



ANNUAL REPORT

— 2020 —



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



A MESSAGE FROM ELCA PRESIDING BISHOP ELIZABETH EATON

Dear friends in Christ,

This year has been a challenging one! The COVID-19 pandemic has changed the church and society. We have had to shift the ways we engage in ministry from a focus on in-person worship and meetings to livestream worship, virtual meetings and gatherings in the parking lot. We have had to shift to teaching children at home and working from home. We have not been able to travel to see friends or relatives or to celebrate life events. This has also been a time to address economic and social justice issues, to shift our thinking and our way of life.

In times such as this, our baptism in Christ makes a difference and makes us different. Like Christians before us, we recall that God is faithful to God's promises and God's people. We see that God enables us to connect with one another even when we are separated. Shifts in the world invite us to be innovative in how we do God's work and reach out to all ages in making disciples. We see that God is at work not only in our buildings but beyond them as well. We have found new ways to serve our neighbors and reach those in need.

As we experience this time of uncertainty, we sense something new emerging. In many places there are new strategies and renewed energy for ministry, often generated by emerging leaders. We have developed a framework to build on, and now is the time to engage in hard work together. As you do in your congregation, we want our collaborative efforts to be both faithfully thoughtful and sustainable. We want to build up the body of Christ today and for the future.

Looking across the church, I am grateful for your generous giving of time, talents and resources. Yes, God does continue to bless us! God will provide both relief from life's struggles and hope for a stronger church, God's church. We do not need to know how the future will unfold. As members in the body of Christ, we need only trust that God is with us and will provide.

Building up the body of Christ together,

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

"The gifts he gave were that some would be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, until all of us come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to maturity, to the measure of the full stature of Christ. We must no longer be children, tossed to and fro and blown about by every wind of doctrine, by people's trickery, by their craftiness in deceitful scheming. But speaking the truth in love, we must grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ, from whom the whole body, joined and knit together by every ligament with which it is equipped, as each part is working properly, promotes the body's growth in building itself up in love." —Ephesians 4:11-16

Agenda for the 2020 Annual Meeting of Bethlehem Lutheran Church

January 24th, 2021

Call to Order: Karen Saake, Council President. A quorum of 10% of Confirmed Members is required to conduct the Annual Meeting. On January 1, 2020 there were 537 Confirmed Members, so a quorum is 54. Pastor Sam will consult Zoom registration and inform the chair of a quorum.

Opening Prayer: Pastor Laura Ziehl

Motion to Approve Minutes from the 2019 Annual Meeting: A motion is needed to ratify the following actions of the Annual Meeting held on January 26th, 2020. Second the motion, discussion, and vote.

Lead Pastor's Report: Pastor Laura Ziehl

Associate Pastor's Report: Pastor Sam Nelson

Recognition of Departing Council Members: Pastor Laura Ziehl

Election of New Congregation Council Members: (Presented by Mark Stauffer) See the report from the Nominating Committee. If there are no additional nominations from the floor then someone may "move election of the slate as presented." Second, discussion, and vote.

Election of Nominating Committee: (Presented by Mark Stauffer) See the report from the Nominating Committee. If there are no additional nominations from the floor then someone may "move election of the slate as presented." Second, discussion, and vote.

Report of the Mission Endowment Fund: Mark Stauffer

Election of Mission Endowment Fund Committee Members: (Presented by Mark Stauffer) See the report from the Mission Endowment Fund Committee. A motion is needed from the floor to "move election of the slate as presented." Second, discussion, and vote.

Treasurer's Report: Presented by Melissa Ontiveros, Council Treasurer

Approval of 2020 Budget: Request a motion that we adopt the 2021 budget (or approve as amended). Second the motion, discussion, and vote.

Reports: The printed reports from council, staff, and ministries of the congregation are received as presented unless there are questions or comments.

Closing prayer: Pastor Sam Nelson

Adjournment: If there is no other business the chair will entertain a motion to adjourn.

Bethlehem Lutheran Church
2019 Congregational Meeting Minutes
Sunday, January 26, 2020 | 11:15 am

The meeting was called to order at 11:15 by Karen Saake, Council President. A quorum of 10% of Confirmed Members is required to conduct the Annual Meeting. On January 1, 2020 there were 536 Confirmed Members, so a quorum is 54.

- Karen announced a quorum of over 90 members in attendance. The meeting proceeded.

Opening Prayer: Pastor Sam Nelson

Motion to Ratify Actions from the 2019 Annual Meeting:

- Julie Derouin moved to ratify the actions of the Annual Meeting held on January 20, 2019. (actions displayed on screen) Kim Oswald seconded the motion. All were in favor. The motion passed.

Senior Pastor's Report: Pastor Laura Ziehl. "Great is thy Faithfulness. Morning by morning new mercies I see." *See Report

- Pastor Laura honored the service of Dee Smith for her many years of service for Team Holy week along with Skye Svenningsen, who was unable to attend the meeting and is to be honored on another date.

Associate Pastor's Report: Pastor Sam Nelson. "The fruits of your labors your labors may be reaped two generations from now. Trust even when you don't see the results." *See Report

Presentation of Property and Maintenance Update: Pastor Sam Nelson: 2018 Forecast slide on the screen, 10-year plan, all completed! (except termite tenting) Much gratitude expressed for Congregational stewardship.

Recognition of Departing Council Members: Karen Saake: Henna Hall, Tom Wolf, Mark Stauffer and Carole Orness

Election of New Congregation Council Members: (Presented by Beth Nelson) See the report from the Nominating Committee.

- Beth moved to approve the slate, Michael Bell seconded. All in favor. The motion passed.

Suzi Westmoreland, Melissa Ontiveros, Mike Lyons, Derrick Oien and Tucker Oien (student rep)

Election of Nominating Committee: (Presented by Beth Nelson) See the report from the Nominating Committee.

- Beth Nelson moved to approve the slate as presented. Kim Oswald seconded. All in favor. Motion passed.

Carole Orness, Tom Wolf, Mark Stauffer, Worth Archambault, Eileen Lajimodiere, and Ashley Lawver

Presentation of Changes to the Model Constitution: (Presented by Bob Michelet)

- Bob Michelet moved to approve changes to the model constitution as presented and published. Mark Reynolds seconded. All in favor. Motion passed.

Report of the Mission Endowment Fund: Bob Michelet: See the report from the Mission Endowment Fund Committee.

Election of Mission Endowment Fund Committee Members: (Presented by Bob Michelet)

- Bob Michelet moved to elect the following to the Endowment committee: Sandy Lakey, Dave Porcelli, and Dan Halvorson for a 2-year term and Mark Stauffer for a 1-year term. Bill Dabbs seconded. All in favor, Motion passed.

Reports: The printed reports from council, staff, and ministries of the congregation are received as presented unless there are questions or comments.

Treasurer's Report: Presented by Mark Stauffer, Council Treasurer

*See Report

Question from Margot Astroth regarding amount to synod: Mark explains by detailing how we will use the extra money we have over budget. We are increasing our giving to the Synod to 9%.

Question by Doug Derouin: What percentage is online giving? Answer, about 45%.

Question by Lois Leslie: What is the cycle of Pastor salary increases? We look at synod guidelines and other professional in the area. Is there an increase built in to this year's budget? Answer: an enthusiastic yes

8.8% increase for the pastors in 2020 budget

Bethlehem Lutheran Church Encinitas Summary of 2020 Budget Changes

Livelihood (pastors) \$ 15,000

Landscaping \$9,500

Library \$4,000

Non-pastoral staff compensation and benefits \$6,500

Synod benevolence \$9,200

Technology \$3,000

Other (mostly reduced discretionary maintenance spend) (\$1,182)

Increase in expenses vs. 2019 actual \$ 46,018

Approval of 2020 Budget:

- Mark Stauffer moved to adopt the 2020 budget as presented. Bob Michelet seconded the motion. All in Favor. Motion passed.

Closing prayer: Pastor Laura Ziehl

Adjournment: Karen moved to adjourn at 12:32 pm. Bill Dabbs seconded. All in favor. Motion passed. Meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,
Carole Orness, Secretary

LEAD PASTOR'S ANNUAL REPORT 2020

“Suffering produces endurance, and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, and hope does not disappoint us, because God’s love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit that has been given to us.” Romans 5:3-5

Dear people of Bethlehem,

Grace to you and peace, in Jesus name. This has been a year like no other. In this year, we have known more pain, more resiliency, more tears and more hope than in any year that has preceded it. We have never been this hard pressed, nor have we been this creative and this determined. The regular willingness of this congregation to work diligently for the sake of the gospel and pour all of our energy into being the church for the sake of others has only expanded, as staff and volunteers alike have given everything, we have to journey together though this wilderness. I could not be more thankful for all of you. For your support and encouragement. For your honesty and humor and tears. As unique as these times have been, the Gospel has never felt more commonplace, nor more central. We have clung to, and made real, words of hope, promise, mercy, pain and redemption. This is the stuff of our faith and the constant commitment of this congregation. We have run with perseverance the race set before us — looking always to Jesus. I will forever be grateful to you all.

WORSHIP

- Our last in-person sanctuary worship service was conducted on March 15, 2020. That service was also recorded and loaded to our website for those who did not feel comfortable coming in person. I remember blessing you all and saying, “It may be a while until I am able to bless you in this way again.” And so it began. Blessings began to reach out across the internet and services began to be loaded to our website with increasing sophistication.
- On March 22nd, we moved all worship services to a virtual platform. We began to build our indispensable, talented tech team to support this new way of worshiping. Grant Meinhardt and Steve McMahon provided tech support initially, and both have led in that effort for months.
- We created a small team of pastors, cantors, organist, sound and AV people. This was initially a group of 10 people. As restrictions and recommendations tightened, that group diminished to 5. At the writing of this report there are 7-8 people in the sanctuary during the live stream making certain that: internet is stable, live stream is functioning, audio is up and running, camera is recording, candles are lit, communion is prepared, music is rehearsed, paraments are in place, sermon is ready, and added videos are in the cue. Just before worship begins, we stop everything — to pray. We pray for all those watching, and for the hope they need to hear. Then we count 3-2-1-Live.
- From Sunday, March 22nd - Sunday, July 19th all worship services were recorded and uploaded to the church YouTube channel and made available on the website. Weekly bulletins were created by Pastor Sam and placed on the website as well.
- Using Holy Week as an example, we created and then scrapped and recreated and then scrapped again, 4 different plans for Holy Week worship in an ever-changing landscape.
- Beginning on August 2nd, we began: outdoor, limited attendance, socially distanced, masks required, under tight protocol, worship. The details of that endeavor are recorded later in this report. We are one of only a few congregations in the Pacifica Synod who have the volunteer base, the leadership ability, the brain trust and the unflinching desire to put in the work necessary, to create outdoor, safe and sustainable worship. We have continued outdoor worship without interruption from August 2nd forward. We were rained out only once.
- We made the decision to begin live streaming worship on August 2nd, as the only way to create timely Sunday morning worship for our online worshippers. Prerecorded worship requires at least 24 hours for editing and production.

