

Messiah Lutheran Church

Schenectady, New York

**Annual Report of the Congregation
for 2021**



**presented at
the Annual Meeting of the Congregation
on Sunday, January 30th, 2022**

Officers of the Congregation

Suzanne Collins, President
Rachel DeTeso-Mathis, Vice President
Karen Keenan, Secretary
Penny Incitti, Financial Secretary
René Dunda-Martin, Treasurer

Members of the Congregation Council

2019-2022

Katie Becker
René Dunda-Martin
Phil Bazicki

2020-2023

Eric Cawley
Karen Keenan
Crystal Murray

2021-2024

Suzanne Collins
Rachel DeTeso-Mathis
Kimlee Marquise

Parish Staff

Rev. Dustin G. Wright, Pastor
Heather Zimmer, Parish Administrator
Douglas J. Chilton, Minister of Music Emeritus
Sarah Bachorik, Community Center Coordinator
Dave Carkner, Parish Caretaker
Suzanne Smedes, Bookkeeper

In memory of all our saints who will ALWAYS be with us.

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President's Report

Dear Friends,

2021 was a year to remember for all of us! I remember stories that my grandmother told about the Spanish Flu Pandemic of 1918. She had just given birth to my mother, and my Aunt was six years old. My Grandfather, my Aunt and my Grandmother all came down with the flu, and a neighbor was kind enough to come and care for my newborn mother.

That is what happens in pandemics and times of great challenges. We stretch and we reach out to help each other. Stretching can be uncomfortable, and we had to stretch in many ways during this year.

First, there was Communication, which turned into Technology and Zoom. We may not necessarily love this technology, but we wanted to see our loved ones, stay in touch, and even do some business and meetings. Streaming Church services, thanks to many dedicated volunteers, became normal, and even useful, as we saw already this year due to the weather.

We had to learn a bit about Construction and Building to understand our projects for the future, with many floor plans and many ideas, as we work our way to a fully accessible Church and revitalized Community Center.

A professional group led us in learning to raise the funds needed to accomplish our goals at Messiah, but the heart of the fundraising came from the dedicated volunteers, who spoke from the heart, doing Temple talks, and visiting our homes, to explain and answer questions in person.

It is all about heart, anyway, isn't it? Everyone reaching out in their own way to do the job, or help the mission of their choice, crafting and meditating together, sending cards or delivering food when needed - all those small parts grow into a great effort together.

I really choose not to look back on 2021, but rather look forward to the exciting changes coming in the next two years! Messiah and Trinity will look so different by then, and God willing, so will our World.

Respectfully submitted,
Suzanne Collins, President



Suzanne Collins, pictured with her husband Tom and their granddaughter.

Pastor's Report

The Feast of the Conversion of Paul, Tuesday, January 25th, 2022

Dear siblings in Christ,

Shortly before Messiah undertook the building of its current sanctuary in 1963, Rev. Richard Rieger, who I've always looked to as mentor since I began as your pastor here in 2014, wrote the following in his Annual Report to the Congregation:

An ever increasing role is being assigned to the Christian laymen today. I firmly believe that if the Church is truly to fulfill its mission it must be a Church where all members realize their vital part. It must not be a "Pastor's Church." Laymen must assume the responsibility of being Christ's church in the world.



Pastor Dustin leading Rotterdam's 20th Anniversary of 9/11 in prayer.

Perhaps it's comforting in the midst of SO much change and uncertainty, that some are still quite the same.

What you'll find in the following pages is a truly AMAZING story of how one small congregation in Upstate New York, despite a year of immense difficulty, rallied to do exactly what Pastor Rieger wrote about nearly sixty years ago and thereby began a radical experiment to transform what it means to be the Church in the twenty first century.

So many leaders, some who never knew Messiah before the pandemic, stepped up to lead art classes, welcome new members and assist in worship. A massive team of volunteers from middle school students to great grandparents and every age in between worked countless hours contributing their gifts to RAISE NEARLY HALF A MILLION DOLLARS to make our Worship Center fully accessible and welcome to EVERYONE, once and for all. New leaders stepped up as Children's Sunday School Leaders and leaders of our Community Center, cantors, fundraisers, and grant writers, coffee makers, package deliverers and more!

Especially since this past Thanksgiving or so, the pandemic has indeed once again burdened us greatly, but this current state of things, just like every other pandemic in human history, will not be forever, and my goodness, there is much to celebrate! There is much good work to do in the name of Jesus Christ! The year ahead will see us fully launch our Trinity Community Center anchored by a new Bread of Life Food Pantry nearly double its current size. New partnerships with folks of all religious and a wide variety of nonprofits will solidify our Trinity Community Center as THE central hub of community in Rotterdam, New York. Supported by guidance from mental health professionals, we'll dig deep to make sure we're supporting our young people in developmentally appropriate ways as we come out of the pandemic. As Mr. Doug returns this spring, our choir will sing once again! And perhaps, most exciting of all, my gosh, when we gather once again for Christmas Eve Potluck this year, it will in a FULLY ACCESSIBLE Fellowship Hall, a dream DECADES in the making.

Without a doubt, and with God's help, our "People's Church" is stronger than ever!

In hope,
Pastor Dustin

Faith Formation Ministry Team

Cradle Roll / Nursery Ministry

PURPOSE

To support young families in faith formation in the home and to provide a nurturing learning environment for children from birth to three years of age.

REVIEW OF 2021

During 2021 there were eight families who received a monthly mailing of an at home resource called FROLIC which is provided by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. This resource helps parents/guardians teach the language of faith during the most critical age of development. A few of the children aged out during the year and are now ready to join Sunday School.

LOOKING AHEAD to 2022

As we come into the new year it is with hope that we can have a busy active nursery with all of our young people able to attend on Sunday mornings. Other ways of supporting our youngest families, from having a couple rocking chairs in the back of the sanctuary for nursing moms, etc. are also in the works. With that said we also hope to have more people involved in this ministry.



We welcomed our youngest current member, Allison Cawley, on October 24th, 2021.

THANK YOU TO OUR MINISTRY LEADERS

Allison Bode (Chair) and we'd LOVE your help strengthening especially our nursery program in the year ahead!

Respectfully submitted,
Allison Bode, Cradle Roll Chair

Children's Sunday School Ministry

PURPOSE

To provide faith formation opportunities for pre-school and elementary school aged children and their families.

REVIEW OF 2021

The year started off rough due to Covid restrictions, we couldn't really do in person Sunday School. Once fall rolled around and Messiah started having in person services again, we gave Sunday School a go with a new curriculum designed for kids ages K-5 since we weren't really sure how many kids would be attending from week to week.

We signed on two new Sunday School leaders, Emily and Krista Russo who are an amazing addition. We have not had one week where there wasn't at least one child in Sunday School although most of the time they were all under the age of 5. It has been challenging and fun.



We were SO happy to be able to present "A Rainbow Christmas" this year!



Pastor Dustin learning with our young people in Children's Sunday School.

We accomplished a big goal of having a pageant this year, "Rainbow Christmas", even though we had to enlist the help of some of the older kids and adults, it was still fun!

LOOKING AHEAD TO 2022

Next year my hope is to pick up some older kids for Sunday School and possibly split the one class into two with Emily and Krista taking one and I the other. Hopefully we can make some bigger strides towards getting the Sunday School program closer to where it used to be. Also try to get outside more in the spring for games and activities once the weather gets better.

THANK YOU TO OUR MINISTRY LEADERS

Emily Russo, Krista Russo, Heather Zimmer, Cheryl Borski (Chair)

Respectfully submitted,
Cheryl Borski, Children's Sunday School Chair

Youth Ministry



Evening devotionals at Prayerathon 2021.

PURPOSE

Provides faith formation opportunities for middle and high school aged youth and their families, including confirmation class.

REVIEW OF 2021

Despite the pandemic, we were still able to provide a wide variety of opportunities for our middle and high school aged youth to connect with one another, grow in their faith, and begin making sense out of the crazy world we're living in. In some ways, confirmation class was a uniquely powerful experience due to pandemic, as we were able to Zoom in speakers from all over the world for a number of sessions! Highlights

included our young people speaking with Dennis Frado, Director of the Lutheran Office for World Community at the United Nations, conversation with Merle Longwood hearing about his story of being a seminary intern in the Deep South during the Civil Rights movement and more. Our confirmation students also participated in a number of service projects throughout the year, from helping with our Shrove Tuesday Drive Thru Pancake Supper to Spring & Autumn Service Days to supporting our food pantries to co-leading our 2021 "A Place at the Table for Everyone" Prayerathon. Over eighteen hours we broadcasted live on Facebook Watch showcasing all we've been at Messiah and all we hope to be in the years ahead as we develop our Community Center and our fully accessible Worship Center. Other one off exciting events included Tubing at West Mountain and an Easter Egg Hunt at the Olochnowicz Estate. Perhaps our most joyful Sunday of the year was this past November when we gathered in a packed sanctuary to support six of our young people, Izzy Paige, Marcus DiGiovanni, Ella Roether, Austin Karrel, Grace & Sarah Olochnowicz during their confirmation on Christ the King Sunday.



Our amazing 2021 Confirmation Class!

LOOKING AHEAD TO 2022

We are SO excited that five of our youth, Grace & Sarah Olochnowicz, Hannah Borski, Kyle Avery and Jesse Mathis will join Pastor Dustin, Kristen Olochnowicz and Rachel DeTeso-Mathis, along with youth and chaperones from Good Shepherd LC at the 2022 ELCA Youth Gathering in Minneapolis this summer along with 30,000 Lutheran youth from across the country. We also plan on starting a new Confirmation Class program this coming autumn. Finally, as pandemic conditions improve, restarting all those cherished annual events will bring our families back together in 2022, from once again Tubing at West Mountain, organizing a Youth Lock-in and Easter Egg Hunt, our Haunted Hayride and more!

THANK YOU TO OUR MINISTRY LEADERS

Tammi Crowther, Betsy Sweet, Rachel DeTeso-Mathis, Cheryl Borski & Kristen Olochnowicz (Chair)

Respectfully submitted,
Pastor Dustin

Adult Education Ministry

PURPOSE

To support the spiritual growth of adults in the congregation and the wider community.

REVIEW OF 2021

The Adult Education program in 2021 continued to offer a Sunday Forum, conducted virtually from 8:45 - 9:45 am during this time of Covid, taught by Merle Longwood. It continued to explore the topic "Peace Not Walls: Justice in Palestine and Israel," using Elias Chacour's *Blood Brothers: The Dramatic Story of a Palestinian Christian Working for Peace In Israel*, supplemented by readings and videos available on the Internet. This course included virtual visits with distinguished guests in Palestine, such as Elias Chacour and others who have had significant experience in that troubled part of the world.



Our Sunday Forum, "The Gospel and the Native American Religious Experience" has been a HUGE success!

Following that, the topic shifted to focus on "The Gospel and the Native American Religious Experience: Colonialism, Resistance, and Liberation," using David Treuer's *The Heartbeat of Wounded Knee: Native America from 1890 to the Present*, supplemented by readings and videos. René Dunda-Martin, a member of our congregation, has been an invaluable participant in this course, bringing her lived experience as a member of the Navajo Nation. Joseph Bruchac, Native American author, scholar, and story teller, joined the class virtually for one session. The participants in the course recommended that Messiah Church include a statement acknowledging and honoring the Native American nations upon whose ancestral homelands we gather for worship, as well as our Indigenous siblings who continue to care for this land in its welcoming to worship, and this proposal is being implemented. This course continues into 2022. In addition, Pastor Dustin taught three midweek courses: (1) "The Upswing: The Story of the Christians Who Rebuilt America and the Scriptures that Inspired Them," Wednesdays in Lent, 2:30 pm, which discussed issues that have been confronted in the past to build a more equitable society and how we might be inspired to do it again; (2) Community Round the Campfire, Summer Wednesdays at 7:00 pm, Parish Yard at Messiah Church, conversations about things that matter most; and (3) Advent Compline, Wednesdays in Advent at 7:00 pm, including lighting the Advent wreath, followed by contemplative prayer, and reflection on the week's theme using the Advent devotional, *Heaven & Nature Sing* (Augsburg Fortress).

LOOKING AHEAD TO 2022

We very much believe the virtual component of our Adult Education Ministry will continue to grow and continue to reach individuals outside of our congregation and even outside of New York State. A significant number of our Sunday Forum participants included folks who are not members of Messiah. Thinking about how this will continue when we do go back to in-person gatherings as well is an exciting possibility.

THANK YOU TO OUR MINISTRY LEADERS

Carly DiSanto, Jean Jones, Dr. Merle Longwood (Chair)

Respectfully submitted,
Dr. Merle Longwood, Adult Education Ministry Chair

Fellowship Ministry Team

Arts & Culture Ministry

PURPOSE

Fosters understanding, self-expression and community through the arts.

