



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



2022 Annual Report

Annual Meeting: January 29, 2023

Christ welcomes all at American Lutheran.

**The Gospel of Jesus Christ calls us to be a welcoming community
for all people growing in faith, love, and service.**

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A MESSAGE FROM PRESIDING BISHOP ELIZABETH EATON



Dear friends in Christ,

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

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

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

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

In Christ,

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

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

(Hebrews 13:16).



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

Dear South Dakota Synod,

Grace and peace to you in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit! On behalf of the 200 partner congregations and worshipping communities in South Dakota, your two companion synods, Cameroon and Nicaragua, and your 64 synod partners across the ELCA, I would like to thank you for your partnership. Together we have faithfully shared the Gospel of Jesus Christ with “all nations” (Matthew 28:19).



Please know that your local ministry has touched people’s lives and hearts. Every item you donated to your local food ministry, every Sunday school lesson you prepared and taught, every quilt you assembled, every cup of coffee you poured at a funeral luncheon, and every other way you served your neighbor in Christ’s name has touched someone else in Christ’s name. You may not think much of it, but be assured that every kind gesture, every caring act, and every kind word is a faithful response to the faith God’s Holy Spirit ignites in you. Thank you, for living out your faith in these various ways in your local context.

Together with the 200 partner congregations and worshipping communities in the South Dakota Synod, we also continue to be able to reach even farther than anyone’s own local context, and, together, make a positive impact in Christ’s name in all parts of our Synod. Please take a look at the “Ministry Celebration” insert that was included in our annual year end mailing. It will give you a numerical snapshot of the many things we have accomplished together as the South Dakota Synod. Thank you for being a partner in this journey.

Personally, I am grateful for your support of my rural ministry emphasis. Because of your generosity and your synod council’s courage, I was able extend a call to Pastor Alan Blankenfeld to serve as the first “South Dakota Synod Rural Liaison”. This position is not funded through the synod’s mission plan but instead through your generosity and in part through “Listen God’s Calling” capital campaign resources. Because of your generosity, Pastor Alan has impacted and continues to impact rural communities in big ways. You may want to be careful if he asks you out for coffee, though, because he is known for planting and cultivating the seed of answering the call to ordained ministry.

We are also able to look back on a successful inaugural “Farm to Table Dinner,” at which we raised over \$100,000.00 for Rural Ministry support. Through these gifts, and your synod council’s support of Pastor Greg Johnson in his sabbatical project, we are now also able to offer you a free five-part study called “A Life of Faith,” which can be used in a variety of ways. You can check out the series on the synod’s webpage www.sdsynod.org. And finally, I am delighted to announce to you that, because of a generous donor, the South Dakota Synod was able to establish the first “Rural Ministry Sustainability Endowment.” As it grows, it will assure that the Gospel of new life in Christ can be shared for generations to come.

In closing, let me share with you my deep sense of gratitude for the opportunity to serve the synod as your Bishop with a deep passion for rural ministry in times such as these. I am grateful for the call, your partnership in ministry and the grace of God, which sustains us in our daily life. Thanks be to God!

Journeying with you,

Bishop Constanze Hagmaier

2022 MINISTRY CELEBRATION



Our Synod's vision of Journeying Together in Christ has continued to focus our work. We invite you to take a few moments to review the list below which celebrates some of the ministry we shared together in 2022. **Journeying together in Christ as the South Dakota Synod, in 2022 we:**

- Walked with a new start congregation, **Spirit of Hope, in Scotland, SD**, called their mission developer and found a site to worship, as they had outgrown their house.
- Continued to partner with the **McLaughlin Community Alliance Group**, a non-profit utilizing the building of Redeemer Lutheran Church for the empowerment of the community.
- Began exploration for two new potential church plants, with **Box Elder** and **Shepherd's Table in Sioux Falls**.
- Walked with the **30** people in various stages of **Candidacy** and have 3 new entrance interviews scheduled in January 2023!
- Received **9 new first call candidates**.
- Completed **28 Ministry Site Studies** and extended **41 calls!**
- Ensured that nearly every congregation has a called pastor, interim pastor, Synod Authorized Minister, or lay leader to care for God's people (thank you to all of you who are helping out with area congregations and filling in!)
- Distributed **\$60,201** through the **Seminary Debt Reduction Program**.
- Granted **\$124,290** in **scholarship funds** to seminary students plus **\$20,000** in **internship site assistance**.
- Received **\$102,000** in grants from ELCA Christian Community & Leadership.
- Distributed **37 disaster recovery micro-grants for \$18,800** to congregations in need of repairs or community relief after natural disasters. In addition, Beaver Valley Lutheran Church received **\$22,000** from Lutheran Disaster Response and **\$10,000** from Synod Storm Recovery funds for tornado recovery.
- Held a **Synod Assembly**, where we gathered again as a community to conduct the business of the synod.
- Hosted **Spring** and **Fall Theological Conferences**, where we continued to support the continuing education of our Rostered Ministers either online or in-person.
- Continued to invest in **FaithX**, a community mapping tool for congregations to see hard data about their neighborhoods and learn more about their neighbors.
- Supported the congregations and ministries of the synod through visits by synod staff, both digitally and in-person.
- Created **new synod staff** positions including a **Rural Ministry Liaison** to journey with our rural ministry sites. In the past year, the Rural Ministry Liaison has worked directly with **10 communities** and **19 congregations**.
- Held an inaugural **Farm to Table Dinner and Auction** which resulted in gifts and pledges of almost **\$100,000** to support rural ministry in South Dakota.

Thank you for all the ways you have supported the ministry of the South Dakota this past year! God has called us to be the body of Christ together, and this is an active and healthy body. We look forward to continuing our journey with you in 2023 and beyond!

Annual Meeting Agenda
January 29, 2023

- **Call to Order**
- **Litany and Opening Prayer (From ELCA Churchwide Office) - On Screen**
- **Pastor's Report**
- **Secretary's Report**
 - Minutes from January 30, 2022 Annual Meeting
- **President's Report**
- **Nominations and Election**
- **Election of Nominating Committee**

C13.02. A *Nominating Committee* of six voting members of this congregation, two of whom, if possible, shall be outgoing members of the Congregation Council, shall be elected at the annual meeting for a term of one year. Members of the Nominating Committee are not eligible for consecutive re-election. **(Copied from ALC By-Laws)**
- **Committee Reports**
 - ◇ **Stewardship and Finance Committee Report**
 - ◇ **Worship, Evangelism and Outreach Committee Report**
 - ◇ **Property and Management Committee Report**
 - ◇ **Youth and Education Committee Report**
 - ◇ **Sunday School Coordinator Report**
 - ◇ **ALC Preschool Report**
 - ◇ **Other Reports**
 - ◇ **WELCA**
 - ◇ **Thrivent Choice Board**
 - ◇ **Parish Nurse Report**
- **Treasurers Report**
- **Adoption of 2023 Budget**
- **Other New Business**
- **Adjournment /Blessing**

“The Gospel of Jesus Christ calls us to be a welcoming community for all people growing in faith, love, and service.”

