

American Lutheran Church

401 Flynn Drive
Milbank, South Dakota 57252

2020 Annual Report

Annual Meeting
January 31, 2021



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

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Dear friends in Christ,

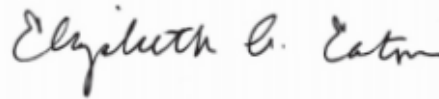
This year has been a challenging one! The COVID-19 pandemic has changed the church and society. We have had to shift the ways we engage in ministry from a focus on in-person worship and meetings to livestream worship, virtual meetings and gatherings in the parking lot. We have had to shift to teaching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

In times such as this, our baptism in Christ makes a difference and makes us different. Like Christians before us, we recall that God is faithful to God's promises and God's people. We see that God enables us to connect with one another even when we are separated. Shifts in the world invite us to be innovative in how we do God's work and reach out to all ages in making disciples. We see that God is at work not only in our buildings but beyond them as well. We have found new ways to serve our neighbors and reach those in need.

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

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

Building up the body of Christ together,



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

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

South Dakota Synod

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

God's work. Our hands.



Dear Siblings in Christ 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!

"But we had hoped" – is probably the most used phrase of 2020. However, this is also the phrase of the two disciples walking from Jerusalem to Emmaus after Christ's death and resurrection. While on the road wrestling with things

that they cannot understand, Jesus joins them on the road, sharing with them how all of these things rested in God all along. It is not until the breaking of the bread that the holy heartburn the two disciples felt all along propels them to run back to their friends to share that Christ truly is alive and not dead, and that therefore his followers need to live into the promise that they too are alive and that death has lost its power.

I cannot help but come to understand that this story is our story. It has always been our story, but 2020 has brought this story alive for me in new and profound ways. We too have found ourselves saying countless times this year, "but we had hoped." We too wrestled with the hard questions about what to make of the events of this past year as they unfolded in our life. We have wished many times to go "back to normal." As I heard from people, I invited them to expound on what going back to normal means to them. Creating this space allowed for a deeper reflection on who we are as people of God in South Dakota. Jesus accompanied the disciples on the road and shared scripture with them to open their eyes to God's continued provision and presence in the world. Even in the midst of these life-altering and events of Christ's death and resurrection God is alive and at work. My staff and I have accompanied your community of faith during this life-altering pandemic assuring you that God's Holy Spirit is inspiring and sustaining.

Early on, we hosted weekly Zoom meetings for rostered and lay leaders. We continue these meetings on a monthly basis. Task forces were created to provide resources and training for congregations to continue ministry, such as "Canvas" an online resource platform and network for everything educational. Two worship documents and guidance were created: "Extending the Table, Expanding Participation" and "Come Let us Worship in a New Way." I can say that the pandemic and the challenges of living into a new way of being church has created some heartburn. Many may not call it a holy heartburn, but remember neither did the disciples until they sat at the table with Jesus and ate. Only when bread was broken, and wine was poured, did they remember the promises that God's got them and that they have nothing to fear. I pray that you too will come to recognize and interpret your heartburn as *holy heartburn* that empowers you to be church in a new and different way for the sake of the Gospel.

**Annual Meeting Agenda
January 31, 2021**

- **Call to Order**
- **Litany and Opening Prayer (From ELCA Churchwide Office) - On Screen**
- **Pastor's Report**
- **Secretary's Report**
 - **Minutes from January 26, 2020 Annual Meeting**
 - **Minutes from November 15, 2020 Congregational 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**
- **Treasurers Report**
- **Adoption of 2021 Budget**
- **Other New Business**
- **Adjournment /Blessing**

“But now thus says the LORD, he who created you, O Jacob, he who formed you, O Israel: Do not fear, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by name, you are mine.² When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; and through the rivers, they shall not overwhelm you; when you walk through fire you shall not be burned, and the flame shall not consume you.³ For I am the LORD your God, the Holy One of Israel, your Savior.” -Isaiah 43:1-3a

Time and again throughout 2020, I returned to these verses from the prophet Isaiah. To hear again the assurance that God is with me – with us – through whatever it is I/we are going through at the moment. These verses also provide the promise that the difficult things of this world are not more powerful than God.

2020 has put these verses to the test. We started the first couple months off strong, picking up where we left off in 2019. Worship, Sunday School, Confirmation, Bible Studies, Annual Meeting, and the beginning of Lent were all running smoothly, and life seemed good. Then we hit the middle of March and everything changed and continued to change daily. The Council met on Wednesday to develop new protocols for holding church, a letter was sent out on Thursday, and by Saturday the Council was meeting again (this time via phone conference) and the decision was made to pause in-person worship and all other activities at the church. And suddenly we were in the midst of “rising waters” or “flames” so to speak as we hear about from Isaiah. As we continued with no in-person worship until July and have since been worshipping at about 25-30% in-person from where we were at in 2019. A few activities have returned but many have continued to be paused as we strive to stay safe and healthy during the COVID-19 pandemic.

As hard and as difficult as this past year has been, I look back and I see God at work, carrying us through so that the waters did not overwhelm us, and the flames did not consume us. Here are a few highlights from 2020:

Leadership – I give thanks to Rich Krueger, President, and the entire Church Council. Some tough conversations and decisions had to be made throughout this year, but they fulfilled their roles with great faithfulness and care for the members of our congregation. This was not what any of them signed up for when they agreed to serve on Church Council, but they stepped up and served us all very well.

Staff – Gail and Carol in the office have been vital as we transitioned very quickly to a new way to communicate (Weekly News and Emails) and stay connected to one another. Amy developed new ways to educate our Sunday School kids, who especially liked the at-home Vacation Bible School, Dough Holy Night, and Virtual Christmas Program. The Preschool staff completed last School Year at home and have worked tirelessly to keep the students and staff safe this year when they returned in August.

