School on May 2<sup>nd</sup>. The kids were able to paint, decorate and plant a variety of flowers in pots during a church-wide spring clean up day and picnic.



The older Sunday School kids also walked Flynn Trail and collected many bags of trash.

Over 70 kids attended two Wednesdays of VBS on July 21 and July 28. "Anchored, Deepening Faith in God" was the theme.

The kids enjoyed a sack lunch, games, bible stories, crafts,

skits and music each evening. Kindergarten through 6<sup>th</sup> grade participated in mixed age groups. Each group traveled throughout the church, stopping at three different stations.



The preschoolers participated in their own rotations that were more tailored to their age group.

On August 1, the kids performed musical selections from VBS, and the congregation was able to view a slide show showcasing pictures of the kids at VBS!





The Fall 2021 session of Sunday School kicked off on Sunday, September 12<sup>th</sup>. Sunday School kids enjoyed Bible camp themed crafts and a scavenger hunt. Our first in-classroom Sunday School classes (for the year) took place on September 19<sup>th</sup>. We have over 125 kids on our Sunday School roster this year and a wonderful group of Sunday School volunteers that make it a success.



This year we are studying “Grow Kids” curriculum. Each Sunday the kids have three rotations. They have music, a video about their lesson and time in the classroom going over the Bible story for the week.

The kids end each Sunday School session with The Lord’s Prayer.

On October 17<sup>th</sup>, all Sunday School kids presented special music during the church service. Current third grade students received Adventure Study bibles in October. Many weeks of practice were put into the Christmas program production of “H.A.L.O...On the Air.” The program featured the birth of Jesus unfolding during a radio production. Approximately 80 kids were present the day of the program!



Thank you to everyone who made Sunday School a success during 2021!

**Amy Bass**  
**Sunday School Coordinator**

## AMERICAN LUTHERAN PRESCHOOL REPORT

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The ALC Preschool classroom continues to be filled with much energy, excitement, and learning with some amazing kids who enter our doors daily. During the 2020-2021 school year, 26 students were enrolled (12 students in the 3's Class & 14 students in the 4's Class). Our student enrollment for the 2021-2022 school year is 31 students (16 students in the 3's Class & 15 students in the 4's Class).

With the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, we had to revamp plans for classroom experiences and our fundraisers during Spring 2021. In lieu of the Easter Ham Bingo, a decision was made to hold a Basket Silent Auction via Facebook around Easter. Preschool families, local businesses, and congregation members donated baskets for this event. This event was quite successful and it was enjoyable to watch the bids go up all for a great cause.

In early May, we took a field trip to the Bramble Park Zoo in Watertown for our preschool field trip via the yellow bus from DeFea Transportation. ALC Preschool hosted a parking lot field trip excursion in reference to safety and invited Emanuel Lutheran Preschool and Learning Time Preschool to join us. Kevin Schuelke, Grant County Emergency Management Director, was instrumental in helping us take our idea to a whole new level with bringing two state employees from Pierre to teach students about tornado safety, with the use of the "Tommy the Tornado" mascot, and our local ambulance, police personnel, and firemen were on hand to visit with students with their safety vehicles. In mid-May, students entertained and shared gifts of music with a full house in the sanctuary for our end of the year program/graduation on our final day of preschool, complete with tables decorated with art display boards and all of the student's belongings to take home in the narthex.

As the final preparations in the classroom for the start of the school year were made, the decisions of health and safety policies for quarantine/isolation for students and staff were tweaked due to the lingering COVID-19 pandemic into Fall 2021. In early August, returning & incoming students and their parents were greeted and welcomed at our Back-to-School Open House. The current staff, Nicole Scott (Teacher), Brittany Bray (Teacher Assistant), and Rebecca Welberg (Classroom Helper Volunteer) continued in their respective capacities to lead the preschool program for the 2021-22 school year.

Preschool began successfully in August with continued modifications of extra cleaning protocols, encouraging of mask usage, and the allowance of parents/visitors in the classroom to drop-off/pick-up their child while being masked. We were fortunate enough to have High School Cadets, Hailey Hupke & Isaac Schulte, from Milbank High School come to our classroom for one period a day to help in any capacity asked. As our community was seeing a surge in cases, we were fortunate to continue our classes – despite some students have to quarantine due to close contact exposures other than at school. Unfortunately, some of our teaching staff tested positive for COVID in early October, therefore we had to close for a week to isolate/quarantine and ensure everyone stayed healthy.

