



2019

Annual Report | American Lutheran Church



TABLE OF CONTENTS

Message from Presiding Bishop Eaton	pg. 03
Message from Bishop Hagmaier	pg. 04
Annual Meeting Agenda	pg. 05
Pastor's Report	pg. 06
Pastoral Acts 2019	pg. 08
Statistics	pg. 08
2019 Annual Meeting Minutes	pg. 09
2019 Special Meeting Minutes	pg. 10
President's Report	pg. 11
Stewardship and Finance Committee Report	pg. 12
Worship and Evangelism Committee Report	pg. 13
Property and Management Committee Report	pg. 14
Youth and Education Committee Report	pg. 15
Christian Education Report	pg. 16
ALC Preschool Report	pg. 17
WELCA Report	pg. 18
WELCA Treasurer's Report	pg. 18
Thrivent Board Report	pg. 19
ALC Event Committee Report	pg. 19
Piece Corps Report	pg. 20
Parish Nurse Report	pg. 20
2019/2020 Budget Report	pg. 21
ALC Council Ballot	pg. 24



A message from ELCA Presiding Bishop Elizabeth Eaton

Dear friends in Christ,

Stepping out in faith can be difficult. Martin Luther did it in 1517. The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America did it at the 2019 Churchwide Assembly. This church can be bold and daring because of our scriptural and Lutheran confessional understandings. Is it easy?

No. Do we always get it right? Probably not. Where we are in error, may God correct us.

The cross is our center. Faith, grace and Scripture alone are our guides. We are church. We are compelled by the gospel and our understanding that in Christ we have been set free to love and serve the neighbor. This loving and serving of our neighbor alongside courageous and faithful leaders is what offers hope to congregations.

Over the past 18 months we have made significant strides in our work on congregational vitality. This church has multiplied its efforts and leveraged its resources to enhance vitality in congregations. Our vision continues to evolve around strengthening our relationships with God, each other and the neighbors we serve. In this way we are addressing both local and global issues by being present in our own community and proactive with issues in the broader church.

This presence is made possible in significant ways through your giving of time, talents and financial resources to our work together. The success of our recent campaign, Always Being Made New: The Campaign for the ELCA, reflects the increasing

support for existing and new ministries that serve our communities here at home and others around the globe. Through regular, special and legacy gifts, \$250 million was given to support God's work. Through the spiritual practice of giving, we both acknowledge receiving God's gifts and share in God's generosity by passing on a portion to others. Together we are doing God's work in ways that we could not do otherwise.

As your congregation plans work for the coming year, I hope you will be both bold and daring, remembering God provides and desires abundant life for all. May you continue supporting God's work together with a spirit of solidarity, collaboration and generosity. We are all partners in the gospel, believing in Jesus Christ crucified and risen for the life of the world.

Stepping out in faith together,

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

"So if anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation: everything old has passed away; see, everything has become new!" —2 Corinthians 5:17



Friends in Christ,

Grace and peace to you in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit!

Little did I know last year, at this time, as I was writing my annual pastor's report to the congregation where I served as the administrative pastor that this year, I would be writing an annual report to all congregations of the South Dakota Synod as the Bishop. Now, a little over 120 days into this new call, I am still filled with a deep sense of gratitude for having been granted this humbling opportunity. Thank you for your trust, grace, and support.

Looking at the life of the synod in 2019, I would like to thank Bishop Emeritus David Zellmer and his associates, Bishop Bill Tesch and Deacon Susan Marone once again for their fine leadership the past twelve years. These were difficult times for the church, but your previous administration did an outstanding job in maneuvering through the difficulties and setting a new course for being church in South Dakota.

I hope to continue this legacy of excellence in leadership. Therefore I called two very gifted associates to lead with me. Pastor Renee Splichal Larson accepted the position for Candidacy, Congregation, and Rostered Minister Accompaniment and Pastor Jonathan Steiner accepted the call to serve as the synod's Director for Evangelical Mission and Associate to the Bishop for Outreach and Stewardship.

For the first time in our synod's history, we will be having staff representation in Rapid City. Pastor Jonathan Steiner's office in Rapid City will be located at "The Garage", an office co-op in downtown Rapid City. When in Rapid, stop on over and check it out!

This Fall, my staff and I traveled the state to stop in all seven conferences for our "Listen, Learn and Care" events where we listened to your joys and challenges as we are being church in South Dakota together. We also learned from each other and gathered insight to determine how we can care for each other. These events were vital for the direction of our work together over the next five years. Please send a strong representation to the **synod assembly at Our Savior's in Sioux Falls on June 4-6, 2020** to hear about the future of how we are church together in South Dakota and around the world.

I am also delighted to invite you to join the celebration of the 50th anniversary of the ordination of women, the 40th anniversary of the ordination of women of color, and the 10th anniversary of the ordination of our LGBTQIA+ siblings. Please take advantage of the many opportunities commemorating these historic milestones throughout 2020.

Last but not least, I would like to thank you for your faithfulness to the Gospel and it's proclamation. As our rural areas are shrinking, our agricultural communities are facing serious difficulties from this past year. Even though our state is seeing these challenges, in the midst of death, decline, and decay, you continue to faithfully proclaim the good news of Christ's death and resurrection. Thank you! God is faithful and with us always.

To God be the glory,

Bishop Constanze Hagmaier
South Dakota Synod, ELCA

**Annual Meeting Agenda
January 26, 2020**

- **Call to Order**
- **Litany and Opening Prayer (From ELCA Churchwide Office) - On Screen**
- **Pastor's Report**
- **Secretary's Report**
 - **Minutes from January 27, 2019 Annual Meeting**
 - **Minutes from May 19, 2019 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 2020 Budget**
- **Other New Business**
- **Adjournment /Blessing**



Pastor's Report – 2019

“So then, just as you received Christ Jesus as Lord, continue to live your lives in Him, rooted and built up in Him, strengthened in faith as you were taught, and overflowing with thankfulness.” - Colossians 2:6-7

Rooted in Christ, Growing in Faith was the theme chosen for the 2019-2020 program year. I invite you to think about that tree as we reflect on the blessings we enjoyed together here at American Lutheran Church this past year.