REVIEW OF 2021

The year of 2021 brought a few new experiences to the Arts & Culture Ministry, including Zentangle classes with Russell McDonald CZT and Community Meditation. After discussion, Community Meditation has been “assigned” to the Arts & Culture Ministry to allow it to encompass less of a religious aspect and more of a spiritual and cultural experience. Both of these events have become regularly scheduled activities at Trinity Community Center, Zentangle Class every Monday at 6pm in the Bijou Room (art studio), and Community Meditation every Thursday at 6:00pm in the Davis Room. As November of 2020 brought the certification of both Pastor Dustin and Russell McDonald in MBSR – Mindful Based Stress Reduction, they have been hosting this activity together. Both of these activities were also featured in the 2021 Prayerathon. Trinity Community Center has also begun hosting the Arts & Crafts group that meets on Mondays at 1:00pm. This group will continue to meet in the Fellowship space at TCC on Mondays. This group has been a great addition to the life of my grandmother, Gladys, and so, on a personal note, I would like to sincerely thank them!



Our first Community Benefit Concert of the year that raised \$1000 jointly for the Trinity Community Center and SafeHaven LGBTQ+ Inc.

LOOKING AHEAD TO 2022

This will be the third year of this Ministry and we are looking forward to a momentous year! Seeing as how the Trinity Community Center is already bustling with activity, the sky is the limit! As previously stated, I believe there are some upcoming concerts in the near future... I also have heard talk of trying to do movie nights in the stage area as well. As newly appointed Chair of the Arts & Culture Ministries, I look forward to working with those responsible for leading the forementioned events, and I feel both of these types of events would be great opportunities to gather the community, foster creativity & self-expression, and bring cultural awareness all around. These events would also afford us the opportunity to do



Zentangle in our new Bijou Art Studio!

some fundraising for this particular Ministry, which in turn would allow us to continue these types of events. Fundraising would also afford for further advanced training for the meditation leaders, as well as basic training for those interested in becoming involved in leading meditation. I look forward to gathering committee members and working to continue bringing Arts & Culture to our community.

Submitted by & sincerely excited,
Russell McDonald, CZT, Arts & Culture Chair

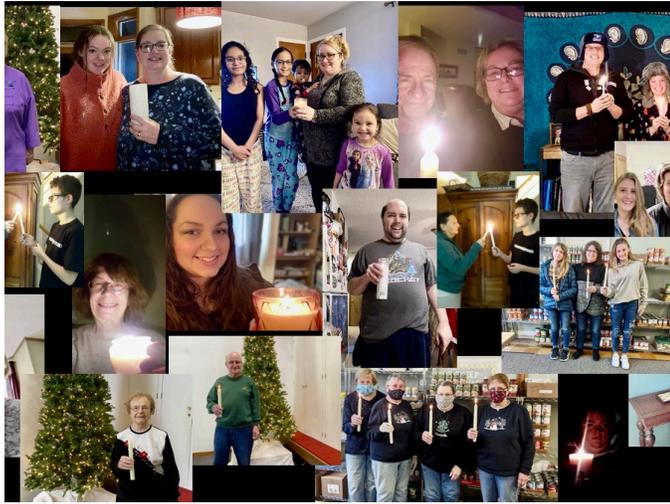
Care & Concern Ministry

PURPOSE

Supports members in need of special care while connecting them to the congregation and the wider body of Christ.

REVIEW OF 2021

So much of what our Care & Concern Ministry does isn't super flashy, or leads to big events, but without a doubt it is a CRITICAL glue that keeps us together as a Spirit filled congregation grounded in Jesus Christ. We currently have eighteen members and friends of the congregation on our Care List, and one big development this year was the idea of pairing each of them with a liaison who has committed to check in regularly, drop off meals, etc. Pastor Dustin



Candlemas 2021 was entirely virtual, but we still lit our candles as a sign of Christ's light connecting all of us!

(interrupted by a lot of COVID related issues), tries to visit these members once every couple months or so, but it is indeed a critical ministry of our lay members to be a visible sign to folks that they are still connected with the body of Christ. One major initiative led by members of our Care & Concern Ministry that we're very proud of was working to help to our seniors get signed up for their first COVID19 vaccines last winter and then hosting a vaccination clinic at the Trinity Community Center to allow the rest of our adult members and friends to be vaccinated. At long last, at this past autumn's Blessing of the Animals we recognized Lilly as Messiah's official therapy dog with the support of member Michael Mitchell! Russell McDonald plays a key Care & Concern role as well Certified Peer Recovery Advocate to support our members and friends suffering from addiction. We also recently launched the Rev. Jonathan Vanderbeck Mental Health Fund that will support members in paying for necessary mental health care. Of one final note, Care & Concern gives great thanks to Barb Hallett, who completed her many years of service as chair of our ministry. Thank you so much Barb for all you have done!



Many thanks to all who helped our members register for early vaccines and those who assisted with our vaccination clinic!

LOOKING AHEAD TO 2022

Two of our three core goals for the year ahead at Messiah falls under the work of our Care & Concern Ministry: "Support and be a resource for people struggling with mental health challenges" & "Support and be a resource for people struggling with drug and alcohol addiction." Much of this work will involve organizing a number of new programs from training folks as Stephen Ministers to bringing in speakers who can address mental health issues related to the pandemic, especially in our young people. We'd also like to once again send care packages to our members at college or serving in the armed forces.

THANK YOU TO OUR MINISTRY LEADERS

Barb Hallett, Joyce Gresham, Judy Becker, Gloria Maki, Betsy Ryan, Bill Ellis, Paul Bode, Allison Bode

Respectfully submitted,
Pastor Dustin

Kitchen Ministry

PURPOSE

Assists the congregation in the use of its kitchen facilities.

REVIEW OF 2021

After a pandemic-induced slumber, the kitchen at Messiah is starting to come back to life. Thanks to Karen K., Alison, Don, and Linda, we have returned to some activity with post-service coffee hours and celebrations, including a baptism and confirmation receptions, and a going-away gathering for Rianne. These all occurred in both the fellowship hall and the narthex as a stop-gap accommodation to make sure the events are inclusive. We are looking forward to the completion of the accessibility renovations that will allow everyone to gather in one space.



Our youth were a HUGE part of making our Drive Thru Pancake Supper successful!

The current kitchen space recently was reorganized to eliminate some of the clutter that has occurred over the past year. Signage was created to let everyone know where things are and what items were already available for use (e.g., plates, napkins, plasticware). For those using the kitchen, please review on-hand stock before purchasing new items. This will ensure that there are, among other things, napkins available for the rest of the world. We still have not been able to locate someone who is willing to clean the exhaust fan. We are considering having an outside cleaning firm come in and do a top-to-bottom cleaning of the space. We would likely

wait until after Easter to do that. Our Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper was a massive hit even with a drive-thru format at the Trinity Community Center. While it was scaled down a bit, the Rally Day picnic still was held, with approximately 70 served. Trinity was the location with hot dogs, packaged chips, lemonade, and brownies on the menu. The Christmas Eve Potluck Dinner returned this year with approximately 25 present. Nice to have everyone together. We are planning on the return of the Shrove Tuesday pancake dinner and the Easter Breakfast.



It was SO amazing to gather together for our God's Work, Our Hands Sunday picnic again!!

LOOKING AHEAD TO 2022

In the year ahead we plan on repairing the dishwasher, doing a full cleaning of the kitchen including all dishes, etc. and will strive to maintain the current organization of the kitchen space.

THANK YOU TO OUR MINISTRY LEADERS

We have many people who participate in kitchen committee activities. We appreciate each and every one of you and look forward to more events in 2022 and beyond. Please be safe and take care of each other.

Respectfully submitted,

Karen Kreischer and Rich Becker, Kitchen Committee Co-Chairs

Lutheran Men in Mission

PURPOSE

Fosters a sense of fellowship, discipleship and service amongst the men of our congregation.



Paul Bode was not only an expert at axe throwing... he even scored a soccer goal on Hannah, Grace & Sarah after dinner!

is to develop a core group of leaders who can chart a path forward for this ministry. There are many new young fathers and spouses who we'd love to connect with further. Additional opportunities for service abound, especially as we continue renovating both our Community Center and Worship Center. Formally joining the national organization Lutheran Men in Mission is also a way of connecting with other men of faith throughout the country. A monthly breakfast is also something that has been brought up. Our Axe Throwing Night in the summer and Christmas Party in the winter will once again be central events of our year ahead!

THANK YOU TO OUR MINISTRY LEADERS

Paul Bode, Chip Crowther, Tyler Jones

Respectfully submitted,
Pastor Dustin

REVIEW OF 2021

Despite the pandemic, we were still able to organize two major events for the good of everyone in our Spirit filled congregation: Axe Throwing Night at the Crowther Estate and our Lutheran Men in Mission Christmas Party at the Bode Estate. Both events were extremely well attended and provided two really wonderful opportunities to reconnect in person after so long physically apart. By the way, this is one more event than WELCA was able to pull off for the year, cementing our status as leaders of a longstanding but loving rivalry between two fellowship ministries of our congregation.

LOOKING AHEAD TO 2022

Something that's been a goal for a number of years



Chip Crowther, with a huge assist from his daughter Hannah, took the crown for our annual "Best Hat" award at the Men's Christmas Party.

Women of the ELCA

PURPOSE

As a community of women created in the image of God, called to discipleship in Jesus Christ and empowered by the Holy Spirit, we commit ourselves to grow in faith, affirm our gifts, support one another in our callings, engage in ministry and action, and promote healing and wholeness in the church, the society and the world.



Jody's home is SUCH a beautiful spot for events (with our "A Place at the Table for Everyone" Campaign Event pictured).

REVIEW OF 2021

Due to the coronavirus, we were only able to have one event this year – the award winning Women's Group Christmas Potluck Dinner at the home of Jody Fleming. It was so good to see some familiar faces, and in some cases, meet in person some of our new members of the congregation.

LOOKING AHEAD TO 2022

With so many new members of our congregation, we look forward to restarting our ministry with community service work, social program and our annual pie baking fundraiser.

WELCA TREASURER REPORT

Balance Forward 12/2020	\$373.24
REVENUE	
Offerings & Donations	\$0
Interest	\$0.08
EXPENSES	
Reception Expenses	\$0
Gifts & Donations	\$0
Total	\$0
Account Balance 12/2021	\$373.32

Respectfully submitted,
Jill Becker, WELCA President

Over 55 Gang

PURPOSE

Fosters socialization and mutual support amongst members roughly over age fifty-five.

REVIEW OF 2021

COVID19 certainly was a friend of our Over 55 Gang at Messiah and we were unfortunately not able to have any significant events this year, although we certainly did meet many times over informal lunches, etc. between members.

LOOKING AHEAD TO 2022

In the year ahead, we hope to regather for a group, perhaps for monthly luncheons and other events as soon as COVID19 conditions allow.

THANK YOU TO OUR MINISTRY LEADERS

Barb Hallett (Chair)

Respectfully submitted,
Pastor Dustin



A great joy of the past year was being able to celebrate John Diegel's birthday in person!

Welcome Ministry

PURPOSE

Welcomes new potential members, organizes new member classes and supports new members in their first year at Messiah.

REVIEW OF 2021

With the ongoing pandemic and atypically busy spring and fall seasons related to coming back in person and our Accessibility Campaign respectively, we weren't able to organize a new member class in calendar year 2021. We did spend a great deal of time over the last year however beginning to connect all of our new members who joined in 2020 with a number of various ministries of the congregation. We currently have eight new members in a Winter 2022 class. It was a joy as well that Sheri Lamb, one of our 2022 new members, recently stepped up to help lead this important ministry in the year ahead.



Sheri Lamb has stepped up and served in SO many ways over the past year and we're so happy she's agreed to serve as Welcome Chair to support our new members!

LOOKING AHEAD TO 2022

Welcoming new members has already started off great this winter, but we plan to organize spring and fall classes, ideally both with a return to our cherished Welcome Dinner format. We have MANY individuals and families who have begun connecting with us online and have expressed interest in becoming members as soon as more in-person community building can take place. We also have a number of friends of the congregation at a distance who may want to become virtual members as well.

THANK YOU TO OUR MINISTRY LEADERS

Sheri Lamb (Chair)

Respectfully submitted,
Pastor Dustin

Young Adult Ministry

PURPOSE

Supports the spiritual and social needs of young adults in the congregation and the local community.



Our Winter Break Lunch with Cori, Sophie and Pastor Dustin.

Pastor Dustin also was able to connect with some of our young adults for a Winter Break Lunch again this year, a cherished tradition at the Whistling Kettle.

LOOKING AHEAD TO 2022

In addition to continuing Community Around the Campfire again this summer, we hope to organize likely semimonthly events throughout the year as COVID conditions allow. Supporting young adults in growing this ministry is a key priority for future growth.

THANK YOU TO OUR MINISTRY LEADERS

This is an area we'd LOVE additional leadership support in! If you're interested, just reach out to Pastor Dustin.

Respectfully submitted,
Pastor Dustin

REVIEW OF 2021

It perhaps wasn't super visible, but 2021 was in fact a banner year for our Young Adult Ministry. We now have a number of young adults on Council and many of our college students stepped to be a part of our Prayerathon from a distance. Two of our young adults, Aaron and Jacob, helped maintain our Worship Center Lawn this summer and Katie Becker has been incredibly helpful in supporting our growing communications ministries. On top of all that service, we launched an incredibly successful Community Around the Campfire gathering on Wednesday nights this past summer co-led by Rachel Longmire and Pastor Dustin that helped us connect with a number of new young adults of all backgrounds in our

community. Pastor Dustin also was able to connect with some of our young adults for a Winter Break Lunch again this year, a cherished tradition at the Whistling Kettle.