- Online worship creativity has included: Apostles Creed and Confirmation zoom recordings, increasingly sophisticated choir, bells, and solo videos, advent storytelling, creative children's sermons, and a virtual children's Christmas program, to name a few.
- We created a unique Confirmation service on the lawn for families and confirmands. Baptisms have been conducted outdoors, and Christmas Eve on the lawn with a lit tree, under the stars was a blessing we will not soon forget.
- My thanks to all those who have worked tireless hours, and continue to do so, to make certain that both online and in-person worship are available every Sunday here at Bethlehem.
- Worship attendance is hard to discern in a virtual world. We are averaging 153 views per week. Wisdom seems to be to double that number for attendance. If true, we may be reaching 300 people/week online.
- We are near capacity for many services on the lawn, averaging 55 worshipers per week. Given our A/B pattern, 110 worshipers are accessing outdoor worship each month. For a total worship attendance of between 208 and 361 per week.

REOPENING AND PROTOCOL TEAM

- In June, I formed a reopening team to consider the possibility of outdoor worship and whether or not a structure could be put in place to meet CDC, state and county guidelines, as well as meet our own strict safety criteria for all worshipers. The team met regularly for months in anticipation of our first outdoor worship service in August. Pages of protocol were discussed and written by a separate protocol writing team. Protocol was written for staff, volunteers and worship environments. An inflight video was produced and deeply enjoyed by all. A one page "What to Expect at Worship" was created. Signage, PPE and other supplies were ordered. Our near neighbors were informed of our plans. A sign-up genius to ensure safe numbers and contact tracing for those in attendance was set up. Months were spent considering and reconsidering: entrance and exit points, signage needed, volunteers needed and training for those volunteers, how bulletins could be accessed, how seating would be handled, how the environment would be controlled, handicapped and special need access, communion practice, sound requirements, social distancing of leaders ...
- Dennis Astroth was responsible for much of the logistical work and space design. My thanks.
- A team of medical professionals was created to evaluate all protocol for safety and best practice. That team has been consulted whenever needed over these months.
- We began outdoor worship with a team of trained volunteers: A host to welcome worshipers and oversee all other volunteers, liturgical bouncers to ensure safety in the worship environment, and ushers to guide people to and from seating. In addition to that we had a sound team, two pastors, a cantor and organist.
- The reopening team also considered the use of the indoor space, outdoor meetings for groups, and staff protocol for work space use. The reopening team continues to meet anytime a new question arises, to ensure the safety of the environment for all.
- Our worship space is over engineered for safety. We have operated since August 2nd without incident or a single Covid case. I am very proud of this effort and of those who have made it possible. It has required an unreasonable number of hours, professional and skilled leadership, thoughtful conversation, and tireless volunteers. It has also been a great blessing to provide worship and community to weary hearts.
- The Pacifica Synod has asked me to serve as resource person in assisting other congregations to create outdoor worship. I have met with several congregations in this capacity.
- My deep thanks to committee members: Dennis Astroth, Mona Goetsch, Cha Cha Pinilla, Laure Reynolds and Karen Saake for countless hours and deep wisdom.

MUSIC

Lutheran worship must never be absent of music. Mona Goetsch is an extremely creative and gifted music director. She is also tireless. She created a team of people to make music possible in these new times. The Good News Singers and the Children's Choir have both met regularly over zoom.

- Increasingly sophisticated music videos have been created. A single video can be weeks to months in the making. My thanks to Ron Hegg for working to create the click track music productions we have all enjoyed. The Hallelujah Chorus was used in a recent synod wide worship video. The children's choir videos have been a balm in Gilead for me, in these times. Very few congregations have the ability or sophistication to create this kind of choral production.
- In addition, Mona has solicited individual pieces from musicians in the congregation and all have been included in worship.
- Two talent shows have been organized by her with editing work by Carolin Meinhardt. These also, have been gift and grace.
- My thanks to: Dave Ensberg, Mona Goetsch, Carolin Meinhardt and Mark Reynolds who have served as cantors throughout the year. In order to keep pod size small for safety, we have chosen to use the same people throughout the pandemic in the indoor and outdoor worship space.
- My thanks to Judy Collier who has played indoors on piano and organ, and outdoors on keyboard every Sunday. Her preludes and postludes have been a moment of light each week and her flexibility and grace, deeply appreciated.
- My thanks to Mark Weed and Kim Froke for leadership of our chimers and bell choir, both of which are playing in outdoor worship.

COMMUNICATIONS

- Eblasts, once an occasional occurrence in the life of the congregation, quickly became our main source of communication. In the early days of the pandemic multiple eblasts a week informed the congregation of the changing landscape. Subsequently: educational opportunities, worship times, surveys, signup genius, giving opportunities and much more have been delivered to the congregation in this way.
- My thanks to Ron Hegg, who oversees our website and eblasts, for his diligent work and time commitment, to keep our congregation informed.
- We are currently updating our website's capacity to meet the needs of a more virtual church.
- If you have not signed up for the BLC eblast, please do so on the website, under "News/Events-Newsletter."
- The stewardship team worked with the pastors to send personal thank you notes to those who contributed during this year and to those who pledged for 2021.

EDUCATION

- In an effort to stay connected as community, regular zoom educational opportunities have been offered throughout the year. The conversations have been deep and heart felt.
- Adult education Zoom opportunities have included: Pub Theology - Lutheranism 101, Bethlehem Cafe, For the Bible Tells Me So - How to read and interpret scripture, A Listening Space - A conversation on Race, A Listening Space 2.0, and "Honky" - a play starring Jamie Newcomb.
- Each of these zoom educational opportunities have created space for conversation and connection in these disconnected times.
- My thanks to Mea Hall and Ron and Sue Dwyer Voss for teaching portions of the Listening Space classes together with the pastors.
- Each week, the following virtual opportunities are also available: Tai Chi Practice, Centering Prayer, Yoga and ASL Practice. Many thanks to the leaders who make this possible.

PRESCHOOL MINISTRY

- Gail Winterbourne, the director of our half day program, retired in June of this year after more than 20 years of faithful, creative and exemplary leadership. The program thrived under her leadership and on behalf of the congregation I thank her for her dedication, joy and deep ability. We wish her every blessing in the next season of her journey.
- A search team was formed by me, to consider her replacement. Given the complexity of running a preschool program during a pandemic and the need for a high trust level with our families, the search team chose to hire Kelly Perez as the director for the half day program on a one-year contract. Kelly has been a teacher in our program, has completed the education necessary to serve as director, and had worked in the office with Gail in finance and registration.
- She was unanimously chosen by the committee and stepped into a very difficult situation with grace, ability and tenacity. She has faithfully led the half day program through all of its transitions.
- Both preschool programs were forced to close in March. The safety of the children, parents and teachers were, and still are, our top priority.
- Both programs continued to operate virtually with education by zoom as much as was possible.
- In the absence of tuition revenue, it became clear that we would be unable to continue to pay the nearly 20 teachers the programs employ. The possibility of laying off our teachers and the impact on their families weighed heavily on me.
- Significant time and substantial energy and wisdom was invested in securing the PPP (Paycheck Protection Program) through the CARES Act in early May. See details. Of this endeavor later in this report.
- The PPP allowed us to retain our teachers. The full day program reopened June 29, 2020 and the half day program reopened Sept. 8, 2020.
- Both programs reopened after considerable work by the directors to meet ever changing accreditation, CDC and county guidelines.
- Both programs continue to remain successfully open and are meeting the needs of our families while paying the upmost attention to health and safety. This is an incredible feat. Many church preschools have closed permanently or remain closed at this time.
- The directors were able to secure 2 grants during this time. The second grant assisted in the necessary replacement of playground equipment. The difference between grant resources and total cost was \$18,000 dollars. The congregation and preschool families together have raised close to \$20,000 dollars to meet that gap. What a testament to the value and support of this ministry among us.
- My gratitude to Debi and Kelly for exemplary leadership in very difficult times. Their energy, ability and strength have allowed our preschool ministry not only to remain viable, but to thrive.

PAYCHECK PROTECTION PROGRAM (PPP)

- We applied for and successfully acquired the PPP through the CARES Act, in May of this year.
- That effort represents countless hours of time and expertise by the council, executive committee, finance committee in particular Mark Stauffer, the pastors, and office administrator Judy Foland.
- The amount of the forgivable loan is \$267,000 dollars. The loan amount is based on monthly payroll costs.
- After unsuccessful efforts with Bank of America, I became aware through my service on the LRCC board of an opportunity to apply through the ELCA Federal Credit Union. Thanks to quick action by myself, Judy, Mark, and the executive committee we were able to secure the loan and retain our preschool teachers and support our church staff as well. The loan funds were expended between May and August of this year.
- If used within the guidelines, as ours has been, the total amount of the loan is forgivable. The paperwork for forgiveness has already been submitted.
- We are in the process of pursuing the possibility of the second PPP loan currently available.
- My thanks to Judy Foland, Mark Stauffer, and Melissa Ontiveros for tireless and detailed work to acquire these loans.