In mid-October, a new program called "Prayer Buddies" was established. This pen-pal program is being used to build intergenerational relationships with ALC Preschool students and congregation members through prayer and friendship. Congregation members were asked to sign-up if interested and would be matched with a respective participating preschool student. Questionnaires were handed out to students and members, with asking to complete with some basic info being shared about the student and the member, along with providing a photo. Correspondence could be delivered to our classroom mailbox and distributed to the student's folder or done via the postal system. A personal mailbox system was set-up for congregation members participating in the program to receive mail at their convenience. The response has been wonderful in the early stages of this program.

In November, ALC Preschool hosted an "Acts of Kindness" project in which we gathered items for foster children who come into care in our local area. Lots of amazing donations were collected and then given to Building our Families, a local foster organization in Grant County, and East Central-CASA. The Parish Nurse Party held a school supply drive in conjunction that benefitted these organizations as well, and an informative presentation about the local BOF group was presented.

The Sunday prior to Thanksgiving, preparations were made for "Preschool Sunday" in which we took the time to showcase our preschool program. A couple of the preschool board members talked about our program during the announcements time and a bulletin insert was created to let individuals know some pertinent info about how the preschool is funded.

The preschool students shared their gifts of music with the congregation at the beginning of the church service. In the narthex, visitors/preschool families/congregation were able to view photos of the students and a selection of student's artwork hung in the windows, along with seeing the tables decorated with student made centerpieces for our soup fundraiser meal following the worship service. Due to COVID-19, the meal was modified to be COVID friendly to ensure health and safety for all in attendance.

In late November, we updated our technology needs with four new Ipads and signed a purchase agreement for a new Promethean ActivPanel display board (set to arrive late winter/early Spring '22). With a portion of the soup fundraiser proceeds, we purchased a few gross motor items (i.e. trikes, a ball cart, balls, trampoline) to use in the fellowship hall on cold and rainy days.

During the different holidays during the year, students created greeting cards to give to shut-ins and the local senior living facilities. The 4's Class went to St. William's Nursing Home at Thanksgiving and Christmas to share some songs and fingerplays with residents and the 3's Class shared Christmas songs at the Parish Nurse Party held at American Lutheran Church.

In mid-December, ALC Preschool teamed up with Craig & Allison DeBoer of Eastside Carwash to try out a new fundraiser – selling \$25 WashCards – to benefit our program; (Prior years we sold Hardee's Bucks, but unable to do those anymore.) It was a HUGE success and we sold out of the 250 cards allotted to us in a short amount of time.

During the school year, students were kept busy learning each week about a variety of focus areas including letters, numbers, colors, and shapes. Each week, students engaged in a Christian based lesson that included a story, song, or art activity in class. Beginning this past fall on Wednesdays, Pastor Justin began hosting a 10 Minute Chapel Time with each class. We continue to use the "Alive Studios Classrooms Alive" curriculum that integrates math and literacy components with the use of technology, our rug, and the journals to provide an enhanced learning opportunity for the children. Technology continues to be implemented with the use of the interactive whiteboard (Promethean Board) and Ipads during various times in our day. COVID-19 definitely continued to affect our plans for many "traditional" activities/outings that we do during the fall such as an outing to the pumpkin patch (cold weather), sharing our gifts of music at the local senior care facilities, and holding our fundraisers, other field trips, etc.

We are ever so thankful for the continued generosity and support given from church and community members, Thrivent members, and thru the designation of Thrivent Choice Dollars and/or allowing us to utilize one's \$250 Action Team Grant card for events, classroom projects, supplies, snacks, etc. In addition, monetary gift donations, attending/supporting our fundraisers, memorials or donations towards preschool financial scholarships, and other means (i.e. snack/supply donations) have all played an active role in helping provide funds and support needed for the preschool. The fundraisers done this past year included the online silent basket auction (March '21), the soup fundraiser (November '21), and the Carwash WashCards (December '21/January '22). **We are very fortunate to all those who help in small and big ways to make the preschool a success----it makes a difference!**

In order for our program to grow, many ways to showcase our program have been done. Ways in which we have reached out include: use of the big screen in the sanctuary, flyers hung up around the church, church bulletin, Facebook, monthly newsletter articles, displaying children's artwork, making greeting cards for shut-ins and senior living residents, offering gifts of music & performances, classroom volunteers, use of bulletin boards outside the classroom, Prayer Buddies program, visitors seeing our day in action with a peek in the door, etc.