Roots

Our roots are in Christ Jesus, our Savior and Lord. We nurture that relationship through Worship, Bible Study, Sunday School, Confirmation, and Youth Group.

- We gather weekly in worship to hear the Word, to celebrate Holy Communion, and to be together as the family of God in this place. We are blessed with a wide variety of musicians who provide leadership for us each time we worship. Our average worship attendance increased to 182 people per Sunday this year.
- There are a few ways members gather for Bible Study. We have a weekly women's group (10 am on Wednesdays) and a weekly men's group (8 am on Thursdays) that I help lead. The Peace Circle meets on the first Tuesday of each month at noon. A new group began this year called "Wine, Women and the Word." This group of women have been meeting once a month on a Sunday evening for Bible Study and fellowship. Members were also invited to take part in a daily Bible Reading during Lent that was published on Facebook.
- Sunday School continues to be a bright spot in our growing congregation with now over 100 students enrolled. This is a vital part of our ministry as we teach these children the foundations of our faith and help them understand God's love for them.
- I enjoy my time together with the Confirmation Students and the Youth Group. Eight students are currently in the Confirmation Program as we study the Bible this year. Nine students were Confirmed this fall and transitioned to being members of the Youth Group. There are now about 12 active Youth Members when we gather each month for food, fun, and devotions.

Trunk

The trunk of our tree, as it shows in the image above, is our church building. This is the place that provides the beautiful space for the ministry we do.

- Our building not only provides space for our ministry, but is also a gift for others as it is utilized in many ways throughout the week. The ALC Preschool is filled to capacity and provides quality, faith-based education to 27 three and four year olds, four days a week. Lutheran Social Services continues to utilize a couple rooms to provide much need mental health services to those in need in our community. Our hallways provide a smooth, warm place for many to come and walk during the winter months.

- Our building also needs to be cared for. A few big projects this year included sealing and striping to finish the parking lot project, replacing the Sanctuary Lights with new LED fixtures, and replacing the water heater that serves the Kitchen. Thank you for your gifts that made these projects possible.

Leaves

As we talked about during the fall, the leaves on our tree are the people who give life to this congregation and ministry. We are blessed to be a growing, vibrant congregation and it is because of all of you. Thank you!

- A new Church Directory was published this year to celebrate the people of our congregation and to help us get to know one another better.
- A new Event Committee held two gatherings with the hopes of building community among our members.
- A new ALC App was developed this last year and launched in December. Thank you to Matt and Nicole Scott for all of their help in the background to get the app set up. The App provides a new Communication tool for everyone. We are still learning about it and will continue to add to it in the coming year.
- Countless number of people share their gifts throughout the year to make this ministry happens – from lectors and Communion Servers, to Special Musicians and Sunday School teachers, and from plant waterers and money counters, to fellowship food providers and funeral helpers. The list could go on and on and I am sure I would not be able to name everything or everyone. So I will just say a great big “Thank You!” to all of you for all that you did this past year. It is appreciated!
- We also thank you for your financial gifts and offerings this past year. We fell behind during the year, but the congregation stepped up in December and helped us end the year on good financial standing. We thank you for that. We encourage more regular giving throughout the year in 2020, so that next December we are not faced with the same budget shortfall. If we all do our part together, we can provide all that we need for our ministry here and tithe 10% of what we receive to support ministries near and far.

As the end of the theme verse states, I am “overflowing with thankfulness,” as I reflect on this past year. It is a joy to serve as your pastor and I look forward to what this new year may bring to us as a congregation. We will continue to look for ways to deepen our roots in the faith of Jesus Christ, strengthen our trunk as we care for this beautiful building, and brighten our world with the leaves on our tree that share their gifts and the light and love of God.

Thanks be to God!

Pastor Justin Neugebauer

Pastoral Acts 2019

Baptism

Bracen Lee Grabow	February 24, 2019
Laramie Briar Steffenson	March 3, 2019
Jayce Lee Johnson	March 17, 2019
Tye Michael Schaffer	April 7, 2019
Kallie Jo Mielitz	April 14, 2019
Rhett Ryan Dunnihoo	July 28, 2019
Luke James Johnson	August 18, 2019
Carly Deb Peterson	October 6, 2019
Gracelynn Cheryl Rinehart	December 22, 2019

Confirmation (October 27, 2019)

Jackson Bohlen
Mason Cordingley
Samuel Femling
Eli Johnson
Laura Johnson
Ellie Neugebauer
Casside Seezs
Jasmine Smith
Keara Van Hoorn

Marriage

Paige Frazee & Zachary Zempel	April 27, 2019
Adam Jones & Presley O'Farrell	May 4, 2019
Corinne Kastrup & Drew Dohmann	May 25, 2019
Dustin Prisinger & Lizzy Hopewell	June 29, 2019
Jordan Schlueter & Katelyn Schultz	August 24, 2019
Allison Koehler & Shane Peiker	September 28, 2019
Ciera Redlin & Corey Schwinger	November 9, 2019
Malinda Thiele & Justin Kohn	November 16, 2019

Funeral

Elaine Marie Aden	March 11, 2019
Rev. Dale Gilbert Seffrood	April 10, 2019
Orrin "Shorty" Anderson	April 29, 2019
Geraldine Mae Hansen	May 31, 2019
Kenneth Keller	June 5, 2019
Ron Bjerke	July 15, 2019
Jerry Berge	September 9, 2019
Harry Kohn (Burial)	September 21, 2019
Sam Kasuske (Burial)	October 12, 2019
Cheryl Ann Pauli	October 19, 2019