Volunteers – Gary Wellnitz leads our AV Booth team along with Kay O’Farrell and Dave Gulck. Their work has been invaluable as they run the technology that provides for the Facebook Live and Radio broadcast of our worship services. We are blessed with a wealth of musical talent in our congregation. Miriam Schwenn, Mary Bjordahl, Pam Neugebauer, and Brenda Handel-Johnson along with the Manna Praise Band and the volunteer song leaders, continued to provide music to an empty church, then to a congregation that was restricted from singing along, to now a congregation that sings only with a mask on. Each week, we are blessed with beautiful music that adds so much to each worship service.

Offerings – Despite not meeting in person, you continued to share your gifts with our congregation. We did not see a dip in offerings or gifts throughout the year and because of that the Church Council was able to gift over \$36,000 to other ministries in our local area, the South Dakota Synod and around the world. We were blessed so that we can be a blessing for others. Thank you!

On-Line Worship – The on-line worship services have reached people that maybe never would have stepped foot in our doors and connected us to one another throughout the year. Families were able to worship “together” from different states on Easter Sunday as well as the other Sundays throughout the year. Snowbirds continue to worship with us from their winter homes in Arkansas, Texas, Arizona, and other places as well.

Pastoral Acts – Baptisms, Funerals, and Weddings were still celebrated. Although in quite different ways. But God is still at work, welcoming little Children into our Church Family and caring for those who have lost loves ones. We also continue to get requests from people seeking to join our congregation. Eleven new members have been received this year. We will fully welcome them and celebrate with them as soon as we can all be together.

Living lives of Faith – 2020 has also reminded us of what is important. And it has been a blessing to see the people of this congregation living out their faith in the world – caring for one another, making masks to share, offering to deliver things to peoples’ homes, and in many ways none of us might have even seen. Thank you for all of the ways you lived out your faith and simply being the people of God in the world.

So yes – it has been a tough year in many ways. But we also know that God has been present with us through all of it. He has continued to bless us as a congregation and bless our ministry here in this place.

I am eagerly looking forward to 2021 and all that this year will bring. We are seeing the light at the end of the tunnel and hope to be able to all gather back together again soon. What a glorious, wonderful day that will be.

Beyond that moment, the church is still at work. We will be entering into a Strategic Planning process at some point in 2021. This work will help us discover our purpose and goals for the work we are doing as a congregation. The Council is also at work thinking about ways they could re-organize to make their work more efficient and to better utilize the wonderful gifts and talents of each of you.

Thank you for your faithfulness and commitment to this congregation. Thank you for all of the kind words and words of encouragement that you have shared with me in the past year. They have meant so much and I truly appreciated each and every one of them. I pray for God’s blessings to be upon each of you.

Pastoral Acts 2020

Baptisms

Witten Ann Thompson	January 26
Briggs Arlo Koepke	February 23
Brodryck Speth	June 19
Juddson Bennett Farrell	August 5
Briggs Avagail Mears	August 16
Peyton Marie Van Hoorn	October 27
Blair LaShae Frogner	November 8
Korbynn Winston	December 5

Funerals

Lois Stinson	February 28
Margie Stewart	March 23
Jane Hedman	March 30
Stanley Street	June 24
Erna Cahill	June 24
Michael Pauli	July 1
Ben Walford	July 11
Gene Johnsen	July 20
Jess Hansen	September 4
Paul Hicks	September 19
Ralph Stinson	October 19
Evelyn Moser	December 26

Marriages

William Hins & Mckenzie Gustafson	October 3
<i>by Pastor Carl</i>	
Fred Hunt & June Seehafer	November 13

Confirmation – October 18, 2020:

Carter Boerger
Shaylee Schuchard
Mattison Scott
Hailey Zinter

First Communion – September 13, 2020:

Kenzey Anderson
Bennett Cordingley
Paisley Ericsson
Cade Grabow
Violet Johnson
Mason Kirchberg
Lauren Lester
Cooper Mueller
Sophia Schuchard
Peyton Snell
Jada Leigh Wellnitz
Kale Wenzl
Kaci Zinter

Church Statistics

	<u>2016</u>	<u>2017</u>	<u>2018</u>	<u>2019</u>	<u>2020</u>
Baptized Members	892	896	954	953	909
Average Weekly Attendance	172	169	178	182	* see next page
% Attending Worship	19%	19%	19%	19%	* see next page
Average Lenten Attendance	72	89	89	106	* see next page
Christmas Eve	474	398	392	443	* see next page

Church Statistics and Attendance Report 2020

Baptized Membership = 909

*Down from 2019 due to the continued work of cleaning up our Membership Roster. We are working towards getting the Membership Number as accurate as possible.

*New Members added in 2020. Will hold a New Member welcome and celebration sometime in the future. Mary Bray, Drew Dohman, John Forman and Kelly Gnat, Reid and Shelly Wildung and Oakley, Terenn and Kristian Winston and Karsonn, Sophia, and Korbynn.

Attendance Report – 2020

2020 was a unique year with the COVID-19 Pandemic. Below is a general report on attendance throughout this year.

Average Attendance through March 8th (Pre-Pandemic) = 176

In-Person Average Attendance – July 5-December 27 = 42

Outdoor/Rally Day Service = 177

Christmas Eve (In-person, 3 services) = 241

Lenten Services Average Attendance (3 held before Pandemic) = 133

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 Worshippers. **We give many thanks to our AV Booth Team for the work they did throughout this year to help broadcast the services on Facebook!**

Average On-Line Attendance (Sunday, March 15-Sunday, December 27) = 283

*This number does include weeks where there were technical issues with Facebook. The numbers for those weeks were down significantly from weeks when everything works as it should.

Average On-Line Attendance for Lenten Services (5 On-line only services including Maundy Thursday and Good Friday) = 421

Total 1-minute Facebook Views from the Christmas Eve Services = $375 \times 2 = 750$ On-Line Attendance

Radio Worship Report:

There is no way to track how many people are listening and worshipping on the Radio each Sunday morning. However, I have personally heard from a number of people who have said that is the way they have been staying connected to worship and to American Lutheran during this time. **Thank you to everyone who supports this valuable ministry of our congregation.**

**AMERICAN EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH ANNUAL MEETING
January 26, 2020**

The meeting was called to order by council president Bryan Johnson. Bryan asked for a motion to approve the agenda, which was made by Doug Fraasch and seconded by Lynn Hardy.

