

Lord of Life Lutheran Church of Baxter 2022-2023 Annual Report



Our Mission: To inspire a deeper and richer connection to Christ, our community, and each other.

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Church Council and Staff

Staff:

Pastor Steven Rye, Senior Pastor
steve@lolbaxter.org

Pastor Erika Nilsen, Associate Pastor
erika.nilsen@lolbaxter.org

Anne Laechel, Ministry Operations
Manager
anne@lolbaxter.org

Tim Slinger, Youth Ministry Director
tim@lolbaxter.org

Karen Erickson, Custodian

Paul Erickson, Custodian

Tyler Jensen, Communications Coordinator
tyler.jensen@lolbaxter.org

Council:

Dan Tupy, President

Steve Schaitberger, Vice-President

Kevin Olson, Secretary

Tom Campion, Treasurer

Emmy Holcomb-Smith,
Youth Council Representative

Mission Leaders:

Karla Skwira, Mission Upward

Pam Caughey, Mission Inward

Donna Salli, Mission Outward

Brian Orlovski, Mission Ground

Congregational Meeting Agenda

June 5, 2022 - 11:00 A.M.

1. Call to order - President Dan Tupy
2. Opening prayer and celebrations - Pastor Erika
3. Attendance
4. Certification of quorum - Secretary Kevin Olson
5. Adoption of Agenda (Verbal Vote) - President Dan Tupy
6. Minutes of Congregational Meeting - June 6, 2021-Secretary Kevin Olson
7. Presentation and Discussion of Annual Reports - President Dan Tupy
8. Presentation of Budget for July 2022 to June 2023
 - a. Motion to adopt, discussion, and approval (Verbal Vote) - President Dan Tupy
9. Nominating Committee Report
 - a. Voting on Council members, Nominating Committee & Financial Review Committee (Verbal Vote) - President Dan Tupy
10. Other business
11. Motion to Adjourn - President Dan Tupy
12. Closing Prayer - Pastor Erika

2021 Annual Meeting Minutes

Lord of Life Lutheran Church

Annual Congregational Meeting Minutes

June 6, 2021

Meeting called to order at 11:22 am by Council President Dan Tupy

Opening prayer and celebrations led by Pastor Erika R. Nilsen.

Review & adopt for approval the special rules/procedures of the remote meeting. Motion to adopt rules & procedures by Sue Beck, seconded by Steve Schaitberger. All approved.

Motion carried. (CM.2021.06.01)

Council Secretary Laura Campbell certified that a quorum of voting members was present.

Motion to Adopt the Agenda - Motion by Rick zumBrunnen, seconded by Sue Beck, All approved.

Motion carried. (CM.2021.06.02)

Approval of Congregational Meeting Minutes October 4, 2020. Motion by Bruce Jensen, seconded by Karen Erickson, All approved. Motion carried. (CM.2021.06.03)

The Annual Report was presented.

Motion to adopt the budget for July 2021 to July 2022. Motion by Sue Beck, seconded by Anne Laechel. All approved. Motion carried. (CM.2021.06.04)

The Nominating Committee 2021 (Cindy Swenson, Pat Huhta, Ruth Nelson, Delia Bruggeman, Matt Rioux, Jolene Parks, Pastor Steven Rye) submitted the following names for election to Church Council:

- Dan Tupy- Second Term as President;
- Steve Schaitberger - Second Term as Vice-President;
- Tom Campion - First Term as Treasurer;
- Kevin Olson - First Term as Secretary;
- Brian Orłowski - Second Term on Council (Ground);
- Pam Caughey - Second Term on Council (Inward);
- Darcy Dwyer - Third Term on Council (Upward);
- Donna Salli - First Term on Council (Outward); and
- Emmy Holcomb Smith - Second term as Youth Council Member

Financial Review:

- John Wolf (nominated for a new three-year term);
- Andy Rangen (nominated to fill the remaining year of Tom Compion's term); and
- Joel Staehling (two years remaining)

Synod Assembly 2022:

- Tom Koop; and
- Bob and Shari Nelson

Nominating Committee 2020-2021:

- Sonja Nefstead;
- Eric Ding;
- Sue Beck;
- Kari Stengrim;
- Andy Isackson; and
- Rob Freelove

Motion to adopt the report of the Nominating Committee for positions on the Council, Nominating Committee and Financial Review Committee for the 2021-2022 planning year. Motion by Paul Jacobsen, seconded by Andy Campbell. Motion carried. (CM.2021.06.05)

Motion to adjourn by Tyler Jensen, seconded by Lisa Tupy. Motion carried. (CM.2021.06.06)
Closing prayer by Pastor Erika R. Nilsen

Member Milestones

During this meeting, we would like to take the time to recognize some milestones in our members' lives. We are incredibly thankful for our faith family and we look forward to making more memories together in the 2022-2023 year.

During this year, we welcomed the following people into our Church through them being baptised into the faith:

- On June 12, 2021, Brody Dean Smith, son of Blake & Emily Smith;
- On July 3, 2021, Emma Lynn Goff, daughter of Ryan & Erika Goff;
- On July 14, 2021, Savvy Ann Smude, daughter of Charles & Ceciley Smude;
- On July 14, 2021 Hazel Loretta Smude, daughter of Jacob & Tina Smude;
- On July 16, 2021, McKenna Rae Tibbetts, daughter of Chris & Alicia Tibbetts;
- On July 18, 2021, Ava Jean Langan, daughter of Adam & Amanda Langan;
- On August 8, 2021, Edith June Swanson, daughter of Luke & Annah Swanson;
- On September 18, 2021, Croix David Butenhoff, son of Connor & Mandy Butenhoff;
- On September 19, 2021, Milo Alexander Peterson, son of Benjamin & Erica Peterson;
- On October 24, 2021, Caden James Gordon, son of Shane & Bobbie Gordon;
- On October 24, 2021, Allison Jean Bishop, daughter of Christopher & Kelli Bishop;
- On November 14, 2021, Oakley Christina Funk, daughter of Luke & Samantha Funk;
- On November 20, 2021, Amelia Gray Sachs, daughter of Joshua Sachs & Andrea Obermiller;
- On November 28, 2021, Ava Boyd Visser, daughter of Jacob & Jacquelyn Visser;
- On December 19, 2021, Maverick Steven Christenson, son of Dustin & Megan Christenson;
- On February 13, 2022, Madelyn Rose Myran, daughter of Cory & Amanda Myran;
- On April 3, 2022, Dakota Grayce Lange, daughter of Christopher & Ashlyn Lange; and
- On May 1, 2022, Lily Jo Parkin, daughter of Chad & Meghan Parkin.

Unfortunately in the last year, we also lost members of our faith family. We give thanks to God for the gifts they gave us as members of the Church, our community and as our friends and family. Let us take a moment to remember:

- Borghild "Bugs" Schmidt, June 6, 2021;
- Shirley Jean Sawdey (Weizenegger), July 1, 2021;
- Kevin Bocklund, January 8, 2022;
- Roland Anderson, March 27, 2022;
- Audrae Gruber, March 31, 2022;
- Jerry Kuehn, April 23, 2022; and
- Janice Hardesty, May 20, 2022.

This year, we celebrated 32 people joining our faith family as new members. Let us once again take a moment to celebrate:

- Jan Carlson;
- James Caughey;
- John & Karin Jensen;
- Lydia Kraemer;
- Hal & Kelli Leland;
- Virginia Orłowski;
- David & Heidi Hagen – Samuel, John & Evelyn;
- Steve & Elyse Hagen;
- Cheryl Plouffe;
- Blake & Marie Setness;
- Jacquelyn Visser – Elijah;
- Gilbert Williams;
- Patricia Dickson;
- Erica Dolven-Kolle & Joseph Erickson – Maurice & Dean;
- Jeff & Cathy Grubb;
- Chad & Meghan Parkin; and
- Nicole Teigen

This year, the following individuals became fully confirmed members of our Church:

- William Aadland;
- Alice Balsley;
- Bella Barber;
- Tia Noel Bruggeman;
- George Campbell;
- Maren Ceynowa;
- Jocelyn Daniels;
- Kayli Dorn;
- Joshua Freelove;
- Kale Koop;
- Tray Lofstrom;
- Tyler Pederson;
- Spencer Porter;
- Sawyer Pribula;
- Brady Rushin;
- Bryan Schaitberger;
- Evan Shogren;
- Calvin Stengrim;
- Lexi Strus;
- Branden Tulenchik;
- Julia Wheeler; and
- Drew Whitlock

President's Report

As a child I remember my Grandma saying, "Always remember, you don't have to go to church today, you get to go to church today!"

I'll admit as a kid this made no sense to me but in this Pandemic world, I once again come to realize how wise Lillian was.

Once again we have so much to celebrate as a church. So much was accomplished in the past year. While many a business and church have withered, Lord of Life continues to touch so many. Far too many to mention them all:



At Lord of Life we have crafted a new normal and we will be improving and adding to it over the next year(s).

We are taking steps to protect God's creation by becoming a more environmentally friendly facility, we continue to improve our physical plant and grounds/parking lot. We will be adding volunteers, Stephen ministers, communion distributors and staff in order to continue to serve the needs of our growing faith community and those beyond our church walls.

I thank God for our Lord of Life Family!
Dan Tupy, Lord of Life Council President

Senior Pastor's Report

Recently we marked our second year coming through Covid. Though this is an annual report, it is our first opportunity to look back with some sense of a restored and normal life. I find myself reflecting now on the whole of our Covid-marked journey together. In some respects, it seems as if everything has changed. We will forever be with Covid. We will forever be a church that measures itself not only by the number of people who gather in our sanctuary, but also by those whose heart is drawn to our congregation in other ways---through our webcasting worship, for example.

These last two years have affirmed for us that the strength of the mission we have together is the people of God. We have been carried forward through these last two years by a commitment to deepen and enrich our connection to Christ, our community, and each other.

As I look back - I find myself being deeply grateful.

Grateful, first of all, for our staff. They are the finest around. Every one of them is deeply committed to the congregation of Lord of Life. Every staff member is dedicated to carrying out our congregation's mission. This past year we experienced some shifting of roles as Jennifer Person resigned as the Worship Music Director and Sarah Aamot resigned as the choir director. I'm glad to report that both continue to be committed to enhancing the worship music at Lord of Life, but needed to step away from the particular roles that they had been serving on staff. Because this is a two-year retrospective, I will add my deep sense of appreciation for Colleen Bush who served on staff as my assistant and resigned just under two years ago. I am grateful for all of their contributions and their deep commitment to our congregation. I hope you will take the time to express your appreciation of them - and indeed the whole of the current staff - for the great work that they do.

I am grateful for our church council who have led our congregation through some very rough waters these past years. They have kept a mission focus in the midst of it all and led out of a commitment to our core values. The council members were a constant source of optimism that we would make it through and be stronger for it. Always they kept their focus on the mission of our church.

I am writing this to you while I'm on my Sabbatical which causes me to be exceedingly grateful for my colleague in ministry—Pastor Erika Nilsen. While I have always been grateful for the partnership we share in ministry, I am especially so now during these three months that I have been granted leave for renewal, and study. I do intend to be back at the church for the annual meeting.

I also celebrate the efforts we have made to enhance our congregation's financial generosity. We still have real challenges before us to close the gap, but I believe we've made great strides. I am grateful that I am not in the situation many of my colleagues report with downturns of 10-15 percent and difficult decisions needing to be made about downsizing staff. Here at Lord of Life we have experienced a rise in our giving. Our strategic planning is dependent on that trend toward greater generosity continuing.

Looking ahead to the coming year.