First Communion (April 18, 2019)

Taylor Anderson
 Zadie Frederiksen
 Fischer Hawley
 Pierce Mathiason
 Tye Schaffer
 Avery Schuneman
 Peyton Van Hoorn

Church Statistics

	<u>2015</u>	<u>2016</u>	<u>2017</u>	<u>2018</u>	<u>2019</u>
Baptized Members	878	892	896	954	953
Average Weekly Attendance	184	172	169	178	182
% Attending Worship	21%	19%	19%	19%	19%
Average Lenten Attendance	77	72	89	89	106
Christmas Eve	470	474	398	392	443

**American Lutheran Church
Annual Meeting Minutes
January 27, 2019 10:00 a.m.**

The annual meeting of American Evangelical Lutheran Church was called to order by Dr. Kevin Bjordahl, Council President. There being no additions to the meeting agenda, it stands as printed. Pastor Justin Neugebauer led the congregation in a short litany.

Dr. Bjordahl introduced the current council members in attendance at the meeting and thanked them for their service.

A motion by Jeanne Krueger was made to approve the minutes of the 2018 Annual Meeting and the June 2018 Special Congregational Meeting, second by Carol Kirchberg. Motion passed.

Pastor's Report: Pastor Justin Neugebauer mentioned a few highlights from his Pastor's Report. He thanked the entire congregation for welcoming him and his family into the church and community, he also thanked those who helped them with the move in July. Highlights of his ministry here include: 1) Music and the variety of music at worship; 2) Families and young families in the congregation; 3) Children, active and enthusiastic; 4) Preschool, where he visits weekly; 5) Confirmation, he is working with a new program and students are also attending Sunday School with a new curriculum; 6) Youth group – the "God Squad" is meeting monthly and the program is growing; 7) Youth Ministry Grant – applied for in partnership with Aberdeen and Moberly churches, will be used to sponsor youth ministry events along the Highway 12 corridor. 8) Pastor also noted two opportunities to help shape the leadership of the SD Synod, with the Conference Assembly on Feb. 24 and the Synod Assembly May 31-June 1. The Synod Assembly will face the task of electing a new bishop, as Bishop Zellmer is not eligible for reelection. Anyone interested in being a delegate to either conference should contact Pastor.

President's Report: Dr. Bjordahl noted key items within his President's Report. The major change was the completion of the call process and calling and installing Pastor Justin. He also noted the shingling projects and maintenance and upgrades of our facility and commented on the growth of the church as a whole.

Committee Reports: There were no questions or corrections to these reports.

A motion was made by Doug Fraasch and seconded by Mark Granquist to accept all the reports. Motion passed.

Nominating Committee presented their slate of candidates, Heidi Wellnitz, Lynn Hardy, Nancy Hansen and Peg Dohrer, for 3 year terms on the Council. There were no nominations from the floor. It was moved by Rudy Nef, second by Tom Schuneman, to accept the slate of candidates. Motion passed.

Dr. Bjordahl asked for nominations/volunteers for the nominating committee for 2020. Sheila Myrum, Amber Scriver, Kay O'Farrell and Tom Schuneman volunteered, and will be joined by two outgoing Council members. It was moved and seconded to accept these names for the nominating committee, motion passed.

At this time, lights in the sanctuary flickered, and led to a brief update on upcoming property projects, which will include updates to the lighting in the sanctuary.

Treasurer's Report and Adoption of the 2019 Budget: Dr. Bjordahl noted that expenses were less than budgeted for 2018, which was good because income was also down. Rich Krueger moved to accept the Treasurer's Report and Adopt the 2019 Budget as proposed, second by Doug Fraasch. A couple of questions were asked and answered.

The 2019 Budget was approved.

New Business:

Constitution: The first vote of the revised Constitution was held at the Special Meeting in June 2018. Ron Boe moved to accept the Constitution, as presented in June 2018, second by Jeanne Krueger. Motion passed. Constitution is ratified.

By-Laws: The bylaws define what we do to comply with our Constitution. These bylaws have been reviewed and updated, and the Council recommends approval. Bylaws are included in today's meeting materials. A couple of typographical errors were noted and corrected. Doug Fraasch moved the bylaws be approved as amended, second by Lynn Hardy. Bylaws are approved.

Church Parsonage: Council is asking for motion to empower them to discuss, negotiate and finalize sale of the parsonage to Pastor Justin and Pam Neugebauer. Council did hire an official appraisal of the property in the fall of 2018. Motion by Lynn Hardy, second by Tom Schuneman to authorized Council to proceed with potential sale. Discussion ensued regarding current costs and expense for needed improvements vs selling and providing Pastor with a housing allowance. It was suggested that any cash from purchase be placed into a dedicated account to offset the housing allowance. The motion to authorize the Council to proceed with the potential sale passed unanimously.

Thanks were given for all the Council's work this year. The meeting was closed with a blessing by Pastor Justin. The meeting was adjourned.