The statement above was the new Mission Statement developed for our congregation by the Strategic Planning Team at the end of 2021. This statement provides guidance for all that we do together as American Lutheran Church.

- **The Gospel of Jesus Christ**

First and foremost, we are guided by the Gospel of Jesus Christ. By the promise that God sent His only Son into the world to die on a cross so that we would know forgiveness, grace, mercy, and love. Everything we do is in response to what God has already done for us. It is that Gospel promise that makes us a church and makes us different than any other organization or group you might belong to. It is that Gospel promise that gives us hope when we are hurting and fills us with peace in the chaos of the world around us.

- **Calls us to be**

We use the term “call” quite a bit in the life of the church, most often when we talk about pastors – I was called into the ministry and you extended a call to me to be the pastor of this congregation. However, it is a term that can be used for everyone. We are all called to a life of faith and to be a part of God’s work in the world. When we included this in our Mission Statement, that was our intention. To remind every member of this congregation that God has called them to be a part of this ministry, to use their gifts to share the Gospel, to be the hands and feet of God in the world. Each of us does that in our own unique way both in our occupations and in the way we live. It is great to see that in big and small ways – caring for a neighbor, making bars for funeral lunch, shoveling the sidewalk to make the church a safe place to enter, playing piano for nursing home worships, decorating the building to provide joy to others, and the list could go on and on.

- **A welcoming community for all people**

This is maybe the greatest strength we have as a congregation. We welcomed numerous new members throughout this past year and have many non-members worshipping with us and participating in our programs. When I visit with these people, most often they are here because one of you invited them! What a beautiful way to live out your faith, by sharing your love of this church and love of God with others.

Then when they are here, the members of this congregation do a wonderful job making sure they feel welcome. If someone is sitting alone at Coffee Time, it doesn’t take long and someone goes to sit with them. You bring extra change, to make sure ALL of the kids have the opportunity to participate in the noisy offering. Our new Preschool Teacher, was welcomed with open arms and invited into participation in our congregation. When young family shows up (maybe driving their toy truck across the Entry Way, as happened just this past Sunday), they are greeted with a smile and an encouraging word.

We continue to grow in worship attendance and membership numbers because of you living out this part of our mission statement to be a welcoming community for all people. Meeting them where they are at so that they may know the love, hope and peace of God!

We also open our building to various groups in the community, providing a welcoming place for people to gather. Some of the ways our building has been utilized this past year include MHS Football team suppers, MHS Education Foundation banquet, Boy Scout Troup 45, Red Cross Blood Drives, MHS Prom Banquet, community walkers, Valley Queen Christmas Party, and others.

- **Growing in faith, love, and service**

Our life of faith is never complete. I always make sure the Confirmation students hear this message before they are Confirmed. The end of Confirmation is not the end of their growing in faith, love, and service.

We are always learning and deepening our understanding of God's work in our life. That is true for all of us.

As a church, we have been growing in faith, love and service for 75 years. A milestone we celebrated this past year under the theme "This Far By Faith." It was a great day of worship, fellowship, and fun shared with our family of faith! Thank you to the Anniversary Committee members (Heather Zinter, Carolyn Giessinger, Rachel Kiley, Ruth Gulck, and Doug and LaVonne Fraasch) for their work in planning for this celebration.

Our programs help to provide opportunities for all of us to carry out this part of our Mission Statement. Weekly worship grounds our lives in the Word of God. Our Worship Attendance numbers continue to grow back to pre-pandemic levels. But we still have room to grow in our faithful attendance at Sunday Worship. We always drop significantly during the summer months and we are also seeing more and more activities being planned on Sunday mornings. Something we will need to keep aware of as we go forward.

Our Youth Programs provide education and community building opportunities for the children of our church. Please see Amy's report on the success of our Sunday School and VBS programs! I thank her for her time and effort in coordinating these programs throughout the year. Also thanks to the many volunteers who are needed to carry out these programs that pass on the faith to the next generation.

We also have some education opportunities for adults, but this is an area of possible growth in the future. If you have an interest in leading a Bible study or forming a group for study, please talk with me and I would love to work with you.

We share the love of God with the world and serve those around us in many ways. Through our quilting ministry, prayer shawl ministry, meatball ministry, and Lutheran World Relief School kits and Personal Care kits we provide for those who may be in need. Through the generosity of our offerings, we have shared nearly \$26,000 with other ministries both here in Milbank and around the world. We also care for families going through loss through our Funeral Ministry, providing our church building to members and non-members for services and serving lunches after the services to care for the families and friends. And there are numerous other ways we as a church and you as church members share the love of God and serve our neighbors each and every day.

Thank you to the Office Staff (Gail, Carol, and Emily) and our Parish Nurse (Diana) for their support of myself and the work of this church. They do so many little things that help care for the ministry we do carrying out our Mission Statement. Thank you to all of the many volunteers for their countless hours that have been given to ALC this past year. Each and every volunteer is greatly appreciated.

I look forward to where God is calling us in 2023! We are a church that is growing, active, and financially stable. And coming out of the pandemic that is a great place to be. We can now look to the future to see what the next big thing in the life of our congregation is! May God continue to bless us and keep us today and always!