It is my prayer that together we may be empowered to:

- 1) offer both a traditional and a contemporary worship service weekly on Sunday.
- 2) Promote the formation of small groups that are dedicated to a focused cause outside of our congregation by creating a culture that fosters initiative and resources members to respond to the “stirring of the holy spirit.”
- 3) Focus on our faith stepping stone ministry where we recognize and minister to people at various stages of their life. Through this focus, we will equip and empower more volunteers for service;
- 4) Take steps toward a future capital campaign that will erase our debt and address critical capital needs such as our roof and HVAC replacement. Then we will be able to invest adequate resources in our children’s ministry and our worship.

I look forward to returning to be with you in August.

God Bless!

Pr. Steve

Associate Pastor's Report

"Love one another, as I have loved you." – Jesus

In so many ways – I feel as if our faith family has been living into this command in old, new and more intentional ways this past year. I want to highlight just a few:

Our Stephen's Ministry continues to grow and share the love of Christ with individuals who are experiencing a difficult time in their lives. In the summer of 2021 we commissioned 6 new Stephen Ministers. I'm deeply grateful for Lolly Kalinoski and Deb Bergstrom, our Stephen Leaders, who lead a twice monthly peer supervision time and coordinate continuing education events with all of the current Stephen Ministers. This is one beautiful way in which we love one another.

Launching from our two month preaching series on 'One Anothering' – two LIFEgroups have formed and meet weekly to learn and practice and nurture the skills needed to love one another well in this world. I hope we can grow into a more intentional LIFEgroup commitment in the coming year.

As a larger ELCA community, we were able to share love with one another throughout the season of Lent when we shared pulpits and meals with one another through a Round Robin Preaching series focusing on God's Boundless nature. I'm so grateful for these partnerships.

Over 100 Personal Care Kits were put together and prayed over by our children and youth and are on their way to Eastern Europe through Lutheran World Relief to aid Ukrainian refugees. This was a powerful way to show our love for one another.

Countless volunteers have stepped up to lead our weekly Kids Time Ministry to children on Sunday mornings. And dozens of adults show up for our confirmation aged teens every week!! Thanks for loving the young people of this church!

Our Soup Kitchen commitment has been reinvigorated and every month we share love in the form of food and presence at Sharing Bread Soup Kitchen.

As a staff we are also working on loving one another as we pray for one another, encourage one another, give thanks for one another and support one another. I'm so grateful for this wonderful staff.

From quilts to prayer shawls, meals to home communion, learning about injustice to participating in acts of justice, we are growing and practicing how to love one another in real and tangible ways.

Thanks be to God!

Pastor Erika

Ministry Reports

Upward Ministries Report (Submitted by Karla Skwira):

This year we continued to feel the absence of the Children's Ministry Coordinator. While that position is greatly missed, it has been exciting to see children and families be able to participate in activities again together in church. The return of Kids' Time during service and the Christmas program were highlights for my family. Many of you have served and supported programming for youth and families that help the faith of both members and church guests. Thank you to the pastoral staff and all of the volunteers that have stepped in to allow these important activities to restart. It takes several hands to continue the spiritual development and growth of our youth. The discontinuation of the Children's Ministry Coordinator position is going to make building further capacity in this area difficult, but I pray and am hopeful for the future and that we may continue our offerings for families.

Outward Ministries Report (Submitted by Donna Salli):

Lord of Life's Mission Outward ministries continued their work over the last year, adjusting as needed to compensate for the challenges of the coronavirus pandemic. Specific activities have included the following:

Habitat for Humanity builds continued. The home built in Brainerd last summer was dedicated at the end of 2021. The current plan is for four homes to be built in Summer 2022: Sebeka, Pequot Lakes, Brainerd, and Baxter (the latter two scheduled to start in June and July).

There was a Red Cross blood drive at Lord of Life in July of 2021, and a second in January of 2022. Another is scheduled for July 8th of this year.

The Tanzania Pilgrims clinic trip had to be postponed until Summer 2023. The Tanzania clinic is not accepting reservations from mission groups at this time because of COVID.

Lord of Life took a hiatus from working at the Sharing Bread Soup Kitchen during the pandemic but has returned to the schedule there beginning this spring. During our absence, we continued to support the Soup Kitchen's work with monetary donations.