**Respectfully submitted,
Mary Bjordahl, Acting Secretary**

SPECIAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING MINUTES

5-19-19 Congregational meeting minutes

Meeting was called to order at 1003 by Council President Bryan Johnson. Johnson presented the Sanctuary Lighting Project overview and that the that the council needs congregational approval to spend over 10% of the current year budget. This lighting project has come up because parts in the dimmer rack have failed and replacement parts are not available. The lighting system we have is no longer supported by the manufacturer and is obsolete due to the technology evolution the last 15 years. The bulbs are getting harder to find and it is labor intensive for us to change the bulbs, most of the pews need to be moved to get access. The lights are currently working after wiring changes made by a contractor to allow us on and off use using a circuit breaker. This is not a long-term solution. Property committee was assigned the project and have put forth a lot of effort to bring a recommendation to the council. The council approved their recommendation and is seeking congregational approval. This project includes replacing all the light fixtures in the sanctuary with a new fixture that is very similar in shape, color and size to what we have today. With the fixtures and labor to install the project is slated for \$59,000.00 and we would like to start in July or as soon as possible. Are there any questions? Seeing none the council is seeking a motion allowing the council to allocate the funds as necessary and start a capital campaign for the funding of the sanctuary lighting project. Motion moved by Lynn Mass and seconded by Steve Street. Motion passed unanimously by a show of hands.

**Submitted Respectfully by,
Craig Kirchberg, Council Secretary**

COUNCIL PRESIDENT REPORT

Greetings, American Lutheran Congregation:

This year has been filled with many blessings for us, a congregation **rooted in Christ, growing in faith**. Earlier this year, Pastor introduced this theme, and it has been joyous to see how it has taken off to inspire all of our members to commit to God and our church family.

One of the first areas of growth I would like to address is regarding our Pastor. We are fortunate to have Pastor Justin, who after a full year now with our congregation, has provided leadership, excitement, new ideas, and dedication to a church that is growing with his guidance. His hours of time and love for our congregation is incredible, and the council expresses our thanks to him. We feel that he is helping us form connections with God and each other- vital elements for a community of faith. He leads every group that we have at our church with a special spirit, knowing we will grow personally in our faith through worship. Pastor serves as a welcoming guide to all of the existing and new members who have joined American Lutheran. We have grown with numerous families, single adults, and couples, and it is invigorating to see how these people are lending new ideas, talents, friendships, and volunteerism as they form relationships among our members. In addition, he has been active in involving youth, particularly middle and high school kids with fun activities such as helping with worship and fellowship, fundraising for a national youth gathering, ski trips, holiday parties, and basic dinner and devotions. It is exciting to see our young adults become active in the church again, as they are the future of our congregation.

The growth among children's faith at our church is evident when we see them singing or sharing instrumental talents during services, emptying coins into the noisy bucket, engaging in Pastor's children's sermon, participating in our fantastic Sunday School events, and joining our preschool. The council is thankful for the dedication of all of those involved with helping us guide our future congregation toward a love for Jesus and our God. The members of American Lutheran have graciously supported fundraisers such as fellowship offerings, BINGO, and the soup challenge to make opportunities available for children. Many volunteers support these activities as well- teaching Sunday School, helping with Vacation Bible School, giving that extra pan of bars, volunteering at various events and fundraisers, leading musical groups, and providing prayers for our youth. This certainly helps us root our faith as we support our next generations.

Our church has grown in terms of offering opportunities for adults for faith and fellowship as well. The new women's Bible study has provided a social event for devotions, musical groups of many styles formed this year, and fun outside-of-church fellowship opportunities such as the Pumpkin Patch event and golf outing allow our congregation members to enjoy time together. The new church directory gives us another path toward connecting with members, as do the social media outlets we have used to increase communication and welcome our neighborhood community to American Lutheran Church.

As we all know, light is imperative to growth, and the commitment our congregation made to our church lighting project is greatly appreciated. This was certainly a need due to our electrical situation, and the congregation was able to fulfill the need. In addition, as budget issues arose close to the end of 2019, and we asked you to look toward giving more, we were able to generate needed funds to make ends meet. We joined together and gave what we could, knowing that we were giving in God's name, giving toward the growth of our church, giving to our congregation so that we have a place for faith-filled opportunities, giving in respect of the love we have for each other, and giving as a **family - rooted in Christ**. The prospects for our church in the next year and beyond are great, and I, along with my fellow council members, are thankful for the blessings of 2019 and excited for the continued growth of American Lutheran in 2020.

Bryan Johnson
Council President

STEWARDSHIP & FINANCE COMMITTEE REPORT

2019 was a challenging year financially for American Lutheran. For those that were at the last annual meeting, you may remember the lights going out during the meeting. That was not long before complete failure of the lighting control system. It was unfortunate, bad timing, in that the control system was now obsolete and couldn't be replaced. That necessitated replacing the entire lighting system in the sanctuary and spending close to \$60,000 to do it. The good news is that the beauty of the sanctuary was maintained, and the new system is much more efficient with LED lights. This was quite a challenge for the budget.

The other major event impacting the budget was the sale of the parsonage. This had been discussed for years, and the timing seemed right at this time with a new pastor willing to purchase the home. As is customary, we now compensate the pastor with a housing allowance instead of maintaining a parsonage. We have income from the parsonage sale, but there will come a time when the parsonage sale money is gone, and we will continue to fund the housing allowance instead of paying utilities and upkeep of the parsonage.

Midyear the congregational giving wasn't keeping up with the expenses and the church had to borrow from the dedicated accounts. The dedicated accounts are funds that are reserved for a specific purpose, but there is a considerable amount that has no immediate need, so we were able to borrow this "internally" instead of from a bank and paying interest. Fortunately, we finished the year stronger and were able to pay back the internal loan, while still making our benevolence commitments.

Thrivent choice dollars continue to help American Lutheran. Again, we encourage members who are Thrivent members to direct their Thrivent Choice dollars to American Lutheran or to American Lutheran Preschool. Thrivent Action Cards have also been well used and very helpful. We support continued use of these. Please contact Gail or Carol if you have a project and can apply for a card or if you have used one, so we can track the impact on the budget. We thank Thrivent and the local Thrivent Board for their support of ALC.

