



2021 Annual Report

First  Lutheran
CHURCH

PASTORS' 2021 REPORT

*"Let us hold fast to the confession of our hope without wavering, for he who has promised is faithful."
Hebrews 10:23*

These are important words for us to hang on to and remember during this significant and hopeful moment in the life of First Lutheran. We write this report with grateful hearts for this past year and for all that is before us in 2022. Over these last almost two years, we have been able to continue to carry out our ministry because, over and over again, we have entrusted ourselves to our faithful God. Second, we have learned to trust one another; and third, we have stayed true to our mission and values. We are a Christian community where faith and life meet in very practical ways through worship, learning, and serving in Jesus' name.

Our values are reflected in our desire to offer **worship** that is meaningful, relevant, and as accessible as possible. We are blessed with a worship team of pastors and staff who commit a significant amount of time and creativity in planning and carrying out our worship. We are also grateful to have an exceptional depth of musicians and volunteers who provide hospitality and make worship at First Lutheran so special.

Learning and growing in our faith is another one of our core values. This past fall we welcomed Pam Miller to our staff to serve as our Small Group Coordinator. We had almost 80 people in our Advent small groups and look forward to having even more involved in our Lenten small groups when we take a closer look at the 23rd Psalm.

Over 85% of our children and youth returned to in-person learning this past fall. Passing on the faith to our young people and offering ways to engage them and their families in worship, learning, and serving is a high priority for us as a congregation.

We are a congregation that has a heart for **serving**. Through our spirit of generosity and our commitment to serving, we packed over 550 backpacks, collected food and snacks for the DMS Shelf, and donated over seven carloads of needed items for the Foster Closet. Add to that the ministries of our quilters, Habitat for Humanity volunteers, our outdoor worship ministry, and most recently, our Ambassadors, who are intentional about welcoming and connecting with guests around worship. Serving and caring for others is in our DNA.

There have been challenges this past year, but our blessings far outnumber those rough spots. In spite of experiencing a direct lightning strike that caused significant damage last year, we were still able to continue to carry out our worship in-person, online, and on the radio.

Other blessings include the many guests and new members who have walked through our doors over the last year. The addition of Pastor Judy is another blessing. We are so grateful for our committed staff and congregational leaders who faithfully carry out the mission of First Lutheran day in and day out. We have many members and participants who serve in any number of ways and make our ministry possible. Finally, hats off to our Call Committee who have gone above and beyond in being thorough and thoughtful. Thank you for dedicating the time and hard work that you put into finding the right person to be our next Lead Pastor.

It takes a team effort to carry out our ministries and we are so grateful for each one of you as we continue to hold fast to the hope that is ours in Christ.



Pastor Greg Billberg



Pastor Kari van Wakeren



Pastor Judy Holmen

VISION TEAM

Vision Team



Dick Geiselhart - Chair



Neal Larson - Communications Board



Jen Sundby - Vice Chair



Del Mari Runck - Finance & Facilities Board



Lucas Kusters - Worship Board



Joanne Kensinger - Secretary



Darla Harstad - Learning Board



Joanne Bliese - Treasurer



Bruce Belseth - Serving Board

Structure Update

At the 2021 Annual Meeting, our church structure was approved to be composed of a leadership group, called the Vision Team, and supported by five boards that represent our core values: Worship, Learning, Serving, Finance & Facilities, and Communications. Since that time of restructuring, we have been building the boards to help carry out the vision, direction, and ministry of First Lutheran Church.

In 2022, each board will define goals and action steps in their respective area and develop teams to support the mission of First Lutheran Church.

First Lutheran is a
vibrant Christian Community

Where faith and life meet
through worship, learning,
and serving in Jesus' name.