The Litany and opening prayer were viewed on screen with a video from Bishop Constanze Hagmaier provided by the SD Synod.

Pastor Justin gave a report highlighting the year and the ways in which our church has adopted the theme "Rooted in Christ, Growing in Faith." He appreciates the many ways our members share their time, talents, and faith with one-another in the congregation. In addition, he showed thanks for the donations for the lighting project and year-end giving. Pastor is excited for all that the new year will bring.

Bryan asked for a review of the secretary's report, including minutes from the 2019 annual meeting and the May 2019 congregational meeting. Carol Kirchberg made a motion to approve the minutes, seconded by Jerry Kathman.

The president's report was presented by Bryan for review. Bryan highlighted the growth of our church in many aspects this past year, as well as the increased giving for the lighting project and year-end needs.

A call of the floor for nominations for church council was made. There were no additional nominations, so a motion was made by Kevin Bjordahl that nominations cease, seconded by Lynn Hardy. The candidates consisting of Mark Leddy, Amber Scriver, Mary Bjordahl, Josh Schmeichel and Mike Cordingley were elected by unanimous voice vote. In addition, a nominating committee of Mark Granquist, Jessi Zemlicka, Bryan Johnson, and Lynn Hardy was formed.

The following committee reports were reviewed: Stewardship and Finance, Worship, Evangelism and Outreach, Property and Management, Youth and Education, WELCA, Thrivent Board, and Events.

The treasurer's report was reviewed, along with the proposed budget for 2020. Dave Bergan made a motion to approve the budget, seconded by LaVonne Fraasch.

There was no other new business, so therefore Jeanne Kruger made a motion to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Jan Scriver.

Pastor Justin closed with the Benediction.

Respectfully submitted by Bryan Johnson

**American Lutheran Church Congregational Meeting Minutes
Special Meeting for November 15, 2020**

The meeting was called to order at 10:15 am by Council President Rich Krueger.

The Church Council recommended the following resolution to amend the Constitution of American Lutheran Church:

Resolution: Be it resolved that American Evangelical Lutheran Church amend the Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions by addition of C10.08 of the Model Constitution for Congregations, stating:

C10.08. This congregation may hold meetings by remote communication, including electronically and by telephone conference, as long as there is an opportunity for simultaneous aural communication. To the extent permitted by state law, notice of all meetings may be provided electronically.

A motion was made by Lynn Maass to approve the resolution as recommended. The motion was seconded by Wally Hamman. The motion passed unanimously with 47 members present.

A motion was made to adjourn the Special Meeting by Wally Hamman and seconded by Mark Granquist.

Respectfully Submitted by:

Heidi Wellnitz

Council Secretary

My report is a report of one year with a split personality. The year started on a high, we just finished a successful Christmas celebration with over 450 people at two services. We started with so much optimism. The preschool was doing well, the church App was put online, Sunday school had over 100 children attending, the youth group started to plan for fundraisers to attend the National Youth Gathering in Minneapolis, Minnesota, and the preschool was making plans for a ham bingo fundraiser. Things looked great, then comes of the news of Covid-19.

The virus started ravaging the transportation hubs such as New York and other populace centers. Cruise ships had people getting sick and not knowing what to do and, in some cases, they were not even allowed to dock. So many unknowns. How is it spreading, by personal contact, by surface contact, by air transfer, how can it be treated, who is most at risk and why, on and on!

With all the unknown risks and recommendations from the Synod, March 8 would be our last in-person worship for a while. We would put worship services on Facebook, our church App and the radio. The service with no in-person worship on March 15, I attended to support Pastor Justin. It was one of the saddest moments for me, and I am sure the Pastor, in a long time. Worship with an empty church when just a few weeks before the church was so vibrant and active. Where do we go from here? Sunday School was closed. Preschool closed with Nicole making learning packets for her students and doing some online meeting with the students to finish out the year. The Synod assembly was cancelled. Lutherans Outdoors Camp was closed for the season. The fellowship hall was closed to events and gathering.

In April we installed a new High-Definition Camera in the AV booth, updated the computer tower, and upgraded the internet to make the online services the best they can be. On July 5 the council decided to start having services in-person with great caution. We were told to limit attendance with no singing advised and to encourage face masks. We added hand sanitizer stations and did a lot of sanitizing. Attendance numbers were low but slowly the church started to come to life.

On August 6, the Preschool had a very successful drive-thru spaghetti supper fundraiser. On August 24, preschool started the new year. On September 13, we had an outdoor service honoring our first communion youth and rally Sunday. The weather was great and the attendance was good.

Going forward men's and women's Bible study started. In September we celebrated thirteen 4th graders as they received First Communion. The youth group had a drive-thru turkey dinner fundraiser for the National Youth Gathering in Minneapolis in 2022. Online Sunday school was set up for now.

Looking back, I do not know if we always did the right thing, but our member's safety was always considered! Hindsight is always so much easier than foresight.

Looking forward I am extremely optimistic. We now have a vaccine that is being administered. Our members should all be commended for offerings during the year. Thank you everyone! We are so thankful for Pastor Justin's guidance and faith during this difficult year! We will be back stronger than before because we are ROOTED IN CHRIST. Thank You for allowing me to be your congregation president. We will thrive with FAITH IN GOD. Also never forget LOVE and HOPE and FORGIVENESS!

Rich Krueger - Council President

STEWARDSHIP & FINANCE COMMITTEE REPORT

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.

The year 2020 has been a year of challenges, as well as blessings. We were off to a great start the first two months, offerings were good, church attendance was good, the whole mood of the congregation was positive and upbeat. Then came March and COVID, and we chose to suspend in-church worship to do our part to keep our members safe. The Finance Committee, and the Council as a whole, were very uncertain of the financial impact of that decision. Because of that, we decided to apply for a loan through the Small Business Administration's Payroll Protection Plan, which was part of the first COVID stimulus package. The loan was to cover payroll and utility expenses for up to three months, and we received a FORGIVEABLE loan in the amount of \$36,794. We are in the process of completing the paperwork for loan forgiveness. Our staff continued to work (probably harder than ever with all the worship modifications) and draw their salaries throughout the tumultuous times.