COUNCIL

- Your council and its executive committee have met more frequently this year than at any other time in my memory, sometimes multiple meetings per week.
- In addition to securing the PPP loan, the council also worked to ensure 3 months of mortgage deferral, a decrease in landscaping costs and consistent work to reconsider the budget in unique times.
- The responsibility and load on the council has been heavy. They have been steady, and able and willing, with expertise and good humor to see this congregation through this storm. I thank them.
- My particular gratitude to our President, Karen Saake. Her warmth, grace, and ability to lead in difficult times have been a Godsend. As she finishes her term as president, I thank her for her commitment to this congregation.
- We end this year with a surplus of nearly \$30,000 dollars. My thanks to this congregation for your generous, regular support in this challenging year. Many have given above and beyond to ensure the congregation's financial stability. The council has worked diligently to adjust spending whenever possible and acquire the PPP loan and deferrals as needed. The staff has underspent whenever possible. I am very proud of what we have accomplished as we enter 2021 in a solid financial position.

FAMILY MINISTRY

- Virtual VBS reached all our children's ministry families this summer. Constance Mithelman, together with a small team of high school students, created a daily VBS video for families, complete with Biblical story, crafts, games and prayers. Both Pastor Sam and I were involved each day.
- A Children's Christmas Program was adapted and created by Mona Goetsch and recorded on zoom.
- My thanks to Linnaea Erisman who took on the work of editing both the virtual VBS and the Christmas Program.
- Zoom Sunday School is happening once a month. I look forward each month to interacting with our children and families. Packets are prepared for families with weekly activities. Fall care packages were delivered to every family in the congregation with elementary age children.
- Confirmation and high school ministry are meeting with a combination of outdoor socially distanced meetings and zoom. Constance is working diligently to reach out to students with support and create opportunities to gather. Both Pastor Sam and I share in teaching responsibilities for Confirmation with Constance.
- Sadly, Confirmation Camp and Summer Service Trip were cancelled last summer and Constance and I are working on creative options for this summer depending on Covid restrictions. We have plan A, B and C. A habit that has become commonplace this year.

PASTORAL CARE

- Our Stephen Ministry/Parish Nurse team has continued to meet virtually every week to address the pastoral care needs of the congregation.
- Every member of the congregation has been called 3 times this year, with particular focus on our more vulnerable members.
- Prayer shawls have been delivered to more isolated individuals.
- Mental health needs have increased dramatically this year. Margo Astroth has assisted us in creating resources for those battling mental health issues.
- We have had remarkably few Covid cases in the congregation until recently. Our first death due to Covid was on Jan. 9th, when we lost our beloved Deanne Pease. May God hold her in grace. There have been several deaths of loved ones in the congregation and the pastoral care at these times has been both painful and blessed.
- Of the many losses this year, not being able to be with hospitalized and dying members of the congregation, has been the most painful for me.

TECH TEAM

- In the first days of the pandemic, I asked Grant Meinhardt to step in with his wealth of experience to create recorded worship for us. He handled all recordings, editing and uploading to our YouTube channel, in the early weeks. I know, at least once he worked all night without sleep to make certain worship was uploaded by Sunday morning.
- I am forever grateful for his steady hand and expertise under fire.
- Likewise, Steve McMahon has been in the sound booth nearly every Sunday since March. In addition to this, he has taken on the extensive set up necessary to create outdoor worship every week since August. I am deeply grateful to Steve for his expertise and his servant heart.
- To this original small team of worship technicians, we have now added: Ron Hegg, Andy Nelson and Will Mather. Linnaea Erisman worked in this capacity this summer.
- Significant investment has been made in: a new camera, tripod, computer, cables, hardware and software. A grant from the Pacifica Synod has assisted in some of these unexpected costs.
- Virtual worship will certainly be a part of Bethlehem's future beyond the pandemic. I count it a blessing to have been forced into, and now to have created, sophisticated recorded worship to reach out to those who may never enter our doors, but whom we are still able to bless.
- Editing work has been expertly done on recorded worship, musical pieces, and videos including: VBS, Stewardship, Children's Christmas Program, In Flight Worship, and Talent Shows. The editing team consists of Linnaea Erisman, Carolin Meinhardt, Ron Hegg and Grant Meinhardt. This unsung work behind the scenes is essential to the ministry of this congregation in these times and adds immeasurable quality to our worship. My thanks to all those who make it possible.
- Next year's budget includes compensation for some of these positions.

STAFF

- The staff has worked very hard this year. They have taken on immense challenges. Our staff has been creative, resilient and tireless. There have been obstacles to overcome and ministry to recreate. I have seen them tired, but never despondent. We have worked together with humor and grace.
- I am thankful for: Judy Collier at every keyboard, Mona Goetsch making sure music finds us, Judy Foland for tireless work on the PPP, Karen Wise for wisdom and perspective, Laure Reynolds handling every organizational challenge, Rose Moldenhauer reminding us what compassion looks like when it is embodied, Constance Mithelman caring for each child and young adult with a personal word, Debi Carr and Kelly Perez bearing heavy burdens while caring for the youngest among us, Molly Hall and Suzi Westmoreland making sure that no need goes unspoken.
- Pastor Sam has been an uncommon partner in ministry in this challenging year. He is a gifted pastor and we have worked tirelessly together using every skill we both possess. I am grateful for his preaching, teaching and technology gifts, but most deeply for his thoughtfulness and humor through it all.
- This has been a year when my leadership in difficult times has been needed in every dimension of this congregation's life. It has required forward thinking attention, creativity, thoughtfulness, compassion and steady resolve. More importantly it has been a year of surprising grace.

SYNOD WORK

- I am pleased to announce that Bethlehem will be hosting this year's Online Pacifica Synod Assembly on May 1st.
- I continue to be the Resolutions Chair for the Pacifica Synod.
- I have newly been appointed the Dean of the Harvest Conference and am serving on the Assembly Planning Team as well.
- I continue to serve on the board of directors for Lutheran Retreats, Camps and Conferences.

FINAL THOUGHTS

As I look over the breadth of this report, I am so grateful, and grateful for all that has been accomplished. Thanks to the skills and willingness of so many, we have created a virtual church community, now supported by in person worship as well. We have found ways to gather on zoom and learn from one another and support and care for one another across so many obstacles. Our preschool is open, our financial stability intact, our worship life-giving, and we have done it all with grace and good humor and resilient faith and hope. We are indeed church together. I have been blessed to be first hand witness to what has often felt miraculous. In every instance, I have been reminded of the strength of God's people to bear witness to the light at all times, and to work tirelessly to further this kingdom work we have been given together. I am deeply grateful for you and for the blessing it is to serve as your pastor. I am filled with gratitude for the remarkable gifts of grace that have been made evident in the pain and stress of this year. In this season of Epiphany, Christ has indeed made himself known among us.

These words precede those at the top of this report: *"Therefore, since we are justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have obtained access to this grace in which we stand; and we boast in our hope . . ."* ~ Romans 5:1-2

Let us boast in our hope. And in the grace of today, and the promise of tomorrow.

Yours in Christ,
Pastor Laura

Associate Pastor's Annual Report 2020

"I wish it need not have happened in my time," said Frodo. "So do I," said Gandalf, "and so do all who live to see such times. But that is not for them to decide. All we have to decide is what to do with the time that is given us." – Lord of the Rings by J.R.R. Tolkein

It is hard to neatly sum up the past year in a simple report. It has been unlike anything we could have imagined. It has been a year of contrasting, and at times, conflicting experiences. There has been great heartache, tremendous loss, and we all carry with us grief and trauma – some collective, and some very personal. It has been a year where what truly matters has been brought into sharper relief. A year where choosing thankfulness, kindness, and generosity have been more important than ever. It has been a year of seemingly constant change and uncertainty; of learning new skills on the fly – I had never heard of Zoom before March, and as a church we had no online worship capacity. It has been a year of self-reflection and examination, of personal and communal growth, of seeking to see the world through the eyes of others, and doing what we can to protect and uphold the lives of our neighbors. Something tells me that unpacking the past twelve months will take many years, and many lengthy tomes, before we begin to fully comprehend the effects that COVID-19 has had on us. So, until then, here is my attempt to summarize what was quite the year:

Worship

- Our last “normal” worship service was Sunday March, 15th. We quickly transitioned to virtual worship, pre-recording both Sunday Morning services as well as mid-week Lenten services.
- The worship team (Pastor Laura, Mona Goetsch, Judy Collier, and myself) began meeting more frequently, planning and replanning, worship services to comply with ever-changing COVID-19 mandates and protocols.
- I took over the job of making the bulletin each week. I also worked with Ron Hegg and Chris LaClair to create a process by which the bulletins could be downloaded by scanning a QR code.
- A Reopening Committee including Karen Saake, Dennis Astroth, Mona Goetsch, Clemencia (Chacha) Pinilla, and Laure Reynolds was formed.
- We had our first in-person worship service on August 2nd
- We did our best to still provide all of the usual special worship opportunities that we could in a virtual way including Holy Week, Bethlehem Serves, the Children's Christmas Program, Comfort at Christmas, and Christmas Eve
- There are so many people who have helped make worship possible this past year that I want to thank:
 - Grant Meinhardt, who was instrumental in making virtual worship possible, both in the beginning with pre-recorded, and as we transitioned to livestreaming. He has also edited many worship videos.
 - Steve McMahon, who has been an invaluable asset and blessing helping run sound for our virtual services, and in figuring out how to make sure we have sound for our outdoor services.
 - Ron Hegg who has also helped with sound, taken over the administration of the church newsletter and Eblasts, manages the Sign-Up Genius for in-person worship attendance, and helps to edit worship content (especially the Click Track recordings of the choir songs – which have been such a blessing during this time when music is so needed).
 - Linnaea Erisman for her expert camera operation, and for her incredible editing of worship videos (especially the virtual VBS, and the In-Flight Worship Protocol videos).
 - Will Mather and Andy Nelson who have taken over camera operation and managing the online streaming software.

- Mona Goetsch who found incredible and creative ways to keep music (one of the defining characteristics of this congregation) alive and thriving including “Sip and Sing” Zoom parties with the choir, and recording pieces by the Good News Singers, the Children’s Choir, and the World Music Ensemble. We are so thankful for her dedication, commitment, and creativity during this time.
- Kim Froke and Mark Weed were also forced to figure out new ways to gather both the JuBellation Ringers and the Children’s Chimers. These have been the only live music groups to play during our outdoor worship services this year, and every time we hear them it is a blessing.
- Judy Collier for her worship leadership and blessing us with the gift of music.
- The cantors (Carolyn Meinhardt, Mark Reynolds, Dave Ensberg, and Mona Goetsch) who regularly sing for Sunday morning worship, as well as the many choir members who have offered the gift of their voices on our prerecorded services.
- All of the outdoor worship service volunteers.
- All of the members of this congregation who have adapted to outdoor worship service protocols and for the ways that you have been so supportive, understanding, and patient as we navigated these uncharted waters.

