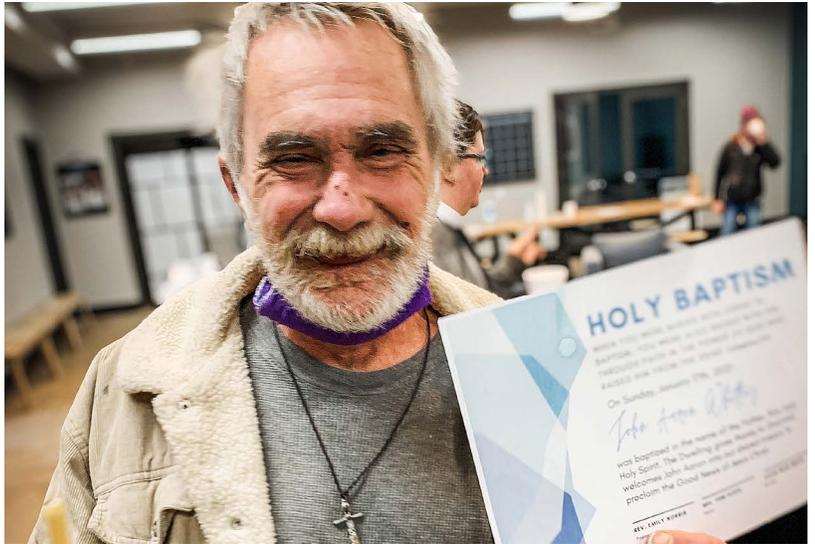


ANNUAL REPORT

2021



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



A MESSAGE FROM ELCA PRESIDING BISHOP

*Elizabeth
Eaton*

Dear friends in Christ,

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

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

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

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

Elizabeth A. Eaton

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

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

2021 ANNUAL REPORT OF THE CONGREGATION

**American Lutheran Church of Sun City
17200 N. Del Webb Boulevard
Sun City, AZ 85373
(623) 974-2512
www.alcsuncity.org**

**2022 Annual Meeting
Tuesday, January 25, 2022, 3:00 p.m.
ALC Sanctuary**

**Sharon Grambow, President
Ron Prekker, Incoming President
Congregation & Council**

Mission Statement

*“To proclaim the love of Jesus Christ,
invite others to participate in our faith community,
and be a blessing to all in word and deed.”*

**American Lutheran Church Sun City
Annual Congregational Meeting Agenda
January 25, 2022**

Call to Order
Opening Devotions
Introductions
Determination of Quorum
Secretary's Report
President's Report
Senior Pastor's Report
Treasurer's Report
Adoption of the 2022 Budget
Introduction of Candidates for 2022 Council
Election of 2022 Council
Benediction
Adjournment

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SECRETARY'S REPORT

The 2021 Annual Congregational Meeting did not take place as an in-person meeting, but rather as mailings to 1,241 registered voting members of American Lutheran Church Sun City.

Mailings included:

- Notice of Annual Meeting Process
- 2020 Annual Report of the Congregation - also available for pick-up
- 2021 Annual Meeting Ballot with instructions for voting on the following three (3) motions
 1. Approval of nominees for the 2021 Church Council
 2. Approval of 2021 Budget as outlined in the Annual Report
 3. Approval of nominees for the Trust Committee

Informational sessions were offered specifically on the proposed 2021 budget and the annual meeting process. Registration was required for ZOOM video and conference call sessions. These sessions were recorded.

The appointed committee of Ted Backman, Kathy Backman, Dennis Kellar, Myron Missling and Terri Polk met on February 12, 2021, to count the returned ballots of the 2021 Annual Meeting of the Congregation.

American Lutheran Church had 1241 registered members as of December 31, 2020. A quorum established at 10%, which is 124 was established with 452 returned ballots.

The proposed 2021 budget was approved with 440 votes, 2021 new council members were approved with 450 votes and Trust committee members were approved with 450 votes.

Minutes of the 2021 Annual Meeting of the Congregation were reviewed by the appointed committee consisting of past ALC Council Presidents: Donna Borden, Dick Jorgenson and Ann Skidmore. They have each certified the minutes as correct and reflect the substance of the 2021 Annual Meeting of the American Lutheran Church Sun City Congregation.

The following have been asked and agree to review the minutes of the 2022 Annual Meeting of the Congregation: Bob Bouldin, Bryan Cooper-Keeble and Jan Powell.

Respectfully submitted: Rita Van Stelle, ALC Council Secretary

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

“For I know the plans I have for you... plans to give you hope and a future.” – Jeremiah 29:11

What a year 2021 was! It began with feelings of hopefulness that the pandemic was going to be behind us. Little did we know then that it would continue through 2021, ebbing and flowing, testing us yet again, but I am happy to report that your 2021 Council was up for the challenge.

Technology allowed us to continue meeting year-round through virtual meetings. We want to say thank you to staff for all their support and efforts that helped make the technology work. Then, once it was safe to resume some in-person meetings, we learned how to be more efficient in our work as our time together was limited by COVID-19 Protocol. Through it all though, we were able to focus on meeting the needs of the congregation and community, planning for the future and being good stewards of the gifts, that God has given ALC.

One of the strategic initiatives of the Council in 2021 was to begin the visioning for our 50th Anniversary in 2025. Vision 2025 was the focus of two half day retreats for the Council, April 17th, and September 25th. The members of the ALC Council and staff gathered to begin the process of clarifying the path forward as we head toward the 50th anniversary of our congregation in 2025. We reviewed the previous Mission Report 2015 and discussed the current state of the congregation including the membership over the last 10 years and our financial health. Then we focused on our strengths and asked questions like – **“What are you looking forward to?”**

After more than a year of isolation due to the pandemic, it should come as no surprise that some of the responses included:

“Engagement; Embracing; Music; Singing; Inviting friends; WNA; Seeing family.”

We ended that first day with another question – **“Why do you belong to ALC?”** The answers were varied but, in many ways, similar.

“This is Family.” “People are so friendly here.” “This is my extended family.”

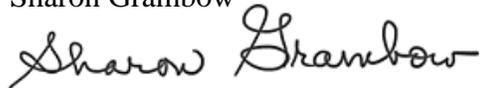
“Invited to join our church family.” “This is home.”

In the reports that follow in this Annual Report, you will hear from the council members as they describe all the work that their committees have accomplished, even under these most trying circumstances. Our Easter Sunday Sunrise service in the courtyard was glorious. Hearing the voices of our choir in person brought tears to eyes. The long-awaited Wednesday Night Alive Gala and the Women’s Ministry Bazaar made it feel just a little bit like we were returning to “normal”. There were so many accomplishments, and I am so very proud to have served with such an amazing group.

As my three-year term comes to a close, I’d like to thank each of you for your love and support. For stepping up to answer a call to service or for volunteering your time, talent, or treasure. It has been a great honor to serve you and even more importantly, to have made so many friends.

I look forward to supporting the 2022 Council in all its work and serving you in new ways. Let us together, discover God’s plan for our future.