The generous offerings made by our members have kept us financially strong. Although we were not worshipping in the church building, members dropped off their offerings or mailed them. The offerings received through automatic payments through members banks increased. The online giving through our Church App increased. At the end of the year, our offerings totaled \$246,520, or 95% of our budgeted offering. That is amazing given the circumstances! We want to say THANK YOU for your commitment to American Lutheran Church.

Because of your continued support, we were also able to support our designated charities. In addition to our budgeted benevolence sent to the SD ELCA Synod, Lutherans Outdoors, SD Lutheran Campus Ministry, St. Dysmas and the local ICAP office, we sent the proceeds from the Pancake Feed directly to Lutherans Outdoors, supported Jordan and Lexie Hins' mission work in Turkey, and provided assistance for Brenda Handel-Johnson's seminary study. The Christmas Eve offering of \$6,630 was sent to the ELCA "Seeds for Nicaragua" program. Our support of Lutheran Social Services is provided through use of our facility. The "Noisy Offering" of \$1,000 was sent to the ELCA Good Gifts program and was matched by the ELCA.

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 or 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.

If you would like assistance setting up 2021 offering payments through your bank or the Church App, please stop in the office or talk with one of the Finance Committee members. Regular giving helps American Lutheran Church continue to do our work and mission. Thank you for your continuing support!

Submitted by Stewardship & Finance Committee members:

Mary Bjordahl and Nancy Hansen

WORSHIP, EVANGELISM & OUTREACH COMMITTEE REPORT

2020 was a strange year for American Lutheran Church as we all know. Our year began with the traditional activities of our congregation, but then in the middle of March Covid-19 hit and everything changed. Worship as we knew it was no longer.

The Church doors were always open and everyone was welcome, but In-person worship services were discontinued in late March and we were challenged to find alternative ways to stay connected in worship.

A big thank you must be given to Pastor Justin, the office staff, and the AV Booth operators as they learned a new way of communicating the service through Facebook Live and the Church App.

Many people utilized the Church App for continuing their giving through automated means or for watching the worship service at a later time. Even though it was not the way we would have liked to hold services, there were positives from holding “online” services, i.e., out-of-state and out of town members were able to worship right along with everyone else, and each week new people tuned in to our worship services.

Sunday school was also put on hold and a “virtual” Sunday school was implemented and sent either by email or postal mail to the children. Greeter, usher and acolyte services were discontinued, and a song leader was used to help lead the worship service with Pastor Justin.

The office staff prepared a weekly newsletter as opposed to monthly to keep us all informed as to the day-to-day activities at the Church. This, along with the bulletin, was transmitted by email to approximately 250 congregation members, and another 50 or so were mailed.

Another adjustment to the service was Holy Communion. We implemented individual disposable bread and wine containers to be used to partake in communion while watching the service at home. In March a group of volunteers delivered the communion and palm branches to members’ homes for Palm Sunday and Easter Sunday services, and later members were encouraged to stop at the Church at their convenience to pick up communion supplies.

We began to open up the Church to in-person worship on July 5th for those that felt comfortable attending.

The Church also complied with the CDC recommendations for this virus and cordoned off portions of the pews with the quilts the quilters had made, and then later roped off some of the pews to meet the six foot distance requirement. Hand sanitizers were installed in the narthex and masks were recommended once the Church was open for in-person worship. Thank you to the members of the Church who made and donated masks.

In September we held our first outdoor service in the parking lot. It was a beautiful day with members sitting in lawn chairs in the lot or listening from their cars. All in all, good feedback was given and we hope to do this again in the future (even when the pandemic is over).

In September we were able to host the Red Cross Bloodmobile in the fellowship hall.

Christmas also challenged us to be proactive in keeping people safe, so three worship services were held at 3:00, 5:00 and 7:00. We could comfortably seat around 100 people per service so reservations were recommended. Approximately 250 members attended the three services in-person with many more on-line.

We sincerely hope to get back to regular worship services soon!

Submitted by Worship, Evangelism & Outreach Committee Members:

LaVonne Fraasch, Peg Dohrer, Amber Scriver

PROPERTY & MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE REPORT

The Property and Management Committee is responsible for maintaining the congregation's properties and contracts, including the church building and surrounding property.

We would like to thank everyone who gave their time, talents, and money to help with projects.

We were unable to have Gods Work, Our Hands Sunday this year due to Covid 19.

One good thing is that we did not have any major repairs and expenditures for the year. Here are some of the projects we did, besides the general upkeep and repairs.

- We replaced the north heritage window lights with LED bulbs because they were burned out.
- We replaced any remaining non-LED bulbs around the parking lots with LED bulbs for electricity savings and longevity.
- We had electric eye light switches installed in the main bathrooms to prevent them from accidentally being left on.
- On April 29 we installed a new High-Definition Camera on the AV booth and replaced the computer tower because they were both obsolete. We also found it necessary to upgrade the churches internet for the best high-quality video and sound. These expenditures proved to be well worth the money. This really turned out to be money well spent because of Covid-19 and our dependence on having the services on Facebook live and on the ALC App.
- Other projects were the sprinkler system needed several repairs and was put online. River rock was added around the playground. There were some shelves built in a couple of the storage rooms. A few landscaping grasses and bushes were replaced.
- The confirmation pictures were moved from the old display and put in racks in the halls of the education wing. Bob Biersbach made the racks and installed them. Thank you, Bob.
- I would just like to note that our electricity costs for the year were down approximately \$4000.00. It is hard to say, with decreased church use, how much of the savings came from the LED lights replaced in the Sanctuary and other places but I am sure over half is a result of those changes.
- Some projects that will need to be addressed in the future:
 - There is paint peeling off the siding in places and this will need to be painted.
 - There probably needs to be work done on the landscaping in a few places.
 - The light on the Steeple Cross needs replacing, which will require a crane.