Our Preschool Board meets monthly and continues ongoing conversations of how we will help our program continue to grow now and in the future, including enrollment, financial scholarship needs, fundraising efforts, needs overall (supplies, classroom items, etc.), and any discussions pertaining to the preschool going forward. Our thanks to outgoing preschool board members Stacy Anderson and Sara VanMeter for their years of service on the board.

**Teacher-Nicole Scott | Teacher Assistant-Brittany Bray | Classroom Helper Volunteer-Rebecca Welberg  
Preschool Board Members-  
Jody Bear, Rachel Kiley, Trista Mikkelson, Haley Harms, Kaitlin Knoll; Heather Zinter (Council Liaison)**

**THRIVENT CHOICE BOARD REPORT**

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Thank you to all Thrivent Members who choose to direct their Choice Dollars to American Lutheran Church.

Over the last 11 years Thrivent Choice Dollars have directed \$116,088 to the American Lutheran Church to help benefit special projects within the church.

Over the last 8 years Thrivent Choice Dollars have directed \$58,124 to the American Lutheran Preschool.

As a reminder, if you haven't directed your 2021 Choice Dollars yet, they need to be done by the end of March. If you have questions about asking for supplementing funds, please contact the Church Office.

**Submitted by Thrivent Board Members:**

**Wally and Diane Hamman, Neil Pauli, Jeff Loutsch, Kathy Mathiason, and June Hunt**

Balance January 1, 2021	\$12,246.14	Money Distributed:	
Balance Deposited Choice Dollars	2,844.00	Baptismal/engraving	\$ 145.84
Interest	1.10	Youth Turkey Dinner	2,000.00
Balance Distributed	(4,864.34)	Radio Broadcast	1,000.00
Balance December 31, 2021	10,226.90	Youth Advent Devotionals	400.00
		Family Bowling	318.50
		Preschool Fundraiser	<u>1,000.00</u>
		Total	\$4,864.34

*Grant Funds paid to Organization are to be used exclusively to carry out the religious, charitable or educational purposes of Organization, and not to influence law, policy, church doctrine or church practice. Organization is prohibited from using any Choice Dollars Grant Funds to (1) satisfy, offset or reduce any part of the pledge, liability or other obligation of any person or entity; or (2) make any payment to or provide any other economic benefit to any person in exchange for or in connection with the direction of Choice Dollars to Organization or to other entity.*

In addition to Thrivent Choice Dollars, each person with Thrivent Financial Insurance/Products is given the opportunity to receive two \$250 Thrivent Action Team Debit cards every year. We thank the Thrivent Financial members from our congregation who supplied many \$250 Thrivent Debit Cards that were used throughout the year for various projects and events here at American Lutheran. The following list includes some of the groups and projects that benefitted.

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| Easter Celebration                      | Rally Day                                    |
| Baptismal Supplies (Bibles, Water Toys) | Youth Project for the Food Pantry            |
| High School Graduates                   | Bibles for 3 Year Olds and 4 Year Olds       |
| May Work Sunday                         | Baptismal Faith Chest Material costs         |
| Tools Purchased for Work Projects       | Cookies for Christmas Party Fellowship       |
| Supplies for Piece Corps Quilters       | Advertising Costs for Blue Christmas Service |
| Summer Health Project with Parish Nurse | Festive Table Clothes for Fellowship Hall    |
| Vacation Bible School                   | Lefse Supplies                               |
| Meatball Ministry                       | High School Youth Party Supplies             |
| Celebration Sundays                     | American Lutheran Preschool                  |
| Golf Outing                             | American Lutheran Sunday School              |

If you are a Thrivent Financial member and would be willing to use a card for American Lutheran Church or Preschool, please contact the Church Office. Carol Kirchberg coordinates this ministry and will connect you with a requested need or idea.

## WELCA (Women of the ELCA) REPORT

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Peace Circle Bible Study was held every first Tuesday of the month at noon. We use the Gather Magazine for our lesson. Due to Covid, we did not hold our Ladies Event last Spring or Fall. We plan to host it this coming Spring. The date has been set for April 3rd.