Noisy offering continues to be strong. We took advantage of a matching program that was available for a limited time this fall and doubled a \$2000 offering from noisy offering to buy \$4000 worth of farm livestock and water wells in Africa. It's also a fun part of the service to see all the little ones going up for the noisy offering!

Getting the Church website updated and starting a Church App was also a project for 2019. That has been accomplished and is up and running. Minor modifications are still being done. Many thanks to Matt and Nicole Scott for their work and technical expertise in getting the App running and coordinating with the church website.

We encourage members to give any way they can. ACH services for automatic payment can be arranged through your bank. Contact the office if you need help setting this up. The App and website have giving options utilizing electronic payments if anyone chooses to do that or is inspired for an extra gift.

American Lutheran is blessed to have a congregation with a wide variety of talents. We highly value gifts of time and talent given to ALC. If you feel you're not able to contribute more money, then consider donating more of your time and talent in service to the church.

We thank the members of American Lutheran for their generous support in 2019 and encourage members to consider stepping up their level of giving in 2020.

Submitted by Stewardship & Finance Committee members:

Kevin Bjordahl, Bryan Johnson, and Lynn Hardy

WORSHIP, EVANGELISM & OUTREACH COMMITTEE REPORT

2019 was an active year for American Lutheran Church. Our year began with the traditional activities our congregation enjoys being a part of annually. We are fortunate to have volunteers to continue traditions that we all enjoy.

Music – Several members contribute wonderful musical talents. This includes the organists, pianists, instrumentalists, soloists, small groups, Note-a-Bell Choir and Manna Praise Band.

AV Booth – Gary Wellnitz, David Gulck and Kay O’Farrell enhance our worship services with screen graphics and worship service information. The services are broadcast live on the radio and by time-delay on the local TV channels. DVD’s of the service are delivered weekly for viewing at Avantara.

Acolytes –Confirmation Students fill this worship role for our services.

Goldfish Servers – The younger youth hand out goldfish crackers during communion.

Quiet Bags and ALC Nursery – Continues to be a much utilized feature for the children.

Altar Guild – This group takes care of communion on a weekly basis along with changing the paraments as scheduled, caring for and cleaning the altar area, and maintaining candles.

Shut-in Communion – This dedicated group takes communion to shut-ins and home-bound once a month.

Bulletins – Delivered or mailed to shut-in and home-bound members each week.

Vespers Services – Pastor Justin conducts Sunday Vespers at St Williams, Wellshire/Park Place and Avantara as part of the Milbank Area Ministerial Association rotation. The ALC preschool often attends Thursday Vespers Services. The December sing-along was successful.

LIA (Love-In-Action) The LIA teams assist during the worship service every Sunday. They also help with funerals, Lent suppers, weddings, special services and events.

Funeral Committee – Doug and LaVonne Fraasch, Nancy Hanson and the funeral committee are integral in organizing for funerals and assisting LIA Teams with funeral duties.

Wedding Committee – Kathy Mathiason and Karla Wellnitz continue to lead our Wedding Committee.

Decoration Committee and Plant/Greenery Committees - Work diligently to decorate our church.

Movie Night – Family and Grown-up’s movies are held monthly during the school year.

Meals on Wheels – Members supported this community service in June and November.

5th Quarter – Continued to be held following home football games.

Jack and Jill Park – Cleanup, upkeep and trees were planted for this adopted city park.

Lutheran Social Services (LSS) – Continues to utilize our facilities for counseling appointments.

Boy Scouts under the ALC Charter – Meet on Monday nights at the church.

Prayer Chain—Is used to reach out to members when support is needed. Prayer requests can also now be made on the church ALC APP.

Quilters and WELCA – Made and delivered 56 quilts, 80 personal care kits, and 12 school kits to Lutheran World Relief. They created quilts for 5 graduating High School Seniors and 9 Baptisms.

God’s Work. Our Hands. – Was successful with church facility and community improvements.

Prayer Shawls - 21 shawls were made and distributed.

Library – Books are available in the library for all. Janelle Kelly (church librarian) also rotates the books on the cart in the narthex for people to look at and take home if they choose.

New Member Sundays – Were held on May 5 for 19 new members and on November 10 for 14 new members.

Grant County Christian Service Council/Feeding SD Food Giveaway - Brenda Maass and Dave Zinter are the ALC representatives. ALC volunteers (including confirmation youth) assist.

Graduation Sunday - High School graduates were recognized.

Fellowship of Christian Athletes – Held at the high school, Dave Bergan leads for ALC.

Float Committee – float created to represent ALC in the homecoming parade.

Event Committee – was started to enhance fellowship activities in the church. A golf outing was held in August and an autumn fellowship event was held at the Big Stone Pumpkin Patch in October.

Organ Recital – was held on December 20th. Dillion Swanson presented the concert. A free will offering was collected for Lutheran Outdoors.

Submitted by Worship, Evangelism & Outreach Committee Members:

LaVonne Fraasch, Peg Dohrer, Nancy Hansen

PROPERTY & MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE REPORT

Our committee is responsible for maintaining the congregation's properties and contracts, including the church building and parsonage properties. We would like to thank everyone who gave their time and talents to help with projects. Thanks also to everyone that helped on God's Work, Our Hands Sunday. You all are very much appreciated. Other than general everyday upkeep and repairs, here are the highlights for 2019.

In February there was new weather-stripping installed on the east hallway door.

In July the entire parking lot was cleaned, cracks filled with polymeric rubber and then a sealcoat was applied. This should prolong the life of both parking areas by several years. Striping to both parking lots was also done.

In August the parsonage was sold to Pastor Neugebauer's family.