**Submitted by Property and Management Committee members:
Rich Krueger, Mike Cordingley, and Mark Leddy.**

Sunday School

Sunday School pre-covid averaged around 80 kids per week. Vacation Bible School was done at home with bags distributed to 45 youth. Currently, Amy has done an online Sunday school that families can participate in. There is not a tracking to allow us to know how many families are currently participating. A virtual Christmas program was put together by Amy featuring 67 youth from our congregation. 40 families also participated in "Dough Holy Night" cookie kits.

Confirmation

There were 4 freshman confirmed on October 18, 2020

Confirmation is attended by 10 youth in 7th and 8th grade. The 8th graders have started a mentor program that is new this year and is going well. The group organized the Souper Bowl of Caring food drive and packed the quilts after Quilt Sunday.

Youth Group

Youth group was meeting weekly pre-COVID for Bible student and activity. During COVID, they did some zooming in the spring. They hosted a drive-thru Thanksgiving dinner fundraiser in November.

The ELCA holds a National Youth Gathering every 3 years. The gathering, scheduled for July of 2021, was postponed due to the COVID-19 pandemic. It is now scheduled for July 24-28, 2022, in Minneapolis. The youth will attend events in the Minneapolis Convention Center and the US Bank Stadium. Please continue to support the youth as they work to raise the funds needed to attend.

Adult Education

Women's Bible Study meets every Wednesday in the library. Meetings took a break during COVID but began again late summer.

Men's Bible Study continues to meet on Thursday mornings at 8:00. This group met on zoom during COVID and resumed back in-person in September. This group is attended by 5-6 men. These men planned and raised money from their Pancake Breakfast hosted in January.

Wine, Women & the Word met at the beginning of the year and has been on break during COVID.

Pray-ers for Youth

Adults are anonymously matched with youth between the ages of confirmation and high school graduation. You are asked to include them on your daily prayer list and remember them occasionally with cards on special occasions or with notes of encouragement. This program was originally led by LaVona Van de Voort through WELCA. It was later opened to the entire congregations. When LaVona retired, Marilyn Nef took the lead. Marilyn retired this year. We thank Marilyn for her years of service. Emily Mueller will lead the group going forward. Thank you Emily. Contact Emily if you would like more information or are interested in participating.

Page Turners Book Club

The book club consists of members from Parkview Methodist and American Lutheran Church. They meet once a month. They are on break due to COVID.

South Dakota Lutheran Outdoors Camps

Camps were not open in 2020.

Submitted by Youth & Education Committee members:

Rhonda Christopherson, Heidi Wellnitz, Josh Schmeichel

American Lutheran Sunday School 2020

American Lutheran Sunday School started the year off in January with the series “Somewhere Between Heaven and Earth,” Short Stories by Jesus. The series focused on the many parables that Jesus told in the Bible.



- Week 1: Good Samaritan: The Helping Hand
- Week 2: The Lost Son: All About a Boy
- Week 3: Three Servants: Bags of Gold
- Week 4: The Farmer: Outstanding in his Field
- Week 5: Lost and Found! The Lost Coin
- Week 6: The Lost Sheep: A Baa-d Day
- Week 7: Nose in the Air: Flat on your Face: The Pharisee and the Tax Collector

In February, Sunday School kids participated in Camp Sunday (however, Lutherans Outdoors

camp was cancelled this summer due to COVID). On February 16th, the kids enjoyed an “I Love Jesus” Valentine Party which was made possible through a Thrivent Action Team. The kids made crafts, constructed marshmallow shooters, played games, made necklaces and frosted and enjoyed Valentine cookies. On February 23rd, Joann Volkenant shared her King Cake with the Sunday School kids and she taught them about how it ties to the Festival of Epiphany.



In March, all Sunday School kids presented special music during the church service. We also started virtual Sunday School in March (the following lessons were sent out with the weekly news).

- Week 8: Build a House: Rock, Paper, Scissors, Sand
- Week 9: Forgiveness: Not for Cowards
- Week 10: Fair Not Fair
- Holy Week Activity Mailing
- Week 11: Hidden Treasure: Pricey Pearl

Spark Family Sunday School lessons were offered for the continuation of the 2020 school year. These lessons were free of charge and each web video episode presented a lesson based on Lectionary readings that families could watch together. The episodes also included three downloadable worksheets. The Spark lessons were available from May 3-June 7.

- Early Believers
- God’s House
- The Promise of the Holy Spirit
- The Ascension
- Day of Pentecost: The Holy Spirit
- Trinity Sunday: Creation

At the end of the Sunday School year, Sunday School kids could pick up an end of year gift. “The Parable of the Pencil” printouts along with a faith-based mechanical pencil was given to the kids.



Amongst the COVID Pandemic, vacation Bible school also took on a new form. All preschool through 5th grade students had the opportunity to sign up for take-home VBS packets. The theme of the packets was “Fruit of the Spirit,” A Hands-on Study of Galatians 5:22-23. Each “Fruit” was explored with supplies provided for crafts, experiments, snacks and more! Forty-five bags were assembled and picked up at the church!



Backpack tags were available for all Sunday School kids to pick up at the church in August.

Rally Sunday was a little different this year as well. An outdoor service took place in the church parking lot and all kids were invited to decorate the church sidewalks and parking lot with chalk. The 3rd (now 4th graders) that would have taken their first communion on Maundy Thursday were able to do so at the outdoor service. Thirteen Sunday Schoolers were able to have their first communion in September!



We started the current Sunday School year using the Go! Curriculum and are going into our 18th week of the lessons. They can all be found online at the church website or through the app. Each week the kids can view a video that ties to the Bible story along with worksheets, activities, and songs.



The Sunday School kids presented a virtual Christmas program this year. I collected almost 80 videos from parents that I combined to make the program. The kids (and parents) did a tremendous job and the program turned out great!! A link to it can be found on the church website in the “Virtual Sunday School” section. I also put together “Dough Holy Night” cookie making kits that all Sunday School families could utilize. The kits included all the ingredients needed to make a batch of cookies while watching an online video about the birth of Jesus.