BOARDS



Worship



Lucas Kusters - VT Liaison



Pastor Greg - Staff Liaison



Sharon Bridges



Gene Hartwig



Carrie Urness



Learning



Darla Harstad - VT Liaison



Pastor Kari - Staff Liaison



Bryan Anderson



Scott McDonald



Brandy Quam



Serving



Bruce Belseth - VT Liaison



Pastor Kari - Staff Liaison



Dave & Alice Anderson



Michelle Flaten



Philip & Kyrsten Zimpel



Finance & Facilities



Del Mari Runck - VT Liaison



Greg Tvrdik - Staff Liaison



Jed Burkey



Julie Critz



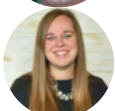
Nancy Doebeert



Communications



Neal Larson - VT Liaison



Molly Comer - Staff Liaison



Craig Andrews

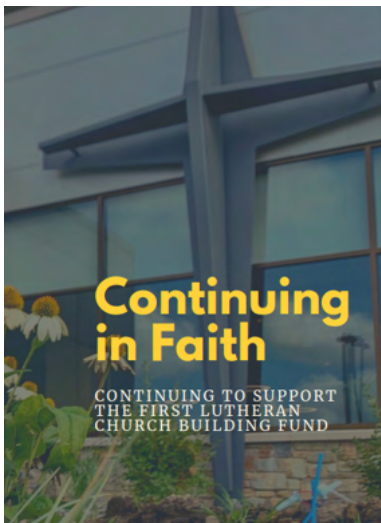


Stephanie Heseltine

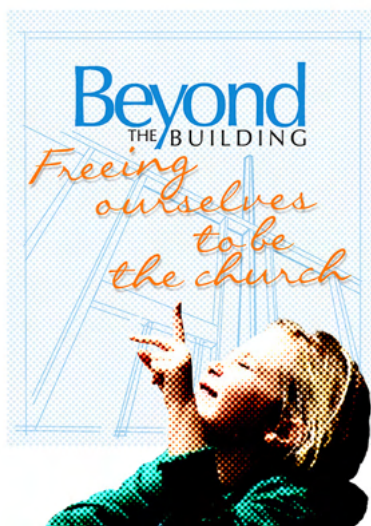


Natosha VanLiere

BUILDING CAMPAIGN



In 2020, our plans to launch the Beyond the Building Capital Campaign were put on hold due to the economic uncertainty from the pandemic. Knowing the importance of paying off our building debt, we moved forward with an interim giving plan called Continuing in Faith. 194 households committed to continue giving at their current level to the building fund, keeping our mortgage and church in a solid financial position. \$234,374 was given to the building fund through Continuing in Faith from January - May of 2021.



The 3-year Beyond the Building Campaign began on June 1, 2021. 332 households have given to this campaign. \$636,235 has been contributed in 2021.

2021 Beginning Mortgage Liability: \$3,821,042

2021 Ending Mortgage Liability: \$2,972,026

We have paid down our mortgage with Mission Investment Fund by 22% in 2021, making principal payments of \$849,015. In savings, we have ten months of mortgage payments totaling \$225,530.

WORSHIP

Purpose:

We provide meaningful, relevant worship that is joy-filled, authentic, and inspiring for all ages and stages of life.



We were thrilled to return to in-person worship in February 2021.

We welcomed 39 kids into our church family through baptism.



Advent wreaths were created to celebrate the Advent season at home.



We enjoyed another beautiful summer of outdoor worship at the Legacy of the Lakes Gardens.

Christmas traditions returned, including Carols & Candles and Living Nativity.



The kid's choir shared their joy and voices with us during worship throughout the year.

LEARNING

Purpose:

We nurture vibrant and active faith for people of all ages and stages of life.



On October 17th, we celebrated with 40 students as they affirmed their faith. Each student created a stole to wear during the service with unique faith symbols and meaningful personal images.



71 students participated in VBS.



31 Bibles were given to 2nd graders.



26 Bibles were given to 3 year olds.



Dementia Friends training for all ages.

SERVING

Purpose:

We engage leaders of all ages and stages of life to extend hospitality, build relationships and care for one another, our community, and the world.



United Way Backpack Attack

Volunteers from First Lutheran came together to stuff over 550 backpacks to distribute to kids in Douglas & Pope Counties. Thanks to generous gifts by FLC members, we also supplemented a technology piece in each backpack!



Habitat for Humanity

First Lutheran participants, Tammy and her daughters, partnered with Habitat for Humanity to build their new home. Forty volunteers from FLC served 1,420 hours in 2021.



Hospitality

Upon returning to in-person worship many responded with, "We can help! It'll be so wonderful to have our church doors open again!"

Additionally, over 55 households with people of all ages stepped up to provide hospitality at our outdoor worship this summer.



Global Health Ministries & Lutheran World Relief

The Mission Quilters and members of First Lutheran assembled 10 hospice kits, 20 newborn kits, 110 pillowcases, 56 face masks, 24 lab coats, 54 personal care kits, 63 baby care kits, 50 school kits, 67 quilts, and 7 blankets to send to those in need around the world.