On September 15, with volunteers from our church members, all the center sections of pews were removed for the lighting project. The old system control panel burned out and we had several bulbs burned out. The components of the control panel were obsolete, and the bulbs are getting very expensive and hard to find. All new LED fixtures were installed with area dimming switches and control programs. This was the best long-term solution. The LED should give us longevity and energy savings. The pews were reinstalled on September 21.

We have always had a bat problem in the church. When the electricians were working in the attic space installing wiring for the lighting, they said there were quite a few bats in the rafters. Since bats can carry diseases, which is a liability, it was decided to hire a contractor that deals in eradicating bats. They arrived on August 23 and sealed all cracks on the church big enough for a bat to enter. At that time, they installed one-way valves to allow all the bats to exit and not re-enter. After 6 weeks they returned and removed the valves and sealed the holes. They gave us a 20 year warranty on their job. The electricians were in the attic in late September and stated they saw no bats.

On September 8, God's Work, Our Hands Sunday volunteers trimmed all the evergreens up off the ground and trimmed trees. There was a lot of general cleaning and upkeep done both inside and outside of the church.

In October there was a new security mailbox installed at church. The post office box rent savings will pay for the box in a little over a year.

In October the water heater that supplies the hot water to the kitchen quit. The parts would have been expensive and due to the age of the water heater and time restrains for events at church it was decided to replace it with a new one.

Some projects that will need to be addressed in the future:

- Building siding (peeling paint and pieces falling off) will need to be repainted or replaced.
- Carpet replacement
- HVAC units
- AV booth recording camera

Submitted by Property & Management Committee members:

Jerry Kathman, Rich Krueger, and Craig Kirchberg

YOUTH & EDUCATION COMMITTEE REPORT

Our Sunday School is going strong. We have had an increase in students (105) that participate on Sunday mornings. What a wonderful sight to see the eager to learn faces each week. Thank you to Amy Bass our ALC Education Coordinator for her work on finding curriculum that everyone can relate to and see it in everyday circumstances. The Christmas Program was awesome with great participation.

Vacation Bible School is always a great time with many attending.

Lutheran Outdoors Summer Bible Camps were attended by 10 youth from ALC.

Susan Leddy attended camp in the Black Hills. Susan did the nursing for a week of camp.

There were families that also attended Grandparent camp at Joy Ranch.

Confirmed:

There were 9 freshman confirmed October 27, 2019.

Confirmation:

Confirmation is attended by 8 youth in grades 7 and 8. They are becoming more acquainted with each other as the year progresses. Some activities that have been carried out: Help with Feeding South Dakota food giveaway, Souper Bowl of Caring.

Youth Group:

Youth group meets monthly for a bible study and activity. February they went to Watertown to Escaped, March was a ski trip, July a Valley Fair trip, September they enjoyed a campfire and yard games. October, they carved pumpkins and had a booth at Treat Street for Halloween.

Adult Education:

Women's Bible Study meets every Wednesday at Wellshire/Park Place Assisted Living at 10:00 am. Meeting at the Assisted Living allows ALC member residents of both Avantara and Wellshire to attend.

Men's Bible Study continues to meet on Thursday mornings at 8:00 am. This group is attended by 8 – 10 men. These men help plan and be part of many events throughout the year. One large event is the Pancake Breakfast to raise money for Summer Bible Camp scholarships.

A new Women's Bible Study "Wine Women & the Word" was started the fall of 2019. They meet in homes of members. All women are welcome.

"Praying for our 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 has been a WELCA program in the past but is now expanded to include the entire congregation. Contact Marilyn Nef if you are interested in this program.

Page Turners Book Club meets the third Thursday of each month at 5 pm. Contact Patti Frazee for information.

Submitted by Youth & Education Committee members:

Carol Kirchberg, Rhonda Christopherson, Heidi Wellnitz

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION COORDINATOR REPORT

2019 Sunday School-Education

In January of 2019, the Sunday School kids met with Lutheran Outdoors Executive Director Paul Hanson about opportunities available for bible camp in South Dakota. Many children took advantage of camps during the summer!

February brought a "Jesus Loves Me" Valentine party on February 10th. The kids enjoyed games and crafts in the Fellowship Hall.

March concluded the "How to be a Superhero" curriculum that the Sunday School students were studying. The Sunday School presented special music during a church service.

In April, "Resurrection Eggs" lessons covered the Easter Story for Sunday School children. Third Graders participated in a class to learn about their upcoming first communion and made unleavened bread with Pastor Justin.



Sunday School children sang during the service on Palm Sunday and then enjoyed an Easter party with egg hunt following the service. Seven third graders received their first communion on Maundy Thursday.

In May, the kids celebrated the last day of Sunday School with a year-end party. They had fun with many team-building games and enjoyed popsicles!



Vacation Bible School took place July 29-31 and the theme was "ReNew, The Green VBS." It taught how to grow in faith, have fun, and change the world. Each day, the kids explored



Jesus' Parable of the Sower with activities that helped the kids learn how to care for God's creation. All children, ages 3 to 6th grade, were welcome to attend. Sixty-five kids attended and enjoyed supper each night, about 25 more kids than last year!

September kicked off the 2019-20 year of Sunday School. The kids had a chance to work on the prayer garden, visit their classrooms and meet teachers. The kids contributed their handprints to the



new banner hanging in the Sunday School wing. We followed "Autumn Leaves, God Makes all Things Beautiful" for our lessons and kept with the theme "Rooted in Christ, Growing in Faith."

In October 3-year-olds and 3rd graders were presented with Bibles during the church service. Sunday Schoolers studied different areas of focus such as The Lord's Prayer, The Ten Commandments and Books of the Bible. The first through second grade classes were instructed in goldfish serving and started serving as worship assistants. The Sunday Schoolers performed musical selections during services.