Sharon Grambow



2021 Council President

SENIOR PASTOR'S REPORT

Thank you for being a member of American Lutheran Church! As you review the Annual Meeting materials, you understand the challenges in this past year. Pandemic concerns reshaped American society and our faith community is not “immune” from these concerns. Whatever was considered “normal” in the past has been confronted with new dynamics in healthcare, employment, travel, family life and so many other aspects of life. While it is perfectly understandable to wish to return to normality in life, we are called to move forward in meaningful ways to accomplish our mission; dare I say, to develop a “new normal” for sustained ministry:

- **“To proclaim the love of Jesus Christ”**- We love to worship at American Lutheran Church and invested time and energy to become a “hybrid” church. This term is used to describe an effective ministry presence both in-person and online. This will continue to be an important strategic direction as we proclaim the Gospel to people in a variety of settings. “Live-streaming” in-person events will become the “new normal” as we strengthen our ministry to those home-bound in our own community and expand throughout the world as both members and non-members connect with our online faith community. A recent memorial service had more people join on-line than in person! Additional resources of time, training and money for equipment and software will be required to keep moving forward in proclaiming the powerful message of God’s love in Christ.
- **“Invite others to participate in our faith community”**- “Invite” is a great word as it implies welcoming people into a lively community of faith. “Wednesday Night Alive” is a superb example of being “lively” and may God continue to bless our efforts to bring excitement and energy to every ministry we undertake. While I have proven mathematically that if everyone invited just one other person into our community, we could easily double our ministry membership, I have not inspired a church-wide movement to grow amid pandemic concerns. Accordingly, I invite the Holy Spirit to bring a hunger and excitement to reach out and invite new participants in ministry. Your invitation is a vital component in achieving our mission. Together, pastors, staff, the Church Council, Boards, committees, ministry teams, worshippers- we all bring a sense of vitality and thankfully, new members bring excitement and revitalization to ALC.
- **“And be a blessing to all in word and deed”**- Wow! Does the world need a blessing or what? With an attitude of gratitude to God for gathering the marvelous accumulation of the spiritual gifts and financial resources of our members, we are poised to be a leader in generosity of spirit and positive impact to reducing gaps in community health. Strategic ministry partnerships with Pan De Vida Lutheran Church (El Mirage) and the Navajo Evangelical Lutheran Mission (Rock Point, AZ) provide a wonderful combination of both sharing and receiving blessings from our partners in ministry. Let’s keep focused on inspired stewardship practices to strengthen our ministry impact in this coming year and beyond.

I am honored and privileged to serve American Lutheran Church and as I move to retirement in early 2022, I want to express my deep appreciation for the support shown to Deborah and myself over these past 3+ years. This is a marvelous church and is well-poised to step forward in faith moving towards our 50th anniversary in 2025. God will bring inspired pastoral leadership to bring a new sense of vitality. Special thanks to the wonderful pastors, staff, Church Council Presidents and members, Boards and Committees, Bible studies, members and their families in allowing me to serve as an ordained pastor.

As your pastor, here is my biblical encouragement to you from Philippians 4:6-8:

“⁶ Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. ⁷ And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. ⁸ Finally, brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things.”

To the world, these spiritual practices are anything but normal, but they are the God-given truth and, accordingly, shape our community life together. So, with appreciation for ALC's past, gratitude for our work together and confident in God's continued blessing for this mission, I say to you "Go in peace and Serve the Lord!" And together, we say "Thanks be to God!" Amen.

Love,



Pastor Lowell

CARE MINISTRY REPORT

"This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you." – John 15:12

The key to effective Care Ministry is to start with the foundation of faith- *God cares for us!* God's love flows to us through Christ's redemptive love and overflows into love for one another. I am thankful for the long legacy of caring ministry at American Lutheran Church including the following expressions of care ministry:

Pastoral Care: What a wonderful legacy of caring pastors over the years! Most recently, Pastor Gary Ulrich retired in June 2021 after many years of superb ministry enhanced by the marvelous marriage partnership with Kathy. Thankfully, Pastor Maria Valenzuela returned to provide pastoral care this year and Pastor David Sivecz's visitation with our centenarians has opened his eyes to the rich blessings of pastoral care for the member and pastor alike. I am heartened by the return to Funerals and Memorial Services after the challenges of such ministry amid the pandemic. May God continue to bless our congregation to bless families during their grief and concurrently proclaim the Gospel of eternal life in Jesus Christ. Linda Shirck is providing inspired, effective Grief Support Ministry to tenderly care for our members. Lori Kellar is wonderfully helpful as our Wellness Minister to extend care & health information to members and their families.

Stephen Ministry: What a powerful, extended expression of ministry over the years! A passion for care and wise Leadership provides a solid foundation for extending this ministry into the future; Ann Skidmore serves as Chairperson, Ken Iverson as Placement Coordinator, Terri Polk as Training Coordinator, Chuck Louderback as Historian, Joyce Wickum as Events Coordinator, Anna Spradlin and Sharron Schueman as Facilitator Coordinators, Lori Kellar as Program Support/Educator, Donna Raus as Recruitment Coordinator and Bryan Cooper-Keeble as Publicity/Reporting and Minutes Author. Well done, good and faithful servants of the Lord!

Helping Hands: Through the generosity of our member's financial support and tender expressions of gratitude in memorials for those who have passed, the Helping Hands fund gives financial support to those in need including help for pharmaceuticals, utilities, gasoline, rent and other expenses of life. I pray we continue to support and strengthen everyone with a faithful resilient response to the challenges of life, in Christ's name.

Connection Calling Ministry: Initially envisioned by Pastor Judith Rainforth during the pandemic, Nancy Long Polnoff has coordinated this phone ministry with Lori Kellar's support to ensure potentially isolated members receive a monthly call of encouragement and to check-in on their health status. As online worship has become part of the fabric of worship, I pray this calling ministry retains its place as a key aspect of caring for our congregation.

With deep gratitude,



Pastor Lowell

ALC WELLNESS COORDINATOR REPORT

I work alongside the Care Ministry Pastors to help provide:

- Service referrals
- Hospital and post-hospital follow-ups
- Rehab visits and follow-ups
- Education in regard to wellness needs
- Train and support volunteers in first aid and injury
- Pastoral assistance with communion to parishioners
- Monthly blood pressure screenings
- Helping Hands referrals
- Prayer Shawl Ministry
- Eucharistic and Stephen Ministry Visitations
- New Member Classes
- WNA assistance
- Communion off-site

Lori Kellar
ALC Wellness Ministry

WORSHIP AND MUSIC COMMITTEE

ORGANIST REPORT

2021 marks my first full year serving American Lutheran Church. Each day is a joy and honor to be a part of the worship ministry leadership team here. COVID-19 continues to present challenges to the church and its ministries. I have taken a moment to reflect on all that has happened over the course of the past year and we as a faith community have overcome many challenges as we continue to proclaim the love of Christ while inviting others and being a blessing to them.