The September Prairie Coteau gathering was held at NeSoDak Bible Camp. We attended the meetings related to missions, quilt information & school bags.

74 School Bag Kits, 31 Personal Care Kits and 51 Quilts were sent to Watertown to meet a delivery truck that picked up all of the Prairie Coteau Conference boxes. The truck then delivered everything to the Lutheran World Relief warehouse in Minneapolis.

Thank you for your donations of school supplies and personal care kit items. We take gently used towels if you are cleaning out closets.

Money raised from the Lefsa Project was given to WELCA for our Missions. Our Mission Bake Sale was well received. Thank you to all the lefsa helpers & bakers that help by contributing to our sale.

**Submitted by: Kathy Mathiason**

### 2021 WELCA Treasurer's Report

**Balance in Account 12/31/2020 \$2,338.81**

Income:

Card Nook	599.75
Circle offerings	1,092.50
Quilts (memorials)	280.00
Lefsa Fund	1,280.00
Runners Club	267.68
ALC	100.00
Bake Sale	<u>1,855.29</u>

**Total Income: \$5,475.22**

Expenses:

Card Nook (Treasurers Abounding)	33.50
WELCA offering	371.00
Quilts (supplies)	115.26
ALC Preschool Scholarship Fund (Lefsa Fund)	1,200.00
Runners Club	267.93
CRU (Bake Sale)	200.00
Orphan Grain Train	25.00
Gather subscription	9.95
LSS Campaign for Hope	200.00
Church on the Street	100.00
ALC Radio Broadcast	100.00
Parish Nurse (Bake Sale)	200.00
Lutherans Outdoors (Bake Sale)	100.00
Grant County Food Pantry (Bake Sale)	200.00
School bags	97.00
Foster Care Program (Bake Sale)	100.00
NeSoDak (Bake Sale)	150.00
Prairie Coteau Conference (school kit shipping)	100.00
Prairie Coteau Conference (quilt shipping)	<u>200.00</u>

**Total Expenses: \$3,769.64**

Undesignated Fund	2,669.55
Quilts	687.16
Card Nook	607.93
Lefsa	<u>80.00</u>
Balance in Account	\$4,044.39

**Balance in Account 12/31/2021 \$4,044.39**

**Submitted by: Darlene Olson Treasurer**

Greetings from the Social Events Committee,

Our small but mighty committee had some great social events this year. Our goal is to provide events for all ages at little to no cost to strengthen friendships and make new connections with other church members through fellowship.

Some of our plans weren't able to be executed due to Covid restrictions but we socially distanced indoor activities and held other activities outside. We had great attendance and encouraged by attendees to continue our efforts. We are so grateful for the Thrivent for Lutherans funds that helped us in so many ways to keep costs down or even free, so everyone is able to enjoy the events without the economic strain on our members.

In early winter 2021 we held a fresh flower arranging class in the barn at Mark & Emily Mueller's Pumpkin Patch. The class filled up and we had a wonderful time arranging and learning about fresh flowers and it was just in time for Easter. Thank you to Mark & Emily for the use of the barn and all of their help!

In the spring we had an outdoor flower arranging event and cookout at the church for members in conjunction with the annual clean up day. Lots of items got checked off the to do list and also allowed members to congregate outdoors for fellowship, food and flowers. This will be an annual event. Mark your calendars for the first Sunday in May!

The summer brought a golf and potluck event that was well attended. We hope this is also going to be an annual event. It is very casual golf, need not be a pro!

Late summer/early fall, our committee had a basketball shoot booth at the Lifelight concert at the high school. We enjoyed taking part at this event that is well attended and represented by many other local churches. Participation in this event will be ongoing and developing with the input from other churches.

In the fall and winter, we enjoyed a family bowling party and an outdoor greenery event. We had full groups at both of those events and will plan to do these again next year.

Finally, a small group met to discuss the possibility of bringing back the Wine, Women and the Word bible study. We are currently planning a time when we can meet again and continue this important ministry.

Next year we hope to continue past events and also try new things. Our group is always looking for more help and participation and also thrilled when we are given new ideas. If you have an idea for an event but just don't know where to start, please reach out to one of the chairpersons-Amber Scriver or Sara Johnson.

As you see social events advertised this year, consider helping or attending!