Adult Education

- *Holy Currencies* – Our mid-week Lenten series on Eric Law’s “Holy Currencies” was cut short due to the pandemic, but remains a topic we plan to use in the future.
- *Theology on Tap: Lutheranism 101* – I led a 4-week Theology on Tap session in May that focused on the basics of Lutheran theology.
- *The Bible Tells Me So* – Pastor Laura and I led a 4-week course in July on how we read and interpret scripture.
- *A Listening Space – A Conversation on Race* – Pastor Laura, Mea Hutson Hall, and I led a 4-week course in October on racism, utilizing videos from Bishop Michael Curry’s “Spirituality and Racial Justice” online curriculum in conjunction with videos from YouTube.
- *A Listening Space 2.0* – Ron and Sue Dwyer-Voss led two more discussion opportunities around the topic of race and racism.
- *Honky* – We gathered on Zoom to watch a recording of the play *Honky* starring our own Jamie Newcomb, and had a debrief/conversation afterwards.

Preschool Programs

- This year marked Gail Winterbourne’s final year as director of our part-day preschool program. For years, she has been an incredible blessing to this congregation, serving with passion, dedication, and a heart for her students and their families.
- The search committee process to hire a new director for was begun, but derailed by the pandemic.
 - At the recommendation of both Gail as well as Debi Carr (director of our full-day program) we hired Kelly Perez (who has both taught at, and worked in the front office of our part-day program) to be the Interim Director with a 14-month contract.
- In March, both of our programs closed temporarily due to the pandemic.
- In April, the Church Council made the difficult decision to layoff all preschool employees except for our directors so that they could apply for unemployment benefits. This decision was later reversed as we received the PPP loan funds and none of the employees missed a paycheck. We received \$267,120.
 - Many thanks to Judy Foland, Mark Stauffer, and Melissa Ontiveros who worked diligently to apply for and begin the forgiveness process of the PPP loan (including opening a new account with the ELCA FCU).

- Our full-day program reopened on June 29th, and the part-day program reopened on September 8th.
- Pastor Laura and I meet with Debi and Kelly every few weeks to check in and see how we can help support them.
- I am so thankful for the work of Debi, Gail, and Kelly who have had to manage ever-changing protocols and requirements, extensive new cleaning and operating procedures, and worked so hard to keep both the staff and students safe.

Church Council

- This year's church council has worked so hard to keep the congregation functioning as normal. We have had more special council and executive committee meetings than I can count.
- I am so thankful for their dedication and commitment, their willingness to tackle difficult topics, all while meeting virtually.
- I am especially thankful for Karen Saake and her leadership as Council President. We have grown closer as a council thanks to her, and we will sorely miss her as she leaves this year.
- Special thanks as well to our other outgoing council members Mea Hutson Hall, Steve McMahon, Marti Wiley, and Tucker Oien for their service.
- Welcome to our new council members Steve Fritsch, Tricia Storey, George Orness, Jana Hegg, and Mallory Oien

Congregational Life

- We had two virtual Bethlehem Talent Shows this year thanks to the efforts of Mona, Carolin, and Ron.
- Pastor Laura led weekly Bethlehem Cafés in May and June.
- Steve McMahon, Mike Lyons, and I organized the annual BLC Golf Tournament.

Stewardship

- Met regularly with Stewardship Committee made up of Carolin Meinhardt, Dick DuBois, Mark Stauffer, Pastor Laura, and myself.
 - Created and distributed thank you cards for gifts made during the pandemic
 - Created and distributed thank you cards for all who pledged for 2021
 - Met with Keith Mundy (former director of Stewardship for ELCA) to serve as focus group for national ELCA sponsored stewardship program
 - I designed the pledge cards for our stewardship campaign, and created a Survey Monkey link to enable for electronic pledging

Family Ministry

- Constance has done a wonderful job adjusting to the realities of this year that canceled virtually all trips and planned activities. She has continued to meet with members of our youth program both online and in-person.
- Constance wrote and organized a virtual VBS Program that Pastor Laura and I participated in.
- I continue to share teaching responsibilities for confirmation with Constance and Pastor Laura. We had a special Saturday Confirmation service in October for the class who completed the program this Spring.
- I helped deliver gift bags with Halloween activities to our families with young children. Constance followed this up with Advent in a box.

Social Justice

- Among other things, this year brought to the forefront of the national conversation the struggles that still exist with racism, on both an individual and a systemic level, that exist in our country and in the world. The events surrounding the deaths of George Floyd, Breanna Taylor, Ahmaud Arbery, and so many more made it clear that a great deal of work still needs to be done.
- Part of our response as a congregation was the adult education pieces around racism held last year and planned for this year. Additionally, I made personal efforts to better educate myself.

Continuing Education

- *First Call Theological Education (FCTE)* – I attended my final two (of six total) FCTE events this year.
- *Faith Based Mental Health Academy Training* – An online seminar with information and resources about mental health intervention and the role churches can play in addressing them.
- *Stewardship Kaleidoscope* – Online national stewardship conference held in October.

Property

- Corona Virus mitigation: Foggers, HVAC duct scrubbers, Touchless soap dispensers and paper towel dispensers,
- Dick DuBois, with the help of Karl Von Schlieder, Tom Wolf, and Dennis Astroth installed new wooden bench slats in the family center patio.
- Received a 50% discount on landscape services April - September, implemented reduced janitorial services April - July.
- Installed French drain next to Family Center preschool director's office to fix water intrusion problem.
- Painted two classrooms in Childcare building.
- Family Center HVAC repair.

Closing Remarks

Throughout my report, you may have noticed that one thing kept coming up in each section – gratitude. And that is the overwhelming feeling that I have as I look back the past year. I want to especially thank Pastor Laura for her leadership and her partnership during this time. We have always worked closely and well with one another, but this year has required more of that than either of us could have imagined. I am so grateful for her – for the presence she offers, the wisdom and insights that she has – I truly cannot image a better person to navigate these uncharted waters with. I have grown so much in my own pastoral identity and capacity because of her, and for that all I am so thankful.

The challenges that 2020 posed were numerous, but again and again the people of this congregation rose to the occasion. Bethlehem is weathering this storm far better than many congregations, and that is because of you. It is because of your dedication, your generosity, and your willingness to share your time and talents for the sake of this ministry. So, thank you, dear people of Bethlehem. We do not know what this next year might hold (we never do, really) but I am confident that we will flourish as a community no matter what it brings.

Your Sibling in Christ,
Pastor Sam Nelson

Nominating Committee 2020 Annual Report

Eleven members of the congregation, in addition our Pastors, comprise the Congregational Council of Bethlehem Lutheran Church Encinitas. Their terms are staggered to maintain continuity in the experience and work of the council. Typically, 3 to 4 members join the council each year to replace the departing members. A youth member is also chosen in consultation with the Pastors and the Director of Family Ministries. The youth representative sits on council for a one-year term.

The recommendations of the 2020 Nominating Committee are as follows:

1. The following members will continue to serve on Council
 - a. Through 2021 – Naida Malchiodi, Sue LaClair, Dave Ensberg
 - b. Through 2022 – Suzi Westmoreland, Melissa Ontiveros, Mike Lyons, Derrick Oien
2. The following are the nominated members who will begin to serve a three-year term on the Council
 - a. Through 2023 – Steve Frisch, Jana Hegg, George Orness, Tricia Storey
3. The nominated youth member for the Council – Mallory Oien
4. We want to thank the following departing Council members for their service
 - a. Mea Hutson Hall
 - b. Stephen McMahon
 - c. Tucker Oien
 - d. Karen Saake
 - e. Marti Willey

In addition, the Nominating Committee is charged with filling next year's (i.e., 2021) Nominating Committee which will nominate church members interested in serving the Congregational Council starting in 2022. The following individuals have agreed to serve on the 2021 Nominating Committee: Mea Hutson Hall, Stephen McMahon, Karen Saake, Marti Willey, Julie Draskovic, Ron Hegg.

Respectfully submitted by the 2020 Nominating Committee,
Carole Orness, Mark Stauffer, Tom Wolf, Worth Archambault, Eileen Lajimodiere, and Ashley Lawver.

Bethlehem Lutheran Church Mission Endowment Fund

Annual Report for 2020

Background

The Mission Endowment Fund was established to further the work of God by supporting and expanding the ministry of Bethlehem Lutheran Church. The Fund exists to receive gifts from members, invest and manage those gifts, and disperse a portion of the fund in support of the fund's purpose.

The purpose of the Mission Endowment Fund is to complement and supplement the mission of Bethlehem through grants that enhance the ongoing ministry of the congregation or develop new ministries. While the congregation is expected to meet the church's operating budget with regular giving, the endowment fund offers another channel through which members can support ongoing ministries as well as encourage the development of new ministries. Members are encouraged to submit a grant application (see the Church's website blcenc.org/contribute/endowment) for consideration of a grant. The Fund is not intended to be used for the church's annual operating budget or for capital improvements or land acquisition.

Assets of the Mission Endowment Fund are invested with the InFaith Community Foundation (formerly known as the Lutheran Community Foundation). Investment gains accrue in the endowment fund while investment losses and administrative fees reduce the value of the endowment fund, as do grants made with the approval of the Mission Endowment Fund Committee and the Congregation Council.

2020 Activity

The Mission Endowment Fund Committee was pleased to receive and approve three grant requests during 2020. They were:

- A grant of \$5,000 to Emily Erisman to help with her room and board and textbook expenses at Wartburg Theological Seminary.
- Grants totaling \$6,000 for tuition for two students in the Bethlehem Half-Day Preschool program with financial need.

The Fund received an additional distribution from the Gish estate of \$11,151. We praise God and give thanks for this generous legacy gift that totaled nearly \$130,000.