Many of the events and activities of 2020 were made possible through Thrivent Action Teams. I used approximately \$1,600 through Action cards! Thank you to all who helped lead the teams!



Amy Bass- Sunday School Coordinator

AMERICAN LUTHERAN PRESCHOOL REPORT

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 2019-2020 school year, 27 students were enrolled (13 students in the 3's Class & 14 students in the 4's Class). Our student enrollment for the 2020-2021 school year is 26 students (12 students in the 3's Class & 14 students in the 4's Class).

We began 2020 with cold temps and snow, resulting in some snow days and late starts. Preschool families sold Hardee's Bucks as a fundraiser for the preschool (6000 tickets – the preschool received 40% of the profits = \$2400). In February '20, we took a field trip to Johnson Family Dentistry to learn about taking care of our teeth. Students who sold Hardee's Bucks were invited to a Rewards Party of a full day of fun with activities and a movie at the Mill Theatres. We continued with our planning and our time of learning in March in the classroom, with gearing up for field trips and end of the year activities being planned. March 12th – who would have known our last day together would have been this day for the school year. Unfortunately, our time together was cut short due to the COVID-19 virus that had made its way into the US. While we didn't know much about the contagious virus severity, the discretion of the Governor suggesting no gathering in schools and going to remote learning for the time being, we took that into consideration. Students were provided with two-week lesson packets via pick-up or Mrs. Scott did porch drop-offs for the duration of the school year that included activities, materials, and any other necessary items needed to do remote learning. Students also had the opportunity to do some connecting with their classmates thru Zoom Meetings, Facebook, and an interactive online website to share and record. We were hopeful we would return after a few weeks, but that didn't happen. While knowing our fate of not returning back to class in late April, child's belongings were sent home at various intervals with their learning packets until mid-May.

With the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic still looming towards the later part of the summer, we had to make some preparations and decisions into the health and safety for students and staff. In mid-August, returning & incoming students and their parents were greeted and welcomed to a freshly painted classroom during a modified Open House—done in an appointment style approach over a week versus the two-hour span to promote social distancing. 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 2020-21 school year.

We were successfully able to begin school in August with some basic modifications including moving up the morning class to 8-11am to allow an extra 15 minutes to clean between classes, extra cleaning protocols, barriers between students at the tables, encouraging masks, and no visitors/parents into the classroom. Unfortunately, due to the pandemic, we were not able to have any High School Cadets from the 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 having to quarantine due to close contact exposures other than at school. A decision was made to cancel the Soup Challenge for early December, so preparations were made for the students to have a Christmas Sing-Along program on the evening of Friday, December 4th in a social distanced fashion with parents only attending (masks required). We were beyond blessed to make it to Christmas Break without any cancellations due to weather or COVID-19.

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. We were fortunate enough to purchase a curriculum called "Classrooms Alive" 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 affected our plans for many "traditional" activities/outings that we do during our year such as an outing to the pumpkin patch, sharing our gifts of music at the local senior care facilities, and holding our fundraisers (Easter Bingo & Soup Challenge), 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. In 2020, Action Team Grant Cards usage was \$1250 (events, classroom projects, supplies, snacks, etc.) and Choice Dollars designated to the preschool was \$11,629. Interesting Fact: Since the inception of the preschool in 2013, Thrivent Choice Dollars received and designated to our program has totaled \$49,406.

In addition, monetary 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 include the selling of Hardee's Bucks (December '19/January '20), a Drive-Thru Spaghetti Dinner (August 2020), and the online silent auction of raffle items that were to be used for the Easter Bingo that was cancelled in early Spring. **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, offering gifts of music & performances, classroom volunteers, 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 Becky Lambrechts & Sara Johnson for their years of service on the board.

**Teacher-Nicole Scott | Teacher Assistant-Brittany Bray | Classroom Helper Volunteer-Rebecca Welberg
Preschool Board Members-Sara VanMeter, Stacy Anderson, Rachel Kiley, Jody Bear, & Trista Mikkelson**

THRIVENT CHOICE BOARD REPORT

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

Over the last 10 years Thrivent Choice Dollars have directed \$113,244 to the American Lutheran Church to help benefit special projects within the church. Over the last 7 years Thrivent Choice Dollars have directed \$49,405 to the American Lutheran Preschool. The Church and Preschool have also received \$9,000 in funds to complete Thrivent Action Team projects.

As a reminder, if you haven't directed your 2020 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, 2020	9,780.56	Money Distributed:	
Balance Deposited Choice Dollars 2020	3,659.00	Manna Band	113.00
Interest 2020	1.07	Baptismal Medallions/Engraving	81.49
Balance Distributed in 2020	(1,194.49)	Klub Dinner/Bible Camp	1,000.00
Balance December 31, 2020	12,246.14	Total	1,194.49

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 any other entity.

WELCA (Women of the ELCA) REPORT

ALC Peace Circle meets on the first Tuesday of each month at noon. All women are welcome to join in at any time. We use the WELCA magazine "Gather" for a monthly Bible study. The Gather magazine contains timely, informative, and relevant articles and Bible studies for women.

Supporting missions locally and throughout the world is an important focus for WELCA. We raise mission funds through our Bake and Craft Sale in November, the ALC Card Nook, and the ALC Cookbook. 100% of the purchase price of the cookbook goes directly into the fund for the youth attending the 2022 Youth Gathering in Minneapolis.

The ALC Prayer Shawl group continued to create beautiful shawls at home. 27 were distributed in 2020. 73 School Kits and 22 Personal Care Kits were put together and sent to LWR (Lutheran World Relief).

There are many fun local, regional, and state events to attend each year.

Although many of our activities needed to be set aside in 2020, we do continue to meet and look forward to returning to normal in 2021.