Lord of Life has continued to make monetary donations to support the mission work of Gary and Shari Hauter in Brazil.

Members of the congregation participated in the Thanksgiving Basket ministry through Bridges of Hope. That has been an ongoing activity over many years.

Our SAIL exercise class has continued to meet despite the limitations of distancing. The class transitioned to an online format due to COVID, which allowed an expansion of participants to include folks not physically in this area.

Lord of Life's clothing give-away was postponed last fall, due to COVID. It took place this spring, with the Micah Group taking over leadership for this year.

The Micah Group has been very energized in their work to promote justice. They've sponsored book studies and educational events and are increasingly partnering with other local and regional diversity and justice groups. Their present focus is racial justice.

Micah Group also served as the test-group for a new group analysis questionnaire that will help Lord of Life's various groups reflect on their ministries. We hope to see most if not all of our groups go through the analysis process, to reflect on their ministry and how it contributes to the larger mission of Lord of Life. As groups go through the process, their insights can be shared with the congregation, giving us all an increased sense of the work going on at Lord of Life both within our walls and outside our doors.

Lord of Life carried out an Offering for Ukraine to support the people of that country. As of mid-May, \$5,538 had been collected and forwarded to Lutheran World Relief.

Our Mission Outward ministries have remained devoted to their work in the face of two very challenging years. Thank you to all who participate in and support the ministry we do at Lord of Life in service to our local and global communities.

Inward Ministries Report (Submitted by Pam Caughey):

As your Mission Inward Council representative, I'd like to review some of the opportunities from this past year that God's people here at LOL have been a part of, through various groups in service to Him and others.

Groups such as the Men's Coffee & Fellowship, the Tuesday Morning Bible Study, the Wednesday Morning Womens' Bible Study, the Sarah & Martha Circles, the Mens' Breakfast group and the Quilters group all have provided the opportunity to spend time gathered in a supportive and caring setting of fellowship toward others.

To walk alongside others in their journey during a time of loss or hardship is the mission of the Grief Support group, the Prayer Chain, the Prayer Shawl group and the Stephen Ministry group, which commissioned several more leaders last fall after completing training for this service of care and support.

While some Mission Inward groups took a pause during COVID, others continued through Zoom or other internet options. The above mentioned groups are up and running! We celebrate their commitment to engage in service here at LOL, and invite you to deepen and enrich your connection to others through service and fellowship opportunities here at Lord of Life!

Youth Ministry Report (Submitted by Tim Slinger):

2020-2021 Youth Team Members:

Jessica Balsley, Layne Danielson, Helene Danielson, Katy Kelm, Darcy Walkowiak, Jason Walkowiak, Tim Slinger

Highlights/Events:

- Summer Splash & Summer Stretch
- Senior Recognition in August (outdoors) & Confirmation Service in November
- School Year Youth Programs
- Programing shifts in the midst of a pandemic

YEAR END REFLECTIONS ON YOUTH MINISTRY

Before writing this reflection, I took a moment to look back on what I had written in last years' annual report. Here is how that article started off. "The program year of 2019-20 will be one I will never forget. As I sit here and am busy writing this reflection, we are in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic." Who knew that as I would be writing this today we are still in the midst of the pandemic but there is light at the end of the tunnel. This again will be a year I never forget!

This past summer looked drastically different than what we were used to experiencing at Lord of Life. The pandemic forced the cancellation of both the summer mission trip to Jamaica and our canoe adventure to the Apostle Islands for our high school students. Summer Stretch continued but with a new look, being offered completely online with weekly service challenges and scripture lessons that were posted for families. We were blessed with the opportunity later in the summer to offer two in-person Daycamp experiences through Camp Onomia. What a blessing it was to gather back together at church outdoors for the first time since the pandemic had begun!