During 2020, the committee researched alternatives for how the fund's assets are invested. To date, we have put 100% into the InFaith Core Growth fund, a broad-based managed fund. InFaith also offers two alternatives – the Mission Growth fund, which aims to support positive social and/or environmental change; and the WomenInvest fund, which invests partially in companies that do well when women do well. The committee determined that the objectives of these two “socially responsible” funds are consistent with the values of Bethlehem Lutheran Church, without compromising the primary objective of protecting and growing the endowment's assets. In fact, these two funds have annual returns that match or exceed those of the Core Growth fund.

The committee also felt it was prudent to allocate a small portion of the endowment fund to an investment vehicle protected from the ups and downs of financial markets, to ensure that when grants are made, the money for them will be easily available.

Thus, the committee decided to allocate 10% of the endowment fund's assets to a money-market fund; and to divide the remaining assets as follows: 50% to the Core Growth fund, 25% to the Mission Growth fund, and 25% to the WomenInvest fund.

2020 Financial Information

There are two funds in the Mission Endowment Fund: the General Fund, which holds funds that were received without use restrictions; and the Bill and Patty Harman Vision Fund, which supports initiatives as identified by the current pastor of Bethlehem.

Below is a summary of the performance of the Fund from December 31, 2019 to November 30, 2020 - the most recent statement received before assembly of this annual report.

					Investment	
		Balances	Contri-		Performance	Balances
		December 31, 2019	butions	Grants*	(net of fees)	November 30, 2020
General Fund	\$	332,938	\$ 11,151	\$ (5,000)	\$ 39,302	\$ 378,391
Harman Fund	\$	12,616	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 1,405	\$ 14,021
Totals	\$	345,554	\$ 11,151	\$ (5,000)	\$ 40,707	\$ 392,412
* - The \$6,000 of grants for Preschool tuition will be disbursed after November 30, 2020.						

The members of the Mission Endowment Fund Committee for 2020 were: Dan Halvorson, Sandy Lakey, Bob Michelet, Dave Porcelli, and Mark Stauffer (Chair).

Finally, the Endowment Committee is responsible for nominating members to serve on the Bethlehem Lutheran Church Mission Endowment Fund. They have nominated the following to serve two-year terms through 2022: Sandy Lakey and Bob Michelet. Continuing members through 2021 are Dan Halvorson, Dave Porcelli and Mark Stauffer (Chair).



Bethlehem Lutheran Church

Treasurer's Annual Report

We started 2020 with a \$42,000 surplus and a plan for ministry, outreach, library funding and a year filled with music! I was excited to start my first year as your Treasurer. I can remember my first council meeting back in February. "Everything looks great" I reported. This was going to be easy... enter Covid.

We didn't know what to expect. The preschools closed, and with no tuition coming in, I started running financial scenarios showing when we would run out of cash. We applied for PPP and ultimately received funding. We renewed our line of credit, although thankfully we never had to use it. And we obtained a 3-month suspension of our mortgage payments. A big thank you to Judy Foland, Jim Mastrogany and Mark Stauffer for their tireless effort in pulling together applications and working through a very frustrating and uncertain process.

Despite the challenges of 2020, we were blessed: with enough PPP funds to cover our shortfall, with the leadership of our pastors to redefine worship while keeping us safe and especially with the generosity of our members who not only continued to give, but found a way to give more.

And now for the numbers....

Financial Impact of Covid

Covid hit us from all directions but thanks be to God we received \$267k in PPP funds. This was about the amount of the preschool tuition shortfall and we were able to maintain staffing levels. Reduced spending across most other operating expenses off-set unplanned Covid related costs.

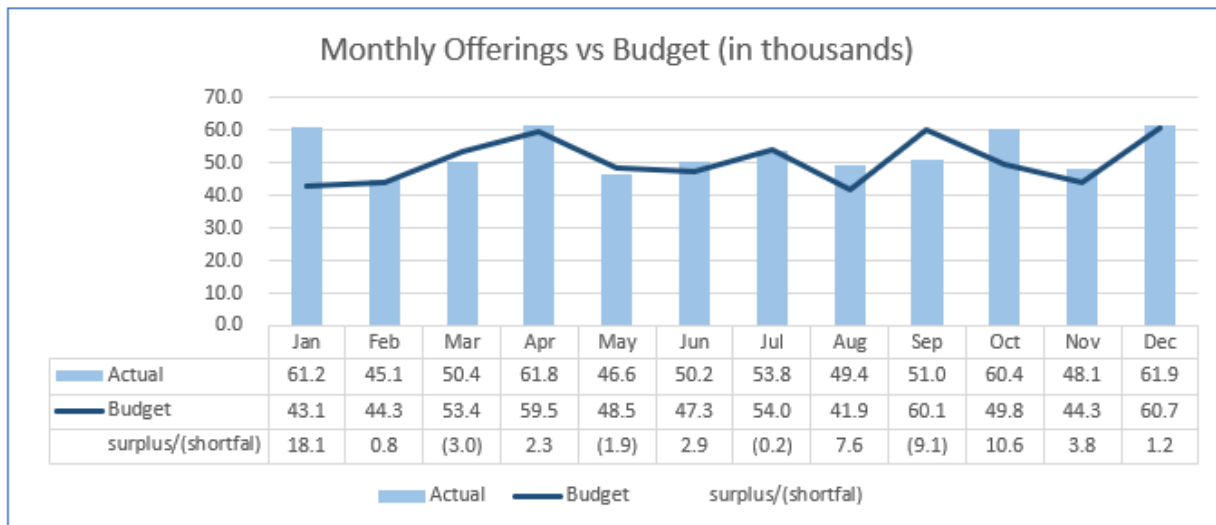
Lost Tuition - Preschools	\$ (266,349)	2020 compared to 2019
<u>Reduced church spending</u>		
3 x Mortgage	17,205	Mortgage payments suspended from May thru July
Music	6,893	Guest musicians
Family Ministry/Education	5,698	Confirmation, highschool and library funding
Ministry / Outreach	1,887	Hospitality, health and Stephen ministries
Other operations	6,055	Utilities, janitorial and grounds services
Total reduced church spend	\$ 37,738	
Reduced Preschool spending	\$ 6,264	Classroom / groceries
<u>Covid Related Expenses</u>		
Church	(22,423)	} Outdoor / virtual worship equipment and supplies, air filter systems, special cleaning agents and PPE
Preschools	(10,684)	
Total Covid expense	\$ (33,106)	
Net Impact	\$ (255,454)	
PPP Fundes Received	\$ 267,120	
Net Impact, after PPP	\$ 11,666	

2020 ACTUAL VS BUDGET

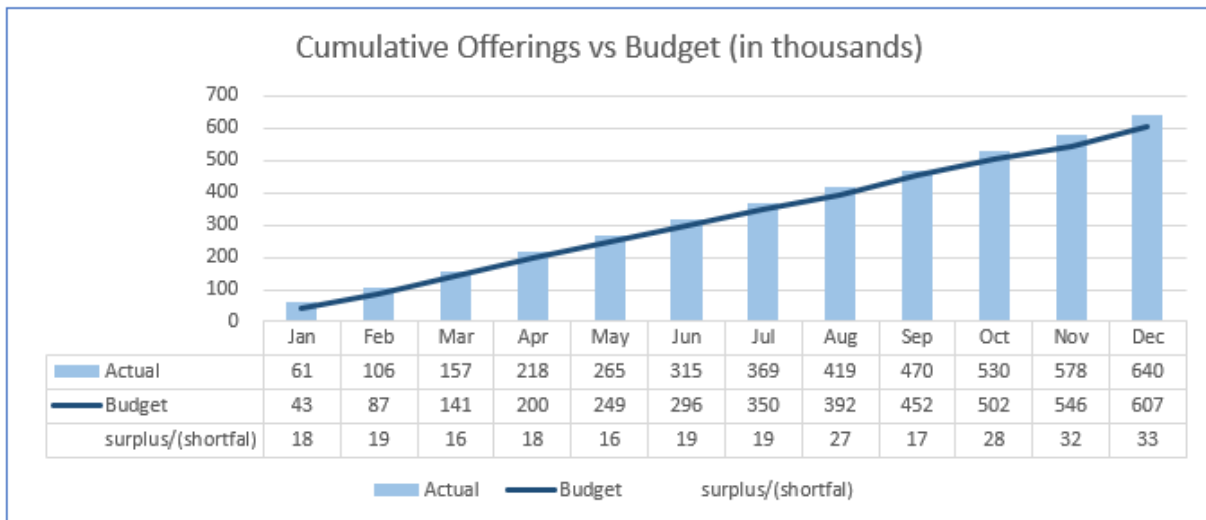
Thanks to the generous giving of our members and the great fortune of PPP funds, the church had an operating surplus in 2020 of \$37.6k. This was partially off-set by an operating shortfall at the Preschools of \$6.4k for a net surplus of \$31.2k

Offerings Exceeded Expectations!

\$33k or 5% over budget (\$640k vs \$607k)



The offerings surplus held throughout the year.



Shortfall in preschool cost reimbursement was off-set with PPP funds:

The 2020 budget assumed the church would receive \$170k from the preschools as reimbursement for shared costs including property, maintenance and office related expenses. However, with the shut-down of the preschools in April and gradual return in the Fall, we suspended monthly reimbursements totaling \$93k for the year. This shortfall was off-set with PPP funds allocated to the church.

On-Target Expenses

Church spending was \$10k or 1% under budget (\$782k vs \$792k). Unfortunately this is because unplanned Covid related expenses replaced planned spending on music, outreach and education.

Spending was under plan in the following areas:

- Music – guest musicians / cantors
- Education – conferences, confirmation, high school ministry and library funding
- Outreach – hospitality, health and Stephen ministries
- Utilities – reduced usage and more efficient HVAC
- Property Maintenance – reduced use of janitorial and grounds servicing contracts

Unplanned Covid related expenses included: Air filters, fencing, signage, equipment for outdoor and online worship / VBS, special cleaning supplies and other PPE.