2020 WELCA Treasurer's Report

Balance in Account 12/31/2019 \$3,505.23

Income:

Card Nook	436.00
Circle Offering	775.00
Quilt (donations)	115.75
Runners Club	<u>302.28</u>
	\$1,629.03

Expenses:

School bags	97.00
Card Nook/Treasurers Abounding	234.60
Conference Runners Club	302.28
Orphan Grain Train	360.00
ALC Radio Broadcast	200.00
Parish Nurse	100.00
ALC Youth Gathering fund	300.00
Grant County Area Back-pack Program	150.00
Lutherans Outdoors	150.00
Grant County Food Shelf	150.00
NeSoDak	150.00
Prairie Coteau Conference (school kit shipping)	100.00
Prairie Coteau Conference (quilt shipping)	200.00
Quilt (supplies)	42.57
WELCA offering	<u>259.00</u>
	\$2,795.45

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

Fund Balances by Account:

Quilters	722.42
Card Nook	41.68
Undesignated Fund	<u>1,574.71</u>
	\$2,338.81

Submitted by Darlene Olson, WELCA Treasurer

EVENT COMMITTEE REPORT

Greetings from the Events Committee,

After forming this committee in 2019 and hosting a couple great events, Covid-19 brought our plans for 2020 for social gatherings to a screeching halt. With a renewed sense of hope for the coming year, we have put together a tentative plan for some events to allow our members to gather for some fellowship and fun!

Late Winter/Early Spring: Zoom Cooking Class with a talented member(s) from our congregation. Join in just to watch or try your hand at following along with the recipe and the “chef” to create your own delicacy!

Spring: Made to order potted flowers. Place your order for flower delivery and a group of volunteers will buy, assemble, and deliver potted flowers to those who can't or don't want to plant their own pot of flowers.

Spring: Church Property Cleanup-outdoor sprucing up of plants and trees and outside area followed by a cook-out hot dog/hamburger feed. Corn hole “tournament” to conclude the afternoon open to all ages

Spring/Summer/Fall: Guided spiritual walk of Flynn Trail. A bible study or devotional will be offered for you to listen to at your convenience while enjoying the beautiful nature trail in our backyard.

Spring/Summer: Softball or Kick ball game open to anyone in congregation just for fun. Hot dogs, popcorn, and treats. Come to watch or join in on a team and show your athletic skills!

Fall: Golf and Potluck at Whetstone Creek. Come enjoy Milbank's beautiful golf course, followed by a potluck. All skill levels are welcome. If you choose not to golf, you can still come and enjoy the scenery on the back patio and stay for the potluck.

Fall: Pumpkin Patch and Potluck. Enjoy the afternoon at the pumpkin patch. Open to everyone of all ages. Possibility of a morning church service held in the barn followed by a brunch potluck and pumpkin picking afterwards.

Winter: Pickup basketball at Unity. Sunday afternoon friendly game of basketball

Christmas: Pastor Justin mentioned it would be fun to have a live Nativity Scene this coming Christmas. We are looking for someone to head this up. With plenty of time to get this organized, someone could make this as simple or detailed as they wish, complete with live animals or stuffed animals from a drive through event to a walk through the church classrooms. The possibilities are endless!

We gratefully accepted financial support from Thrivent and other outside donations last year as this is not meant to be a fundraising group but rather a **FUN**raising group to bring our members closer together.

Plan to attend all events this year! Watch for info on the screen at church, on Facebook and in the newsletter.

We are looking to add more members to our group and also, we are looking for people to help at each event in a variety of ways! Look for opportunities to volunteer for something you enjoy. Don't wait to be asked to help, call one of us to volunteer or be sure to sign up to help. Contact Amber Scriver or Sara Johnson for any questions!

God asks us all to share our talents to benefit others:

1 Peter 4:10- As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God's varied grace.

1 Corinthians 12:4-6 Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; and there are varieties of service, but the same Lord; and there are varieties of activities, but it is the same God who empowers them all in everyone.

Submitted by
The Social Events Committee

PARISH NURSE BOARD REPORT

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

Covid hit in March and changed the way we could carry out many Parish Nursing programs. I did a lot more phone calls and cards to parishioners.

I still send cards to many throughout the year. These include birthday cards to all members over 75, sympathy, thank you, thinking of you, baptism, get well and new members cards.

Blood pressures were only taken in Jan and Feb so only 11 people were touched with this program. 150 personal contacts made and 150 cards were sent.

We held only two events throughout 2020:

1. Walking program –“Route 66” with 38 participants
2. I delivered small gift bags to all the shut-ins and nursing home residents for Christmas and also to attendees of the Blue Christmas Service.
3. The Blue Christmas service was taped and broadcast on Facebook which did touch more people.

One parishioner was helped with Salem Funds.

Bulletin inserts are prepared and provided but used a little differently.

Monthly Grant County newspaper articles are written.

Financials:

\$ 1,500 received from American Lutheran	\$ 2,392 salary paid
\$ 1,000 from Parkview Methodist	\$ <u>93</u> other expenses
\$ <u>750</u> from Donations/Gifts	\$ 2,485 Total expenses.
\$ 3250 Total Income	

Without generous donors, we would be going backwards financially. 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: Elaine Will, Jackie Smith, Betty Torness, and Patti Frazee.

Submitted by Diana Dirksen, Parish Nurse

PIECE CORPS QUILTERS REPORT

Despite the pandemic, 2020 was a busy year. At first, the quilters continued to quilt from home. Later, following COVID protocols, they did start meeting in the Fellowship Hall. This meant working at separate, well-spaced tables. They wore masks and did not stay, following their sessions, for coffee.

The quilters meet on the 2nd and 4th Tuesday of each month at 9 am in the fellowship hall. They can always use additional quilters and (non-quilter) helpers. All are welcome!

- 80 quilts sent to LWR (Lutheran World Relief).
- 4 quilts given to graduating High School Seniors.
- 8 quilts given to babies and children baptized.
- 4 quilts sent to the LSS Beacon Center for Youth in Aberdeen.
- 96 quilts in total were distributed in 2020.