**Submitted by**  
**The Social Events Committee**

## PARISH NURSE BOARD REPORT

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*Commit to the Lord all that you do and your plan will be successful. Proverbs 16:3*

Covid has still had an impact on our programs.

Being available once a month, after a worship service, to take blood pressures started up again in May. 81 people take advantage of this service.

196 personal contacts were made in 2021 and 151 cards were sent. These included birthday cards to all members over 75, sympathy, thank you, thinking of you, baptism, get well and new members cards.

Since I retired from fulltime at the hospital at the end of March, I have had more time to do visitations. I did more of these after our June event to deliver cards and then again after the Christmas party to deliver a small box of goodies.

I have enjoyed getting to know our parishioners that are unable to get out much.

We held 4 events throughout 2021:

1. Walking program –“Appalachian Trail” with 33 participants
2. In conjunction with the walking program, I had a May Health event, utilizing Mind, Body, Heart and Soul with activities for each of the 4. An activities packet was sent to all the walkers and copies were also available at each church. Many did this on their own, so I do not have an accurate number of participants. We then had a get together in June for the Walkers and May Health participants. We had activities for all. Pam Neugebauer gave a talk on body stretches. Devotions were led by Pastor Justin for our Spirit. We had word games for our mind. Then we made cards for our shut-ins for our heart. We had 16 in attendance, with good reviews given by those filling out a survey.
3. We held our Christmas party on a December morning, instead of an afternoon, for a change, and had 23 in attendance. Attendees brought items for Foster Care program. Kim Goetschius gave us information on Foster Care. The preschool children sang, Pastor Justin gave devotions and we shared our hobbies with one another.
4. The Blue Christmas service was held at American Lutheran and advertised in the paper. Unfortunately the attendance was small. Just a total of 12 with helpers and audience. It was taped and put on the church’s webpage and it did get quite a few views there. I received a nice thank you from one of the attendees

One parishioner was helped with Salem Funds.

Monthly Grant County Newspaper articles are written along with monthly bulletin inserts.

### Financials:

\$1,500	Received from American Lutheran Church
\$1,000	From Parkview Methodist Church
\$ 275	From Donations/Gifts
<b>\$ 2775</b>	<b>Total Income</b>

\$3008	Salary paid
\$ 55	Other expenses
<b>\$3063</b>	<b>Total expenses.</b>

The last couple of years, we had more gifts given and this helped us remain in the black. But, without those gifts and the use of 2 Thrivent cards this year we would be further behind.

Parish Nursing is God’s work. The ministry belongs to the people and is consecrated by God.

Thank you for your support over this past year. May we be blessed with many more years.

### Parish Nurse Health Board Members:

**Kim Goetschius, Jackie Smith, Kathy Mathiason, and Patti Frazee.**

**Submitted by Diana Dirksen, Parish Nurse**

## PIECE CORPS QUILTERS & PRAYER SHAWL MINISTRY REPORT

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The Piece Corps Quilters meet at 9 am on the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Tuesday of each month. They would welcome additional members. You do not need to be a quilter. There are tasks for everyone. If you are interested in learning more about what is needed—let the church office know. You can also stop in to visit and watch the quilters on one of their Tuesdays. A total of 96 quilts were made and distributed by the group this year.

### **Special Quilts for American Lutheran Members and Local Needs:**

A baby quilt is given to each child when they are baptized here American Lutheran.

A quilt is given to each of the American Lutheran High School graduates.

Quilts are available and given for charity events/raffles.

Quilts are available and given as needed for area family and children's organizations.

**21 Quilts were given out at American Lutheran and for local needs by the Piece Corps Quilters in 2021.**

### **Special Quilts for Others:**

When natural disasters strike or war drives families from their homes, our hearts might hurt but we don't know what to do. One way to help is to be a volunteer with the ALC quilt group.

Quilts are a real way to express our love to neighbors in need. The quilts we send to Lutheran World Relief (LWR) can be used as warm bedding, simple tents or floor covering. Each one of our quilts reflects God's loving presence in a troubled world.

**51 quilts were sent to LWR by the Piece Corps Quilters in 2021.**

### **Prayer Shawls:**

Our ALC Prayer Shawl Ministry is one way to reach out in Christian love to those in need of special blessings.

Each of the Prayer Shawls symbolizes the love and embrace of God. Each shawl has been lovingly made and prayed over, and those who receive the shawls continue to be held in prayer.