At this time a year ago, all in-person activities were suspended as COVID-19 infections surged. We made a bold move to have in-person worship services beginning in Lent and gathered for services in our courtyard for a couple of weeks. As infection rates declined and people were getting vaccinated, we returned to our sanctuary for worship; what a joyful experience it was to praise God in our beautiful sanctuary. As we approached Easter, we relaxed some of our COVID-19 restrictions, and more people came together for worship to celebrate the resurrection of Jesus. For many of us, it felt like a resurrection in our personal lives as we were able to engage in more of the activities we missed over the past year.

Throughout the summer, we discussed strategies to continue to build on the momentum of re-engaging our activities here. We had hoped to return to “normal” by September, but as we all know, COVID-19 infections began to increase, and we decided that it was not quite the right time to return to doing things as we had in the past. However, we did not let that stop us from having our beloved choir sing during worship, incorporating more liturgical elements into our services, providing for coffee hour and social opportunities following the 8:30 service, and hosting concerts including an organ recital performed by myself and a devotional concert by our choir. We were able to gather for our annual Thanksgiving celebration in November and took an offering to assist The West Valley Food Pantry at St. John’s Lutheran Church in Glendale.

Our online worship ministry is reaching people not only in the Sun City vicinity, but across the country. Pastor David and I are working diligently to transition from our pre-recorded worship services to live-streaming our weekend and special services. ALC is making a commitment to reach beyond our campus to offer a worship experience that proclaims the Word and love of God, and keep people connected to our faith community.

I am excited for what the coming year will bring to American Lutheran Church; I hope you are too. Together, we will build on our established ministries and discover new opportunities for us to minister to a world filled with challenges.

James Gerber, DMA
Organist and Worship Coordinator

CHOIR DIRECTOR REPORT

Throughout 2021 the ALC Choir continued virtual choir and safely returned to in-person rehearsing and singing. We held three choir gatherings in the sanctuary in the spring and looked forward to the possibility of resuming in-person rehearsals in the fall. We met distanced in the Fellowship Hall mid-September through mid-October. We welcomed several new members to the ALC choir. In addition to weekly worship services, we prepared and presented a cantata on November 14th with string quartet and organ. On Thanksgiving Eve, the choir, Ah-Men Singers, and an octet provided prelude and service music. We paused rehearsals and worship participation when necessary.

This summer I attended virtual seminars including working with the aging voice, refining techniques for virtual choir, and strategies for re-engaging the singing voice. Technology enabled me to attend ALC summer staff meetings and planning sessions.

I am blessed and grateful to be part of a vibrant staff and weekly worship planning with Pastor Lowell and James Gerber. I want to express gratitude to our choir, Ah-men singers, small ensembles, and soloists for their commitment to each other, this church and singing to the glory of God.

Thank you to the ALC congregation, Church Council and the many committees and organizations for your leadership, support, and kindness.

Respectfully submitted,
Janet MacDonald, Choir Director/Worship Planning

STEPHEN MINISTRY

The Stephen Ministry Leadership team of nine members has been skillfully chaired this year by Ann Skidmore. Meetings were held on 3rd Friday of each month January-May and September-December. In addition, continuing Education and Peer Group sessions were held on the 2nd Thursday of each month for all active and inactive Stephen Ministers in Fellowship Hall from January-May and September-December. The year ended with 85 Stephen Ministers at ALC. There were 48 active members, 7 passive and 29 veterans.

During the year, COVID-19 restrictions initially made it difficult for care givers to meet in person with their care receivers. However, ways to communicate such as mailings, emails, phone calls and gifts at front doors were employed to let the receivers know they were cared for. Once COVID-19 vaccines had been received, in-person meetings became much more normal again. Sadly, Pastor Gary and Kathy Ulrich retired from Ministry in June, but they were honored at our 'Welcome Back' Breakfast in October.

At the three November Stephen Ministry Weekend services, Ken Iverson gave a 'Stephen Ministry Message' from the pulpit. Also, Donna Raus, dressed as a cheerleader, told us what Stephen Ministry meant to her and then gave a rallying cry:

*Give me an S, Give me an M, What does it mean? "**Stephen Ministry!**"* we all shouted.

Stephen Ministers are being used at various Senior Center locations to provide Communion to the residents there who are ALC members. An exciting development from a monetary grant by the Langholz Foundation is the possibility of providing Stephen Ministry training to the Navajo Nation with the help of Pastor Kate Adelman.

Bryan Cooper-Keeble

BENEVOLENCE COMMITTEE

The Benevolence Committee continued to have limited meetings during 2021 due to the COVID-19 virus. Thanks to the on-going generosity of the members of American Lutheran Church, we were able to continue to support the following:

Pan De Vida Lutheran Church	\$24,000
Grand Canyon Synod	\$61,000

FELLOWSHIP COMMITTEE

Due to the pandemic, we had been unable to host coffee hour since the middle of March 2020. In October of 2021, we resumed Sunday coffee hour in Fellowship Hall. I want to thank the following people who have volunteered to chair the monthly coffee hour committees. Each of the chairs have reached out to recruit people to help them. Chris Weldon chaired October's committee. In November, Joyce Wikum and Glen Schulz were the chairs and in December, Susan and Alan Olson were chairs. Thank you to all the volunteers who have served on the coffee hour committee these past three months.

I would like to recognize Ann Skidmore and the Angel Tree Committee for their perseverance in distributing angels, collecting gifts, and packing the family bags for the children who benefit from this worthy ministry. ALC and Central Baptist Church have worked together for many years to help make Christmas special for these children who have one parent in prison. This year there were 50 children who each received presents from an incarcerated parent because of your generosity. Thank you to the following people for distributing angels, collecting gifts, and packing the gifts: Steve and Brigitte Miedzybrocki, Sharron Schueman, Joyce Wikum, Char Riebe and Glen Schulz. A big thank you to the ALC members who purchased gifts for these children.

Fellowship has not resumed our traditional potlucks. Our prayer is that the COVID-19 numbers will eventually go down so that it will be safe, at some time in the future, to resume potlucks once again.

It has been wonderful to gather once again for Sunday Coffee Hour. Hopefully, we will be able to continue doing so. I am thankful to all the volunteers who serve on Fellowship all year long in so many ways. You help make American Lutheran a very special place: our church home. We are truly blessed!

Madeline Niccore
Fellowship Chairperson

NEIGHBORHOOD GROUPS

The neighborhood groups are a necessary and integral part of the lifeblood of our church. It is a special way of detecting the pulse and strengthening the mood of our ALC community. The rigors of COVID-19 across the country has caused many members of ALC, and their relatives back home in other parts of the country, to realize how necessary it is to have nearness when it comes to care for and attention of our elders. COVID-19 made it even more so. Several members of ALC stayed near their families instead of returning to ALC. Some not returning were leaders of neighborhood groups. It has been difficult to find others who would step into their shoes.