Pastoral Acts 2022

Baptisms:

Lincoln Rinehart	March 6
Taves Mears	April 3
Bennett Dohman	May 22
Holland Knoll	June 19
Saylor Jones	August 7
Parker Sipe	September 18
Owen Johnson	October 2
Maddyn Harms	October 16
Reagan Frogner	November 20
Kaiya Brandt	November 27

Marriages:

Dustin Fahleen and Ashley Tilma	April 1
Hunter Pulscher and Katie Sinner	July 16 (Off-Site)
Dylan Rossow and Jessica Van Veen	September 17
Brock Gomer and Emily Ellefson	October 1

Funerals:

Linda Hall	January 29
Kay Strandvold	February 3
Marge Keller	February 19
Leslie Schmeichel (non-member)	February 21
Allen Longhenry (non-member)	March 6
Wesley Bolstad	April 15
Waneta Heaton	August 6 (Pastor Hans Sacrison)
Margaret Van Veen	August 13
Jayla Johnson	September 22
Rudy Nef	September 23
Jason Jurgens (non-member)	September 29

First Communion – April 14, 2022:

Jaxon Bear
Mason Bray
Brady Ericsson
Brielle Grabow
Sophie Gruba
Hannah Kirchberg
Archer Mathiason
Ariana Prisinger
TyLynn Wellnitz

Confirmation – October 30, 2022:

Dane Anderson
Kalli Grong
Hunter Hawley
Lucas Johnson
Anna Neugebauer

Church Statistics and Attendance Report 2022

	<u>2018</u>	<u>2019</u>	<u>2020</u>	<u>2021</u>	<u>2022</u>
Baptized Members	954	953	909	934	939
Average Weekly Attendance	178	182	xxx*	128*	155
% Attending Worship	19%	19%	xxx*	14%*	17%
Average Lenten Attendance	89	106	xxx*	51	103
Christmas Eve	392	443	xxx*	424	438

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

On-line Worship Report:

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

- 2022 Average On-Line Attendance = 148
- Average On-Line Attendance for Lenten Services (Facebook Only) = 73
- Total On-Line attendance for 2 Christmas Eve Services = 304

Membership Report

Baptized Members – January 1, 2022	934
New Members Received	11
Baptisms	<u>10</u>
New Members added in 2022	21
Deaths	9
Transfers Out	<u>7</u>
Members removed in 2022	<u>-16</u>
Baptized Members – December 31, 2022	939

New Members Received

- Eunice Seffrood
- Linda Hall
- Presley Jones, daughter Lainey
- Richard and Linda Schmeichel
- Preston and Abigail Barragan
 - ◊ (Sons, Ledger and Bishop, will be received by baptism in 2023)
- Sierra Daugaard
- Garry and Marie Trapp

Transfers Out

- Brian and Laura Dallman
 Amelia and Josephine
- Eric Selchert
- Zack and Paige Zempel

**American Lutheran Church Council Meeting Minutes
Annual Meeting – January 30, 2022**

- 1. Call to Order**
 - a. Attendance Report: 69 voting members present in person
- 2. Approval of Agenda**
 - a. A motion was made by Josh Schmeichel to approve the agenda as read. Seconded by Bryan Johnson – Motion Passed
- 3. Litany and Opening Prayer:** Given by Pastor Justin
- 4. Pastor’s Report:** Pastor gave a review of the last year. Navigating through the pandemic. Celebrate pastoral acts listed in the report. Blessed with many young families but also a responsibility of our church. Celebrate the generous gifts of our members and acts of the church. Looking forward to 2022 and planning ahead.
- 5. Secretary’s Report**
 - a. A motion was made by Wally Hamman to approve the minutes from the January 31, 2021 Annual Meeting. Motion was seconded by Doug Fraasch – Motion passed
- 6. President’s Report:** Mark gave a review of the year and highlights. New vision and mission statement developed by the strategic planning committee this year.
- 7. Nominations and Elections**
 - a. A call of the floor for nominations for church council was made: no additional nominations
 - i. Motion made by Kathy Sussex to nominate Laurie Strege, Jessica Schuchard and Danny Bohn to a 3 year term on council. Seconded by Mark Granquist. Motion passed
 - b. A call was made for the nominating committee
 - i. Motion made by Jan Sriver. Tom Schuneman, Bryan Johnson, Peg Dohrer, Mark Leddy and Heidi Wellnitz to form the nominating committee. Seconded by Josh Schmeichel. – motion passed
- 8. Committee Reports**
 - a. Brief overview of each report was given by President Mark: Stewardship & Finance, Worship, Evangelism and outreach, Property and Management, Youth and Education, WELCA, Thrivent Board
- 9. Treasurer’s Report:** Mark gave a summary of the report
 - a. A motion was made by Emily Mueller to accept as written. Seconded by Ryan Gruba. - Motion passed
- 10. Adoption of 2022 Budget**
 - a. Approved the 2022 budget as written with the treasurer’s report.
- 11. Other New Business**
 - a. Strategic Planning Update
 - b. 2022 ALC Council Goals
- 12. Adjournment/Blessing**
 - a. Pastor gave blessing
 - b. A motion to adjourn was made by Tom Schuneman and seconded by Dave Bergan – motion passed

Respectfully Submitted by:

Heidi Wellnitz: Council Secretary

COUNCIL PRESIDENT REPORT

Greetings American Lutheran Church Congregation:

This year has been filled with many blessings. We were able to celebrate our 75th anniversary, we expanded our education coordinator's role, and created new committees to help improve our church. All of this is possible through our mission statement of **The Gospel of Jesus Christ calls us to be a welcoming community for all people growing in faith, love, and service.**

The church reached an exciting milestone this year by being able to celebrate the church's 75th Church Anniversary. It turned out to be a great day with a special worship, amazing fellowship, a fabulous meal, and lots of activities for the kids. We were blessed by the presence of everyone who showed up that day, from current members to former members, to former ministers and their families, and even Bishop Hagmaier. This day would not have been a success if it were not for the Anniversary committee. They put in a lot of time planning and coordinating to make it such a amazing event. THANK YOU everyone who was involved in making this day a great success.

Back in 2020 we created a committee called Strategic Planning. This committee gets tasked by the council to come up with solutions to things the council needs help with. Last year they redid our vision statement of **Christ Welcomes All at American Lutheran Church** and our mission statement from above. This year we tasked them with figuring out a way to expand our ministry for our youth and help lighten the load placed on the church.

While looking at youth in the church, we noticed we had a good problem we had to fix. The amount of youth in our church is growing in numbers, but we aren't prepared for those numbers when they get older. Strategic planning gave the church council the recommendation of expanding our youth coordinator's role into something more than just Sunday School. With this expanded role, Amy has started a youth group for the middle school. She has also been able to lighten Pastor Justin's load a little by helping with the High School Youth Group and even taking over confirmation class when Pastor needs to be gone.

The church council has had too much on their plate for some time. We started trying to fix this in 2020 until covid hit. With the help of Strategic Planning, we took a step in the right direction. This fall we did a time and talent survey to get people signed up for the new committees and got them started. There are still plans for more committees, and there is plenty of room on all the committees if you wish to help. Also, if you see a need in the church, please know that you have the permission to help address it.