Many thanks to Aaron and Jacob for all they do in service to our community!

Social Action Ministry Team

Bread of Life Food Pantry

PURPOSE

Serves our neighbors in need and builds community.



Thank you to Karen, Joyce, Judy and Betsy (amongst so many others) for all you do to nourish our community in body, mind and soul!

REVIEW OF 2021

2021 has been a very busy time for the food pantry. We have experienced, unfortunately, so many families who are food insecure. We are open 3 days a month and hopefully will be open 1 extra day a month beginning in July. We continue to pack and deliver food for the Food Pantries of the Capital District 4 days a month. We are now a member of their coalition. This allows us to have food ordered from the Regional Food Bank delivered once a month. We are very thankful to Jim & Betsy Ryan, Dave Barnett, Jacob and Aaron for helping us unload the delivery truck.

Our 2020 - 2021 statistics are as follows:

2021

Total Guests: 1775
Meals Served: 15,976

2020

Total guests: 1507
Meals Served: 13,305

2015-2021

Total guests: 19,565
Meals Served: 59,866

LOOKING AHEAD TO 2022

Every year we find our pantry growing, therefore, we are looking forward to moving to the Trinity Community Center. Many many thanks to the Schenectady Foundation for selecting us to receive a \$75,000 grant of which a part of it will go to increase the space for our pantry. Also, thank you to Barbara Quackenbush and Kimlee Marquise for all their work in obtaining this grant.

THANK YOU TO OUR MINISTRY LEADERS

We are very grateful for all the support from the Congregation. You all make it possible to keep the food pantry running, especially all our volunteers! God has surely blessed us!



Our 2021 Confirmation Class helped restock our food pantry shelves this past autumn. Thank you!

Respectfully submitted,
Judy Becker, Bread of Life Food Pantry Co-Chair

2022 Bread of Life Food Pantry Budget

2022 OPERATIONAL BUDGET

2022 PROJECTED REVENUE	
Category	Revenue
Food Pantry Designated Fund Revenue <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Support, Thrivent Choice (\$2,000) • NYS COVID-19 Food Delivery Funds (\$7,650) 	\$9,650.00
Regional Food Bank Account Revenue	\$4,000.00
TOTAL Projected Revenue	\$13,650.00
2022 PROJECTED EXPENSES	
Category	Expenses
Food Pantry Designated Fund Expenses <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Items purchased at the Regional Food Bank • Items purchased at local grocery stores 	\$4,850.00
Regional Food Bank Account Expenses <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Items purchased at the Regional Food Bank 	\$2,350.00
TOTAL Projected Expenses	\$7,200.00
GRAND TOTAL PROJECTED INCOME	\$6,450.00

PROJECTED BUDGET FOR 2022 - 2024

EXPENSE	2022	2023	2024	Total
TOTAL Estimated Expenses	\$7,200	\$8,280	\$9,522	\$25,002

CURRENT DATA

- Revenue to the Food Pantry Designated Fund in 2021 was \$16,582.00 including grants, New York State funding for emergency COVID-19 related deliveries and giving from members and friends of the congregation. Revenue to the Regional Food Bank in 2021 was \$4,390, including grants from Concerned for the Hungry, HPNAP, Food Pantries of the Capital District, the Regional Food Bank and Adopt a Pantry. **Our 2021 Total Revenue was \$20,972.**
- Expenditures from the Food Pantry Designated Fund in 2021 were \$3,741 and expenditures from the Regional Food Bank in 2021 were \$1,802. **Our 2021 Total Expenses were \$5,543.**
- The Food Pantry Designated Fund as of 12/31/21 had a balance of \$11,233 and the Regional Food Bank account balance as of 12/31/21 was \$1,938.
- Clients increased by 18% in 2021 from 2020.
- A total of 1,775 guests were served 15,976 meals in 2021.

CURRENT ASSUMPTIONS

- Based on adding a fourth session a month in the summer of 2022 and a 15% growth in clients for existed session, we project serving 2,381 guests a total of 21,430 meals in 2022.
- From 2022 to 2025 we anticipate a 15% growth in clients per year and a 3% cost of inflation.

Produce Pantry

PURPOSE

Provides free and fresh produce to our neighbors in need without appointment or identification.



Some of our amazing produce pantry volunteers hard at work!

REVIEW OF 2021

The weekly Produce Pantry at Trinity Community Center distributes produce on Fridays from 4:30 to 6:00pm. We had many volunteers distribute fresh produce that we receive for free from the Regional Food Bank. We had volunteers pick up the produce from the Food Bank and now have and will continue to have Dave, our employee, get the food and bring it to the Center inside the lobby.

Volunteers arrive starting at 2:45pm in order to set up tables, prepare baskets, bag smaller items and fill approximately 55 baskets with many items. We also periodically receive milk, eggs and/or butter. Distribution is on a first come/first serve basis and

people line up starting at about 3:45 to receive their produce. There is no registration, identification or personal information collected. Once we start distribution at 4:30, we typically run out of the majority of the food in the first half hour. We set up a table with surplus for late arrivals.

LOOKING AHEAD TO 2022

Our mission is to provide fresh vegetables and fruits to those in need in our community and to connect guests with additional resources including our Bread of Life Food Pantry, Concerned for the Hungry, Help Portrait Schenectady and other programs. We hope to continue this wonderful ministry and always welcome more volunteers.

THANK YOU TO OUR MINISTRY LEADERS

Sarah Bachorik, Karen Doyle, Jenn Keenan-Fenson, Sabine Keenan-Fenson, Ashley, Rachel DeTeso-Mathis, Michael Jegabbi, Linda Santiago, Barb Hallett, Jackie DeTeso, Sue Collins (Co-Chair) and Karen Keenan (Co-Chair)



All ready for our guests!

Thank you,
Sue Collins and Karen Keenan, Produce Pantry Co-Chairs

Trinity Community Center Advisory Committee

PURPOSE

To provide a safe, non-judgmental space for community members of Rotterdam and Schenectady County to learn and grow together. To collaborate with various community agencies to develop programs and activities that meet the needs of our community and congregation members.



The first meeting of our TCC Advisory Committee.

REVIEW OF 2021

After the unification of Messiah and Trinity at the beginning of the year, due to the Schenectady Classis' VERY slow lawyer we weren't able to officially purchase the former Trinity Reformed Church site until this fall. In the meantime, a task force developed our four focus areas for the Trinity Community Center: 1) food security; 2) mental health & emotional well-being; 3) safe and affordable housing and 4) arts, culture and self-expression. We then set to work beginning to put together a governance structure for the site by creating the TCC Advisory Committee including Pastor Dustin, Laurie Lumbr, Pete Jones, myself and representatives from AA, Al-Anon, Zentangle, Safe Haven LGBTQ+

Inc., Monday Crafters, Bread of Life Food Pantry and the Trinity Produce Pantry. Last fall, our congregation also voted to appoint a TCC Redevelopment Task Force including Barb Quackenbush, Laurie Lumbr, Adrienne Westfall, Neal Fisher and myself to work with architects John Fry and Jaclyn Tyler to continue our Who Is My Neighbor process towards developing affordable housing on the site. This group also worked with contractor Wade Coton of Manchester Homes, LLC as well as our pantry leaders Judy Becker, Jill Becker, Karen Keenan and Sue Collins to come up with renovation plans that will nearly double the existing space of our Bread of Life Food Pantry. This work was also informed by a survey sent out to all our other organizations who currently use the community center. I and Community Center Coordinator Sarah Bachorik have also begun work on policies and procedures for the community center from a volunteer policy, non-discrimination policy, a safety policy and space use agreements with our outside groups.

Events and programming at the Community Center in 2021 included a Shrove Tuesday Drive Thru Pancake Supper, a COVID19 Vaccination Site, our God's Work, Our Hands Sunday cleanup and picnic, a benefit concert co-organized with Safe Haven LGBTQ+, Inc., AA and Al-Anon meetings, Zentangle, Monday Crafters, SiCM Summer Lunch, Friday Produce Pantry, Meditation and HelpPortrait Schenectady 2021.

LOOKING AHEAD TO 2022

Right on January 3rd of this year we approved a final plan for our renovated food pantry space (1024 sq ft), which will also include a welcome area (76 sq ft) and waiting area (70 sq ft). This project, at a cost of \$68,500 is funded entirely with the generous support of the Schenectady Foundation and construction will begin in the next couple weeks! It is our intention to have constructed completed, our Bread of Life Food Pantry moved in and a grand opening held by late April 2022! In the meantime, we will work with

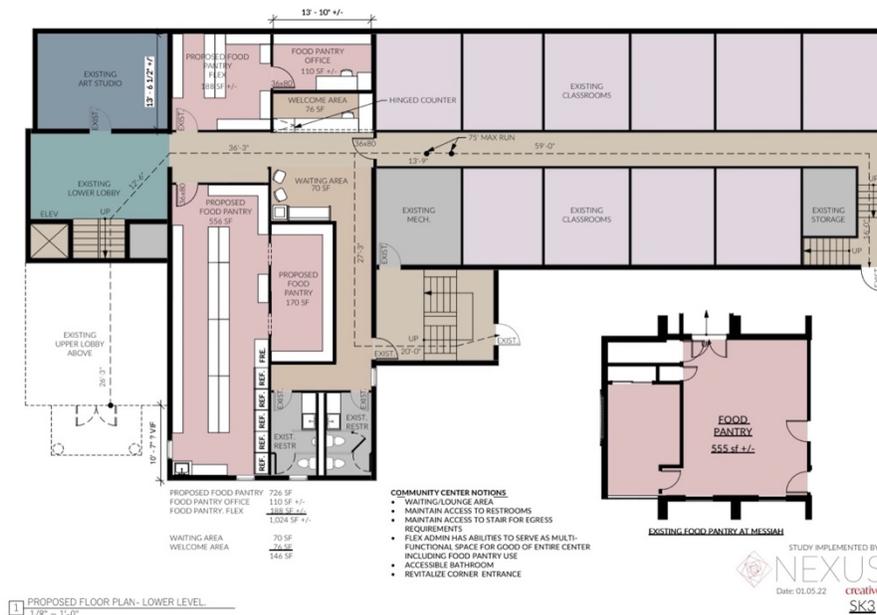


HelpPortrait Schenectady 2021.

consultant David Palmquist of Executive Service Corps of the Tri-Cities to finalize a Business Plan for the community center that will explore issues of governance, safety, financial sustainability, marketing and more. This will dovetail as well properly representing TCC either on Messiah's existing website or a new separate website with new physical signage, etc. Potential programs for the upcoming year including concerts, community meals, youth events, a community garden, a clothing closet and various trainings and classes. Many of these programs will be conducted in collaboration with the Boys & Girls Club, the Rotterdam Senior Center, SiCM, SCAP, Schenectady Health & Human Services, food security organizations, LGBTQ+ groups and more.

Respectfully submitted,
 Kimlee Marquise, TCC Chair

PHASE ONE RENOVATION PLANS



1 PROPOSED FLOOR PLAN- LOWER LEVEL
 1/8" = 1'-0"

Plans for renovated community center alongside our existing food pantry footprint.

2022 OPERATING BUDGET

Revenue Category	Revenue Amount
Schenectady Foundation Grant (minus one time capital funds)	\$3,800.00
Other Grants & Corporate Contributions	\$11,000.00
Individual Contributions	\$13,000.00
Space Use Contributions	\$3,200.00
Fundraisers and Events	\$8,000.00
Total Goal for Revenue	\$39,000.00
Expense Category	Expense Amount
Salaries and Wages (15% of Pastor's Salary, 50% of Sexton's Wages, 100% of Community Center Coordinator's Wages, 10% of Parish Administrator's Wages)	\$17,874.00
Fringe Benefits (15% of Pastor's Benefits & Parsonage Expenses, 30% of Messiah Staff Payroll Taxes, Worker's Comp, etc.)	\$7,130.00
Rents & Utilities (Electric & Gas, Liability Insurance, Town Taxes, Trash Removal, Snow Removal, Cleaning Supplies, Building Maintenance, Telephone & Internet)	\$12,615.00
Printing & Copying (30% of Messiah Printing Costs)	\$300.00
Postage, Shipping and Courier (30% of Messiah Mailing Costs)	\$135.00
Advertising & Marketing	\$600.00
Professional Development (30% of Messiah Leadership Development Costs)	\$100.00
Supplies (30% of Messiah Office Supply Costs)	\$225.00
Total Projected Expenses	\$38,979.00
GRAND TOTAL PROJECTED INCOME	\$21.00

Creation Care Ministry

PURPOSE

Fosters eco-justice decisions and events among all activities and offices of the congregation.



Messiah led a local effort as part of a statewide faith inspired push to pass the Climate & Community Investment Act.