The Neighborhood Group Leader and Toni Molck in the ALC office can help prepare anyone who is willing to step forward as a new group leader. Addresses, telephone numbers and email lists are available via Toni.

Bryan Cooper-Keeble

PROPERTY AND GROUNDS COMMITTEE

The Buildings and Grounds Committee met as needed. The committee has seven active members. We meet to discuss, decide, and complete items that need attention on our campus. Because of the ongoing pandemic situation, we did not meet on a monthly basis and work was limited.

The outside rafter of the roof portion facing Del Webb and 107th Avenue needed replacement along with 10 feet of drip edging on each side of the roof. This was done in July along with solving the problem of bees entering the Sanctuary. We moved our worship services to the Fellowship Hall until work was completed. Work was completed by Crosspoint Construction, LLC.

There was another problem with bees on our church property in December. This location was in the parking area along 107th Avenue. Bees had moved into one of the trees. The hive was located and removed along with the entry holes being plugged.

Our new signage for the church was completed and mounted in December. The signs were made and printed by ABD Signs and Printing of Peoria. The 5'x12' signs are mounted on the side of the church building facing Del Webb and the other on the side of the church building facing 107th Avenue. Volunteers from Radiant Church of Surprise along with their Pastor Tory came and mounted signs for us. They had the work completed in two hours. We are very grateful for their assistance in this project.

The topic of securing the church bus has been discussed for quite some time. Because of the open location of the bus, the committee felt a need to find a more secure location. After many calls to different storage areas and calculating the cost of storage, it was decided to go ahead and secure a spot at Storage Solutions located on 107th Avenue and Union Hills. Our church bus is now at a close and secure location. Thank you to all of the people who assisted in locating this place and solving a needed solution.

Please give me and committee members a call if you, as a member of American Lutheran Church, have ideas or questions about our church campus. We would like to hear your ideas also.

Pete Oppedahl and the Property and Grounds Committee

COMMITTEE REPORTS

PERSONNEL COMMITTEE

It's been a busy and interesting year for the ALC Personnel Committee. Former Committee Chair, Sharon Grambow, left us to become President of the Church Council and Maryanne Winters retired from the Committee in March. We were very pleased to have Terri Polk and Judy Erickson join ongoing members Chuck Alliss and Dave Hjortland to continue our work.

The committee meets weekly on Monday afternoons, and more often when our work requires it. We have often had to rely on Zoom meetings but meet in person when it is safe and practical to do so.

In the last year, the committee developed procedures for monitoring the Personnel Budget, which is the largest category of expense for the church. We review finances monthly and were pleased to end 2021 well below our budget. We continue to do what we can to control expenses while maintaining necessary and expected services to the congregation.

Other activities and accomplishments of the past year include:

- Development of an application form for staff positions along with a general information sheet about employment at ALC, both of which are available on the church website
- Developed procedures for securing and storing personnel files
- Evaluated and made changes to employee benefits, including changes to health insurance and procedures for awarding sick and vacation leave
- Advertised, interviewed candidates, and hired for staff positions
- Developed a COVID-19 policy for staff with Church Council approval
- Conducted and monitored employee performance evaluations
- Reviewed contracts for employees working under contract

Our goals for 2022 include conducting staff training for information confidentiality, reviewing personnel files for completeness and regulatory compliance, developing procedures for volunteer recognition, and reviewing and revising the Employee Handbook.

I am grateful to the members of the Committee for their work and dedication. We think we have a good team, and we are dedicated to the mission of the church we serve.

Dave Hjortland, Committee Chair

FELLOWSHIP OF FRIENDS

Fellowship of Friends is becoming active again at ALC! It's a great way to meet other members of the church community and have fun! After a long delay, we were finally able to attend a live performance of *Chicago, the Musical!* at Arizona Broadway Theater in October. For 2022, many will be attending *Gypsy*, a Musical Fable. More activities may arise as 2022 moves forward.

John and Vicki Tate

TRUST COMMITTEE

The American Lutheran Trust Committee is responsible to manage the investments donated to the trust:

- **Select the investment company.** Morgan Stanley has been retained by the committee.
- **Provide the investment guidelines.** The investment portfolio was changed from a broker account to a managed account shifting the fiduciary responsibility from the trust committee to Mark Callahan of Morgan Stanley. The committee has voted to change the equity limits which had been to not exceed 10% to a target of 40% with limits of 30% to 50%. The Current Investment Policy Guidelines (1/8/2013) need to be revised to reflect this change. Lisa Higginbotham from the ELCA Foundation reviewed the policy and suggested numerous changes. A meeting will need to be set.
- **Review proposed investments.** Morgan Stanley's portfolio Manager, Mark Callahan proposed creating a five-year bond ladder to better respond to a changing market. This was unanimously accepted by the committee.
- **Monitor results.** The committee reviews the portfolio at every meeting.

There were a number of changes in 2021. Connie Kurth resigned as secretary and Joanne Greathouse volunteered to become secretary for the committee. Perc Peckham resigned and recommended Jack Leyse to replace him who will need congregational approval. Louise Sosa resigned, and a replacement will be needed to complete 2 years of her 3-year term. Joanne Greathouse volunteered to become a voting member and will need congregational approval. Bob Sosa has completed his three-year term at the end of 2021.

Bob Sosa

2021 Trust Committee Annual Report

Ending 2020 Total Assets: \$ 1,575,575.79
Ending 2021 Total Assets: 1,581,638.88

Total distribution of funds for 2021

• Lutheran Seminary Scholarships. St. Paul	\$6,614.41
• Pacific Lutheran Seminary Scholarships	\$6,614.41
• ALC Mortgage Reduction (Principal)	\$13,873.38
• Pan De Vida Scholarships	\$785.00
• Pan De Vida Church Support	\$465.31
• ALC General Fund	\$1,093.67
• ELCA	\$272.96
• Choir	\$1,193.54
• ALC Care	\$10,941.67
• Scholarships (male student Pan De Vida)	\$2,500.00
• Spirit of the Desert	\$4,000.00
• Lutheran Social Services of the Southwest (Afghan refugees)	\$2,500.00
• Navajo Reservation	\$2,500.00

STEWARDSHIP COMMITTEE

American Lutheran Church is in our second year of our *Sparked by the Spirit* campaign. Our campaign and its initiatives are directly connected to the Mission of American Lutheran Church: **Proclaim** the love of Jesus Christ, **Invite** others to participate in our faith community and to be a **Blessing** to all in word and deed.

In 2021, we formed a Stewardship Committee: Dick and Judy Jorgenson, Ron and Marie Pearson, Oddey Hernandez, Communications/Media Director at ALC, Pastor Lowell Nelson and Terri Polk. Pastor Lowell and Terri worked with the Church Council to set new initiatives for our 2022 campaign. The committee met several times a month and decided that their focus would be on “Thanks4giving” and the theme of their Thanks4giving would be “**An Attitude of Gratitude**”.

In 2021, you responded generously to our *Sparked by the Spirit* campaign, **THANK YOU!** A large portion of our congregation grew in their generosity to our mission. This made our continued ministry possible. Planning for our second-year campaign started in September 2022.