The church and the church council have been blessed by everyone who helps make this church run. Thank you Pastor Justin, the lay staff, and all of the volunteers. Without all of you, our church could not do the things that we do.

Lastly, I challenge everyone to go out and do what they can to keep American Lutheran Church a welcoming community for all people to grow in faith, love, and service.

Josh Schmeichel, Council President

FINANCE COMMITTEE & STEWARDSHIP 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.

We started 2022 with Emily Mueller capably taking the position of Treasurer. Under her time and leadership, we transferred our bank accounts to First Bank and Trust. Emily reviewed the finance and payroll systems, and as of 1-1-2023, we will be switching to an online payroll system. This should be more efficient and timely.

Congregation members continue to give regularly, and usage of the online giving has increased. Regular giving, weekly or monthly or quarterly, provides the cash flow to keep American Lutheran operating efficiently. We also thank the staff for always looking for ways to keep our operating expenses within budget guidelines.

A new subcommittee was created to assist the Council Finance Committee. The ALC Investment Committee has been tasked with reviewing our current investments; making recommendations for investing any surplus funds; and advising as a comprehensive gifting policy is created. We thank Tom Schuneman, Jacob Knoll, Steve Street, Steve Wenzl and Emily Mueller for their willingness to sit on this committee. The ALC Council's goal is to encourage gifts, large or small, and assure you that American Lutheran Church is a place where gifts are appreciated and used to continue our mission.

To that end, we are also reviewing our Memorial Gifts policy. Again, we want to be good stewards of gifts given to us. We are working on the policy information, but there is currently a list of suggested items or areas within ALC that would benefit from gifts. That list is available in the office. Every gift makes a difference!

Budgeted benevolence for 2022 was sent to the SD ELCA Synod, Lutherans Outdoors, SD Lutheran Campus Ministry, St. Dysmas and the local ICAP office. Additional gifts were given with our Lenten Offerings and Gideon Sunday. The proceeds from the Pancake Feed provide camp scholarships for youth attending Lutherans Outdoors. Our support of Lutheran Social Services is provided through use of our facility. The "Noisy Offering" was sent to the ELCA Good Gifts program.

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

If you would like assistance setting up 2023 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 Finance and Stewardship Committee Members:

Mary Bjordahl, Dave Bergan

WORSHIP & EVANGELISM COMMITTEE REPORT

The main objectives of this committee this past year was to continue to develop and strengthen member engagement and to recruit volunteers and expand opportunities in which to do so.

The Worship & Evangelism committee has spent the past year focusing on systems to fill various volunteer needs especially those duties that are required on Sundays. With the elimination of the Love in Action groups, members are now assigned various tasks and are asked to find their own replacements by reaching out to other members. It is an ongoing process to look for ways to communicate with and engage members without relying on the office staff to coordinate. The committee, along with the help of the council, continues to update member information to allow better communication and attendance. We began the year by enlisting the council to sit at the welcome center each Sunday. This was done to highlight the various sign-up sheets with opportunities to participate and volunteer. Council members also made contact by phone or personally with members to explain the new system and encourage them to volunteer. We will continue to work on the engagement process in the next year.

Easter Lenten meals were organized and held by council members and various church groups and were well attended. Fellowship time was encouraged during the mealtime while recreation time for children were organized and focused on interaction at church. Many volunteers had a positive experience and many of those were first time volunteers. Lenten meals will be a permanent part of the Lenten season and there are plans to expand on the fellowship time idea in the future.

In May, the Property & Worship committees teamed up to hold the annual workday to complete various projects around the church property and in the sanctuary. This annual event is always well attended and is not only an excellent opportunity to tackle various tasks but also looked upon as a fun social gathering as well. Hamburger and hot dog potluck was enjoyed by adults and kids alike. Children were treated to kite flying in the church backyard.

Spring also brought the flowerpot project. This year the pots were planted off site and delivered to various members that are unable to plant their own.

In August, a golf outing and potluck was held at Whetstone Creek Golf Course. We will continue this event as long as there is interest. Winners donated their prizes to the Preschool which included items on their wish list.

In the spirit of fostering a welcoming atmosphere, a new coffee bar was added in the Narthex in May. Members and visitors can enjoy a free cup of coffee or hot chocolate at any time. We hope to add a water bottle filler to use with the coffee bar and will be available for the preschool and others to use as well. A basketball hoop was donated by State Farm and put up in the church parking lot for everyone to use.

The coffee fellowship brought new changes this year as a new ministry group formed called the "Sweet Mixers". This group meets monthly to bake various items from the church cookbook to serve for coffee hour. This new addition has been well received and they will continue to work out the kinks and try to engage more bakers and solicit more donations for their baking ministry.

American Lutheran continues to support the Meals on Wheels by providing drivers and assists in blood drives for the American Red Cross.

Family and adult movie nights are held periodically in the church theater and are well attended.

There are many groups that meet and are always looking to add more members. These are just a few of them: New Member Team, Missions Team, Community Outreach, Events Committee, Decorating Committee, Volunteer Recruitment Committee, Fellowship Team, Social Media Committee as well as Quilters, Musicians, and the list goes on!

Submitted by Worship & Evangelism Committee Members:

Amber Scriver, Laurie Strege & Amanda Grabow

**Property & Management
2022 Annual Report**

- Parking lot crack seal (early Spring)
- In September carpets were cleaned for the entire church. Going forward, the church will be divided up into 3 sections, doing 1 section per year.
- Organ panels were cleaned in August. This will be done on a quarterly basis to help with organ tuning.
- Hot water recirculating pump was installed for the kitchen.
- 1 tree was removed from the north side of the church.
- Minor carpet repairs in the sanctuary.
- Preschool flooring and base board were replaced.
- New table racks were purchased for the fellowship hall. (they need to be assembled)

Looking ahead to 2023

- Looking to purchase a storage shed for Property & Management equipment and supplies
- Extend down spouts on the north side of the church
- Sprinkler system will need repairs in the spring
- Carpet around the sanctuary thresholds need minor repairs

Submitted by Property and Management Committee members:

Mike Cordingley, Ryan Gruba, and Dan Bohn

YOUTH

Confirmation

5 freshmen were confirmed on October 30, 2022. The 2022-2023 Confirmation Class includes 17, 7th and 8th grade youths. Each of the 8th grade students also works with an adult mentor from our congregation. The confirmation youth did several outreach/service activities during the year, including Souper Bowl of Caring Food Drive, helping with the Grant County Christian Service Council Food Giveaway and helping pack the quilts and school kits for shipping to Lutheran World Relief.