REVIEW OF 2021

We organized an in person Prayer Vigil for Climate Justice on March 11th at Riverlink Park with First Reformed Church of Schenectady, Congregation Gates of Heaven and Progressive Schenectady. This was part of an international day of action with Greenfaith called “Sacred People, Sacred Earth.” Here in New York State, we rallied to encourage our state legislature to pass the Climate and Community Investment Act. We had a very successful gardening season with produce going to the Bread of Life Food Pantry and TCC Produce Pantry. We organized weekly creation appreciation hikes to natural areas through the Capital Region led by Jean Jones, who shared interesting information about the areas we visited as well. We became a Greening Congregation

Partner with Earth Ministry, part of Washington State Interfaith Power and Light – this gives us a framework to organize our efforts to lessen the carbon footprint of our buildings, grounds and personal practices. We also voted to become a Partner Congregation with the Pacific Theological Seminary’s Center for Climate Justice and Faith. We participated in many advocacy opportunities by emailing and calling our elected officials to let them know of our support for climate justice issues.

LOOKING AHEAD TO 2022

We’ll move forward with the green congregation process by adopting a mission statement, summarizing our past accomplishments and developing an annual plan to bring our mission statement to fruition. We’ll also seek more volunteers for the garden and find ways to improve getting produce to our food pantries. We’ll continue our advocacy efforts by attending rallies when safe to do so and by contacting our elected officials. We also plan on supporting our Property & Grounds Team in doing an energy audit of the Trinity Community Center this year as well as installing smart thermostats in all our buildings.



The third year of our Rev. Richard Rieger Memorial Harvest Garden, an experiment in landscaping primarily with native edible plants, was a HUGE success!

THANK YOU TO OUR MINISTRY LEADERS

Margaret Glennie, Jean Jones, Merle Longwood, Crystal Murray, Eric Telfeyan, Kären Telfeyan and Nancy Stuebner (Chair)

Respectfully submitted,
Nancy Stuebner, Creation Care Chair

Community Service Ministry

PURPOSE

Guides our members in serving Christ in the face of their neighbors.



It was SO wonderful to be back with the Concerned for the Hungry Thanksgiving Basket Program again this year!

REVIEW OF 2021

Without a doubt, this year was a huge year for community service at Messiah! All our regular weekly programming done at our the Trinity Community Center is indeed community service, as is the rapid expansion of both our food pantry programs. Many of our big one time have been covered elsewhere in this annual report, from our complete clean out of the Trinity building on God's Work, Our Hands Sunday to staffing a COVID19 Vaccination Clinic to supporting the SiCM Summer Lunch program and more. The two other major events organized by our Community Service Ministry this year was our support of the annual Concerned for the Hungry Thanksgiving Basket Program and HelpPortrait Schenectady 2021.

We fielded over twenty volunteers to assist in packing our traditional carrots, onions, apples and more for the Thanksgiving baskets. Despite heavy headwinds as the Omicron Variant spread shortly after Thanksgiving, hosting HelpPortrait Schenectady for the first time in our community center went extremely well. Roughly fifty households were provided with a safe, fun holiday party featuring free gifts to wrap for parents, Christmas cookie decorating, time with our therapy dog Lilly, arts and crafts and snacks. Most importantly of course, every household was able to go home with multiple professional quality portraits. Many friends from outside our congregation participated in this classic event as well!



What an amazing crew who helped with HelpPortrait Schenectady 2021!

LOOKING AHEAD TO 2022

A couple goals for the year ahead include systematizing different collections for each season of the church year for various local nonprofits. Being in conversation with other local nonprofits to identify other service opportunities or needs not already being met in our corner of Schenectady County will also be a big part of 2022.

THANK YOU TO OUR MINISTRY LEADERS

Pete Jones (Chair)

Respectfully submitted,
Pastor Dustin

Social Justice Ministry

PURPOSE

Supports our members and neighbors in living out their baptismal covenant to “strive for peace and justice in all the earth” in line with ELCA social teachings.



Right in our harvest garden this past summer, Pastor Dustin was honored to moderate a discussion amongst community leaders to build local consensus on issues related to Palestine/ Israel.

REVIEW OF 2021

In the complicated times we live in, it's not always easy to live into our baptismal calling to “strive for peace and justice in all the earth,” but it's also critically important! In addition to regular preaching and teaching on a wide variety of social issues from both Pastor Jonathan and Pastor Dustin this past year, we engaged as a congregation in a number of areas, from organizing the local iteration of a statewide faith movement to pass climate change legislation to participating in a virtual New York State Ecumenical Advocacy Day. Most notably, we reconvened our Reconciling in Christ (RIC) Task Force at the request of Reconciling Works. Co-led by Dr. Merle Longwood and Kimlee Marquise, a number of areas have already been addressed at Messiah to

make us a more welcoming congregation across all our various identities but there is SO much more to do! Our autumn/ winter Sunday Forum in turn has asked our congregation to begin the practice of a land acknowledgement at the beginning of each worship service, a practice we began shortly after the new year. Finally, through his leadership on the New York State Council of Churches, in Schenectady Clergy Against Hate and other organizations, Pastor Dustin has represented Messiah on issues from building local common ground on Palestine/ Israel to continued support of law enforcement in reform efforts.

LOOKING AHEAD TO 2022

While Messiah has benefitted from a number of social justice areas where Pastor Dustin has been asked by the wider community to serve, our biggest priority for the year ahead is decentering our social justice work from pastoral leadership. Clergy should be supporting the social justice work of members, rather than often taking the lead. As Pastor Dustin has stepped back from leadership on the New York State Council of Churches, with Schenectady Community Ministries, etc., this will allow our lay members to begin discern their own priorities for justice work in partnership with a variety of organizations from ELCA Advocacy to the NAACP, the Poor Peoples' Campaign and more. One way of truly getting this conversation going will be to make sure as many of our members as possible participate in both New York State and national Ecumenical Advocacy Days this spring.

THANK YOU TO OUR MINISTRY LEADERS

Barb Quackenbush, Merle Longwood, Kimlee Marquise (and we'd LOVE more support in this area)

Respectfully submitted,
Pastor Dustin

Schenectady Community Ministries (SiCM)

PURPOSE

Connects the work of Messiah Lutheran Church with Schenectady Community Ministries (SiCM).



Rev. Amaury Tañón-Santos, SiCM's new Executive Director/ CEO, preached at Messiah this past summer and joined a Sunday Forum session as well.

REVIEW OF 2021

Without a doubt, this is an area that needs some work at Messiah. Shortly before the pandemic, Messiah was THE leading congregation that worked for over a year to transition SiCM from being simply a Christian to an interfaith coalition of faith communities. While Pastor Dustin left SiCM's Steering Committee last January, he remained chair of its Interfaith Task Force until its' initial stage of work was completed this past spring. In the intervening months, SiCM has launched a wide variety of exciting new programs out of its recently renovated campus on Albany Street in Schenectady, particularly a partnership with Ellis Hospital to provide food pantry guests with medical care. Over the past year, the congregation's main connection with SiCM

was hosting their summer lunch program at our Trinity Community Center.

LOOKING AHEAD TO 2022

Finding two new delegates to the SiCM Assemblies will allow us to live into our congregation's commitment to work together with other local congregations to serve our community in ways we cannot do alone.

Respectfully submitted,
Pastor Dustin



Guests and volunteers at SiCM Summer Lunch this past summer.

Worship & Music Ministry Team

PURPOSE

Oversees all aspects of worship, from Sunday Mass to special services, private prayer and sacred music.



Our first Sunday back in person for sunrise on Easter morning.

Sunday in July. Much of our work since has been figuring out how to take the best of what we learned during the pandemic and adding it to so many of our cherished worship traditions at Messiah. It was SO wonderful to have Mr. Doug back in-person this summer and his virtual support of our services at a distance since October has been critical. Many thanks as well to our cantors, Jill Becker, Emily Russo, Sophie Mathis and Kristen Olochnowicz for their amazing dedication and leadership. A few other highlights of worship this year was Messiahstock VI, God's Work Our Hands Sunday, Confirmation on Christ the King Sunday and the return of all our favorite Advent and Christmas services.

LOOKING AHEAD TO 2022

There's obviously a lot to do in the year ahead in terms of worship. Adding back a children's sermon and making worship more developmentally appropriate for young people is a priority as is recruiting a whole new crew of crucifers, greeters, ushers and more. Omicron has of course put a damper on in-person participation, but folks discovering us through our streaming services has continued to grow into the new year. Launching a summer choir when Mr. Doug returns this spring is another area of great excitement and our final top priority is to develop a new Altar Guild/ Sanctuary Decoration Ministry to make sure our sanctuary is properly dressed for each liturgical season. We also are SO excited to have Emily Russo as our new chair!



Many thanks to our amazing cantors!

THANK YOU TO OUR MINISTRY LEADERS

Betsy Ryan, Doug Chilton, Jill Becker, Joyce Gresham, Judy Becker, Rich Becker, Rachel DeTeso-Mathis, Heather Zimmer, Emily Russo (Chair)

Respectfully submitted,
Pastor Dustin

Stewardship Ministry Team Report

Budget & Finance Ministry

PURPOSE

Oversees all aspects of worship, from Sunday Mass to special services, private prayer and sacred music.



Many thanks to Dave Barnett and Rich Becker who served as co-chairs of our "A Place at the Table for Everyone" Accessibility Campaign.

REVIEW OF 2021

Our budget for 2021 was adopted at our Annual Meeting of the Congregation. Following the sale of Trinity Reformed Church to Messiah Lutheran Church this fall, the Community Center was added to the Church Mutual insurance policy. Our budget for 2022 was crafted by the Budget and Finance Committee and approved by Council on a new schedule that allowed for approval in advance of January 2022. The Budget & Finance Committee recommended the hiring of Suzanne Smedes as our new bookkeeper. This hiring was approved by Council.

LOOKING AHEAD TO 2022

The 2022 amended budget will be reviewed and voted upon at our Annual Meeting of the Congregation while an internal (and perhaps external) audit of the 2021 church finances will be conducted in March. The Budget & Finance Committee will continue to meet quarterly in 2022 to constantly assess where we are financially and, when necessary, make recommendations to Council in an effort to address concerns. The Budget & Finance Committee will continue to work with other church and community center committees to ensure growth of these two buildings is fiscally responsible.

THANK YOU TO OUR MINISTRY LEADERS

Neal Fisher, Bill Fleming, Penny Incitti, Dave Barnett, René Dunda-Martin, Karen Kreischer, Kristie Becker (Chair)

Communications Ministry

PURPOSE

Oversees the digital and print communications of the congregation to both members and the wider community that tells the story of how Messiah is nourishing its neighborhood in body, mind and soul.

REVIEW OF 2021

Still faced with the looming pandemic and the concern about outreach activities in 2021, the Communications Team turned its attention from outreach activities to supporting the communication needs of the congregation's capital campaign, "A Place at the Table for Everyone." Working with the consultants and the leadership team, we helped create content and graphics for the campaign's look and feel, as well as produced weekly updates for distribution. While the campaign only spanned a short six weeks, the months of preparation in the background were well spent.



Marilyn Barnett and Sue Collins helping stuff envelopes for our historic "A Place at the Table for Everyone" Campaign.

LOOKING AHEAD TO 2022

We'd like to think that 2022 might see a return to more normal church type communications but it's too early to tell. However, our goal for the year is to begin once again putting out Messiah's great deeds for all to hear about. We have a very good digital footprint established in the community with our website and existing social media platforms that we will seek to expand. Our second goal is to work on linkages with the communications needs of the Community Center to help synchronize and promote the ministries and activities that will be occurring.

THANK YOU TO OUR MINISTRY LEADERS

Katie Becker, Tom Collins (Co-Chair) & Molly Karrel (Co-Chair)

Respectfully submitted,
Tom Collins and Molly Karrel, Communications Ministry Co-Chairs

Archives Ministry

PURPOSE

Documents and interprets the historical identity of the congregation with orderly records so that heritage will be preserved and can be built on into the future.



Pastor Dustin meeting with longtime members to review the current state of our Archives.

Dustin's office anymore! Right as folks walk into our new Worship Center entrance, there are plans to properly tell Messiah's legacy, display important photos and artifacts, and we very much need to figure out what is going to go there. In our new library/ adult education space, we'll certainly want to display aspects of our legacy as well. Another project that we are hoping to undertake is recording an oral history from many of our longest serving members.

THANK YOU TO OUR MINISTRY LEADERS

Karen Kreischer, Bill Ellis, Allison Bode, Paul Bode and Judy Becker have been so helpful, but chairing this important effort is a wonderful opportunity to serve and learn more about Messiah's amazing history!

Respectfully submitted,
Pastor Dustin

REVIEW OF 2021

The work of one of our newest ministries is off to a great start! With support from Sarah Bachorik, we went through all our randomly put together files, pictures, etc. that had collected over the last ninety four years, decided what needed to be kept and began filing and properly storing everything in line with contemporary archiving techniques. Over the summer, Pastor Dustin met with a number of our longtime members to review progress so far and chart a course for the work ahead.

LOOKING AHEAD TO 2022

Gosh, we have a lot of work to do! So much of our now properly sorted archives are in Pastor Dustin's office, in a few short months, that won't be Pastor



The historic meeting where we FINALLY voted to move forward with our Accessibility Campaign.

Mission Support Ministry

PURPOSE

Guides the congregation in its understanding of how Christian stewardship fulfills the mission of making disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.

REVIEW OF 2021

The Mission Support Ministry is proud of the 2021 campaign. With the support of a GSB team lead by Evan Molin and Rev. Peter Reuss we had a very successful Accessibility Campaign. Our goal was \$570,000 and we raised approximately \$484,000 in gifts and pledges which is 85% of our goal.