Our *Sparked by the Spirit* Campaign begins the first week of January 2022. “**An Attitude of Gratitude**” will be our theme throughout the month of January. In January, you will receive more detailed emails and flyers regarding our three Initiatives. Temple talks, sermons and Outreach articles will be featured. The weekend of January 15-16 we will feature a **Volunteer Booklet**. This will explain many of the committees at ALC that you can choose to volunteer with. The weekend of January 22-23 you can begin to turn in your Statement of Intent (commitment) cards. Tuesday, January 25 will be our **Celebration Day**. All congregation members are invited to attend this Celebration in Fellowship Hall (time to be determined). We are planning for music and some dessert treats! (Apple Pie and Ice Cream!!) In addition, Pastor Lowell and Pastor Maria will be retiring at the end of January. We will celebrate their retirement on this date. There will be baskets for each of them if you want to give them a card. Our Annual Meeting will follow. The last weekend in January will be an update on our *Sparked by the Spirit* campaign outcome.

We look forward to fulfilling our initiatives for 2022. Again, thank you for your support and generosity during a challenging 2021 year.

Terri Polk

GIFTS AND MEMORIALS

This committee was formed in April 2019 to work in conjunction with the Trusts Committee for the dispersal of monies donated as gifts or memorials. As a committee, we have established policies and procedures for the reporting, requesting and dispersal of funds given to ALC for use distinctly different from operating expenses.

These were presented and approved by both the Trusts Committee and the Church Council. The designated gifts and memorials funds are available to appropriate committees or ministries and will be released when needs arise and committee chairs present a request. The undesignated gifts and memorials are also available upon request but with the committee’s oversight as to the specific details of the need. There has been limited activity due to COVID-19, but we are establishing guidelines to present to the congregation to help direct gifts to areas and projects that the various ministries may want to promote for the blessing of all at ALC. Also, we are working to bring transparency to everyone by providing more frequent updates about the funds available for special projects or events.

If you are interested in joining this committee, we would like to hear from you. Thank you for your amazing generosity in honor or celebration of family and friends.

Ann Skidmore, Chair

Committee members, Donna Borden, Wally Eklund and Jane Tschida Olson - Council Liaison

WOMEN'S MINISTRIES

Women's Ministry at American Lutheran Church provides opportunities for serving the church community through Quilters, Book Club, Spinning Bandages, Memorial Receptions, Missions, and Operation Christmas Child, as well as fundraising events such as luncheons and the Holiday Bazaar. These activities allow us to support our local, national, and international charities.

The COVID-19 virus totally changed our activities in 2021. From January until the end of August we were not able to have any of our normal activities. At the end of August, we began serving Memorial Receptions. So far, we have served five receptions. In the Fall, we were also able to once again Spin Bandages for Lutheran Global Health Miniseries. October brought the distribution of the Operation Christmas Child boxes to be filled.

November and December were very busy months for Women's Ministry. In November, church members returned 110 Operation Christmas Child boxes, which were sent to children in need. On November 20th, we were able to hold our Holiday Bazaar. Because of no baked goods, we took extra COVID precautions by spreading things out in the Fellowship Hall and put Cafe au Lait outside in the Courtyard. It was a successful event and we actually sold out of Lefse, but not to worry, we ordered more for Christmas.

In December, we hosted our Christmas Luncheon...the first luncheon in 23 months. It included a Quilt Raffle, a Mini Bazaar, a Modified Cookie Walk and Lefse Sale. It was a wonderful day having our women together again.

Although we are starting to raise funds again, we will wait to distribute funds to our charities until April 2022 to allow more time to increase our fundraising. Women's Ministry is so grateful to our Board Members and faithful volunteers who willingly help with events. We couldn't do our events and activities without them.

We also thank the ALC members for your generous support of our projects. As you show your Mission Hearts, you make it possible for us to share God's Love...locally, nationally, and internationally. Thank you so much!

Women's Ministry:

2021 Receipts: \$ 9884
(From Memorial Receptions,
Holiday Bazaar, Christmas
Luncheon, Cookie Walk,
Christmas Lefse)

2021 Expenses: \$ 2458
(For Quilter Supplies, Holiday
Bazaar Lefse, Christmas
Luncheon Meals, Christmas
Lefse)

NOMINATING COMMITTEE REPORT

The ALCSC Bylaws require the Congregational Council to appoint 6 members to the Nominating Committee. The 2022 members are: Sharon Grambow, Bryon Cooper-Keeble, Jan Powell, Winston Schmidt, Bob Bouldin and Otto Imig.

The nominating committee met in November, and each was asked to recommend 6 names to be considered for the openings in the 2022 Congregational Council. Many factors were taken into consideration and after much thought, consideration, and prayer, the following list of nominees were selected and have agreed to serve on the Council:

- Jackie Huget—Stephen Ministry
- Pam Prueter—Women’s Ministries
- David Hjortland—Personnel
- Tom Bjerkreim—Finance
- Winston Schmidt—Worship and Music
- Otto Imig—Trust—1 year term

ALCSC By-laws require the Council to nominate candidates to fill vacancies in the Trust Committee for election at the annual meeting. This year the Trust Committee has two openings and the following have been nominated:

- Joanne Greathouse—3 year term
- Jack Leyse—1 year term

Thank you to the Nominating Committee members and thank you to the nominees for answering the call to serve on the Congregational Council.

Respectfully Submitted,

Ron Prekker
Vice President

Officer Position	Council Member	Remaining Term	2022 Committee Liaison
President	Ron Prekker	2022	
Vice President	Donna Borden	2023	
Secretary	Rita Van Stelle	2022	
Treasurer	Carol Weber	2023	
	Tom Bjerkreim	2024	Finance
	Christine Weldon	2022	Fellowship
	Donna Borden	2023	WNA
	Chuck Allis	2023	Personnel
	Jane Tschida Olson	2023	Benevolence
	Winston Schmidt	2024	Worship and Music
	David Hjortland	2024	Personnel
	Otto Imig	2022	Trust
	Ronald Prekker	2022	Trust
	Pete Oppedahl	2022	Property/Grounds
	Arvid Peterson	2023	Parish Ed and Outreach
	Jane Tschida Olson	2023	Gifts and Memorials
	Jackie Huget	2024	Stephen Ministry
	Pam Prueter	2024	Women’s Ministries

Jackie Huget

I am a retired music teacher and taught vocal and general music for 30 years. I had the opportunity to teach grades K-12 at several different schools. My husband, Ralph, and I moved to Arizona in 1998. We joined ALC as associate members within a few months of our move. Ralph was a retired ELCA minister. I am widowed and we had two children; our daughter, who died at age 29, and a son, who was recently widowed and currently living with me. I have two grandchildren and two great-grandchildren. I volunteer with Reading for the Blind and play piccolo and flute with the Sun City Concert Band and the Sun City Community Orchestra.