ALC High School Youth Group

The High School Youth Group meets on the 1st and 3rd Wednesdays of each month. Each evening includes supper, activities, and devotions. There have been 10-15 youth attending. The group has done a lot of fun activities including ice skating, bowling, an afternoon at the Mischel's house at the lake, and Christmas caroling with other community Youth Groups. They also led the Hanging of the Greens Worship Service at the beginning of Advent and hosted a spot at Treat Street on Halloween.

ELCA National Youth Gathering

The ELCA holds a National Youth Gathering every 3 years. No Youth Gathering has been held since 2018 due to COVID as the Youth Gathering planned for Minneapolis was postponed one year and then eventually cancelled. The 2024 Youth Gathering will be held in New Orleans. They will be adding a Young Adults Gathering that will run alongside the Youth Gathering for Young Adults ages 19-30 to provide an opportunity for those students who were never able to attend Gathering because of COVID. We will begin making plans to attend throughout this coming year.

ALC Junior High Youth Group

Amy Bass, Education Coordinator, began planning some fun events for the Junior High Students. This fall they have visited the Big Stone Pumpkin Patch and held a Christmas Gathering where they competed in Candy Cane Olympics.

Pray-ers for Youth

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

South Dakota Lutheran Outdoors Camps

A number of youth attended Bible Camp this summer. Church offers financial support to any youth that attends Bible Camp. A request form can be found on the Church Website or by calling the Office.

ADULTS

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

Men's Breakfast Group meets on Thursday mornings.

Page Turners Book Club is a group led by Janelle Kelly. There is an afternoon Book Club and an Evening Book Club that each meet once a month. Janelle provides books to the group from the state library. The group consists of members from Parkview Methodist and American Lutheran Church.

Submitted by Youth & Education Committee members:

Josh Schmeichel, Heather Zinter, Jessica Schuchard

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION COORDINATOR REPORT



The Sunday School kids started the year with a 5-week study, “A Day at the Museum.” The series covered the early life and ministry of Jesus from the New Testament. This year felt more normal as we did not need to social distance as we did in 2021.

We celebrated Valentine’s Day and God’s love for us in February. The kids enjoyed crafts and decorated mugs. On February 20, the Sunday

School kids celebrated Camp Sunday with the annual pancake breakfast along with fun and games with Lutherans Outdoors.



Mid-year attendance awards were given to Sunday School students. All ages of Sunday School kids performed special music in February during the church service!



During the Lenten services, the kids had the opportunity to enjoy special games and activities in the Sunday School wing between the meal and worship. The kids enjoyed this, and we will be planning activities again this year!

Three and four-year-old children received their story book Bibles in March.



On Palm Sunday the kids sang special music during the service and

had fun with an Easter party

following the service. The oldest group of Sunday School kids helped serve the Palm Sunday breakfast.



In May, we wrapped up the Sunday School year with kite making and flying. Although it was cold, the kids still had a blast.



May Day care packages were also prepared by Sunday School kids for our members who reside in nursing homes. Vacation Bible School was held on two Wednesday evenings during June and July. Our theme was “I Wonder…” There were seventy kids in attendance. We enjoyed supper,

skits, music, crafts, tie-dyeing t-shirts, and fun outside!

We had a backpack blessing in August. The kids received backpack blessing tags and gift bags with snacks, water bottles, bracelets, and a fidget toy.



Our current Sunday School year kicked off with Rally Sunday in September. The kids enjoyed bounce house inflatables during ALC's 75th Anniversary. Three-year-olds and third graders received Bibles in October.



All kids presented musical selections during November worship services.



In December, the children performed "Hark! The Herald Angels Sing."



All ages continue to use "Grow" curriculum for our lessons during Sunday School. Each morning the kids see a video, study a lesson, and have music time.



Preschool-5th grades explore "Grow Kids," while the 6-8th grades are taking on "Grow Students."

There are 136 students on our Sunday School roster this year!

Check out our class pictures in the Sunday School wing to get more familiar with all of the smiling faces of Sunday School!

I have enjoyed expanding our youth programming with the emergence of our junior high youth group. So far, we have enjoyed fun at the Big Stone Pumpkin Patch and Candy Cane Olympics. This month we will meet to ice skate at Hurley Park!



As always, our program would not be a success without all the help of volunteers!

I also appreciate everyone who has supplied the use of Thrivent Action Teams to supplement our program in a variety of ways! Thank you to everyone who contributed to the success of our Sunday School program in 2022!

Amy Bass- Sunday School Coordinator

AMERICAN LUTHERAN PRESCHOOL REPORT

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

With the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, we continued to revamp plans for classroom experiences and our fundraisers during Spring 2022. We held our second online Basket Silent Auction via auction32.com around Easter. Preschool families and congregation members donated baskets for this event. This event was quite enjoyable and successful.

In early May, we took a field trip to the Bramble Park Zoo in Watertown via the yellow bus from DeFea Transportation. ALC Preschool hosted a parking lot field trip excursion in reference to safety and invited Emanuel Lutheran Preschool and Learning Time Preschool to join us. "Tommy the Tornado" mascot, and our local ambulance, police personnel, and firemen were on hand to visit with students and show them their safety vehicles. We also joined Emanuel Lutheran Preschool to have a bike safety course and earn money to go towards St. Jude's Hospital. To end the month and school year the students prepared and shared gifts of music for all to see. The narthex was filled with display boards and artwork for each child. The 4 yr old class graduated with a full house present in the sanctuary.

The end of the school year also closed a 9-year chapter with American Lutheran Preschool's first preschool teacher, Nicole Scott. We can't thank her enough for what she did for our program and how she helped it grow. Although her resignation closed one door, God's grace helped the Preschool Board members promptly start the search for our next head teacher. After many meetings, time, effort, and prayer we found our next rising star, Sierra Daugaard. The rest of the summer was busy with some much-needed classroom renovations. The room was painted, and the new flooring was installed by Zems. This was all possible thanks to some fundraising dollars from our Online Silent Auction.

