

## President's Annual Report 2017

It has been such an honor serving as your President for 2017! Much has happened in our church this year!

In late January we achieved a milestone and following the Holy Spirit by becoming a Reconciled in Christ community in the ELCA. We truly honor the words on our doorpost, "All Are Welcome." In visiting my husband's family's church in Blue Earth, Minnesota, over Christmas I noticed they also have an RIC emblem posted in their vestibule upon entry. In mentioning our new status to a my mother-in-law, she replied, "Oh, we did that like 7 years ago!" Yes, I guess we are catching up!

We said hello to help provide an internship and later a temporary position as Diaconal Minister to our life-long member and friend, Mary Shaima. We said goodbye to a long-standing, much beloved Youth Minister, Jonathan Garman, and wished him well upon his new journey into the legal arena. A short time later we were fortunate to add a new YM, Constance Mithelman, to our staff. How incredibly Blessed we have been!

As President, and in consultation with the pastor, I felt compelled to update our outdated BLC Policies and Procedure Manual. With many hours of help of the tremendous team of Carole Orness, Natalie Germuska, and myself, the 2018 version of the manual now reflects our current practice and coincides with the Pacifica Synod's updated version of 2016. This will serve to offer our staff increased consistency and a better understanding of the day-to-day operations supporting God's Work in our church. We also adopted a clause making sure that this document and our operations are reviewed by a new set of eyes every three years to help insure we are giving those that are hands-on for us, the support they need.

The most important thing I can share with the congregation from working with Debi Carr and Gail Winterbourne on updating the Policy manual is that we must appreciate the strong and caring staff members we have in the Early Childhood Center, and equally strong in their commitment to supporting the community, and in sharing God's Word and His Love in our world! A better seed for planting and growing a community, I know no other!

Speaking of the Early Childhood Center, it follows to celebrate completion of yet another stage in our Preschool Renovations Project! If you haven't had a chance to get over to the Family Center to see the new carpet and flooring, Gail's improved office, and the new countertops in the bathrooms, and more, you should! Thank you for the hours our volunteers put on this, especially Rusty Powell, Jim Mastrogany, Mary Shaima, Mike Ontiveros, Beth Nelson, Steve McMahon, Dennis Astroth and others too numerous to name.

A HUGE THANK YOU goes out to all our staff! Pastor Laura, Mary Shaima, Debi Carr, Gail Winterbourne, Mona Goetsch, Judy Collier, Judy Foland, Chris Matthews, Constance Mithelman, Rose Moldenhauer, Karen Wise, Marilyn Stencien, Kim Froke, Mark Weed, THANK YOU, THANK YOU, THANK YOU! Your talents and energy gift us DAILY! GOD BLESS YOU and INSPIRE YOU as you feed your church throughout 2018.

Lastly, I want to encourage and invite everyone to get involved and invite their friends to get involved! There are so many ways YOU can be fed at Bethlehem: by serving on council, participating in one of our ministries, attending Bethlehem Serves Day, bringing over food or being an overnight host for the Interfaith Shelter, caroling to our shut-ins at Christmas, helping paint or pound nails setting up for Vacation Bible School, and a whole long list of other wonderful things, Come Do It!! By us getting filled with the Holy Spirit and coming out to donate our 3 T's - time, talent and treasure - is how God's Love gets out to you, me, and all over the community. Service in the church gives you a higher purpose, fills you with greater meaning, and an unimaginable joy that fills the soul.

So Thank You for allowing me to serve!  
Blair Lindberg  
President BLC Council 2017