November was filled with practice for the Christmas program, "Tree-Mendous Love...From the Manger to the Cross." The kids shared music on New Member Sunday. The kids worked hard to present a wonderful and humorous program filled with fantastic music in December! We have 105 (90 last year) kids currently on the Sunday School roster! Thank you for all the support for our youth!

Submitted by Amy Bass

AMERICAN LUTHERAN PRESCHOOL REPORT

The ALC Preschool classroom continues to be filled with great kids, energy and excitement, and much learning within the classroom walls. During the 2018-19 School Year, we had 20 students in our classes. Our student enrollment remains at an all-time high with 27 students enrolled in our program for the 2019-2020 school year (13 students in the 3's Class & 14 students in the 4's Class).

The winter months of 2019 were quite tough with very cold temps and snow, resulting in many snow days and late starts. In February '19, we took a field trip to Johnson Dentistry to learn about taking care of our teeth. Students who sold a certain amount of Hardee's Bucks were invited to a Rewards Party for their efforts in our fundraiser. In April, a special someone, parents, or grandparents were invited to our classroom for the "M is for Mine" event to participate in activities we do in our classroom and enjoyed a snack in the Fellowship Hall. At the end of the school year, we took a ride on the yellow bus by DeFea Transportation to both the Children's Museum in Brookings and the Bramble Park Zoo in Watertown. To culminate the yearend, students enjoyed various mini field trip outings in our local area, with transportation provided by the Milbank Community Transit. Our Spring Program was showcased with many in attendance, followed by fellowship afterwards.

Mid-August, new students and their families were greeted and welcomed during our Preschool Open House by our current staff. The current staff, Nicole Scott (Teacher), Brittany Bray (Teacher Assistant), and Rebecca Welberg (Classroom Helper) continued in their capacities to lead the preschool program for the 2019-20 school year. We were also fortunate to have High School Cadet teachers who came into our classroom one period of their day to help in any capacity they were asked. Cadets included: Katie Wollschlager (2018-2019), along with Jaecy Engebretson & Danica Schulte (2019-2020).

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 was taught, along with correlating songs, share stories, art activities, and having some time with Pastor Justin. Technology continues to be implemented with the use of the interactive whiteboard (Promethean Board) and Ipads. We were very fortunate to go on a few field trips in the fall including the Pumpkin Patch, with our gratitude to the Milbank Community Transit for providing transportation for all local outings. We offered our gifts of music to all the senior care facilities during the holidays (Valentine's, Easter, Halloween, Thanksgiving, and Christmas) with both classes partaking at various times. The week prior to Thanksgiving, students shared their energy, smiles, and music to a large crowd at the Sunday morning worship service. Families and congregation members enjoyed a variety of delicious soups at our annual Souper Sunday Challenge fundraiser following the service. Our local church Thrivent Board graciously matched \$1000 towards our Soup Challenge Fundraiser.

We continue to be thankful for the generosity and gratitude of our church members, and other Thrivent members, thru their designation of Thrivent Choice Dollars (\$3,724) and/or allowing us to utilize one's \$250 Action Team Grant card. In 2019, Action Team Grant Cards used: \$1000 for Events & \$3000 within the classroom for projects, supplies, etc. In addition, monetary donations, attending/supporting our fundraisers, giving memorials or donating towards preschool financial scholarships, and other means (ie snack/supply donations) have all played an important role in helping provide funds and support needed for the preschool. Some of the fundraisers this past year included serving goodies during the Coffee Fellowship Hour after worship in August, in addition to our three major fundraisers of selling Hardee's Bucks (December/January), Bingo with Walking Tacos (Spring), along with the Souper Sunday Challenge (late November due to Thanksgiving). A raffle was held for a beautiful nativity set (generously donated) and proceeds raised were put towards preschool scholarships.

We are very fortunate to all those who help in small and big ways to make the preschool a success----It all adds up!

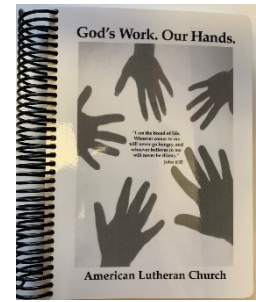
In order for our program to grow, many ways to showcase our program have been done. Ways in which we have reached out include: use of the big screen in the sanctuary, flyers hung up around the church, church bulletin, Facebook, monthly newsletter articles, displaying children's artwork, offering gifts of music to local nursing homes, performances, visitors seeing our day in action with a peek in the door, and having volunteers come in to help with different things, 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 member Nathan Bass for his years of service on the board.

**Teacher-Nicole Scott | Teacher Assistant-Brittany Bray | Classroom Helper-Rebecca Welberg
Preschool Board Members-Becky Lambrechts, Sara Johnson, Stacy Anderson, Sara VanMeter, Rachel Kiley**

WELCA REPORT

WELCA and Peace Circle had a busy year. Several months went into producing the new ALC cookbook: **God's Work. Our Hands.** Over 1000 recipes are included in the cookbook. ALL expenses to print the cookbook were paid by Peace Circle with matching funds from the Klub supper and Thrivent Choice Dollars.



All proceeds from the sale of cookbooks will go to the ALC Youth for their 2021 Youth Gathering trip to Minneapolis.

We held our bi-annual Mother, Daughter, Sister, Friend Event in May. We used a cookbook theme to kick off sales of the books. Offerings received went to the Grant County Food Shelf and the Grant County Back Pack Program.

The Fall Retreat at NeSoDak was attended.

80 school kits were filled and 12 personal health kits packed for Lutheran World Relief as part of "God's Work. Our Hands." day in September

Our fall Mission Bake Sale was a success raising \$1,445.00 to go to LSS New Beginnings, Grant Country Food Shelf, Grant County Back Pack Program and Orphan Grain Train.