School Year Programming by The Numbers:

- 63 youth participated in the confirmation program
- 28 youth participated in our Club 56 & Teen's Upstream programs

It's hard to put into words what this past year has been like! This year brought about new changes and experiences that I will always remember and I am thankful to all the families who journeyed with us! As program staff, we found ourselves connecting with families where they were. This brought us to doorsteps, front yards or going out for walks around your neighborhoods together! Our Club 56 program made a drastic shift with a new format this year which included intentional faith conversations around the family dinner table and pizzas delivered to your door step! Our high school youth group was blessed to meet in person towards the end of last summer. Remaining outside on Wednesday nights even throughout the cold winter months devoted to connect with one another and enjoy some intentional faith conversations around a campfire! Confirmation began the year online until we reached the season of Lent where were able to meet in person and offer a hybrid learning model for families! This year was filled with lots of Zoom meetings and livestreams but I am thankful for technology which gave us the opportunity to connect with all of you when we could not be in person!

There is so much more that I could share with regards to this past year but I will wait for another time to do so. I want to thank the congregation for their continued support of the youth ministry programs at Lord of Life and to all the families who are involved. I can't wait to see what this next year has in store for all of us!

Micah Group Report (Submitted by Patricia Dickson):

What is now called Micah Group had its start in March of 2020 when people had just begun hunkering down because of Covid. A group of people had gathered via Zoom to discuss Ann Lamott's book *Hallelujah Anyway*, published in 2017. The murder of George Floyd on May 25 had a strong impact on group members and inspired their desire to stay together, form a group, and seek ways to change the inequities imposed on the lives of people of color. The group chose to do a second book study and selected Lenny Duncan's 2019 book, *Dear Church*, and they continued their study with a third book, *Waking Up White* by Debby Irving, 2017.

Discussing how to make a difference resulted in the group sponsoring a series of presentations on the history of slavery and its far reaching impacts these centuries later. Six (including the presentation by Cindy Swenson in the original series) educators who have taught or do teach history in the school district and are members of Lord of Life agreed to present this first round of lectures. Those lectures were repeated January – May, 2022 and focused on the history of slavery. Four of the six presentations in the second series have been taped and are or will be accessible on YouTube, some with a restricted access code because presenters had the option of not going public if they so chose. The second series includes a new presenter with a focus on Asian and Pacific Islanders in America. To date, Indigenous People have not been a primary focus, but fall program plans include collaboration with other groups to sponsor a series of events focused on Native Americans.

Micah Group adopted its name, a formal mission statement, and its brochure in the fall of 2021. Also in the fall of 2021, Darrell Pedersen, the group's first coordinator stepped down, and a Core Leadership Team (CLT) of six people was formed to explore program and event options for the coming months. Pat Dickson was asked to be the coordinator for the Micah Group. The CLT reports to the greater Micah Group membership and to our Council representative/support person, Donna Salli.

Numerous books, digital resources, and community events are shared within the group. Many of these are first brought to the attention of the CLT to be reviewed and then distributed to the larger group via CCB e-mailings. Members of the CLT are currently organizing listings of books and digital and hard-copy resources, which will be shared with the NE MN Synod and other justice groups when complete and also made available in hard copy in Lord of Life's church library in the months ahead.

Early in 2022, Micah Group applied for and received a Thrivent Grant. It is in the process of applying for a Greater Minnesota Racial Justice Grant of \$2,000.

The Northeastern Minnesota Synod reached out to Micah Group and other racial justice groups in the synod and all participated in two Zoom meetings, which facilitated getting to know each other and the varieties of programs that were being offered.

Micah Group has taken part in one collaborative event to date and is in planning stages with religious and secular groups for fall events.

It should be noted that, although the five other known justice groups in the NE MN Synod and

the Synod's Together Here Ministry are focused on anti-racism just as Micah Group currently is, Micah Group sees its mission going forward as one of addressing any of the injustices that inspired the Social Statements of the ELCA.

Children's Ministry Report (Submitted by Pastor Erika):

With the help of many, many volunteers, Children's Ministry was able to happen this past year despite the absence of a Children's Ministry Coordinator on staff.

In the summer of 2021 we had kids involved in Day Camp put on by Camp Onomia and Vacation Bible School, thanks to the fine and fun leadership of Rita Linder and Amy Foley.