The 2022-2023 school year started a little differently this year. Our new head teacher, Sierra Daugaard, eagerly entered the classroom with 28 energetic students (15 students in the 4's Class & 13 in the 3's Class). An open house was held in early August so the returning and incoming students and their parents could see the updated classroom and meet their new head teacher. Brittany Bray continues to be the Teacher Assistant and Rebecca Welberg is our Volunteer Classroom Helper. We were fortunate enough to have High School Cadet, Avery Whitesitt, from the Milbank High School come to the classroom during the morning session to help in any capacity asked.

In mid-November, preparations were made for "Preschool Sunday" in which we took the time to show-case our preschool program. The preschool students shared their gifts of music with the congregation at the beginning of the church service. Then we joined for a meal that included Soup and breadsticks along with many desserts provided from the preschool families. The tables were decorated with student made centerpieces and placemats along with pictures and artwork of the students in the halls. The preschool room was also open for anyone to take a look.

During the different holidays during the year, students created greeting cards to give to our local senior living facilities. While Covid-19 and Influenza remain in our community we hope to find a virtual way to share the gift of music and the smiles of our young students with others.

During the school year, students were kept busy learning each week about a variety of focus areas including letters, numbers, colors, and shapes. Each month a new Bible verse is memorized by slowly adding to the

verse each week until the students can put it all together at the end of the month. Pastor Justin joins the classroom each week to read and converse with the children. We continue to use the “Alive Studios Classrooms Alive” curriculum that integrates math and literacy components with the use of technology, our rug, and the journals to provide an enhanced learning opportunity for the children. Technology continues to be implemented with the use of the interactive Promethean Board and iPads during various times in our day.

We are ever so thankful for the continued generosity and support given from the church and community members, Thrivent members, and through the designation of Thrivent Choice Dollars and/or allowing us to utilize one’s \$250 Action Team Grant card for events, classroom projects, supplies, snacks, etc. In addition, monetary gift donations, attending/supporting our fundraisers, memorials or donations towards preschool financial scholarships, and other means have all played an active role in helping provide funds and support needed for the preschool. Our fundraisers this past year included an online silent auction and our soup fundraiser. We are very fortunate to all those who help in small and big ways to make the preschool a success!

Our Preschool Board meets monthly to have ongoing conversations of how we will help our program continue to grow now and in the future. We discuss enrollment, financial scholarship needs, fundraising efforts, and the overall needs of our preschool. Our thanks to out-going preschool board member Rachel Kiley for her years of service on the board.

Teacher - Sierra Daugaard

Teacher Assistant - Brittany Bray

Volunteer Classroom Helper - Rebecca Welberg

Preschool Board Members - Jody Bear, Trista Mikkelson, Haley Harms, Kaitlin Knoll, Rhonda Zinter; Heather Zinter (Council Liaison)

THRIVENT CHOICE BOARD REPORT

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

Over the last 12 years Thrivent Choice Dollars have directed \$117,170 to the American Lutheran Church to help benefit special projects within the church.

Over the last 8 years Thrivent Choice Dollars have directed \$67,903 to the American Lutheran Preschool.

As a reminder, if you haven't directed your 2022 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.

Balance January 1, 2022	\$10,226.90	Money Distributed:	
Balance Deposited Choice Dollars	1,011.00	Baptismal/engraving	\$ 132.00
Interest	1.10	Popcorn Machine	300.62
Balance Distributed	(4,327.62)	Radio Broadcast	1,250.00
Balance December 31, 2022	6,785.50	Pancake Benefit/Bible Camp	777.00
		75 th Anniversary Expenses	2,000.00
		Manna Band	73.00

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

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

American Lutheran Preschool	Supplies for Piece Corps Quilters
American Lutheran Sunday School	Vacation Bible School
Baptismal Faith Chest Material costs	Pancake Breakfast for Camp Sunday
Baptismal Supplies (Bibles, Water Toys)	Palm Sunday Breakfast
Bibles for 3 Year Olds and 4 Year Olds	Pie Social
ALC Golf Outing	Anniversary T-Shirts
High School Graduates	Anniversary Supplies
High School Youth	Caramel Rolls
Lefse Supplies	Bibles
Meatball Ministry	Confirmation

Submitted by Thrivent Board Members:

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

PARISH NURSE BOARD REPORT

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

2022 was a busy year for the Parish Nursing program.

- Visits are made by phone, church, home, Nursing Home or Hospital **(201)**
- Cards are sent for birthdays (*over 75*), thinking of you after surgery or other illness, baptism, new members and sympathy**(164)**.
- Blood pressures are taken monthly at each congregation **(126)**.

This year I tried to focus on reaching out to the shut ins.

We held 6 events throughout 2022:

1. Walking program –“Journey through Minnesota and North Dakota” with 43 participants and 9,985.58 miles logged.
2. In conjunction with this I had a April/May Health event, utilizing Mind, Body, Heart and Soul with activities for each of the 4. We then had a get together in May for walkers and Health month participants. We had 12 in attendance
3. In July I hosted a noon fellowship meal at American Lutheran church for many of the shut ins or those that do not get out much. We had 10 in attendance and there was some great conversation around the table. Pastor suggested we try this quarterly. I also took some of the leftovers to a couple of shut ins.
4. In October we had a Fellowship with Friends event with a Sit and Fit demonstration/participation with Judy Frink, donation of soup cans for Milbank Food Pantry and followed by soup lunch. We had 18 in attendance with a couple people that had never come to an event before.
5. We had a Christmas party mid am and had 41 in attendance. Attendees brought items like chapstick and small travel lotions for our shut ins Christmas box, the preschool children sang, Pastor Justin gave devotions and some helped make Christmas cards for those boxes along with a couple of games led by Patti and each one received a hand warmer made by Kathy.
6. The Blue Christmas service was held at Parkview and advertised in the paper. We had a good attendance this year with about 25 and had a shared fellowship afterwards which many stayed for. It was taped and put on the Parkview’s web page and shared on Facebook.

One parishioner was helped with Salem Funds. Monthly Grant County newspaper articles are written along with monthly bulletin and/or newsletter inserts. Easter and Christmas baskets were taken to our shut ins and organized a tote of items for a family as they underwent medical procedures. I started a prayer Shawl/Quilt ministry at Parkview and have received yarn and some material donations for this program. I also spoke at a Parish Nurse education event in Sioux Falls this past Fall.