Thanks to this program we have built many strategies that will help in the future. Thank you to all members



We are currently on track to break ground on our new fully accessible entrance by June 2022!

who sent in an annual pledge, generous gifts and supported the Accessibility Campaign. Thank you to Rich Becker and Dave Barnett for being co-chairs. Thanks to Tom Collins, Barb Hallett and Penny Incitti for being team leaders. Together, with the support of many members, each team worked hard to successfully run this campaign.

We had several Temple Talks throughout the Accessibility Campaign. Thank you to Barb Hallett, Emily Russo, Hannah Borski, Gloria & Brian Maki, Pete Jones, Sheri Lamb, Gladys Cath, Russell McDonald, Kristie Becker and Dave Barnett for speaking to the congregation.

LOOKING AHEAD TO 2022

We are joining a National Stewardship for All Seasons Cohort group that will consist of people throughout the country. Together we will support one another with ideas on how to raise revenue for our churches. Thank you!



Raising our "A Place at the Table for Everyone" Campaign banner.



Four generations of the Hallett Family working to ensure all are welcome at Messiah!

THANK YOU TO OUR MINISTRY LEADERS

Ann Marie Gray, Marilyn Barnett, Rebecca Bliss,
Penny Incitti (Chair)

Property & Grounds Ministry



Property & Grounds Chair Steve Friebel with noted local herbalist Rachel Longmire getting our gardens ready during Spring Service Day.

Carbon monoxide & smoke detectors are at key locations: Furnace room, Kitchen, Boiler room, Pantry and Sanctuary. Smoke detectors have been installed throughout the rest of the building. We replaced out water heater sized properly for the upcoming renovations. We had to shut down the Narthex heater because it was leaking carbon monoxide but this will be replaced with a new unit during renovations. The slate roof on the oldest part of Messiah has been fixed, along with the falling gutter. The outside lights in front parking lot now have electronic timers controlling both. The entry way light is also controlled by an electronic timer. As bulbs burnt out inside and out they were replaced with LED bulbs. Sign lights have been repaired. We have a new donated Push mower, and repairs were made too rider mower. Mice control in kitchen was installed, and locks on pantry outside door have been upgraded.

As for the parsonage, new storm windows have been installed in dining room area, all windows on the Oak Street side have had glazing if needed and frames



Our young people helping rake leaves during Autumn Service Day.

PURPOSE

Organizes the maintenance and continual improvement of all congregation property in a manner consistent with the mission of the congregation.

REVIEW OF 2021

This past year was a start to bringing out church, and parsonage building to a place we have not been at in some time. As we are ready to build at Messiah, I would like to let everyone know what we have been doing this past year.

Messiah now has working carbon monoxide and smoke detectors throughout the entire building.



Architect John Fry gives a presentation on the final plans for our accessibility renovations.

Painted. The basement sump pump for the sink and washer has been replaced and a new electric dryer and wiring has been installed. Several water leaks have been fixed, a new kitchen faucet installed, and one outdoor hose bib has been replaced. Gutters were also repaired. In 2021 we opened the Trinity Community Center. The building has a lot of run down equipment, and some safety issues. A carbon monoxide leak was found, and the heating system causing the leak has been shut down. The main key is that the building is safe of any carbon monoxide leaks. The sign was upgraded to LED lights and repainted inside.

LOOKING AHEAD TO 2022

Messiah will be upgraded to save energy from smart thermostats to upgraded lighting and more. Narthex and office walls outside will be stained in addition to the beginning of our accessibility renovations. I am excited how our building and grounds will change over 2022.

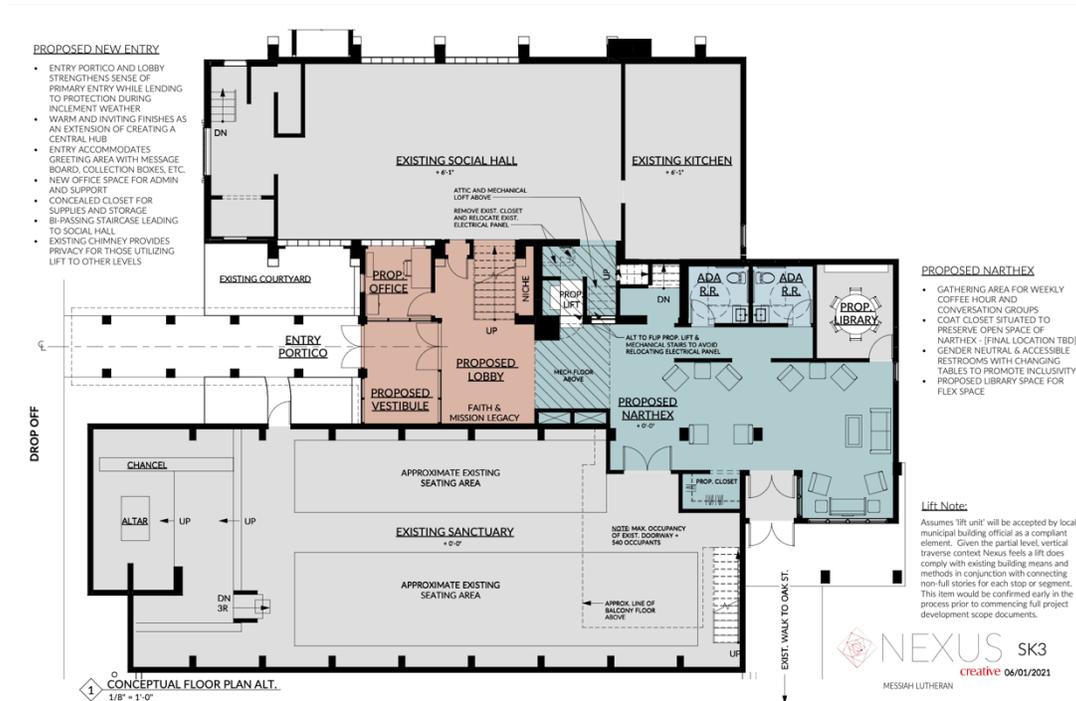
The parsonage will also have several more long overdue repairs. Lighting upgrades will be made in basement. Gardens will be regraded to stop water leaks in basement. Basement windows will be repaired. Driveway sealing. A smart thermostat. The goal in 2022 is to keep moving to upgrade the parsonage which is long overdue. At the Community Center will have an energy audit done. Repairs to furnaces will be done and carbon monoxide and smoke detectors will be installed. Repairs will be done to access the AC unit in the performance area. The Bread of Life Food Pantry will move in. Energy efficient thermostats will be installed. All AC systems will be serviced. 2022 will be a year the community center will take form, and a lot of repairs done. I am excited to see some well over due upgrades and repairs happen.



Pastor Dustin signing the deed to the Trinity Community Center on September 15th, 2021.

My goal is to have the Messiah Lutheran Church, Parsonage, and Trinity Community center buildings to keep improving this year!

FINAL PLANS FOR OUR ACCESSIBILITY RENOVATIONS



THANK YOU TO OUR MINISTRY LEADERS

Bill Ellis, Bill Olochnowicz, Karen Keenan, Michael Mitchell, Steve Friebe (Chair)

Respectfully submitted,
Steve Friebe, Property & Grounds Chair

Personnel Ministry

PURPOSE

Supports the work of the pastor and staff in carrying out the mission of Messiah Lutheran Church.



It was SO wonderful to finally celebrate Mr. Doug's many years of service in person and welcome him as our Minister of Music Emeritus.

REVIEW OF 2021

COVID19, returning to in person activities, our Accessibility Campaign and getting ready to launch the Trinity Community Center may have taken the headlines this year, but without a doubt, the other major revolution that took place at Messiah was a complete restructuring and turnover of our staff. This led to a lot of creative thinking and additional pressures on Pastor Dustin, but we believe on the whole, this time of transition has gone extremely well.

Anticipating major staffing changes, we accomplished a long sought goal of developing a formal Staff Handbook, Position Descriptions and a New Hire Packet last January. This was the first of two major steps in bringing Messiah in compliance

with a wide variety of New York State laws from how payroll is structured to paid family leave, disability and more (see step two below). Most notably, we shifted our model from the Personnel Committee itself serving as a supervisor of staff to Pastor Dustin serving as "Head of Staff," an arrangement that has allowed us to respond to issues more quickly as they arise. We also thanked Pamella Ford for her many years of service as Personnel Chair and welcomed Pete Jones' new leadership in the position.

As part of our unification with Trinity, last January we hired three new employees: Pastor Jonathan as Interim Associate Pastor, Dave Carkner as Parish Caretaker and Sarah Bachorik as an Administrative Assistant. Our next major change took place last June, when we rehired Doug Chilton, now as our Minister of Music Emeritus. In July, already having Dave on staff allowed us to easily combine our Sexton and Parish Caretaker roles as Nicole Fatato ended her time as Sexton after many years of service. Sarah Bachorik also transitioned into her new Community Center Coordinator role. In October, another major transition took place, with us saying farewell to our beloved Parish Administrator, Rianne Johnson, and hiring our new beloved Parish Administrator, Heather Zimmer. With the hiring of our new Bookkeeper Suzanne Smedes, CPA in November, a CRITICAL new role was filled.

LOOKING AHEAD TO 2022

Hiring Suzanne has already allowed us to get a better understanding of both our finances and the final step in making sure all our payroll practices are fully in line with increasingly complex New York State and Federal laws, an area we were lacking in expertise for many years. This year we'll switch our annual evaluations of all employees from the VERY busy autumn season to the calmer late spring. Discerning additional staffing needs related to the Community Center and communications is also important. Finally, and most importantly, figuring out permanent plans for our CRITICAL Minister of Music role is essential.

THANK YOU TO OUR MINISTRY LEADERS

Christine DeMento, Lisa Whitman, Joyce Gresham, Pete Jones (Chair)

Respectfully submitted,
Pastor Dustin

2022 Annual Meeting of the Congregation Agenda

- Call to Order and Opening Litany (five minutes)
- Approval of 2022 Congregation Meeting Agenda & 2021 Congregation Meeting Minutes (five minutes)
- President's Report & Pastor's Report (five minutes)
- Financial Reports (fifteen minutes)
- Ministry Team Reports (five minutes)
- Annual Report of the Upstate New York Synod (five minutes)
- Old Business (zero minutes)
- New Business (fifty minutes)
 - Discussion and Approval of Amended "2022 Parish Budget"
 - 2022 Nominating Committee Report
 - Nominations for Members of the Congregation Council (3)
 - Nominations for Delegates to the 2022 Upstate New York Synod Assembly & 2022 Hudson-Mohawk Conference Assemblies (2)
 - Nominations for Delegates to the 2022 SiCM Assemblies (2)
 - Nominations for the 2023 Nominating Committee (4)
 - Eric Cawley
 - Karen Keenan
 - Crystal Murray
 - Brainstorm on Questions for the Year Ahead
 - How can we provide better support for people suffering from mental health or addiction issues?
 - How can we generate more community financial support for the Trinity Community Center?
 - How can our fully accessible Worship Center be more fully utilized by the community once construction is completed?
- Announcements and Communications (ten minutes)

2021 Meetings of the Congregation Minutes

held February 7th, 2021

Members present: Pastor Dustin Wright, Barbara Hallett, Bill Ellis, Cheryl Borski, Jill Becker, Joyce Gresham, Judy Becker, Kimlee Marquise, Kristen Olochnowicz, Penny Incitti, Pete Jones, Suzanne Collins, Steve Friebel, René Dunda-Martin, Randi Dunda-Martin, Jean Jones, Lisa Whitman, Charles Whitman, Eric Cawley, Hanna Cawley, Pastor Jonathan Vanderbeck, Katie Becker, Kiersten Becker, Kristie Becker, Rianne Johnson, Neal Fisher, Carly DiSanto, Linda Halbrend, Ann Marie Gray, Betsy Ryan, Linda Buehler, Rebecca Bliss, Matt Bliss, Margaret Glennie, Merle Longwood, Maria Vasquez, Paul Bode, Alison Bode, Vanessa Ford-Roether, Dave Barnett, Sheri Lamb, Gladys Cath, Brian Maki, Gloria Maki, Adrienne Westfall, Pamela Ford, Rachel DeTeso-Mathis, Russell McDonald, George Small, Barbara Quackenbush, Ray Smith, Lisa Johnson, Rich Becker, Karen Keenan, Rick Keenan, Linda Klein

Meeting called to order 12:09 pm with Pastor leading Opening prayer

Jill Becker made motion to approve agenda, Neal Fisher seconded and all in favor

Judy Becker made motion to accept minutes from 2020 Congregation Meeting, Neal Fisher seconded and all in favor

President's Report- We have started out with a new plan for merger with Trinity and brought two congregations together with the challenges of the pandemic

Pastor Dustin- We are in a very strong position, We have a lot of work to do. We have 46 new members this past year, connecting, healing and bringing people together.

Financial Reports- Rene discussed our application for the PPP grant which added \$14,000.00 to our surplus, With COVID, the building was not used as much this past year. We brought church online and purchased equipment for Virtual services. Penny's report matched pretty well, Phil reconciles the checkbook, Penny worked on tithe reporting, and Dave assisted with reconciling. Kristie Becker reported on Endowment Fund end of year balance of \$309,932.39, significant surplus, we are in a comfortable position, \$14,000 came into the Food Pantry, Neal Fisher made motion to approve, Paul Bode seconded and all in favor.