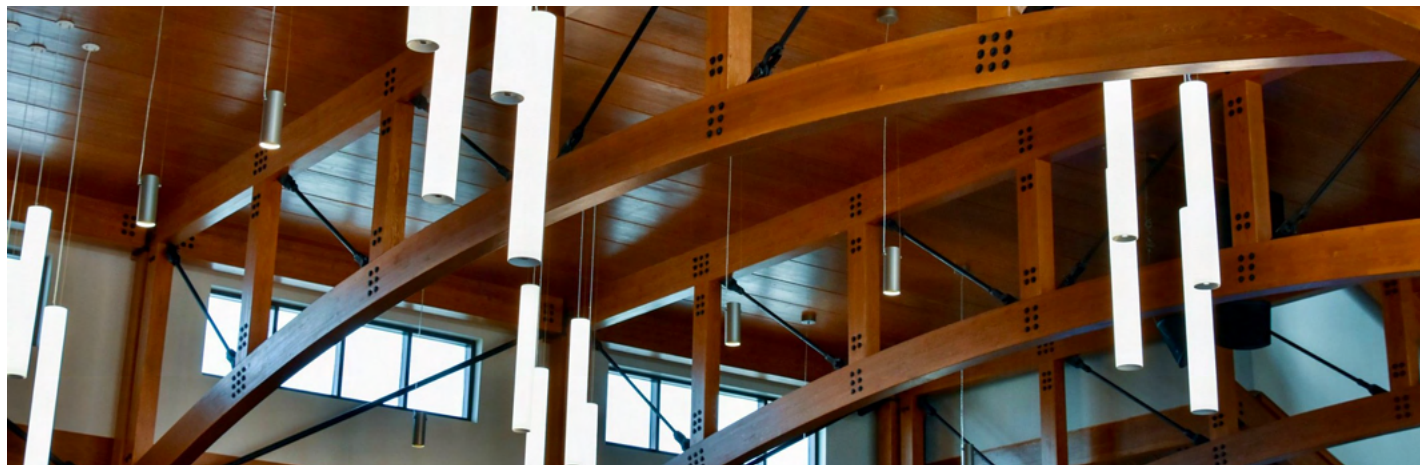
Foster Closet

We collected items for the Foster Closet for this year's Advent of Gratitude. Since opening on September 16, 2021, they've served 36 children ages newborn to 16. FLC donated over seven car loads of items along with over \$1,000 in gift cards and \$1,000 in monetary gifts to show foster kids & families they are loved and not forgotten.

FINANCE & FACILITIES

Purpose:

We provide operational and financial oversight to coordinate a safe, comfortable, and sustainable environment for all ages and stages of life at First Lutheran Church.



A Place Where Faith & Life Meet

In addition to our regular weekly activities and events, our facility also hosts several community groups including:

- Cub Scout Pack 416
- Two AA Groups
- Red Cross Blood Drive
- Salvation Army
- Habitat for Humanity
- Luther Crest Bible Camp
- Theatre Le Homme Dieu
- Dancing Sky - Dementia Friends
- Alexandria Lakes Area Chamber of Commerce
- Lakes Area Concert Association
- West Central MN Communities Action
- Parkinson's Support Group
- Caregivers Support Group

Lightning Strike Update

On August 20, 2021, the cross tower was struck by lightning, causing damage to our sound and video system, the bell ringing equipment, cross tower lighting, internet switches, HVAC, and lighting programming. Most of these items have been remedied and are functioning properly. With supply chain delays, approximately 40% of our replacement sound and video equipment has been delivered to the Tricorne Audio Warehouse, and we are working on obtaining the rest. On January 13, 2022, we settled with the insurance company for \$120,240. Approximately \$90,000 is for sound and video equipment, with the remainder for everything else listed above. We appreciate your patience and understanding as we've worked through this process.



COMMUNICATIONS

Purpose:

We promote our mission and values in order to engage people of all ages and stages of life in our congregation and community.



1110

Subscribers to the weekly e-news



235

Followers on our Instagram page



2058

Followers on our Facebook page



197

Subscribers on our YouTube channel



Where people are worshipping from...

Every week people worship with us from all over the world. The majority of people are tuning in from the locations indicated on the map shown. Additionally, we have many snowbirds staying connected through worship in Arizona, California, Florida, and more.



A look back at our Sermon Series throughout the year...