Financials:

\$ 2,400 received from American Lutheran	\$ 4,152 salary paid
\$ 1,000 from Parkview Methodist	\$ 55 other expenses
\$ 200 from ELCA Women	\$ 4, 207 Total expenses.
\$ 158 Coffee money donation	
\$ 125 memorials	
\$ 3,883 Total Income	

I also have had access to one Thrivent card to help with some items for gifting to elderly and also for recognition of our walkers. Last couple years we had more gifts given and this has helped us remain in the black.

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

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

Parish Nurse Health Board Members:

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

Diana Dirksen, Parish Nurse



WELCA (Women of the ELCA) Report _____

In April we held our bi-annual Spring event using the quilt theme "Wrapped in Love". We had 90 ladies attend & many quilts donated for display. Pastor Barb McKewin & Heavenly Beds Group spoke. Our free will offering went to Heavenly Beds and the Piece Corps Quilters.

In August we started collecting school bag & health care items. The Confirmation Students helped pack 69 school bags & 22 personal kits, which were sent with the quilts to Lutheran World Relief.

In November we organized the Lefse Baking & Sales. We purchased stools for the Manna Praise Band & table carts for the long tables with the lefsa funds. Krum kaka & rosettes were made for the Mission Bake Sale. We raised \$2,094 which was used for all the donations to local community charities, SD Lutheran Outdoors, & Lutheran World Relief as listed in the treasurers report.

Peace circle meets the first Tuesday of the month at 12 pm at Church. We use the Gather magazine for our lesson. All are welcome.

Submitted by: Kathy Mathiason WELCA Coordinator



2022 WELCA Treasurer's Report

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

Income:

Card Nook	245.00
Circle Offering	970.00
Quilt	655.91
Lefse Fund	1,279.00
Runner Club	277.39
Ladies Fellowship Event	400.00
Bake Sale	<u>2,094.00</u>
	\$5921.30

Expenses:

Card Nook (Treasure's Abounding)	221.95
1/3 circle offering to Synod	324.00
SHP (Ladies Event))	400.00
Quilts (supplies)	612.51
Conference Runners Club	277.39
BackPack Program (bake sale)	400.00
NeSoDak (bake sale)	200.00
Orphan Grain Train (bake sale)	200.00
St. Dysmas (bake sale)	200.00
Lutheran World Relief (bake sale)	200.00
ALC Radio Broadcast	125.00
Quilters (bake sale)	200.00
Parish Nurse (bake sale)	200.00
Lutherans Outdoors (bake Sale)	200.00
Stools (lefse fund)	230.38
Grant County Food Shelf (bake Sale)	200.00
School Bags	29.00
ALC (table cart, lefse fund)	602.94
Gift Cards	90.00
Prairie Coteau Conference (school kit + quilt shipping)	300.00
Prairie Coteau Conference (mission + expenses)	<u>200.00</u>
	\$5413.17

Quilters	530.56
Card Nook	630.98
Lefsa Fund	525.68
Undesignated fund	<u>2,865.55</u>
Balance in Account	\$4,552.77

Balance in Account 12/31/2022 **\$4,552.77**

Submitted by Darlene Olson, WELCA Treasurer

PIECE CORPS QUILTERS REPORT

Come join us or stop in and visit to watch the Piece Corps Quilters.

We meet on the 2nd and 4th Tuesday of each month at 9am to noon. There are many different areas you could participate like ironing, tying, sandwiching, cutting blocks or, being creative, laying out the patterns. Any help is always appreciated and all are welcome!

We thank the congregation members for helping us by the donation of fabric, thread and monetary contributions to help with purchasing batting and shipping costs etc.

80 of our quilts were sent to Lutheran World Relief this year. They can be used as warm bedding, tents, or floor coverings.

A quilt is given to each of the children baptized at American Lutheran Church.

Each graduating senior also gets a quilt.

Quilts are available for charity events, raffles, or as needed for area families and children's organizations.

A total of 93 quilts were donated in 2022

70 Lutheran World Relief
03 High School Graduates
01 Welcome Quilt for Sierra Daugaard
09 Heavenly Beds
10 Baptism Quilts
93 TOTAL

Submitted by Marilyn Hodenfield, Quilting Coordinator

PRAYER SHAWL MINISTRY REPORT

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

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

Members of the Prayer Shawl Group crochet or knit shawls on their own time. Instructions and all of the yarn is provided.

We gave 28 shawls this year to members and friends of the congregation.

Submitted by Janelle Kelly, Prayer Shawl Coordinator

CHURCH LIBRARY REPORT

An inventory of the library took place this year. We currently have 884 books/audio books/DVD movies. Stop in at the library anytime to browse through the selections. Check-out is easy, with clear directions available by the library shelves. There is no set time limit for returning the items you check out.

The library cart, located in the east side hallway, is also a quick and easy spot to see what is new or being featured each month.

Submitted by Janelle Kelly, Church Librarian

LUTHERANS OUTDOORS IN SOUTH DAKOTA



2022

CONGREGATIONAL
REPORT

WELCOME, NEW STAFF!

Lutherans Outdoors welcomed some new faces to our staff during 2022.

We welcomed Marti Knudsen as the Camp Director of NeSodak in November. Marti brings many years of experience in Outdoor Ministries at Upper Missouri Ministries in North Dakota. She has three daughters and a husband; Pastor Josh Knudsen serves at Grace Lutheran in Sisseton.

Klaire (Hudson) Decker was welcomed as Program Director at Outlaw Ranch in late spring 2022. She was on summer staff in 2018 and 2019. Klaire and her now husband Noah were married in October.

SUMMER 2022 | SUMMER 2023

Over 1,250 campers experienced God's Boundless Love during the summer of **2022** at NeSoDak, Klein Ranch, and Outlaw Ranch! This was an approximate 15% increase from the Summer of 2021. It is approximately 75% of the number of campers attending the camps in 2019, previous to the Covid-19 pandemic. Unfortunately, the last week of summer camp at Outlaw Ranch needed to be canceled for safety reasons as several staff members tested positive for Covid.

WONDER Summer 2023

During the summer of **2023**, campers will explore the wonders of creation, the gift of grace through Jesus, and how we steward these gifts. Campers will look down, look up, look around, look in, and look out to examine the precious gifts of community and creation.

**Registration is currently open so reserve your spots today at losd.org.
We will see you at CAMP in 2023!**

REIMAGINING LUTHERANS OUTDOORS

Staff and Board members of Lutherans Outdoors, along with many of you that are interested in the future of Lutherans Outdoors, will begin a REIMAGINING of the ministry during 2023. New Core Values will be announced early in the year.