Ministry Team Reports

- Kristie Becker- Budget Committee- main focus on Audit and proposed budget
- Judy Becker- Food Pantry, very busy year, free supply of produce, put up a camera to parking lot, a lot of support Thank you to all who helped
- Alison Bode-Cradle Roll, Faith Formation, Support for new parents, monthly newsletter sent to parents of children from birth to 3 years old
- Cheryl Borski- Sunday School on Zoom- challenges on Zoom, looking forward to in person
- Kimlee Marquise- Thank you to Merle and Pastor
- Betsy Ryan-sent Birthday cards to Sunday School children and for special events
- Barb Hallett-Care and Concern- busy and wonderful year and thank entire team for all they did
- Each person spoke as introduction and summary of year in their role
- Dave Barnett thanked Rene and Penny's for keeping finances straight

- Merle- Resurrecting Reconciling Christ process- Improve, Creation Care re-innovated with new Chair, Adult Ed going well, having guests join us
- Penny-Stewardship- Excellent program, very successful
- Kristen O.- children looking forward to being together- Pancake drive thru - looking forward to seeing members
- Rianne assisted with purchasing technology for Virtual services
- Community Service- Social Justice-Pete Jones will now Chair this-Regional Food Bank and Thanksgiving Drive

Annual Report of the Upstate NY SYNOD was presented

Old Business- None

New Business- Pastor Jonathan spoke in regard to Trinity Reformed history and all the positive and beneficial advantages of coming together, Excited to look forward to this year "Who's Your Neighbor?" with Joyce and Neal

Pastor Dustin spoke on transition. Memorandum of Understanding and decision on Resolution on purchase of Trinity property, we have a guarantee of a grant up to \$30,000.00 from Attorney General for Development, Need a few folks to continue consulting-Accessibility Task Force for proposal of Community Center and Mission- with assistance from Pete Russo to conduct Capital Appeal. Authorizing us to reflect our name as Messiah Lutheran and new logo design. Discussed possible location of Food Pantry. Barb Quackenbush made a motion to adopt 'The One Messiah Resolution' as proposed, Russell McDonald seconded and we set up a poll on Zoom for everyone to vote anonymously. We had 56 yes votes for adopting Resolution and 1 no vote.

Budget- We switched Insurance Companies as a cost savings measure, snow removal contract on Trinity and now Messiah, have 3 proposals and now have contract, Rich Becker made motion for accepting the Adoption of the 2021 Parish Budget as proposed and Jill Becker seconded and anonymous vote 55 in favor 0 opposed.

Nominating Committee- Eric Cawley-2 year term, Rachel DeTeso-Mathis- 2 year term, Katie Becker- 1 year term, NYS SYNOD-Hudson Representatives- Merle Longwood and Kimlee Marquise, SICM delegates Sue Collins and open position, motion made by Kristie Becker to approve these nominees, Neal Fisher seconded and all in favor

Affirmation SICM Statement-Interfaith Reaffirming our Commitment. Kristin O. made motion to to Accept statement of Reaffirming Messiah's membership in Schenectady Community Ministries and approve of the organization's purpose, Rich Becker seconded and all approved

Announcements- Shrove Tuesday drive thru Pancake at Trinity

Neal Fisher made motion to adjourn meeting at 1:43pm seconded by Linda Klein and all approved.

Notes from the Parish Register & Pastoral Acts

MEMBERSHIP AT THE BEGINNING OF 2021: 233

MEMBERS GAINED IN 2021 (2)

1. Baptism (1)
Allison Cawley – October 24th, 2021
2. Affirmation of Faith (1)
Douglas Chilton – August 29th, 2021
3. Transfer (0)
4. Other sources and statistical adjustment (0)

MEMBERS REMOVED IN 2021 (4)

1. Death (0)
2. Inactivity (0)
3. Transfer (4)
4. Other sources and statistical adjustment (0)

MEMBERSHIP AT END OF 2021: 231

2019 Avg. Attendance: 74 | 2020 Avg. Attendance: HAHA! | 2022 Avg. Attendance: Ditto.

FUNERALS:

March 20th, 2021 – Alan Richard Maki – New Comer Cremations & Funerals – Rev. Dustin Wright
September 23rd, 2021 – William (Bill) Becker – Messiah Lutheran Church – Rev. Dustin Wright
November 15th, 2021 – Jean Hartman – DeMarco Stone Funeral Home – Rev. Dustin Wright

WEDDINGS:

None

Treasurer Report

2021 Statement of Activity

The Evangelical Lutheran Church of the Messiah

2021 Profit & Loss : Actual vs. Budget

January - December 2021

	TOTAL		
	ACTUAL	BUDGET	OVER BUDGET
Revenue			
40050 Endowment Fund	11,305	10,800	505
40100 Offerings	118,302	134,858	(16,556)
40120 Holiday Offerings	1,207	2,675	(1,469)
40200 Other Miscellaneous Income			
40185 Thrivent Choice Dollars - for Operating Fund	363	200	163
40190 Miscellaneous Income	585		585
40220 Non Profit Income - Transfer from Trinity	746	1,500	(754)
40280 Rental Income - Messiah	6,100	6,000	100
40282 Rental Income - Trinity Community Ctr	675	2,500	(1,825)
40284 Trinity - Donations	1,210		1,210
Total 40200 Other Miscellaneous Income	9,679	10,200	(521)
Total Revenue	\$140,493	\$158,533	\$ (18,040)
GROSS PROFIT	\$140,493	\$158,533	\$ (18,040)
Expenditures			
50100 Part 1 Mission Support			
50110 1.1 Local	400	400	0
50120 1.2 Synod	4,000	4,000	0
Total 50100 Part 1 Mission Support	4,400	4,400	0
50200 Part 2 Pastor			
50210 2.1 Base Salary & SS offset	49,209	49,473	(264)
50230 2.3 Retirement Pension	7,718	7,718	(0)
50240 2.4 Health Coverage	7,365	7,132	233
50250 2.5 Disability & Survivor Benefit	1,396	1,415	(19)
50260 2.6 Mileage Reimbursement	506	2,000	(1,494)
50270 2.7 Continuing Education	250	1,000	(750)
50280 2.8 Professional Expenses	333	400	(67)
50285 2.9 Equity Housing Allowance	1,929	2,000	(71)
50287 2.10 Mobile Phone Allowance	540	540	0
Total 50200 Part 2 Pastor	69,247	71,678	(2,431)
50201 Part 2A Associate Pastor			
50211 2A.1 Assoc. Pastor Base Salary	23,833	23,833	0
50212 2A.2 Assoc. Pastor Social Security	0	1,823	(1,823)
Total 50201 Part 2A Associate Pastor	23,833	25,656	(1,823)
50300 Part 3 Personnel			
50301 3.1 Supply Pastor	498		498
50302 3.2 Church Musician's Salary	3,760	7,200	(3,440)
50305 3.5 Supply Church Musician	1,000	100	900
50306 3.6 Parish Bookkeeper Salary	1,750		1,750
50309 3.9 Parish Administrator Salary	16,023	14,779	1,244
50312 3.12 Parish Admin. Asst. Salary	1,800	2,340	(540)
50315 3.15 Parish Caretaker Salary	8,163	6,500	1,663

The Evangelical Lutheran Church of the Messiah

2021 Profit & Loss : Actual vs. Budget

January - December 2021

	TOTAL		
	ACTUAL	BUDGET	OVER BUDGET
50318 3.18 Sexton Salary	3,861	5,870	(2,009)
50360 3.9 Employer's Payroll Tax Expenses - Personnel	4,132	2,807	1,325
50370 3.9 NYS Disability/PFL and Workers Comp - All	1,943	936	1,007
Total 50300 Part 3 Personnel	42,930	40,532	2,398
50400 Part 4 Administration			
50410 4.1 Office Supplies	728	750	(22)
50420 4.2 Telephone & Internet	1,283	1,500	(217)
50430 4.3 Postage	568	400	168
50440 4.4 Offering Envelopes & Supplies	253	250	3
50450 4.5 Toner Supplies and Maintenance	651	1,200	(549)
50455 4.55 Bank Charges	298		298
50460 4.6 Web Hosting & Domain	697	1,000	(303)
50470 4.7 IT Specialist		550	(550)
50480 4.8 Synod Assembly	375	800	(425)
50490 4.9 Software	972	900	72
Total 50400 Part 4 Administration	5,825	7,350	(1,525)
50500 Part 5 Messiah Property			
50510 5.1 Electric & Gas	3,249	4,500	(1,251)
50520 5.2 Liability Insurance	2,917	4,616	(1,699)
50530 5.3 Town Taxes	338	390	(52)
50540 5.4 Trash Removal	184	300	(116)
50550 5.5 Snow Removal	2,620	790	1,830
50560 5.6 Cleaning Equip & Supplies	51	200	(149)
50570 5.7 Building Maintenance	1,732	1,300	432
50580 5.8 Pest Control	250	300	(50)
Total 50500 Part 5 Messiah Property	11,340	12,396	(1,056)
50600 Part 6 Parsonage			
50610 6.1 Electricity & Gas	2,126	2,100	26
50620 6.2 Liability Insurance	325		325
50630 6.3 Town Taxes	722	750	(28)
50670 6.7 Maintenance	563	500	63
50680 6.8 Telephone & Internet	840	840	(0)
Total 50600 Part 6 Parsonage	4,576	4,190	386
50700 Part 7 Worship & Music			
50710 7.1 Candles & Communion Supplies	295	500	(205)
50720 7.2 Sundays & Seasons	217	100	117
50730 7.3 Holiday Flowers	185	400	(215)
50740 7.4 Organ Maintenance		100	(100)
50750 7.5 Piano Maintenance-Tuning	340	400	(60)
50760 7.6 Music	33	300	(267)
50770 7.7 Licensing	640	650	(11)
Total 50700 Part 7 Worship & Music	1,709	2,450	(741)

The Evangelical Lutheran Church of the Messiah

2021 Profit & Loss : Actual vs. Budget

January - December 2021

		TOTAL	
	ACTUAL	BUDGET	OVER BUDGET
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50800 Part 8 Faith Formation			
50810 8.1 Sunday Church School	483	500	(17)
50820 8.2 Youth Ministry	62	500	(438)
50830 8.3 Confirmation	200	550	(350)
50840 8.4 Life Passages	87	550	(463)
50850 8.5 Adult & Community Education	673	1,000	(327)
50860 8.6 Cradle Roll & Nursery	86	100	(14)
Total 50800 Part 8 Faith Formation	1,590	3,200	(1,610)
<hr/>			
50900 Part 9 Ministry Support			
50901 9.1 Stewardship		800	(800)
50902 9.2 Outreach	579	100	479
50903 9.3 Care and Concern		100	(100)
50904 9.4 Social Action		50	(50)
50905 9.5 Lutheran Subscription	80	100	(20)
50906 9.6 Young Adult Group	156	50	106
50907 9.7 Leadership Development	200	400	(200)
50908 9.8 Creation Care		250	(250)
50909 9.9 Food Pantry Supplemental Fund		2,000	(2,000)
50910 9.10 Fellowship	540		540
Total 50900 Part 9 Ministry Support	1,555	3,850	(2,295)
<hr/>			
51550 Part 5A Trinity Property			
51511 5A.1 Electric & Gas	602	2,400	(1,798)
51521 5A.2 Liability Insurance	882	3,300	(2,418)
51531 5A.3 Town Taxes		390	(390)
51541 5A.4 Trash Removal	565	500	65
51551 5A.5 Snow Removal	5,160	2,325	2,835
51561 5A.6 Cleaning Equip & Supplies	105	200	(95)
51571 5A.7 Building Maintenance	733	1,000	(267)
Total 51550 Part 5A Trinity Property	8,046	10,115	(2,069)
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Total Expenditures	\$175,051	\$185,817	\$ (10,766)
NET OPERATING REVENUE	\$ (34,558)	\$ (27,284)	\$ (7,274)
NET REVENUE	\$ (34,558)	\$ (27,284)	\$ (7,274)

2021 Statement of Financial Position

The Evangelical Lutheran Church of the Messiah

Statement of Financial Position

As of December 31, 2021

	TOTAL
ASSETS	
Current Assets	
Bank Accounts	
100000 Cash	0
100010 Trustco Checking (XXX 1703)	151,933
100015 Vanguard Memorial Fund	3,407
100018 Vanguard Doremus Fund	7,107
Total 100000 Cash	162,448
Total Bank Accounts	\$162,448
Total Current Assets	\$162,448
Fixed Assets	
100060 Buildings	
100062 Building - Church	321,000
100064 Building - Parsonage Building	179,400
100069 Accumulated Amortization	-500,400
Total 100060 Buildings	0
100080 Land	
100082 Land - Church	53,000
100085 Land - Parsonage	15,600
Total 100080 Land	68,600
Total Fixed Assets	\$68,600
Other Assets	
100050 Long Term Investments	
100058 Vanguard Endowment Fund	12,728
100059 ELCA Endowment Fund	288,543
Total 100050 Long Term Investments	301,270
Total Other Assets	\$301,270
TOTAL ASSETS	\$532,318