STATS

CELEBRATIONS

- 39** Baptisms
- 4** Weddings
- 25** Funerals
- 48** Sponsored Radio Broadcasts
- 25** Sponsored Online Worship Services
- 13** Sponsored Outdoor Worship Services
- 85** New Members



CHILDREN & YOUTH

- 388** Registered Students in Programming
- 55** Programming Volunteers
- 40** Confirmands
- 71** VBS students
- 57** Bibles received
- 45** First Communion
- 106** Community Preschool Students

ATTENDANCE

- 229** Average Outdoor Summer Worship
- 1440** Christmas Eve Worship
- 307** Average Weekly In-Person Worship
- 158** Average Weekly YouTube Worship Views
- 419** Average Weekly Facebook Worship Views
- 884** Total Average Weekly Worship Reach



FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH

2021 FINANCIAL REPORT & 2022 MINISTRY PLAN

<u>GENERAL MINISTRY FUND</u>			
	2021 BUDGET	2021 ACTUALS	2022 PROPOSAL
OFFERING INCOME	\$1,245,619	\$1,187,429.76	\$1,307,500
OTHER INCOME	\$2,500	\$8,153.44	\$3,500
TOTAL INCOME	\$1,248,119	\$1,195,583.20	\$1,311,000
WORSHIP			
Board Expense	\$14,980	\$17,332.08	\$30,600
Personnel Expense	\$251,442	\$233,515.63	\$264,165
WORSHIP TOTAL	\$266,422	\$250,847.71	\$294,765
LEARNING			
Board Expense	\$63,700	\$33,303.69	\$63,700
Benevolences	\$17,000	\$14,969.03	\$17,000
Personnel Expense	\$193,344	\$176,081.27	\$203,127
LEARNING TOTAL	\$274,044	\$224,353.99	\$283,827
SERVING			
Board Expense	\$9,000	\$7,345.34	\$9,500
Benevolences	\$62,500	\$63,104.00	\$62,500
Personnel Expense	\$160,815	\$144,244.28	\$168,952
SERVING TOTAL	\$232,315	\$214,693.62	\$240,952
COMMUNICATIONS			
Board Expense	\$36,000	\$34,504.07	\$36,000
Personnel Expense	\$68,064	\$64,573.40	\$71,508
COMMUNICATIONS TOTAL	\$104,064	\$99,077.47	\$107,508
FINANCE & FACILITIES			
Board Expense	\$148,500	\$143,083.11	\$149,901
Personnel Expense	\$222,774	\$207,075.30	\$234,046
FINANCE & FACIL. TOTAL	\$371,274	\$350,158.41	\$383,947
TOTAL EXPENSE:	\$1,248,119	\$1,139,131.20	\$1,311,000
2021 GENERAL FUND NET AHEAD: \$56,452.00			
2021 Beginning General Fund Balance: \$233,906.03 Transferred to Cash Reserve Savings: -\$158,970.00 Reinvested in Ministry: - \$24,306.00 2021 Net Ahead (Profit): + \$56,452.00 2021 YEAR END BALANCE: \$107,082.03			

<u>BANK ACCOUNT ACTIVITY</u>	
<u>GENERAL CHECKING ACCOUNT</u>	
BALANCE 1/1/21:	\$233,906.03
2021 Additions:	\$1,195,583.20
2021 Disbursements:	-\$1,322,407.20
BALANCE 12/31/21:	\$107,082.03
<u>CASH RESERVE ACCOUNT</u>	
BALANCE 1/1/21:	\$0.00
2021 Additions:	\$160,262.92
2021 Disbursements:	\$0.00
BALANCE 12/31/21:	\$160,262.92
<u>BUILDING ACCOUNTS</u>	
BALANCE 1/1/21:	\$360,936.81
2021 Additions:	\$875,431.09
2021 Disbursements:	-\$1,010,837.23
BALANCE 12/31/21:	\$225,530.67
<u>CONSTRUCTION LOAN</u>	
BALANCE 1/1/21:	\$3,821,042.54
2021 Payments to Principal:	\$849,015.72
2021 Interest Accrued & Paid:	\$132,370.28
BALANCE 12/31/21:	\$2,972,026.82
<u>DESIGNATED GIFTS & MEMORIALS FUND</u>	
BALANCE 1/1/21:	\$92,559.52
2021 Additions:	\$112,789.09
2021 Disbursements:	-\$92,395.04
BALANCE 12/31/21:	\$112,953.57
<u>PROJECT NEIGHBOR FUND</u>	
BALANCE 1/1/21:	\$11,439.85
2021 Additions:	\$8,681.58
2021 Disbursements:	-\$11,360.68
BALANCE 12/31/21:	\$8,760.75

What a great year as we worshiped, learned and served together!

We began with a general fund balance of \$233,906.03. In January, the Vision Team voted to transfer \$158,970 to a cash reserve savings and \$24,306 to a fund for reinvesting in ministry. Our 2021 income over expense was \$56,452, leaving First Lutheran with a year end balance of \$107,082.03!

What a blessing!