Deep dive audits will begin looking at Program, Governance, Marketing, Finance and Budgeting, Staffing, Facilities, and Financial Development. This REIMAGINING will create what Lutherans Outdoors will look like for the next 30, 40, or even 50 years and will be presented at the 2023 Annual Meeting taking place in June 2024. Please contact the Lutherans Outdoors office if you are interested in helping with this REIMAGINING!

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

LOSD.ORG



BE A PARTNER IN HEALING OUTREACH



2022 Annual Report to Congregations

LSS Services Focus on Strengthening Families

The challenges of the last three years have changed the landscape of the work that we do at LSS. Not only have local community needs shifted, but funding, staffing and service delivery models have shifted.

Our strategic planning process engaged the Governing Board of Directors, executive and leadership teams, and LSS staff in conversations about how those changing dynamics will impact us over the next four years.


At LSS we're passionate about making a difference in South Dakota communities and addressing emerging community needs. We believe that a focus on services that strengthen families and help keep youth at home and in their community will help attain our vision for South Dakota—that all South Dakotans will be healthy, safe and accepted. We have established a number of internal operational strategies to be achieved for us to reach that goal and are hopeful that after four years we will be able to say that we made a significant impact.





Rebecca Kiesow-Knudsen
President/CEO

With Your Support, Together We Make a Meaningful Impact on Families

Your donations enable LSS to transform lives through high standards of quality service and service delivery. LSS monitors and reviews client outcomes as a gauge of programmatic quality. With your congregation's support, we are better able to carry out our vision—bringing clarity, stability, family and support to people of all ages, families of all kinds and communities of all sizes. Thank you!

 Functional Family Therapy outcomes are strong. **97%** of youth and **98%** of parents reported improved family functioning. **96%** of youth were in school or working at discharge.

 Youth at New Alternatives were successful at discharge. **96%** were discharged to safe and stable housing and **94%** were employed or in school at discharge.

 Youth in residential treatment programs were successful at discharge. **81%** of youth were discharged to a less restrictive environment. **100%** of youth who were referred by schools were discharged to their home with a parent or relative.

A Glimpse at Our Strategic Plan

Here is a preliminary glimpse of our strategic plan. From these operational strategies, we are developing action plans and a four-year line of site.

ORGANIZATIONAL

Strategy 1: Pursue programmatic opportunities that strengthen families

Strategy 2: Pursue programmatic opportunities that keep children and youth in their homes and communities

OPERATIONAL

Strategy 1: Create a positive culture that helps recruit, retain and support a high quality workforce to meet program goals and objectives

Strategy 2: Ensure long-term financial viability for the organization and individual programs

Your continued support will help us accomplish our goals and better serve our South Dakota communities.

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

Grace to you and peace from God, our Father, and from our Lord and Savior, Jesus, who is the Christ. Amen!

Greetings from your brothers and sisters in Christ behind the walls of the South Dakota State Penitentiary system. Thank you all for the outpouring of support and encouragement we have received this year. It has been a big year of transitions, and God is at work in amazing ways in the lives of people inside and outside the walls.

The beginning of this year saw us restricted from even being allowed inside the prison due to lingering Covid restrictions, to again being able to gather for worship in-person. And you stepped up; we have had great groups visit both "The Hill" in Sioux Falls and at Mike Durfee State Prison in Springfield, SD, to worship with us.

In February, we bid Pr. Wayne Gallipo a joyous farewell as he transitioned into retirement. I want to thank Pr. Wayne for his faithful service, hard work, and ministry to St Dymas. Our staff including our office manager, Susan Zacher, and music directors, Diane Larson and Joran Olson, all worked so hard to endure very challenging times in the history of both the St Dymas ministry and the world in general.

Emerging from Easter season in the promise that God makes all things new, on May 1, I began serving as the Senior Pastor and Development Director to St Dymas of South Dakota. Though I am new to leading this ministry, I inherited a strong legacy of God's grace at work in challenging places. I give thanks that each and every day I get to witness God bringing new life from death in the lives of those who society often sees as undeserving. Worship attendance has increased at "The Hill," MDSP, and the Yankton Unit. I am grateful for the work of Pr. David Bentz, who serves at MDSP, and Pr Dani Jo Bierwagen, who serves at the Yankton Unit. They are both faithful shepherds of God's flock.

We are guided by a faithful and hardworking Associate Council that helps guide the strategy of the St Dymas ministry. Bringing my business management background with me into leading this ministry, I know I have certainly thrown new ways of thinking at them, and they have been greatly supportive.

Mitch Wilson continues to serve as our Re-Entry Coordinator. During Covid, a lot of the momentum of his work took a hit, but he has continued to accompany those transitioning from incarceration back into the "normal world," and he does a great job. We look forward to talking to congregations about welcoming justice-impacted individuals to be part of your faith community. We know that making connections with these individuals leads to the success of their transition.

Above all, I give thanks to God for the many gifts he has entrusted to us. Through the faithful partnerships of many congregations, families, and individuals, we can do the work of proclaiming the good news of Jesus Christ to those who need to hear it most; "setting the captives free..."



Grace and peace to you always!



Pastor Jeff Backer
Senior Pastor/Development Director

DEDICATED ACCOUNTS OF AMERICAN LUTHERAN CHURCH

American Lutheran Church maintains dedicated accounts that are outside the annual budget. These accounts reflect funds that are earmarked or restricted for a specific purpose. Often these funds have come from gifts, or from special activities that have raised funds for a specific purpose.

Dedicated accounts do not close out their balances at the end of a fiscal year, like income and expense accounts, but retain their balances over fiscal years.

Dedicated accounts are not individual bank accounts, rather we have one account for all the dedicated funds, and track each fund to ensure it is used for the purpose intended.

The Council oversees the establishment of these accounts, as well as the withdrawal of monies from the dedicated bank account.

Scholarship Fund	\$ 3,972.92
Manna Worship Praise Band	\$ 5,320.88
Mission Trip—Youth	\$ 16,368.82
Parish Nurse	\$ 117.00
Proceeds from the Parsonage Sale	\$ 161,677.57
Music	\$ 2,101.14
Youth 6-12 grades	\$ 3,644.60
Property/Building Improvement	\$ 47,171.76
Preschool Scholarships	\$ 2,475.96
Preschool Capital Funds	\$ 60,000.00
Thrivent Choice Deposits	\$ 6,785.50
Bible Camp	\$ 2,054.43
Milbank Ministerial Association	\$ 2,326.04