Members of the Prayer Shawl Group crochet or knit shawls on their own time. Instructions and all of the yarn is provided. Approximately 37 shawls were made by 6 ladies. We gave 15 shawls to members and friends of the congregation.

### **Church Library:**

Throughout the year we have added 34 books by donation to the Library. We discarded 138 books.

### **Book Club:**

Book club was reorganized and started in October 2021 There are two groups. Group "1" meets during the day and meet once with 10 that attend. Group "2" also meets once a month in the evening, with 5 that attend at this time.



## LUTHERANS OUTDOORS IN SOUTH DAKOTA



# 2021

CONGREGATIONAL  
REPORT

## KEEP THE CAMPFIRES BURNING APPEAL IS SUCCESSFUL!

LO created the **Keep the Campfires Burning Appeal** to aid in the financial challenges resulting from the Covid-19 pandemic. Reaching our goal of \$1.2 million in 2021 moves us forward into 2022 without debt remaining. It will also enable LO to continue offering quality, life-giving programs and maintain and improve our facilities.



Lutherans Outdoors received a terrific response during 2021, enabling the ministry to meet its goal of \$1.2 Million! These gifts came from individual donors, congregations, SD Synod, special events, memorials, and more. Thank YOU for making this appeal a success!

## SUMMER CAMPERS RETURN

Lutherans Outdoors was thrilled to have campers return to NeSoDak, Outlaw Ranch, and Klein Ranch during the summer of 2021! **Nearly 1,100 campers** received a safe, Christ-filled, and life-giving experience.

In 2021 Lutherans Outdoors planned for a return of 60% of campers compared to previous years. In 2022, LO has increased camper capacity and hopes to improve from last summer.

**Registration is currently open so reserve your spots today at [losd.org](http://losd.org).  
Then, see YOU at camp in 2022!**

## JOY RANCH TRANSFER OF PROPERTY COMPLETED

In early January 2022, Lutherans Outdoors completed the transfer of ownership and operation of Joy Ranch to a new entity named Joy Ranch of South Dakota. This process had started in November of 2019 with the creation of a Joy Ranch Task Force.

The Lutherans Outdoors Board, after much consideration and deliberation, determined that Joy Ranch, although a beautiful site with many amenities, did not fit our operational model of seasonal outdoor camping ministries.

Lutherans Outdoors is proud to have been an instrumental part of the birthing process of this beautiful facility that increases the quality of life for all who gather. Lutherans Outdoors thanks the thousands of supporters who have participated in the development of Joy Ranch. With these changes, Lutherans Outdoors is confident that Joy Ranch of South Dakota will be successful into the future and will faithfully honor its many supporters.

## WELCOME, NEW STAFF!

Lutherans Outdoors welcomed some new faces to our staff during 2021.

NeSoDak welcomed Vicki Foss as the new Camp Director in March. Vicki comes from Minnesota with a youth ministry and camping ministry background. Thomas Wishard is the new Program Director and began in September. Thomas has been on summer staff for several years.

Outlaw Ranch welcomed Shannon Pulscher as the new Facility Manager last February. Shannon is a general contractor and brings many abilities to the position. In addition, we welcomed back Taylor Wiese as the Program Director last April.

Farewell



It has been the greatest blessing of my career to be entrusted with the stewardship of LSS and its glorious ministry. Every minute of the past fifteen-plus years has been a journey that has left me at times overwhelmed and always awestruck. I am grateful for all who have walked this journey alongside me sharing both the burdens and the joys. Godspeed to all who support and lead the ministry of LSS.

**Betty Oldenkamp** PRESIDENT AND CEO



Strengthening Individuals,  
Families & Communities



I have been blessed to spend twenty years of my professional career with LSS. Throughout my time here I have been inspired by the richness of the agency's programs and the myriad ways that LSS helps to strengthen South Dakota communities. I've witnessed the team at LSS follow in Christ's footsteps and respond to community needs with creativity, compassion and a deep respect for those we serve. I feel honored and humbled to carry on the tradition of strong executive leadership and help shape the agency's vision in its next century of service.

**Rebecca Kiesow-Knudsen** COO, INCOMING PRESIDENT/CEO

## OUR MISSION

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

## OUR VISION

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

## OUR VALUES

Lutheran Social Services is a social ministry of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. As such, we believe that God's love compels us to serve and to value all people. Our core values are grounded by our faith in God—they guide our hands and feet, our hearts and words as we serve our neighbors as God intended. Our core values guide our work with the people we serve and those who serve them.

