ST. PAUL LUTHERAN CHURCH, ELCA

GATHERING JOYFULLY GROWING SPIRITUALLY GOING FAITHFULLY

SHARING THE GOOD NEWS OF JESUS CHRIST

2021

Annual Report to the Congregation

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."

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

All Creation Sings #1063
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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)

From the Pastor

Epiphany, 2022

Dear friends in Christ,

This year has gone by so fast. It's hard to believe I've been the pastor of St. Paul Church for almost a year already! Even in the midst of the ongoing pandemic, we've done some marvelous things together in the name of Jesus. I am still excited and happy to be your pastor!

In this annual report you will find ministry highlights of the past year. I hope you'll join me in celebrating the wonderful things God has done and made possible in and through you and this congregation. God is good!

I give thanks for the Congregation Council members. These people have worked tirelessly on behalf of this congregation praying, discussing, discerning, daring to imagine the future of St. Paul Church. We've made some difficult decisions, but not without prayerful deliberation, and all with the best interests of this congregation.

I give thanks for the Safety Team who has been devoted to keeping everyone at St. Paul Church as safe as possible during these days of the pandemic. They have studied, learned, kept up to date with the pandemic status, and put protocols into place that allow us to worship and gather as safely as we are able.

I give thanks for all those who serve on committees and ministry teams – you are the people who make this congregation tick. You remain devoted to serving Jesus and leading this congregation into the future (and have some fun, too!). You inspire me every day.

I give thanks for the St. Paul Church staff. You are absolutely amazing! I love working with you! Each of you goes the extra mile in serving this congregation – and you do it with a smile! Thank you being my partners in ministry!

And finally, I give thanks for each and every member of St. Paul Lutheran Church. What a fantastic group of people God has joined together in ministry here! Your hospitality, generosity, willingness to work and help where needed, your faith and faithfulness is incredible. I've so enjoyed getting to know you and look forward to the day when we can all gather safely together in worship again! That will be a great day and celebration (yes, I'm already planning!).

I am eager to discover what God has in store for us in 2022. While many things remain uncertain, I am confident that God will lead us forward into new adventures and bring us new opportunities to share the good news of Jesus with others in many and various ways. I am thankful to be serving Jesus with you.

Pastor Amy Engebose

QUILTING ANGELS 2021 TOTALS REPORT

Baby Care Kits	**427 kits**
213 bars of soap	
TOTAL: 59 boxes	
Personal Care Kits	**460 kits**
230 bars of soap	
TOTAL: 25 boxes	
School Kits	**80 kits**
320 notebooks	
TOTAL: 8 boxes	
Quilts	**260 quilts**
TOTAL: 50 boxes	

THE KIND FUND

The activities for the Kind Fund for 2021 were pretty much non-existent. We had no requests for money; the committee rarely met because of the COVID situation; and we have a new process with RBC (our investment firm) so we have not even met with our new representative there.

We had granted one request back in 2020, the program was cancelled that year and the students were told they could use the money for the program in 2021. The person was no longer interested in the class; so the money was refunded back to the Kind Fund.

December 31 statement shows a balance of $259,507; up almost $30,000 for the year from $231,522. We also received a $1,000 check from the mission fund but I don't know who donated it.

As of the writing of this report; we have been informed that our investment will now be handled by the national group for RBC in Minneapolis rather than the local office in Appleton. Wayne Sigl talked to the representative, but we are going to get together as a committee, discuss this change, and see if we can put a meeting together with them so we are more informed of what is going on and how to move forward.

Submitted by -
Kathi Jones

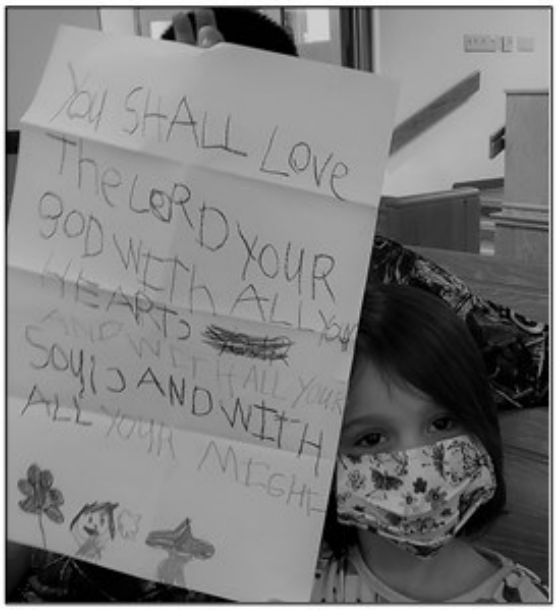
Committee Members -

John Kalfahs	Ken Blom
Laura Wyman	Eric Tipler

Worship in the Park, Sunday, July 18, 2021
The Sanctuary Choir

Living Nativity Angels

2021 Faith Formation in pictures



St. Paul Faith Formation time moved from all virtual 2-5 minute videos in January through May to in-person lessons from September through December.

Baptismal Tiles, Kindergarten Spark Story Bibles and 3rd grade Spark Bibles were distributed.

2021 Rocky Mountain Railway VBS

2021 Summer Confirmation Retreat

2021 Faith Formation in pictures

Confirmation instruction now includes monthly retreats lead by Pastor Engebose.

Lent and Advent in a bag projects brought Faith Formation in our homes in 2021.

GIFT Time included various themes, including God's Got Your Back Blessing, Scripture Scavenger Hunt and 2022 Youth Gathering focus topics on our Boundless God!

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Congregation Council

Peg Hoks, president
Jessica Hess, vice president
Dave Wolff, secretary
Diane Turke, treasurer
Dave Fink
Jody Tews
Alicia Macias
Alissa Jones

Staff

Rev. Amy Engebose, pastor
Tamie O'Dell, parish administrator
Linda Tipler, director of faith formation
Todd Nerenhausen, facility manager
Jill Hagen, bookkeeper, custodian
Linda Parker, custodian
Eric Ihde, choir and handbell choir director
Jill Hagen, organist