Pam Prueter

I was born and raised in Ohio and attended Wittenberg University in Springfield, Ohio. After graduation, I taught High School biology and assorted sciences for 30 years in Columbus, Ohio. I have been married to my husband, Larry, for 52 years as of July 2022. We have one son, David, who is married. We have one step-granddaughter. Larry and I joined ALC around 2005 and have lived in Sun City full-time for 12 years. I am a current Stephen Minister at ALC.

David Hjortland

I was born and raised in Minnesota and am proud that my great-grandparents on both sides immigrated from Norway. While my wife and I are snowbirds and live in Minnesota about half of the year, we love Sun City and are both very involved with ALC. We are third generation in Sun City, both in the home we have here and as members of ALC. I am a retired nursing home administrator, and my wife, Debra, is retired from the Minneapolis Federal Reserve Bank. We have been married for 43½ years, have two adult children, and one young grandson. My primary hobby is music and hi-fi equipment.

Tom Bjerkreim

I was born in Glendive, Montana and raised on a ranch. Kathy and I were married in November 1971. We have two daughters and three grandsons. I was employed by Shell Oil Company in 1971 and other oil companies as a Construction Supervisor until retiring in 2016. We moved to Sun City in 2018 and joined ALC the same year. Currently, I'm on the Finance Committee.

Winston Schmidt:

Winston is a retired Air Force colonel who moved full-time to Arizona from Northern Virginia in 2009. After retiring from the Air Force in 1990, he worked as a project manager, director, and vice president with contract companies supporting the Joint Staff in the Pentagon. While in Virginia, Winston and Shari were active in the choir as 20-year (+) members of Lord of Life Lutheran, Fairfax, VA, and where Winston served on the church council as Director of Lay Ministry, Vice President, and President. Winston has an advantage regarding "Lutheranism," being the son of a LCMS Pastor and graduating from Valparaiso University. Winston and Shari have been married for 55 years, have three sons (all living in the Valley), eight grandchildren, and two great-grandsons.

Otto "Bill" Imig

I was born in Seward, Nebraska and raised on a dairy farm, one of ten children. I attended University of Nebraska-Lincoln and received a B.S. in Agriculture Economics. I then served six years in the Army National Guard and was commissioned as 2nd Lieutenant. I am married to my wife, Sarah, and our 54th wedding anniversary is in June. We have two daughters, one in Seattle, Washington and one in Parker, Colorado with our two grandchildren. My career was in the meat industry management for 43 years with Wilson Foods, IBP, and Tyson Foods at locations in Omaha, Cedar Rapids, Oklahoma City and Sioux City. I am an enthusiastic college sports fan (especially BIG RED), enjoy golf frequently and hiking with Sarah. We spend six months living in Parker, Colorado and six months in Sun City, AZ. I served as an usher and was on the church council in Oklahoma City and Sioux City. We joined ALC in January 2017 and I usher and have been on the Trust Committee.

Joanne Ludwig Greathouse

I was born and raised (a lifelong Lutheran) in central Illinois but spent most of my married life in Richmond, Virginia. We moved to Chicago for 10 years before moving to Arizona in July 2007 and joined American Lutheran shortly thereafter. I was a tenured faculty member at Virginia Commonwealth University for 25 years and later the CEO of an accrediting agency.

Jack Leyse

I was born and raised in Kewaunee, Wisconsin. I joined the US Army after high school graduation and spent 33 months in Germany during the Korean conflict. I received a degree in mechanical engineering from Indiana Institute of Technology. I worked for a corn wet miller in Cedar Rapids, Iowa as a technical sales representative to the paper industry until 1997, when I retired. I married my wife, Betty, 63 years ago and have been happily married for 63 years.

Locally, I served on the initial Sun City CAN board of Directors. I have been an AAARP Tax Aide Counselor for 14 years. Currently, I am serving as a Benefits Counselor at SCCAN helping low-income people with Medicare and Social Security benefits and have been doing this since 2006.

WEDNESDAY NIGHT ALIVE

Wednesday Night Alive is designed to offer the congregation and community an opportunity for fellowship, inspiration, motivation, and entertainment. The Wednesday Night Alive program has been an integral part of American Lutheran Church for over 25 years – a weekly event that begins with a program at 4:30 p.m., often educational or motivational, followed by a catered dinner at 5:15. We conclude with a program at 6:00 p.m., often musical entertainment with plenty of time of socializing and having fun. The programs begin the first week of November and continue until Holy Week. All programs are free and open to church members and the community, but there is a charge for the catered dinners.

Although the spring 2021 season of Wednesday Night Alive was on hiatus due to the pandemic, we resumed programming with a fabulous Gala event on November 3, starting with the Cimmaron Sidekicks, a special dinner catered by Jane and Rod Coughlin, and concluding with the Desert Aires, an award-winning barbershop chorus. We have planned some excellent and fun programs for the remainder of the spring 2022 season. The fall 2022 and spring 2023 programs are in the planning stages. We will begin the fall 2022 season with a Gala on November 1, 2022.

The WNA committee searches far and wide for quality programming with something for everyone. The committee consists of:

Donna Borden, Co-Chair and Council Liaison
Debra Hjortland, Co-Chair
Carol Torgerson
Debbie Nelson
Lori Kellar
Judith Rainforth
James Gerber
Janet McDonald

Thank you for your participation and support and we look forward to seeing you at a Wednesday Night Alive program!