### COMPASSIONATE

We will be empathetic in our interactions with others and non-judgmental in the delivery of our services.

### APPRECIATIVE

We will acknowledge the quality, significance and magnitude of the contributions of our clients and employees and seek to develop their capacity.

### RESPECTFUL

We will engage in collaborative and professional relationships with our clients, partnership organizations, and each other.

### ETHICAL

We will demonstrate our commitment to quality services and high standards in acts, words and deeds.

### STRATEGIC

We will anticipate and respond strategically to service trends and our communities' needs.

## TRANSFORMING PEOPLE'S LIVES 27,759 TIMES

YEAR ENDING JUNE 30, 2021

<b>BEHAVIORAL HEALTH</b>	<b>4,671</b>
<b>RESIDENTIAL</b>	<b>540</b>
Children & Youth	203
Family Counseling	337
<b>ALTERNATIVES TO DETENTION</b>	<b>5,748</b>
Children & Youth	1,756
Family	3,992
<b>INDEPENDENT LIVING</b>	<b>607</b>
<b>FOSTER CARE</b>	<b>1,036</b>
Children	144
Foster Parents	60
Kinship	832
<b>RESOURCE FAMILY SERVICES</b>	<b>1,590</b>
<b>ADOPTION</b>	<b>362</b>
Adoption Services	60
Education	302
<b>CENTER FOR FINANCIAL RESOURCES</b>	<b>3,562</b>
Counseling Services	1,478
Education	2,084
<b>CENTER FOR NEW AMERICANS</b>	<b>6,745</b>
Refugees Resettled	23
Secondary Migrants	49
Immigration Counseling	630
ESL Training	210
Interpreter (hours provided to 150 entities)	5,833
<b>MENTORS/MENTEES</b>	<b>1,964</b>
<b>CHILDCARE &amp; EDUCATION</b>	<b>934</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>27,759</b>

**DEDICATED ACCOUNTS OF AMERICAN LUTHERAN CHURCH**

American Lutheran Church, like many churches, maintains dedicated accounts that are outside of the annual budget of the church. These accounts reflect funds that are earmarked or restricted for a specific purpose. Often, the funds have come from gifts or from special activities that have raised funds for a specific purpose. Dedicated accounts do not close out their balances at the end of a fiscal year like income and expense accounts, but retain their balances over fiscal years. Dedicated accounts are not bank accounts and do not necessarily tie directly to a specific bank account; they simply track funds that can only be used for specific purposes. The council oversees the establishment of these accounts and the funding and withdrawal of monies from the account. We are pleased to present the status of these accounts.

1/12/2022  
12:04p

American Lutheran Church  
**Bank Account Balances Less Dedicated**  
as of the end of December, Fiscal Year 2021  
**05 - Dedicated**

Account	Activity through December	Beg. Balance	Current Balance
<b>Bank Accounts</b>			
051-00-00-00	Great Western - Dedicated	85,862.79	159,847.38
<b>Total Assets in Bank Accounts:</b>		85,862.79	159,847.38
<b>Dedicated Accounts</b>			
057-00-00-06	Cash Flow Supplement	0.00	0.00
057-00-00-25	Scholarship Fund	3,000.00	972.92
057-00-00-29	Manna Worship Praise Band	150.00	5,503.44
057-00-00-85	Mission Trip - Youth	635.00	10,538.82
057-00-00-95	Parish Nurse	0.00	117.00
057-00-07-02	PARSONAGE SALE	25,430.93	66,697.60
057-00-07-06	Misc in & Out	5.60	0.00
057-00-07-07	Music	0.00	2,563.93
057-00-07-25	Youth 6-12 Grades	-664.68	4,309.28
057-00-07-31	Property/Bldg Improvement	17.55	59,928.78
057-00-07-34	Preschool Scholarships	-990.00	4,467.96
057-00-07-35	Preschool Capital Funds	60,000.00	0.00
057-01-07-00	Bible Camp	-1,884.00	2,584.00
057-07-00-04	Milbank Ministerial Assoc	162.39	2,163.65
057-07-01-00	Lefse & Klub	0.00	0.00
<b>Total Dedicated Funds:</b>		85,862.79	159,847.38