The Evangelical Lutheran Church of the Messiah

Statement of Financial Position

As of December 31, 2021

	TOTAL
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LIABILITIES AND EQUITY	
Liabilities	
Current Liabilities	
Other Current Liabilities	
Payroll Liabilities	
Federal Taxes (941/944)	487
FSA	100
NYS Employment Taxes	84
NYS Income Tax	1,284
Portico	131
Total Payroll Liabilities	2,085
Total Other Current Liabilities	\$2,085
Total Current Liabilities	\$2,085
Total Liabilities	\$2,085
Equity	
300002 Retained Earnings	398,503
300005 Total Board Designated Funds	
300100 Adult Education	100
300105 Bible Fund	25
300110 Campership Fund	1,119
300115 Capital Campaign	115,551
300125 College Student Support Fund	165
300130 Community Center Fund	5,101
300135 Creation Care Fund	235
300140 Food Pantry	3,191
300150 Richard Hallett Accessibility Fund	3,420
300155 Mental Health Fund	989
300165 Property Care Fund	635
300180 Sunday School Fund	674
300190 Youth and Family Fund	918
300200 Memorial Fund	3,571
300202 Endowment Fund Donations	5,173
300235 Pastor Discretionary Fund	422
Total 300005 Total Board Designated Funds	141,288
300010 Total Board Temporary Designated Funds	
310218 Special Collection Fund	25,000
Total 300010 Total Board Temporary Designated Funds	25,000
Net Revenue	-34,558
Total Equity	\$530,233
TOTAL LIABILITIES AND EQUITY	\$532,318
<hr/>	

2021 Financial Secretary's Report

UNDESIGNATED FUNDS

	YTD
Offerings	
Offering Envelope (Pledged + Unpledged).....	\$117,235.51
Loose Plate Offering.....	\$1,066.50
Offerings Subtotal	\$118,302.01
Endowment Revenue	
Endowment Fund Revenue (ELCA).....	\$11,061.93
Endowment Fund Revenue (Vanguard).....	\$243.01
Endowment Revenue Subtotal	\$11,304.94
Holiday Giving	
Advent Folders.....	\$0.00
Bulletin Dedications.....	\$0.00
Christmas Envelopes.....	\$335.00
Easter Envelopes.....	\$271.50
Holiday Flowers.....	\$188.00
Initial Offering Envelopes.....	\$45.00
Lenten Folders.....	\$0.00
Lenten Midweek / Holy Week Envelopes.....	\$257.00
Thanksgiving Envelopes.....	\$110.00
Holiday Giving Subtotal	\$1,206.50
Miscellaneous	
Miscellaneous.....	\$1,331.41
Rental Revenue Messiah.....	\$6,100.00
Rental Revenue Trinity.....	\$675.00
Trinity Donations.....	\$1,716.00
Thrivent Choice Dollars.....	\$363.00
Miscellaneous Subtotal	\$10,185.41
UNDESIGNATED FUNDS SUBTOTAL	\$140,998.86

DESIGNATED FUNDS

Adult Education.....	\$194.00
Bible Fund.....	\$0.00
Building Campaign.....	\$129,539.68
Campership Fund.....	\$265.12
Capital Campaign / Hallett Accessibility.....	\$395.00
Creation Care.....	\$100.00
Endowment Fund Contributions.....	\$722.95
Food Pantry.....	\$14,718.47
Memorial Fund Contributions.....	\$25.00
Outreach.....	\$0.00
Property Fund.....	\$0.00
Souper Bowl/ CROP Walk.....	\$50.00
Special Collection Fund.....	\$25,325.00
Sunday School.....	\$0.00
Student College Support.....	\$0.00
Trinity Community Center.....	\$10,000.00
World Hunger ELCA.....	\$100.00
Youth and Family Fund.....	\$526.00
DESIGNATED FUNDS SUBTOTAL	\$182,949.72
Total Revenue Subtotal	\$323,948.58
In Kind Donations	\$4,487.58
TOTAL REVENUE	\$328,436.16

2021 Endowment Fund Report

The Endowment Fund of Messiah Lutheran Church was established at the congregational meeting in January 1992. The primary emphasis was income – with stability – and growth of principal. Income is automatically deposited in a separate savings account and the treasurer is empowered to withdraw from this account if funds are needed for current expenses. In the event that this saving account would grow because the funds are not needed, then a separate decision would be made by Council to reinvest some of the funds back into endowment principal.

History of deposited amounts to this fund is:

1992	Beginning Amount	\$46,210	Lambert estate; Richter estate; Graupner estate; Kreisler family
1993 - 2004	Additions	\$31,518	
2004	Addition to ELCA Endow.	\$60,000	Griffeth estate
2005 - 2008	Addition to Vanguard Total Bond (T.B.)	\$945	In memory of R. Doremus; C. Lindsay; H. Keseberg; P. King
2009	Addition to ELCA Endow.	\$50,000	Doremus estate
2011	Addition to Vanguard T.B.	\$450	In memory of E. VanWormer; V. Parsons
2013	Addition to ELCA Endow.	\$20,496	In memory of M. Juckett; E. Friebel; L. Miller
2015	Addition to Vanguard T.B.	\$300	In memory of L. Engvold; J. Baumler; G. Gresham; P. Laws; R. Stone; E. Friday
2017	Addition to ELCA Endow.	\$9,300	In honor of Karen Kreisler; Sister Lorraine; In memory of Richard King; John Engvold; Tom Town; Pastor Reiger; Betty Friebel
2018	Addition to ELCA Endow.	\$75	In memory of Craig Aldi; Joan Libby; Marion Lewis
2019	Addition to ELCA Endow.	\$2,105	In memory of Christine Gaulin, Gerald Hoffstetter, Roseanne Hyde, Joseph Fisch, Dave Ellis, R Christoffel, Germaine Doremus, Robert Penn, Beverly White
2020	Addition to ELCA Endow.	\$4,150	In memory of; Beverly Niebuhr, Diane Fisher, Robert Reisinger, Denise Larrabee, Joseph DeMento, Nancy Stellrecht, Irene Joseph and William Becker
2021	Addition to ELCA Endow.	\$425	In memory of; Ken Zeman, Ninette Sipos, Bill Nolan, William Becker

TOTAL DEPOSITS \$225,974.00

The ELCA endowment is managed with a long-term philosophy that contains a mix of fixed income investments for distribution and stocks to compensate for inflation. Calculating 4.25 percent of the average closing value of the last five years smooths the annual distribution. The stock market recovery, plus a significant addition from the Doremus estate, resulted in a big increase in account value and income for years 2009, 2010, 2012 and 2013.

Performance data for the year 2021 is indicated below:

	<u>Vanguard Total Bond</u>	<u>ELCA Endowment</u>
Start 2021	\$13,238.20	\$309,932.23
2021 Revenue	\$241.51	\$8,296.45**
2021 % Revenue	1.82%	2.68%
2021 Total Return	-3.49%	5.56%
End 2021 Value	\$12,775.82	\$327,155.00**

**as of 11/30/2021

Total End 2011 Account Value: \$193,408.18	Total End 2011 Income: \$8,688.21
Total End 2012 Account Value: \$208,263.07	Total End 2012 Income: \$8,236.15
Total End 2013 Account Value: \$254,601.85	Total End 2013 Income: \$8,121.14
Total End 2014 Account Value: \$265,519.09	Total End 2014 Income: \$9,454.17
Total End 2015 Account Value: \$254,964.88	Total End 2015 Income: \$9,871.56
Total End 2016 Account Value: \$252,493.65	Total End 2016 Income: \$9,542.70
Total End 2017 Account Value: \$282,149.51	Total End 2017 Income: \$9,877.82
Total End 2018 Account Value: \$275,477.31	Total End 2018 Income: \$8,055.04
Total End 2019 Account Value: \$295,020.86	Total End 2019 Income: \$7,991.78
Total End 2020 Account Value: \$312,520.92	Total End 2020 Income: \$8,221.34
Total End 2021 Account Value: \$339,930.82	Total End 2021 Income: \$8,537.96

* Percent total return includes income and value change (not considering additions to principal.)

2021 Proposed Amended Parish Budget

Proposed Amended 2022 Messiah Budget				
		Original 2022 Budget	Proposed Changes	Proposed Amended 2022 Budget
REVENUE:				
	1. Regular Offerings	\$ 131,618		\$ 131,618
	2. Endowment Revenue	\$ 10,800		\$ 10,800
	3. Holiday Offerings & Misc.	\$ 3,275		\$ 3,275
	4. Trinity Asset Transfer	\$ 0		\$ 0
	5. Community Center	\$ 10,000		\$ 10,000
	TOTAL REVENUE	\$ 155,693		\$ 155,693
EXPENSES:				
Part 1	MISSION SUPPORT			
	1. Synod	\$ 4,000		\$ 4,000
	2. Local	\$ 400		\$ 400
	Total	\$ 4,400		\$ 4,400
Part 2	PASTOR			
	1. Base Salary	\$ 46,350		\$ 46,350
	2. Social Security (.0994 x base salary)	\$ 4,608		\$ 4,608
	3. Retirement Pension (12% of DC)	\$ 7,950		\$ 7,950
	4. Health Coverage (12.2% of DC)	\$ 8,082	\$ 397	\$ 8,479
	5. Disability & Survivor Benefits (2.9% of DC)	\$ 1,921	\$ (464)	\$ 1,457
	6. Mileage Reimbursement	\$ 1,500		\$ 1,500
	7. Continuing Education	\$ 1,000		\$ 1,000
	8. Professional Expenses	\$ 400		\$ 400
	9. Equity Housing Allowance (3% of DC)	\$ 1,987		\$ 1,987
	10. Mobile Phone Allowance	\$ 540		\$ 540
	Total	\$ 74,338	\$ (67)	\$ 74,271
Part 2A	ASSOCIATE PASTOR			
	1. Base Salary	\$ 0	\$ 1,167	\$ 1,167
	2. Social Security (.0765 x base salary)	\$ 0		\$ 0
	Total	\$ 0	\$ 1,167	\$ 1,167
Part 3	PERSONNEL			
	1. Church Musician's Salary	\$ 9,776		\$ 9,776
	2. Church Musician's Social Security (.0765 x base salary)	\$ 748	\$ (748)	\$ 0
	3. Substitute Musician	\$ 100		\$ 100
	4. Supply Pastor	\$ 750		\$ 750
	5. Parish Administrator Salary	\$ 15,204		\$ 15,204
	6. Parish Administrator Social Security (.0765 x base salary)	\$ 1,163	\$ (1,163)	\$ 0
	7. Sexton Salary	\$ 9,360		\$ 9,360
	8. Sexton Social Security (.0765 x base salary)	\$ 716	\$ (716)	\$ 0
	9. NYS Disability/PFL & Workers Comp - all employees	\$ 990	\$ 535	\$ 1,525
	9. Employer Payroll Tax Expense on Personnel (.12 x base	\$ 0	\$ 5,180	\$ 5,180
	15. Administrative Social Security (.0765 x base salary)	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0
	16. Community Center Coordinator	\$ 4,030		\$ 4,030
	17. Community Center Coordinator Social Security (.0765 x base salary)	\$ 308	\$ (308)	\$ 0
	19. Bookkeeper	\$ 4,800		\$ 4,800
	20. Bookkeeper Social Security (.0765 x base salary)	\$ 367	\$ (367)	\$ 0
	Total	\$ 48,312	\$ 2,413	\$ 50,725
Part 4	ADMINISTRATION			
	1. Office Supplies	\$ 750	\$ 350	\$ 1,100
	2. Telephone & Internet	\$ 1,500		\$ 1,500
	3. Postage	\$ 450		\$ 450
	4. Offering Envelopes & Supplies	\$ 250		\$ 250
	5. Toner Supplies and Maintenance	\$ 1,000		\$ 1,000
	6. Web Hosting & Domain	\$ 900		\$ 900
	7. IT Specialist	\$ 550		\$ 550
	8. Synod Assembly	\$ 800		\$ 800
	9. Software	\$ 500		\$ 500
	10. IT Equipment	\$ 800		\$ 800
	11. Audit	\$ 2,500		\$ 2,500
	Total	\$ 10,000	\$ 350	\$ 10,350