2021 CHURCH STATISTICAL RECORDS

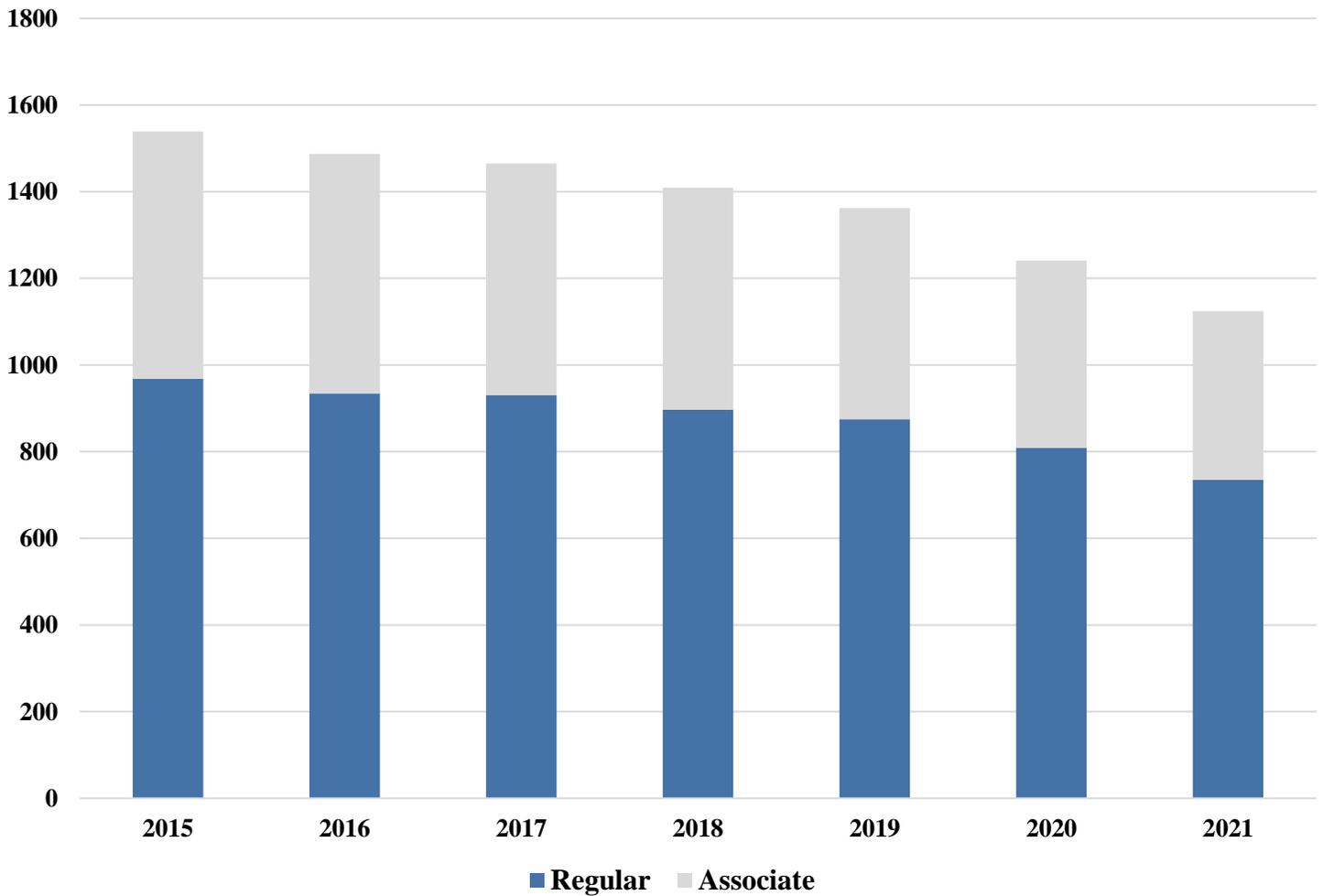
MEMBERSHIP RECORD FOR 01/01/2021 thru 12/31/2021

	REGULAR	ASSOCIATE
Membership on 01/01/2021	809	432
New Members	+38	0
Deceased	-47	-5
Transferred / Inactive	-65	-38
Membership on 12/31/2021	735	389

Total Regular and Associate Membership as of 12/31/2021 – 1,124 members

Other (Marriage)	2	
Adult Baptism	0	
Infant/Child Baptism	1	

ALC MEMBERSHIP



IN MEMORY OF ALC members who passed away in 2021:

Betty Albers

John Barsness

June Bickmann

Nadine Bomgren

Kellie Carey

Jack Carter

Mary Ann Chandler

Barbara Cramer

Helene "Billee" Culin

Wilmer "Doc" Dachtler

Gloria Dittmer

Frances Ellis

Kenneth Firchow

Josephine Fletcher

Merle Freitag

Helen Freund

Arnie Gaarde

Donna Ginsbach

Ruby Harris

June Herrling

Richard Herrmann

Hugh "Ed" Hughes

Jone Jensen

Marguerite Johnson

Tegner Kolstad

Caroline Lake

Margery Lane

Verna Larson

David Livingston

Thomas Long

Daniel McNamara

Elroy Odland

Angela Ohnesorge

Helen Olson

Sylvia Olson

Robert Page

Jack "Rich" Pearson

Judith Peterson

Clare Lange

Arlis "Babs" Riedel

Beverly Roeger

Helen Rogness

Theodore Scherer

Jean Schmidt

Fredric "Fritz" Sledgister

Patrick Stanwick

John Stark

Dorothy "Dotti" Stewart

Donald Stroh

Gail Wedan

Connie Wert

Ruth Youngblood

FINANCIAL COORDINATOR'S REPORT

FINANCES-2021

- **Debt Reduction**

In addition to principal amount, \$97,389 received toward debt reduction this year, the monthly payment was reduced to \$12,836 and interest rate was lower in June 3.875 %.

PPP Loan

Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) loan was forgiven by the government and became a grant.

- **2021 Overview**

Operating Account

➤ 2020 End Balance	224,614
➤ 2021 End Balance	130,750

Money Market Account

➤ 101030 Capital Reserve	\$142,192
➤ 101031 Undesignated Memorial	\$280,129
➤ 101032 Designated Gifts & Memorial	\$110,027
➤ 101033 Money Market Checking	\$ 8,774

We worked on the memorial designated and undesignated gifts implementing a process for the integrity of the balance of each account. We determined balances of designated and undesignated gifts and further split designated gifts to specific groups:

- Helping Hands
- Stephen Ministry
- Music & Worship
- Property Grounds
- Coach
- Columbarium
- Library
- Navajo
- WNA
- WELCA

Please consider giving a designated gift. By giving, you are benefiting various groups at ALC and assisting others in the church community.

Thank you to all for your generous gifts and offerings this past year.

Department	2021 Budget	2021 Actual	2020 Actual
Pledged Gifts	872,910	717,104	773,959
Non-Pledged Gifts	360,500	383,447	260,494
Total Revenue	1,233,410	1,055,582	1,034,453
Advertising	2,500	490	2,070
Benevolence	85,000	84,100	102,100
Finance & Budget	91,167	84,347	90,000
Operations	63,200	49,805	183,285
Personnel	844,172	738,106	669,372
Property & Grounds	95,977	103,927	56,573
Worship & Music	19,430	11,252	11,556
Total Expenses	1,201,466	1,073,727	1,114,956

2022 Budget

Account	Budget
Revenue	
Pledge Gifts	619,130
Non-Pledged Gifts	522,000
Interest Income	180
Misc (rental)	525
Total Revenue	1,141,835
Expenses	
Benevolence	79,788
Finance	85,140
Operations	49,900
Personnel	702,415
Property & Grounds	101,260
Publicity	5,000
Pastor Programs	23,600
Worship & Music	21,500
Total Expenses	1,068,603
Principal payments on mortgage	73,225
Grand Total	1,141,828

Statement of Financial Position

As of: Dec 31st 2021

Assets

CURRENT ASSETS

100010 Petty Cash	261.07
Operating Funds x0108	
100000 Amtrust General Checking 108	130,647.06
101040 Mission Investment Funds	102.48
Total Operating Funds x0108	130,749.54
Endowment (Perm Restricted)	
101090 Endowment Account	1,660,079.60
Total Endowment (Perm Restricted)	1,660,079.60
Savings and Reserved x3162	
101030 Capital Reserve	142,192.34
101031 Undesignated Memorial Fund	280,129.38
101032 Designated Gifts & Memorials	110,026.65
101033 Money Market Checking 3162	8,773.60
Total Savings and Reserved x3162	541,121.97
Total CURRENT ASSETS	2,332,212.18