Quilts were placed on the pews as we returned to in-service worship in July to help designate where to sit. Quilt Sunday was held in October. The quilts displayed on this special Sunday were then sent to LWR.

The quilters would welcome gently used sheets and 4 yard cuts of plain fabric for quilt backings.

Submitted by Betty Torness

LUTHERANS OUTDOORS IN SOUTH DAKOTA



2020

CONGREGATIONAL REPORT

Lutherans Outdoors in South Dakota welcomes all to explore and experience Christ's love in community and creation.

The year 2020 may not have allowed Lutherans Outdoors to share four beautiful ministry sites with you, but it has not stopped Lutherans Outdoors from continuing its mission. Lutherans Outdoors is still a vibrant, meaningful ministry that will continue to provide life-giving and faith-growing experiences for people of all ages for years to come.

PROGRAM

On March 13, 2020, the Lutherans Outdoors' Board of Directors made a decision to stop all programming at our camp sites for a 10-week period. On April 7, 2020, the Board of Directors made the decision to cancel the summer program at Outlaw Ranch, Joy Ranch, NeSoDak, and Klein Ranch. **This was the right decision, yet very difficult.**

The empty camps continued in this way for the rest of the year, except for some horse riding programs at Joy Ranch and some family rentals at Outlaw and NeSoDak. It will continue to be quiet during the first months of 2021.

Lutherans Outdoors found several ways to keep the relational ministry happening last summer through successful special event fundraisers. Klein Ranch had many supporters participate in the Adopt-A-Horse program. Joy Ranch held special drive-thru Chef Nights. NeSoDak had a fun Road Runner 5K Run/Walk. Outlaw Ranch offered a Thursday night Concert Series featuring Family Camp musicians from past years with a special Christmas Concert in December.

We look with optimism and excitement to Summer 2021! Lutherans Outdoors is moving forward in providing summer camp programs at a 60% capacity for the summer of 2021. We are hopeful that retreats and gatherings can begin again this fall. It will be wonderful to hear the laughter and music and life that has been missing for too long.

We hope that your congregation can feel safe at camp and allow Lutherans Outdoors to provide an important and much needed faith-growing experience called Bible Camp for members of all ages. **We will see you at camp!**

FINANCIAL NEED

During the course of our need to cancel summer camp and not host retreat groups, Lutherans Outdoors lost approximately 1.7 million dollars of anticipated income. The loss of revenue will continue into 2021 with the hope that revenue streams can begin again with summer programs---but they are not guaranteed.

Thus, there has been a great need for financial help from our ministry donors. And many, many of them did indeed make wonderful financial contributions to help fill the revenue need. Lutherans Outdoors also was able to receive a Federal PPP loan.

But the financial need is still great and we will be making a large financial ask during 2021 through our **Keep The Campfires Burning Appeal**. Your congregation will be receiving and sharing information on how you can make a vital decision to help Lutherans Outdoors continue to be a strong ministry through a generous donation.

Thank you for making our campfires burn bright into the future with your positive response to this appeal.





**ONE
PERSON**
can make
an impact.



2020 Annual Report to Congregations Life Stories Take Shape at LSS

LSS helps to transform the lives of people of all ages, faiths, races and economic status with professional, confidential and affordable services. With vital services offered statewide, LSS touched the lives of those we serve 38,099 times last year. LSS is where life stories take shape. We strive to care for, support and strengthen those in need, bringing clarity, stability, family and support to people of all ages, families of all kinds and communities of all sizes.



*"I honestly don't know what we would be doing without LSS. The extra bit of normalcy is what matters most right now (COVID-19 pandemic). If my daughter didn't have routine, I think she would be more scared or confused about what is happening."
– first responder parents of children at LSS Childcare & Education Services*

LSS has assisted with **4,184 ADOPTIONS SINCE 1920**. We are ready for a second century of service.

The COVID-19 pandemic created many challenges. LSS has reacted quickly, safely and compassionately to offer many of our services using telehealth technology. It is a good alternative for individuals and families experiencing overwhelming stress and anxiety associated with separation and isolation.

Clients receiving outpatient counseling experienced a **23%** reduction in symptoms from the first session to the fourth session.

LSS continues to improve its capacity to deliver trauma-informed care. **91%** of youth in Psychiatric Residential Treatment and **83%** of youth in Foster Care showed a reduction in trauma symptoms upon discharge.

85% of clients who received financial counseling reported reduced stress after their session. **88%** of clients participating in a debt management plan successfully completed their payments.

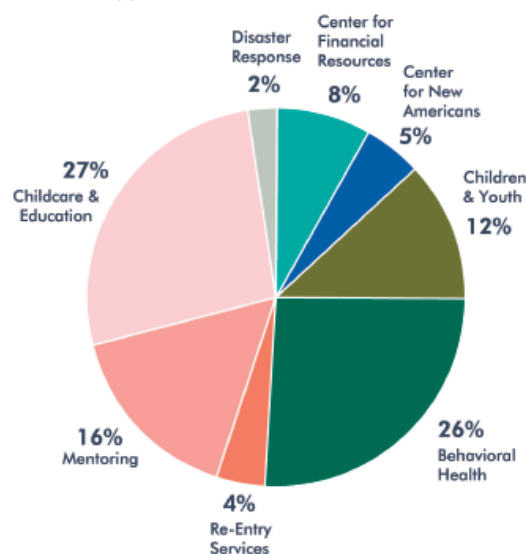
100% of the residents of the New Alternatives Intensive Independent Living Services improved their independent living skills and improved their overall wellness and health.

Youth who participate in the Arise Shelter Care are successful. **90%** of youth are discharged to safe and stable housing.

For 100 years, LSS has not just been about looking at one person and trying to help them with their situation, but coming from a bigger, more holistic picture. It's not just one person's life today, it's about what do we do to make things better into the future, for other people.

Betty Oldenkamp
President and CEO

How Your Gift is Used



Nominations for ALC Council

Dave Bergan

Ryan Gruba

Heather Zinter

Amanda Grabow

Nominations for Nominating Committee