		2020 Actual	2020 Budget	Favorable (Unfavorable) \$ %	
CHURCH	Offerings	639,857	606,771	33,085	5%
	Other Income	9,835	15,320	(5,485)	-36%
	Shared cost reimbursement (preschools)	76,367	169,704	(93,337)	-55%
	PPP funds allocated to church	93,337		93,337	
	Income	\$819,396	\$ 791,795	\$ 27,601	3%
	Staffing	438,752	433,459	(5,293)	-1%
	Music	7,557	14,450	6,893	48%
	Education / Library	886	6,402	5,516	86%
	Family Ministry	7,018	7,200	182	3%
	Worship	7,781	5,000	(2,781)	-56%
	Outreach	55,260	57,147	1,887	3%
	Office / Administrative	39,173	36,800	(2,373)	-6%
	Utilities /Telephone	39,086	41,048	1,962	5%
	Property Maintenance	108,737	96,246	(12,491)	-13%
	Property Mortgage, Taxes and Insurance	77,522	94,043	16,521	18%
	Total Expense	781,773	791,795	10,022	1%
	Net Surplus	\$ 37,623	\$ (0)	\$ 37,623	
PRESCHOOLS	Operating Shortfall	(180,151)	na		
	PPP funds allocated to preschools	173,783	na		
	Net shortfall	(6,368)	na		
COMBINED	Net Surplus	\$ 31,254			

2021 BUDGET

We will pray for the best but plan conservatively.

The offerings budget for 2021 is 5% less than last year based on pledges and conservative estimates of non-pledged giving. Most expense categories have been reduced below 2020 levels to the extent there were non-recurring Covid expenses in 2020 and based on the assumption that we will not be “back to normal” until late in the year.

Increased spending over 2020 reflects salary adjustments, increased benefits rates, three additional months of mortgage payments that were suspended in 2020 and increased utilities reflecting an increase in usage.

Preschools are assumed to operate near full capacity in 2021 and will resume making full cost reimbursement payments to the church.

Unfortunately, we were not able to balance the budget and will need to use our reserves to resolve the \$29k shortfall outlined below:

		2021 Budget	2020 Actual	Favorable (Unfavorable)	
				\$	%
CHURCH	Offerings	610,000	639,857	(29,857)	-5%
	Other Income	-	9,835	(9,835)	-100%
	<i>Shared Cost Reimbursement Income</i>	<i>169,704</i>	<i>76,367</i>	<i>93,337</i>	<i>122%</i>
	<i>PPP allocated to church</i>		<i>93,337</i>	<i>(93,337)</i>	<i>-100%</i>
	Income	\$ 779,704	\$ 819,396	\$ (39,692)	-5%
	Staffing	450,274	438,752	(11,522)	-3%
	Music	7,557	7,557	-	0%
	Education / Library	500	886	386	44%
	Family Ministry	4,500	7,018	2,518	36%
	Worship	7,100	7,781	681	9%
	Outreach	55,647	55,260	(387)	-1%
	Office / Administrative	35,300	39,173	3,873	10%
	Utilities /Telephone	41,300	39,086	(2,214)	-6%
	Property Maintenance	108,053	108,737	684	1%
	Property Mortgage, Taxes and Insurance	93,773	77,522	(16,251)	-21%
	Total Expense	804,004	781,773	(22,230)	-3%
	Net surplus (shortfall)	\$ (24,300)	\$ 37,623	\$ (61,922)	
PRESCHOOLS	Income	\$1,172,250	\$ 864,756	307,494	36%
	Expense	1,007,309	968,540	(38,769)	-4%
	<i>Shared Cost Reimbursement Expense</i>	<i>169,704</i>	<i>76,367</i>	<i>(93,337)</i>	<i>-122%</i>
	<i>PPP allocated to preschools</i>		<i>173,783</i>	<i>(173,783)</i>	<i>-100%</i>
	Net surplus (shortfall)	\$ (4,763)	\$ (6,368)	\$ 1,605	25%
COMBINED	Income	1,782,250	1,514,448	267,802	18%
	Expense	1,811,313	1,750,313	60,999	3%
	Net surplus (shortfall) without PPP	\$ (29,063)	\$ (235,866)	\$ 206,803	
	<i>Total PPP funds received</i>		<i>267,120</i>	<i>(267,120)</i>	
	Net surplus (shortfall) with PPP	\$ (29,063)	\$ 31,254	\$ (60,317)	

We will continue to monitor our cash closely and keep a tight rein on spending. We will revisit the budget on a quarterly basis given the high degree of uncertainty in 2021. We also intend to apply for the 2nd round of PPP.

Blessings,
Melissa Ontiveros

Bethlehem Lutheran Church Encinitas

Council President's Report

January 24, 2021

Dear Fellow Members of BLC,

Let me begin by thanking you for the opportunity to serve our Congregation in this role. This year has been very challenging for us all and I am so thankful for the gifts and generosity of this congregation.

In a council president's report, I would normally briefly recap the highlights of the year. 2020 was not a normal year. The 2020 council had many issues to deal with and they and the pastors provided incredible leadership for our congregation during a difficult year. So, I'll walk through the year with you, so you will know that they were there for you, and especially for ME, every step of the way.

- We started off the year with a wonderful retreat. We enjoyed a bountiful breakfast and were so impressed with our 4 new council members, Suzi Westmoreland, Mike Lyons, Derrick Oien, and Tucker Oien.
- In March we happily began to plan for lent and soup suppers and the possibility of a kitchen remodel. We celebrated the generosity of our congregation and the fact that there was a \$11.3K increase in pledged offering. Little did we know that this would be our last in person meeting of the year, the Preschools would be forced to close by the end of the week, and the following Sunday would be our last in person worship for several months.
- In April with a heavy heart, we had to pass a motion to lay off all preschool staff, with the exception of the directors of both programs, due to school closure in response to COVID. We met via Zoom to discuss options for church expenses and staff salaries, including preschool, during closures. We applied for the Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) through Bank of America. We also made a motion to rehire the preschool teachers if we were granted the PPP loan. We requested a 3-month deferment of the church mortgage from Thrivent. We researched extending / increasing our line of credit with Thrivent. Then began scouring church expenses for possible reductions. On a more positive side we were able to approve funds allocated by the BLC council for the Navajo Evangelical Lutheran Mission.
- In May with no response regarding the PPP from Bank of America we applied for the program through the ELCA Federal Credit Union and received approval very quickly for \$267,120. This meant we were able to draft a letter to rehire our preschool staff! We also made a motion to offer Kelly Perez a 14-month contract for the half day preschool director's position, opening up upon Gail Winterbourne's retirement, contingent on the recommendation of the search committee. Our incredible treasurer continued to keep us updated on the burn rate of cash on hand and informed us that our generous congregation's offerings were up year over year even in the midst of a pandemic.
- In June the full day preschool program announced they would reopen on June 28th. Kelly Perez was offered and accepted the half day preschool director position. Our Thrivent line of credit was renewed at the same amount of \$50k. We began discussing returning to in person worship. We approved funds for many COVID related expenses.
- In July we began to think about a stewardship campaign that was appropriate for the times. We approved funds to carry the half day preschool program over until they began receiving tuition again in September.

- In August we returned to in person worship. We also approved the recommendation of the Endowment committee to award a grant to seminarian, Emily Erisman. Approved the BLC COVID-19 policy.
- In September we began thinking about the 2021 budget. We sent thank you notes to members for their continued financial support during these trying times. We started researching how to hold a virtual annual congregational meeting.
- In October we started to learn about the process to obtain forgiveness for the PPP loan. We passed a motion to reinstate the preschool's contribution at graduated rates over the next 3 months. We reviewed a preliminary 2021 budget. We received an update on pledge cards. We discussed upgrading processes and equipment to enable us to live stream worship services.
- In November we approved a recommendation by the endowment committee to grant 2 partial scholarships for 2 families affected financially by COVID.
- In December we continued to work on a budget recommendation for the full congregation. While the numbers are still being finalized it appears that our congregation yet again has surprised us with offerings 5% over plan.

This is only a portion of what the pastors and the council did this year. Always with a smile and a kind word, asking intelligent and thoughtful questions all along the way. When we can hug again, hug a pastor and a council member and tell them thank you. And while you're at it, give yourself a pat on the back for being an amazingly dedicated, faithful and generous congregation. I would like to thank my fellow Council members for their faithful attendance and deliberations in 2020 as well as Mark Stauffer and Judy Foland for their assistance in so many matters. In particular, thanks to those who are concluding their terms: Mea Hall, Vice President, Marti Wiley, Steve McMahon, and Tucker Oien. Your service is so appreciated and you will be missed dearly. My gratitude to Pastor Laura and Pastor Sam is beyond words. Their dedication to the well-being of our congregation is immeasurable.

Sincerely,

Karen Saake, 2020 Council President

BETHLEHEM COMMUNITY EARLY CHILDHOOD PROGRAMS 2020

It has been quite the year for our preschool programs. Both programs closed in mid-March due to COVID. We were not able to collect tuition for the remainder of the school year putting a severe strain on the programs. We were fortunate to be able to obtain the PPP loan with the church's help and avoided staff having to go on unemployment.

We then began to prepare the programs for reopening. We put in many necessary PPE improvements including Hepa filters, sanitation equipment, touchless soap and paper dispenser's masks, gloves, and fencing. The full day program was able to reopen June 29, 2020 with a limited number of students. Following all guidelines for group sizes as well as maintaining separate cohorts in each classroom, both programs were able to open with near normal enrollment numbers by fall. Although the restrictions are many, we continue to be able to operate a safe program.

But 2020 was not done with causing pain to the programs yet, it was determined that one of the play structures in our play yard would need to be replaced soon, like in now. With no funds available, this was going to be impossible to achieve. Not willing to give up, Bethlehem got busy finding ways to make this happen. We applied for and received a grant from San Diego County Childcare Provider (CDA). The programs contacted our playground specialists and determined that we could purchase the equipment at half price through a promotion that was running this fall. This was a savings of \$15,000 on the equipment. We found that we were still short \$18,000 and so with the generosity of church members and school families we now have the funds we need to move forward. The new equipment has been ordered and installation dates are being set up.

The programs are very grateful for all the support we have received from the Church. This is an affirmation of the differences Bethlehem Community Early Childhood Center and Bethlehem Lutheran Church are making and will continue to make in the lives of children and families in our community.