LONG TERM ASSETS

Fixed Assets

102000 Land-at Cost	59,775.44
102010 Buildings-at Cost	6,975,704.55
102020 Furniture & Fixtures-at Cost	665,136.65
102030 Pipe Organ-at Cost	737,237.98
102040 Landscaping-at Cost	49,699.55
102050 2007 Chevy Eldorado Aero Elite-Cost	92,070.35
Total Fixed Assets	8,579,624.52

Total LONG TERM ASSETS

8,579,624.52

Total Assets

\$ 10,911,836.70

Liabilities & Net Assets

Liabilities

Current Liabilities

200000 Social Security Liability (EE)	168.40
200050 Pastors Continuing Education	9,047.02
200060 First Bank Credit Card	3,583.36
Total Current Liabilities	12,798.78

Long Term Liability

250000 Mortgage Payable	2,119,862.62
Total Long Term Liability	2,119,862.62

Total Liabilities

2,132,661.40

Net Assets

Fund Principal (Net Worth)

300000 Fund Principal (Net Worth)	804,167.09
351000 Capital Assets Equity	6,055,358.22
361000 Capital Fund Equity	10,016.03
371000 Reserve Savings 3162	249,554.36
Total Fund Principal (Net Worth)	7,119,095.70

Permanent Restricted1

900000 Trust Endowment	1,660,079.60
Total Permanent Restricted1	1,660,079.60

Total Net Assets

8,779,175.30

Total Liabilities & Net Assets

\$ 10,911,836.70

God of the Fertile Fields

1 God of the fer - tile fields, sha - per of
 2 We would be stew - ards true, hold - ing in
 3 As grows the hid - den seed to fruit that
 4 God of the coun - try - side, dear to the

earth that yields our dai - ly bread: forth from your
 trust from you all that you give; help us in
 serves our need, so your reign grows. Let all our
 Christ who died to make us one: we pledge our

boun - teous hand come gifts your love has planned,
 love to share, teach us like you to care
 toil be used, no gift of yours a - bused,
 lives a - new in faith - ful love to you.

that all in ev - 'ry land be clothed and fed.
 for peo - ple ev - 'ry - where, that all may live.
 no hum - ble task re - fused your love be - stows.
 Guide all we say and do. Your will be done.

All Creation Sings #1063

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ANNUAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING

OPENING LITURGY

Litany

Today our congregation gathers in prayer and hope to begin another year of ministry. We bring with us the memory of a year like no other, even as we move into a future that we cannot yet imagine. Yet even now, as in every age, God is our refuge and strength. In times of plenty and want, in times of conflict and peace, in times of growing and pruning, we remember:

God has called us for such a time as this.

We remember the past year with lament and gratitude. We have lost so much, and so much still feels uncertain. We have also witnessed God's hand at work in new and unexpected ways. We delight at hidden seeds bearing surprising and wonderful fruit. When our own resources fail, when we cannot predict the future, when we must rely on God alone, we remember:

God has called us for such a time as this.

We celebrate this moment and the many ways God has held us together as a community. We give thanks for the gift of our church building and the welcome it provides, even as we bless God for the marvel of technology and the new bonds of connection it makes possible. When our bodies need sanctuary, when our minds need expanding, when your grace must transcend our limitations, we remember:

God has called us for such a time as this.

We look ahead to the road we will travel together this year. We anticipate and receive with joy the new gifts God's love has planned. We pray for the grace to let go of what has served its holy purpose. When we are trailblazers or followers, when we are seekers or visionaries, when we must walk by faith and not by sight, we remember:

God has called us for such a time as this.

And so we pray: Grace our meeting, O God, with the gift of your Holy Spirit: the Spirit who has guided the church from the beginning, the Spirit of our risen Lord Jesus, the Spirit who sends us as healers and restorers of your beloved world. You are the source of our life together. You are the rock and cornerstone.

You have called us for such a time as this.

God of the Fertile Fields

1 God of the fer - tile fields, sha - per of
 2 We would be stew - ards true, hold - ing in
 3 As grows the hid - den seed to fruit that
 4 God of the coun - try - side, dear to the

earth that yields our dai - ly bread: forth from your
 trust from you all that you give; help us in
 serves our need, so your reign grows. Let all our
 Christ who died to make us one: we pledge our

boun - teous hand come gifts your love has planned,
 love to share, teach us like you to care
 toil be used, no gift of yours a - bused,
 lives a - new in faith - ful love to you.

that all in ev - 'ry land be clothed and fed.
 for peo - ple ev - 'ry - where, that all may live.
 no hum - ble task re - fused your love be - stows.
 Guide all we say and do. Your will be done.

All Creation Sings #1063

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Music: ITALIAN HYMN, Felice de Giardini, in the public domain.

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**O God,
 you have called your servants
 to ventures of which we cannot see the ending,
 by paths as yet untrodden,
 through perils unknown.
 Give us faith to go out with good courage,
 not knowing where we go,
 but only that your hand is leading us
 and your love supporting us;
 through Jesus Christ our Lord.
 Amen. (ELW, p. 317)**

Change and the need for creativity have become constants over the last year and a half in many aspects of life, including the church. This was the case for **Living Christ Lutheran Church** in Flagstaff, Ariz., even before a global pandemic caused many of us to rethink what it means to be church. Generosity from all three expressions of the ELCA (the churchwide organization, the Grand Canyon Synod and members of Living Christ) helped turn a congregation “on the road out of town, near the mall” into an online presence reaching over 500 people a week from Phoenix to the Philippines. (Read more about Living Christ in the current issue of “**Stories of Faith in Action**” at [ELCA.org/SOFIA](https://www.elca.org/SOFIA).)

Many other congregations have found new ways to connect both when in-person worship was impossible and when congregations began to return to their sanctuaries. Generosity, especially through Mission Support, helped us find and support these new ways of being connected. Early in the pandemic, ELCA Worship launched the “Worship in the Home” webpage, with Scripture, hymn links, prayers and reflections for each

Sunday. These resources were and continue to be used in congregations across the ELCA—even at **Sitka Lutheran Church** in Alaska, whose members printed and hand-delivered “Worship in the Home” resources to fellow members without internet access.

Change and creativity have taught us many things. As Pastor Sandra Rudd of Sitka Lutheran Church noted, “The pandemic was a stark illustration of the fact that the church is not a building. A lot of people say that, but we didn’t fully know it until we didn’t have a building to use. We learned that there are many ways to be connected as the church.” Throughout the pandemic, the ELCA has changed and adapted, doing ministry in new and creative ways, because of the generosity of its members. Even now, you may be gathering in a new way for your annual meeting, to discern how you will steward the gifts shared generously with your congregation to do ministry in your community and beyond. As you have these important conversations, remember that your gifts of time, talent and resources have helped create new spaces beyond our walls and buildings where we continue to worship, serve and love God and each other.

ANNUAL REPORT

2021