Part 5	MESSIAH PROPERTY			
	1. Electric & Gas	\$ 4,750		\$ 4,750
	2. Liability Insurance	\$ 5,078	\$ (2,145)	\$ 2,933
	3. Town Taxes	\$ 390		\$ 390
	4. Trash Removal	\$ 300		\$ 300
	5. Snow Removal	\$ 2,000		\$ 2,000
	6. Cleaning Equip & Supplies	\$ 150		\$ 150
	7. Building Maintenance	\$ 2,000		\$ 2,000
	8. Pest Control	\$ 300		\$ 300
	Total	\$ 14,968	\$ (2,145)	\$ 12,823
Part 5A	COMMUNITY CENTER			
	1. Electric & Gas	\$ 3,350		\$ 3,350
	2. Liability Insurance	\$ 3,630	\$ (809)	\$ 2,821
	3. Town Taxes	\$ 390		\$ 390
	4. Trash Removal	\$ 300		\$ 300
	5. Snow Removal	\$ 4,000		\$ 4,000
	6. Cleaning Equip & Supplies	\$ 200		\$ 200
	7. Building Maintenance	\$ 2,000		\$ 2,000
	8. Advertising	\$ 600		\$ 600
	Total	\$ 14,470	\$ (809)	\$ 13,661
Part 6	PARSONAGE			
	1. Electric & Gas	\$ 2,250		\$ 2,250
	2. Liability Insurance	\$ 0	\$ 325	\$ 325
	3. Town Taxes	\$ 750		\$ 750
	7. Maintenance (incl. sealing)	\$ 700		\$ 700
	8. Telephone & Internet	\$ 840		\$ 840
	Total	\$ 4,540	\$ 325	\$ 4,865
Part 7	WORSHIP & MUSIC			
	1. Candles & Communion Supplies	\$ 500		\$ 500
	2. Sundays and Seasons	\$ 100		\$ 100
	3. Holiday Flowers	\$ 400		\$ 400
	4. Organ Maintenance	\$ 100		\$ 100
	5. Piano Maintenance/Tuning	\$ 400		\$ 400
	6. Music	\$ 300		\$ 300
	7. Licensing	\$ 650		\$ 650
	Total	\$ 2,450	\$ 0	\$ 2,450
Part 8	FAITH FORMATION			
	1. Sunday Church School	\$ 500		\$ 500
	2. Youth Ministry	\$ 500		\$ 500
	3. Confirmation	\$ 275		\$ 275
	4. Life Passages	\$ 550		\$ 550
	5. Adult & Community Education	\$ 1,000		\$ 1,000
	6. Cradle Roll and Nursery	\$ 100		\$ 100
	Total	\$ 2,925	\$ 0	\$ 2,925
Part 9	MINISTRY SUPPORT			
	1. Stewardship	\$ 800		\$ 800
	2. Outreach	\$ 200		\$ 200
	3. Care & Concern	\$ 100		\$ 100
	4. Social Action	\$ 50		\$ 50
	5. Lutheran Subscription	\$ 50		\$ 50
	6. Young Adult Group	\$ 100		\$ 100
	7. Leadership Development	\$ 400		\$ 400
	8. Creation Care	\$ 250		\$ 250
	9. Food Pantry Supplemental Fund	\$ 2,000		\$ 2,000
	10. Fellowship	\$ 500		\$ 500
	Total	\$ 4,450	\$ 0	\$ 4,450
	TOTAL EXPENSES	\$ 180,853	\$ 1,234	\$ 182,087
	NET OVERAGE / (SHORTFALL)	\$ (25,160)	\$ (1,234)	\$ (26,394)

2021 ELCA Upstate New York Synod Report

Bishop's Report

Bishop Lee M. Miller II

"Rejoice in the Lord always, again I will say, Rejoice!" (Philippians 4:4)

I can't even read those words without singing them in my mind as they begin their own refrain, "Rejoice in the Lord always, and again I say, Rejoice! Rejoice! Rejoice! And again, I say Rejoice!"

Paul writes these words to the church in Philippi who is struggling in the face of opposition and suffering. Paul himself was imprisoned and awaiting trial as he wrote this letter encouraging believers to have the "same mind" (1:5), the same love, that was in Christ. Paul wanted the church to know that in spite of the tension and struggle, because of the power of transformational love, we might still rejoice.

I know you're tired, Church. It's been a long 18...19...20...months...years...in the pandemic. I know pastors are tired of pivoting on a dime and adapting, again and again. I know congregations want to gather, sing, commune, shake-hands, hug, eat together! I know we long to be close again. Some want things to "go back to the way they were." Others know, things aren't going back. And the way things were, weren't good for everyone. I know you're tired.

I pray this fall begins a season of healing and wholeness. I pray that with the gifts of scientists and medical professionals we will find the tools to drive away the pandemic of Covid-19. I also believe that God has called us to be the Church, the Body of Christ, in this place we call the Upstate New York Synod, for just such a time as this. God has given us what we need for what we are called to be.

As people of God, saved by Grace, I dream a church where Love activates us in the world do justice and share the joy which we have inherited.

This fall I will spend as much time as I am able listening to rostered leaders across our synod and lay leaders gathered in conference assemblies. I join the whole synod in giving God thanks for YOU! Without you, there is no church-together! Thank you for the gifts you share. Thank you, for the very many ways God works in you for the sake of justice and joy.

I look forward to listen and learning from you, and serving with one another as church together.

"Rejoice in the Lord always, again I will say, Rejoice!"

Report from Operations, Administration, and Finance

As we enter this new Fall season, the Upstate New York Synod is mimicking that change in the synod office with gratitude for what has been and an excitement and rekindling of energy for what is to be. We send our prayers forward with Bishop John and Lin Macholz as they enter a new season of their own in retirement. Blessings and God-speed. We are very pleased to welcome and assist Bishop Lee M. Miller II as he steps into his new call as Bishop of this great synod.

The Synod office has fully embodied the phrase, “change is the only constant”. We are now a much smaller staff, operating primarily out of our home offices, while putting in place new systems and functionality that will serve our synod well in the years to come. We have remained open as we navigate this new way forward so as not to let a deaf ear fall on the voices that make up this synod. Honestly, we have faced challenges. However, they have given us the opportunity to identify priority needs and start to put plans in place and even into action around many of them.

We are in the process of outsourcing both the payroll (Asure Software) and accounting (Insero & Co, CPAs, LLC) functions of the synod office. We are working with our representatives at Dermody, Burke, and Brown to streamline our systems and functions to make them as efficient and effective as possible during this transfer of responsibility. Both functions remain

under synod management and guidance. We are also working through our remaining physical office space: what stays, what needs to be archived, what needs to possibly return? Finally, in the 2022 budget, you have approved the allocation of staffing dollars for a part-time administrator and communication specialist. During this pandemic, we have learned that communication and streamlined systems are key to fully supporting the needs of the synod and we are onboard with this necessary change.

Pastor Lori Kochanski, in addition to Faith Formation, leading a weekly 9@9 and fully facilitating our Faithful Learning and Teaching Together (F.L.A.T.T.) platform has also taken on the regular Upstate Update communications, Midweek Musing facilitation, Synodically Authorized Minister (SAM) program, Welcome Event coordination and multiple functions within the synod that require her special and newly developing skill set.

Julie Grindle remains fully immersed in the large scope of work involved in the synod’s Candidacy & Mobility functions. In the process of streamlining, she has assimilated all administrative functions related to these two areas and our communication with the ELCA. Julie has also stepped in to provide support in the Syracuse office on a regular basis providing banking, mailing and file coordination.

We are grateful to our interim DEMs, first Rev. Dr. Becca Ehrlich and now Branden Dupree for carrying us forward in care of our new starts and mission developers

until a permanent Director of Evangelical Mission is called by Bishop Miller.

As Assistant to the Bishop for Operations, my roles have expanded two-fold since this position oversees the functions of finance, investment, and administration, all of which were greatly affected by the staff reduction over the last two years. After being part of the team that put together this year's first-ever online Synod Assembly and Bishop Election (successfully!), the majority of my time has been spent moving through our financial processes, necessities, systems and the work needed to transition to organizations that will provide consistent, long-term, dynamic support for our synod in the years to come. This took time. In the wake of my diverted attention, other functions have been at a standstill to allow full focus.

Although we have increased hours for staff as we are able, each of these positions remains part-time (Lori Kochanski at 20 hours; Julie Grindle at 30 hours; Michelle Josephson (me) at 30 hours and our Interim DEM at 5 hours per week each).

Your synod staff is small, but mighty and working to serve the Lord in every aspect of our work for the synod. As he steps into his new call, we are creating space for Bishop Miller to listen, understand and gauge where we are as a synod, where we need to go and how best to get there. His staff is here to share our experience and knowledge and offer full support as he steps into this new space.

What an exciting time we are in! As a church, we stand as pioneers: of this new

time, on a new frontier, stepping into this new way of being. Lest we forget, we are reminded through scripture that we are fully supported and strengthened by the love and strength of our Lord, Jesus Christ, just as we have always been. Thanks be to God.

In faith, service and gratitude,
Michelle Josephson
Assistant to the Bishop for Operations

Faithful Learning and Teaching Together (FLATT): A collective of learning opportunities to grow in faithful witness and service

We continue to offer courses for learning through this online platform. I am thankful for the way this has been a space for sharing of ideas and continued learning with others who we may not ever get to meet in person.

The range of courses continues to grow. If you have an idea for a course or topic for conversation please reach out and let me know. I am always looking for leaders who are willing to share their passion with others. I am also looking for ways to promote ongoing congregational studies and discussions. If your congregation is offering an online Bible Study or workshop and would like to open it beyond your congregation please consider adding it to our list of offerings.

I look forward to the ways this platform will be a space for intentional leadership development and discernment for members of congregations.

The Rev. Lori Kochanski, Assistant to the Bishop

Synodically Authorized Ministry (SAM) and Growing in Lay Leadership Learning Opportunities, Equipping Leaders to Lead

Early in the 2021 a new set of policies regarding Synodically Authorized Ministry was developed through conversation and with the guide of ELCA policies regarding this kind of ministry. It was then affirmed by Synod Council.

There is also a growing need to provide more opportunities for all congregational leaders, not just those who identify as a Synodically Authorized Minister, to have opportunities for development and learning.

In order to build on the practice of offering a variety of opportunities for general learning, and for the authorization of Synodically Authorized Ministers, we have been meeting in 4 different working groups to determine best practices as we move forward in this ministry. The working groups are: Procedures, Online Learning, Core Curriculum and Education, Lay Leadership Training and Identification. These working groups will continue to meet and plan ways to provide strength and support to our efforts in the area of equipping lay leaders for service to God and others.

The folks on these working groups have been doing very good work on the individual tasks. Eventually the work of all four groups will come together to form a united vision around how we equip leaders to be prepared to keep sharing the Good News of God in all places.

The Rev. Lori Kochanski

First Call Rostered Leaders Partnering with Metro New York Synod

Rostered leaders in their first three years of ordained ministry are required to meet and learn together. This year we began a program where UNYS leaders meet with colleagues who are in their first call in Metro-New York Synod (MNYS). We met for an online retreat to begin this work together. In addition, Pastor Kochanski and Pastor Becca Seely (of the MNYS) collaborate to gather the group together for large group sessions. Leaders are also expected to meet in colleague groups in between the large group sessions.

Zoom technology has made this kind of collaboration easier. The whole process speaks to the way we can practice good stewardship while deepening relationships and sharing support.

We hope to continue to build on this collaboration as we move into the future.

The Rev. Lori Kochanski

Human Based Thinking as a Way Forward Congregational Planning: *Leading with Intention*

I have met with congregations to use a human based thinking model as the foundation for strategic work that needs to be done in congregations. Through a series of meetings, congregational leaders discern their own particular needs and research plans for answering those needs. The plans are often measurable and actionable steps toward achieving goals and growing in faithful witness to God.

If you are interested in learning about how the synod staff may be able to support this kind of opportunity for thinking and planning for your congregation please let us know.

The Rev. Lori Kochanski



9@9: Building Relationship in Uncertain Times

What joy the staff has found in connecting with folks through 9@9. The daily 9AM Facebook meetings have lifted spirits while providing sacred space for meeting together in prayer, praise and practice.

Throughout the Spring and into summer we slowly altered the schedule 9@9. Staff took a break in August but is now back online each Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday at 9AM. We hope to see you there!

<https://www.facebook.com/uptatenysynod>

Fall Assembly Report on Mobility and Transitions

Greetings, siblings in Christ of the Upstate NY Synod!

The past 18 months of the pandemic have caused a sea change in the Transitions and Mobility processes in our Synod.

One of our pastors presciently asked me in April 2020, "Will we see lots of retirements and other rostered ministers leaving churches because of this pandemic?" At the time, I wondered the same thing, and for the first few months, it didn't matter to our Synod

personally, as our churches were not heavily in transition.

But then the retirements in our Synod began in earnest, many of which had already been planned prior to the pandemic. Rostered ministers all over the ELCA found that they didn't see eye to eye with their leadership about Covid practices, whether it be masking or social distancing, Zoom or in person worship. And many pastors simply felt the tug of the Spirit to move elsewhere.

You might expect the by-product of this to be a glut of pastors for our churches that are open; but the opposite is true. While there are quite a few pastors looking for call, the number of open churches across the ELCA is large. I have referred to it, crudely, as a buyer's market for rostered ministers. Add to that the (relatively) new pull to live near family that the pandemic has created (or exacerbated), and these pastors are extremely choosy about where they want to move geographically as well.

We have adapted our strategies to continue to find the right pastors for our congregations. We have acknowledged the realities and are working hard to help our transitioning congregations understand how long they may need to wait. And we are encouraging these congregations to work on vision and mission during this time, so that when they are ready for that pastor, the work can begin.

God is working in these times, making all things new. Our response will be one of faithfulness, courage and joy, even in the midst of anxiety and the frustration of not knowing what the future holds. Please continue to pray for those discerning calls, our churches in transition, and that the Holy Spirit will move in every call process to work for good in Christ's church. Thanks be to God!

Julie Grindle

Assistant for Candidacy and Mobility

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America Report

ANNUAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING OPENING LITURGY



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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**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)



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.”