Yours,

Debi Carr, Full Day Director

Kelly Perez, Part Day Director

Family Ministry (Children & Youth)

Constance Mithelman

Greetings dear friends!

In January 2020, I added the Children's Ministry program that had been running under interim Director Mea Hudson Hall into my scope of responsibilities and joys here at Bethlehem.

Learning Circles (our Children's Christian Education program) was happening every Sunday with three age-based classrooms (plus the Nursery) under the instruction of several adults, parents and youth volunteers. Then March 2020 happened. Learning Circles was paused and my main avenue of communication with our children was via a weekly email blast to their parents.

In June & July, with the help of several youth and the master video editing skills of Linnaea Erisman, Bethlehem produced a first-ever virtual VBS entitled 'God at Work', a 4-day construction themed program to be done completely at home, with supplies most families of young children already have around their homes. Each day we talked about how God is at Work in our lives every single day!

Starting this fall, I began putting together packets of the age-based curriculum for each student and sending them home with families. I continue to send out weekly email blasts with a recording of the Bible story for the week, coloring and family activity pages, and children's bulletins. We gather for Zoom Learning circles every third Sunday of the month; one highlight was putting together advent wreaths on our November call!

In October with the help of Suzi Westmorland, Fall Family Care Packages were put together and delivered to their homes with boatloads of activities, crafts and treats for the entire family!

2020 was not the year I envisioned as my first year in Children's Ministry, however, it has been a gift to be creative in our ways of supporting the youngest in our midst.

Again as in years past, the youth programs began 2020 in the mountains at Luther Glen on their respective middle school and high school winter retreats along with our St. Andrew's counterparts. Our weekend theme was Under Construction based on Ephesians 2:10. We talked about how God makes us new and never gives up on us, God created us to be exactly who God needed us to be, flaws and all.

Confirmation and High School youth groups were meeting on Tuesday and Wednesday evenings for education, fellowship and fun. The Confirmation program was in the midst of learning about Paul, the High School Youth Group's devotions are based on friendships, current events, and service among other things.

Once again, March 2020 happened and everything paused and pivoted.

Both programs would check in and exchange text messages with one another every week, and I began putting out devotions in my weekly youth email blasts. Confirmation Camp at Luther Glen and the High School Summer Service Trip to Navajo Nation were cancelled. We began to meet via Zoom in our respective groups every week to catch up, support one another and find something to laugh about. What a gift technology has been during this time of pandemic.

In the fall, when we were able to safely gather outside, masked and socially-distanced, we began/resumed in-person Confirmation and High School Youth Group gatherings on the lawn here at Bethlehem. Given the size of the High School group, in partnership with their St. Andrew's counterparts, I mixed up and then split the group in two to meet with each one every other week.

In October, we confirmed 11 of our youth in their very own private Confirmation service held on the lawn on a beautiful Saturday morning. We heard them give testimony to where they see God at work in their life and commit to continuing to be a part of this community of faith.

In December, when things began to shut down again, the Bishop of the Episcopal church (St. Andrew's), prohibited in-person gatherings of any kind. Given all the work our youth have done over the past four years to form one cohesive group, I will not gather in person with the youth from one church and not the other, and believe our youth wouldn't either.

It has been a roller coaster of a year for our children, youth and families but it is a gift to be with you as we navigate this together.

BETHLEHEM LUTHERAN CHURCH

MUSIC ANNUAL REPORT 2020

*My life flows on in endless song; above earth's lamentation.
I catch the sweet, though far-off hymn that hails a new creation.
No storm can shake my inmost calm while to the Rock I'm clinging.
Since Christ is Lord of heaven and earth, how can I keep from singing?*

On March 12, the Good News Singers had their final group rehearsal of 2020. The Children's choir sang their final anthems in church the following Sunday and I remember saying to the congregation, that I didn't know when we would return. The world of church music was in shock trying to figure out what to do in order to continue making music in our congregations as we faced the COVID pandemic.

Bethlehem's worship services went to recorded services with a rotation of four cantors, 2 pastors, Judy Collier as organist and the recording team. But as Director of Music, I needed to reconnect with my choirs and find a way to meet with them and produce music. In April we began our first Sip and Sing rehearsals for the Good News Singers. Using the zoom format, choir members have attended weekly rehearsals to sing and record a variety of hymns. Some of these have been used as special music in our worship services. However, the Zoom format didn't give the choir the choral four-part experience we were so longing for, so we ventured into our first virtual choir video. Twenty-four choir members learned the music, made individual recordings and submitted them for production. Thanks to the technological and photographic abilities of Ron Hegg and Carolin Meinhardt we produced *The Lord Bless You and Keep You* in July. We could not keep ourselves from singing!

Next the World Music Ensemble came together to produce their first virtual choir piece with the timely African piece, *Okwagalakwe (Love)*. This piece went on to be part of Mary Shaima's ordination service in November. The Children's Choir continued to rehearse monthly online and graced us with their voices via Zoom singing *Jesus Loves Me* and *M for Mom*.

In the summer we offered congregational members the opportunity to show their talents and participate in the first Summer Talent Show on July 26th. The twenty-four acts included people and animals of various ages that performed gymnastics, kitchen chemistry, singing, choir pieces, dancing, instruments, comedy, and sports. The show was offered first in Zoom format and later posted on the Bethlehem YouTube channel.

The virtual choir format has become the means of producing choral music at Bethlehem. This fall the Good News Singers produced *Christ is the Rock*, a video choral montage and ended the year with *Hallelujah Chorus* from Messiah. The Children's Choir sang *We are the Salt, We are the Light* and the World Music Ensemble performed their famous Christmas piece, *Jesus, What a Wonderful Child* for the holiday season. The JuBellation Ringers and Children's Chimers returned to in person rehearsal, recording and performing "live" for the outdoor services on a regular basis.

In December, we continued our Christmas program tradition substituting it with a Winter Talent Show on December 6th. Over twenty-five acts of varied congregational talents were enjoyed by all via the BLC YouTube channel ending with an afterglow zoom party later that day.

On December 13, Learning Circle children, young and older adults teamed up with the Children's Choir to perform *Called to Christmas*, our first Zoom Children's Christmas program. The play was filmed in short Zoom scenes pieced together with a Christmas carol sing along. Special thanks to Constance Mithelman for costumes and Linnaea Erisman for video editing. The Children's Choir performed their second virtual choir

piece *Happy Birthday, Jesus!* as the final song in that program. Many of the Winter talent show acts provided beautiful special music offerings for our December worship services. Thanks again to all the participants!

Now in 2021, we are continuing with new virtual anthems for each of the choral groups. Soloists are asking for music to perform for worship services and the JuBellation Ringers and Children's Chimers are already scheduled for live performances in the next few months. Music has not been extinguished at Bethlehem. I want to thank all the singers, ringers, instrumentalists, and tech personnel who have made our efforts possible. A special thanks goes to Judy Collier who has played all but four Sundays since the pandemic began. She has been the mainstay providing thoughtful instrumental preludes and postludes and accompanying all of our hymn tunes through this pandemic. We are so lucky to have Judy, Kim Froke and Mark Weed whose leadership has kept music alive at Bethlehem.

*Through all the tumult and the strife, I hear the music ringing.
It sounds and echoes in my soul; How can I keep from singing?
No storm can shake my inmost calm while to the Rock I'm clinging.
Since Christ is Lord of heaven and earth, how can I keep from singing?*

Let's keep the music flowing!

Mona Goetsch
Bethlehem Director of Music



The Stephen Ministers of Bethlehem Lutheran Church are lay volunteers who have been trained to provide high-quality, confidential care and support to people who are facing changes in their lives. We provide support to members of the Bethlehem congregation as well as members of the community. This year, in addition to caring for our assigned care receivers, our Stephen Ministry team has reached out to all members of the congregation during the pandemic.

In 2020:

- We had 13 active Stephen Ministers, three who served as Stephen Leaders.
- Our Stephen Ministers made 387 contacts with care receivers and provided 193 hours of care to individual care receivers.
- Our Grief Ministry program provided 26 Stephen Ministry Grief Series books to members of the congregation.
- Our Stephen Ministers met twice monthly for Supervision and Continuing Education, meeting via Zoom during the pandemic. Continuing Ed topics this year included caring for your congregation in times of crisis, ministering during social distancing, and mental health issues during quarantine. We also studied the books “Caring Criticism” and “Don’t Sing Songs to a Heavy Heart”.
- Stephen Leaders participated regularly in the Bethlehem Health Ministry team.
- Two Stephen Leaders completed the county Faith-Based Mental Health Academy Training.

In early 2020:

- Suzi Westmoreland attended the Stephen Ministry Leadership Training Course in Anaheim and was commissioned as a Stephen Leader for the congregation.
- We began a Spiritual Gifts class attended by 11 members of the congregation.
- During the pandemic:
- The Stephen Ministers, assisted by the church nurse and 3 volunteers from the congregation, phoned all members of the congregation on at least three different occasions to assess the well-being of the members, communicate information, and inquire if they needed help, which totaled approximately 750 calls.

Thank you for your continued support of the Stephen Ministry program.

Laure Reynolds

Stephen Ministry Team Coordinator

Health Ministry 2020

Rose Moldenhauer, Parish Nurse

As Parish Nurse I work closely with the Pastors and Stephen Ministers to make sure our parishioners and community are well taken care of.

During this pandemic my main job has been to stay in contact with our parishioners and provide them with information, health advice, referrals, and most importantly, a caring presence.

I stay connected with our staff and programs such as the Bethlehem Cares Fund, church safety and health, and Mental Health and Wellness committee.

Thank you for allowing me to be with you during this difficult time.

Bethlehem Women of the ELCA

2020 Annual Report

“To mobilize women to act boldly on their faith in Jesus Christ.”

Mission Statement of the Women of the ELCA

This annual report like 2020 is different than any of its predecessors.

Where usually we discuss the numbers of quilts and pajamas made and distributed – this year we talk of adaptations to a global pandemic and its impact on our community. We talk about adjustment and perseverance. We talk not only of quilts that were made, of pajamas that were made, of receiving blankets that were made, of prayer shawls and knitted hats that were made but also of thousands of masks that were made by members of this community. Scraps and Prayers donated bins of quilt material, both donated and purchased, to make the masks. This is a year that we will never forget and can only hope will not soon be repeated in its length and impact.