**Submitted by
Kathy Mathiason**

2019 WELCA Treasurer's Report

Balance in Account 12/31/2018	\$5,515.99	Expenses:	
Income:		School bags	87.00
Klub Supper	1,016.00	Card Nook/treasurers abounding	471.25
Thrivent	2,200.00	Conference Runners Club	256.03
Cookbook sales	5,200.00	MDF Grant Co Food Shelf	231.00
Bake Sale	1,445.00	MDF Back Pack	231.00
Card Nook	372.00	Jumbo Jack publishers	7,553.35
Circle Offering	923.75	CRU	210.00
Quilt (donations)	25.00	ALC Youth Gathering fund	2,411.00
MDF Event Offering	462.00	Grant County Area Back Pack Program (bake sale)	360.00
Runners Club	<u>256.03</u>	New Beginnings LSS (bake sale)	360.00
	11,899.78	Lutherans Outdoors (quilt donation)	100.00
		Grant County Food Shelf (bake sale)	360.00
		NESODAK	25.00
		Mother, Daughter Friend Event	342.33
		Grant Co. Review	66.00
		Prairie Cateau Conference expense	25.00
		Prairie Cateau Conference Offering	175.00
		Quilt (supplies/ shipping)	340.33
		WELCA offering	<u>308.25</u>
			13,912.54
		Quilters	849.24
		Card Nook	1,040.28
		Undesignated Fund	<u>1,615.71</u>
			3,505.23
		Balance in Account 12/31/2019	\$3,505.23

THRIVENT CHOICE BOARD REPORT

Balance January 1, 2019	14,962.69	Money Distributed:	
Choice Dollars given in 2019	4,652.00	Manna Band	184.00
Interest 2019	1.32	Bible Camp	504.00
Dollars Distributed in 2019	(9,835.56)	Education Curriculum Middle School	597.00
Balance January 1, 2020	9,780.56	T-Shirt order New Members	957.17
		Cook Books—Fundraiser for Kids	2,200.00
		Directories—New Members	530.00
		Baptismal Medallions/Engraving	305.00
		Homecoming Parade Float	100.00
		Library Books	55.00
		APP Development Church	1,500.00
		Preschool Bingo Fundraiser	1,000.00
		AV Laptops	1,902.00
		Total	9,835.45

Use of Thrivent Choice Dollars Grant Funds. All Thrivent Choice Dollars 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.

If anyone has a project they would like to request funds for, there is form at the church office to apply.

Submitted by Thrivent Board Members:

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

EVENT COMMITTEE REPORT

Greetings from the Events Committee,

We formed this committee during the spring of 2019, with the goal of providing social events for all ages that were little to no cost and did not involve a whole lot of fundraising, but rather, allowed for opportunities for our members to get to know one another through fun fellowship activities.

Our major events for the year included a golf scramble and Pumpkin Patch day.

Several adults turned out to enjoy a beautiful evening of golf, socializing, and a pot-luck meal. Everyone in attendance had a lot of fun, so please consider joining us at the next golf event. We are by no means a group of professionals!

Mark and Emily Mueller were gracious to host us at the Big Stone Pumpkin Patch for an afternoon of fun fall activities. Children through seniors enjoyed the beautiful day as well as the pot-luck supper that followed in their event barn.

We obtained financial support from Thrivent to provide for the main dishes and supplies at these events, and our committee is thankful for the Thrivent Action cards we received.

Our group has a few events in mind for the upcoming year, and we are eager to hear ideas or take on more members. Please contact Sara Johnson or Amber Scriver. Most importantly, as you see these events come up in the next year, plan on attending for a whole lot of fun together as a congregation!

Submitted by

Sara Johnson and Amber Scriver

PARISH NURSE REPORT

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

Highlights, activities, and people touched in 2019:

- I visit parishioners in the hospital, nursing homes, and in their homes.
- Cards are sent to many throughout the year. These include birthday cards to all members over 75, sympathy, thank you, baptism, get well and new members cards.
- Blood pressures are taken monthly and recorded.
- 10 new people started tracking their blood pressures in 2019
- We held four events throughout 2019:
 1. Walking program –“Through South Dakota” with over 30 participants
 2. Pink Power- Featured a panel for Breast Cancer Awareness
 3. Christmas party for all- Manger Theme
 4. I delivered small gift bags to all the shut-ins and nursing home residents
- Two parishioners were helped with Salem Funds.
- Bulletin inserts are prepared and provided.
- Monthly Grant County newspaper articles are written.

Parish Nurse Health Board Members: Elaine Will, Jackie Smith, Betty Torness, and Patti Frazee.

Financials:

\$1,500 received from American Lutheran	\$3,164 salary paid
\$1,000 from Parkview Methodist	\$ 99 other expenses
\$ 500 from Donations/Gifts	\$3,263 Total expenses
\$3,000 Total Income	

As you can see, we are going backwards, even with the generous \$500 donation. **Please prayerfully consider how this program can continue.** I enjoy being a part of both congregations’ families.

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.

Submitted by Diana Dirksen

PIECE CORPS (QUILTING GROUP)

2019 was another busy year. The Piece Corps Quilters meet on the 2nd and 4th Tuesday morning of each month at 9am. We can always use more people to help us get the quilts done. The jobs are easy - sewing, ironing, designing quilts, cutting blocks and having coffee with us.

Two members donated their Thrivent Action Cards for which we Thank You Very Much!! We used these to purchase battings and materials for senior quilts. There is always a need for fabric, thread and sheets for backs. Thanks for supporting us.

In 2019 we gave:

- 56 Quilts to Lutheran World Relief
- 2 60x80 Quilts to Fundraisers

- 9 Quilts for Baptisms
- 5 Quilts to High School Senior Graduates

- 72 Quilts Total

Submitted by Betty Torness