Prior to mid-March, the Women of Bethlehem held their annual meeting; the Pajama Project had its first (and only) meeting of 2020 in late February; the Giving Tree was actively and positively involved in community projects; Scraps and Prayers had met a couple of times to determine their focus for 2020 and finish quilts from 2019; discussions were held on purchasing school bags and supplies for the 2020 Community Serves Sunday in August; the Women's Retreat was preparing to register participants for its May event; the Eleventh Triennial Gathering of the Women of the ELCA was scheduled for Phoenix in July and those interested were registering and looking to gather a large number of Bethlehem Women to attend; the Women's Bible Study group, Lydia Circle, had met twice and its leader, Marla Keith, had the year of meetings and topics planned – it was in other words, the beginning of a year in the life of the Women of Bethlehem. And then – California was shut down on March 13th and it all stopped – for a short time for some, for the rest of the year for others.

The Women of Bethlehem immediately recognized the need for masks and responded. The sewers of Scraps and Prayers as well as other members of Bethlehem and the community volunteered their time and talents. Initially we answered the call from Casa de Amparo for its staff and residents; then Support the Enlisted Project (S.T.E.P.) requested masks for the spouses of the military personnel employed in the local medical community. We supplied bins of material and sewers along with many other groups in the community to answer the call for 4,000 masks by Palomar Hospital. Masks were made for Scripps Encinitas, local residential and nursing homes, Es Por Los Niños and even for Bethlehem's outdoor worship services – a need was identified, masks were made. And are still being made to meet ongoing needs.

And although the majority of all sewers and sewing machines in our Bethlehem community were dedicated to masks, other projects identified with the Women of Bethlehem continued.

With seven women washing, cutting and sewing – over 1,400 flannel pajamas and sleep pants were made and distributed by the **Pajama Project** this year for teenagers, women and children in need in our community. As in years past, the garments were distributed through various social service agencies and military organizations. The Pajama Project dedicated volunteers purchased almost two miles of flannel in late November and will start again in some way or another in February 2021. The Pajama Project celebrates 25 years in 2021.

The scraps from the Pajama Project were collected (as usual), cut into squares for baby quilts (by one woman), quilt tops were laid out (by another woman), quilt tops were sewn together (by a couple of women) and in mid-August **Scraps and Prayers** set up socially distanced tables to tie quilts which were then sewn by members of the group and ready to be donated. And others found space in their homes the right size to tie a baby quilt and added to those that needed to be finished and ready for

donation. Meanwhile, members of the group had been cutting squares for the quilts we donate to Lutheran World Relief (LWR). The squares were sewn into tops, tying was done at home or, once we were set up for socially distanced tying, at the church and then the tied quilt was sent to be sewn and ready for donation. It wasn't easy but the need for baby quilts, LWR quilts and pajamas didn't stop with the Pandemic.

The **Prayer Shawl Ministry** continued to make prayer shawls and in November distributed prayer shawls to members of Bethlehem most impacted by the Pandemic. Knitted hats were made and distributed to the local military and Es Por Los Ninos in December. Scarves were knitted for high school graduates.

Much of the “usual” missions of the Women were paused and we hope they return soon.

By the numbers – an unusual year but we did more than we originally thought would be possible - only because of the dedication of so many who stepped up and asked how they could help.

Masks – thousands made by members of Scraps and Prayers, Pajama Project and anyone in our community with a sewing machine and any sewing knowledge with material from our fabric stash.

Full Size Quilts

LWR	29	
UCSD Hope Scholars	24	
Wounded Warrior Battalion - West (WWBN-W)	11	
Total		64

Baby Quilts

Gently Hugged	47	
WWBN-W	15	
S.T.E.P.	49	
Es Por Los Ninos	24	
Baptism	1	
Total		136

Receiving Blankets

Gently Hugged	8	
WWBN-W	12	
S.T.E.P.	15	
Es Por Los Ninos	3	
Baptisms	2	
Total		40

Prayer Quilts

Lap Blankets (WWBN-W)

1	
2	
Total	3

TOTAL QUILTS AND BLANKETS

243

2020 proved to be a challenging year. The Women of Bethlehem Lutheran Church met that challenge.

Respectfully submitted with our heartfelt thanks by your sisters in Christ,

Kim Oswald, President
Lynne Miller, Secretary

Roberta Allen, Vice President
Dana Roberts, Treasurer

BETHLEHEM LUTHERAN CHURCH

2020 PASTORAL ACTS

Baptisms = 6
Confirmations = 11
Funerals = 2

2019 – 2020 STATISTICAL SUMMARY

Average Weekly Worship Participation in 2019 = 189

Average Weekly In-Person Worship Participation 1/1/2020 to 3/15/2020 = 176

Average Weekly In-Person Worship Participation 3/15/2020 to 12/27/2020 = 51

Average Weekly Virtual Worship Participation 2020 = 153

Membership at the end of 2019

Baptized (Includes Children) = 871
Confirmed (Teenage & Adult) = 536

Baptized Members received in 2020 = 14

By Transfer, Affirmation & Restoration = 8

By Baptism = 6

Baptized Members removed in 2020 = 21

By Death = 2

By Transfer = 0

Inactive/Removed/Moved = 19

Confirmed Members received in 2020 = 17

By Transfer, Affirmation & Restoration = 6

By Baptism = 0

Confirmed = 11

Confirmed Members removed in 2020 = 16

By Death = 2

By Transfer = 0

Inactive/Removed/Moved = 14

Membership at the end of 2020

Baptized (Includes Children) = 864
Confirmed (Teenage & Adult) = 537

PLEDGE/ESTIMATE REPORT FOR 2021

CATEGORY/AMOUNT OF PLEDGE PER YEAR	NUMBER OF FAMILY UNITS
AS ABLE	3
ESTIMATE	3
\$0.01 - \$500.00	7
\$501.00 - \$2,000.00	26
\$2,001.00 - \$5,000.00	40
\$5,001.00 - \$10,000.00	20
\$10,001.00 - \$40,000.00	10

TOTAL FAMILY UNITS PLEDGE/ESTIMATE GIVEN FOR 2021 = 106

TOTAL FAMILY UNITS CURRENTLY MEMBERS OF BETHLEHEM = 247

PLEDGE/ESTIMATE REPORT FOR 2020

CATEGORY/AMOUNT OF PLEDGE PER YEAR	NUMBER OF FAMILY UNITS
AS ABLE	6
ESTIMATE	12
\$0.01 - \$500.00	6
\$501.00 - \$2,000.00	31
\$2,001.00 - \$10,000.00	59
\$10,001.00 - \$40,000.00	7

TOTAL FAMILY UNITS PLEDGE/ESTIMATE GIVEN FOR 2020 = 115

TOTAL FAMILY UNITS CURRENTLY MEMBERS OF BETHLEHEM = 249

JANUARY 2021

BETHLEHEM LUTHERAN CHURCH

MISSION STATEMENT

**The mission of Bethlehem Lutheran Church
is to announce boldly the love of God through Christ.**

We do this because we are:

***Included through baptism**

***Nourished by Word and Sacrament**

***Rooted in the Gospel**

We do this by:

***Celebrating our faith in worship**

***Listening and responding to needs and concerns**

***Including children and youth in all aspects of our ministry**

***Applying our faith in loving, caring actions in our community and throughout the world**

VISION STATEMENT

We see Worship as a means by which we are continually called and drawn into renewed relationship with God through Christ.

We are called by God through Baptism and reach out through Word and Sacrament-centered worship. We believe that through worship we experience anew the healing power of the Gospel in our lives and God's redeeming love for our broken world. We acknowledge God's abiding grace with prayer, praise and thanksgiving for all that God has done for us, most especially the gift of salvation through God's son, our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. We are sustained and nourished by the Holy Spirit. We encourage our pastors to boldly preach the Gospel, keeping its message alive and meaningful to the diverse needs of our congregation and the larger community of God's people. We celebrate the Eucharist as being the real presence of Christ for all people embodying God's renewing and sustaining love and forgiveness. We value diversity of worship styles, in an environment of openness and acceptance which expresses God's love for people of every age and background.

The spiritual well-being of our members is a responsibility shared by everyone in the congregation. We provide an environment that promotes ongoing spiritual self-examination and maturity. We support each other on our faith journeys, and seek to strengthen everyone facing the challenges life brings. We are a congregation willing to take risks and to act on faith as reconcilers, care-givers and missionaries through a ministry of witness, service and evangelism.

There is a gladness in service, in reaching out to people in need, both in our community and throughout the world. We see outreach as a response to the Gospel, and believe that in touching the lives of others we make known God's love for all people. We see our congregation and our community as interdependent. We invest human and financial resources in our society, and take an active role in addressing unmet community needs.

Christian Education is essential to the life and growth of our congregation. Through education God develops an enriching relationship with us through Jesus Christ. We provide a wide range of educational programs and each person is encouraged to participate in ongoing experiences designed to be meaningful to every age.

We view stewardship as an act of worship which is a natural outgrowth of the Gospel. Stewardship is a biblical imperative, and begins with the recognition that all we have is a gift from a loving God. It involves how we use all the resources God has given us – our lives, our time and our possessions. It includes the money we give that is necessary to meet the financial needs of the congregation, its mission, and social responsibilities throughout the world. But good stewardship goes well beyond just gifts of money. It recognizes each individual's opportunity and responsibility of daily managing God's gifts of time and talents. Growth in stewardship goes hand in hand with growth in the Gospel as stewardship is a practical expression of an individual's faith.

Our Christian Faith is encouraged through fellowship with one another. We are committed to witnessing joyfully to our Christian faith in ways that will draw others into our caring community. We encourage the formation of small groups to preserve our sense of family. We promote a sense of intimacy that facilitates that healing of brokenness. We assist one another to discover, sustain, and nurture the use of our inherent talents. We seek opportunities to gather in fellowship and are strengthened through our communion with fellow believers. We see ourselves as a center for cultural and community events.

We are called by God to go forward with courage to share the message of the Gospel. We recognize that our lives can be a living illustration of God's love in Christ. It is the privilege of our entire congregation to share the love of God in a broken world. We are willing to experience rejection in order to announce justice, peace and God's love.