In the Fall we blessed Kindergartners and their families and put Bibles in the hands of 12 3rd graders!

Our kids, ages 3 through the 4th grade, were able to participate in a simple but delightful Christmas Program based on the book "B is for Bethlehem."

Lenten Family Devotions were shared with all of the families of the church.

This Spring our Kids Time kids packed 25 Personal Care Kits for Ukrainian refugees.

This summer we are participating in a joint ELCA Children's Choir!

We continue to hope for a day when we can have a paid Children's Ministry leader. Until then, THANK YOU to all who share faith and love with the kids of Lord of Life.

Lord of Life Quilters Report (Submitted by Irene Christofferson):

This year, the Lord of Life Quilters distributed 74 quilts.

These included 33 for Lord of Life High School Seniors, 26 to be distributed by Lutheran Social Services and St. Joseph's Medical Center, and others which went to numerous organizations and individuals in the community.

This year, the Lord of Life Quilters have decided to continue meeting informally throughout the summer to cut fabric, design quilts, and make plans for the Fall. They meet Thursdays from 9 to 11 am in the Fellowship Hall.

Property Team Report (Submitted by Rick zumBrunnen):

Team Members:

Rick zumBrunnen (acting chairman), Jack Christofferson, Jerry Bergstrom, Stan Kalinoski, Joe VanDenBoom, Kelly Story, Ron Hensel, Verdell Bose, David Schliek, Steve Jones, Karen Erickson, Bob Nelson, Doug Schultz and Hawk Hawkinson

Major 2021-22 Activities:

- Mowed grass and watered plantings during summer months;
- Painted floor in the storage/shop building;
- Installed pre-finished fascia and soffits on the north side of the church;
- Insulated ceilings and walls in storage/shop building;
- Installed and painted gypsum board walls in storage/shop building;
- Installed new replacement LED light fixtures in the main hallway;
- Repaired the damaged glass in the Son Shine window;
- Installed lay-in ceiling system in storage/shop building;
- Installed LED ceiling light fixtures in storage/shop building;
- Facilitated the fall work day;
- Shoveled sidewalks during winter months;
- Crow Wing Electrical Audit was performed for the church energy consumption;
- Reprogrammed sanctuary light switches and lighting controls to make more efficient use of lighting;
- De-lamped existing 2x4 fluorescent fixtures in the Son Shine room;
- Installed new 2x4 LED replacement fixtures for the offices, meeting room #3, kitchen and fellowship hall;
- Installed LED lamps in existing wall-washer light fixtures in Commons Room;
- Prepared Use/Management Plan for storage and "Faith Works" Shop;
- Applied weed & feed fertilizer to all grass areas; and
- Facilitate spring work day;

Goals for 20221-23:

- Schedule fall and spring work days;
- Repair woodpecker damage on stucco walls;
- Repair or replace damaged shingles on Sanctuary roof;
- Stain wood benches at the fire ring at north side of church;
- Repair irrigation system controls; and
- Add additional irrigation to SW corner of church property.

Friends of Habitat for Humanity (Submitted by Bonnie Henningson):

Our 2021 Lord of Life spring fundraiser for Lakes Area Habitat for Humanity was more than successful! We raised \$6,000 with our goal being \$5,000. In July we had a LOL Build Day; nineteen LOL volunteers joined the Svoboda family to help build their home. Many volunteers continued to work throughout the summer/fall. The Svoboda's celebrated Thanksgiving in their new home.

We are gearing up for our June 2022 fundraiser. This summer one home will be built in Brainerd and one home will be built in Baxter. Building will start in July.

There are 40 Lord of Life members on the Friends of Habitat list. These are volunteers who are ready to build and/or provide lunches and snacks.

We at LOL are the hands and feet of Jesus with our financial donations, volunteer hours and with our continued prayers for the Lakes Area Habitat mission, the families we serve and our volunteers who are so gracious with their time.

Friends of the Red Cross (Submitted by Sally Jacobsen):

Lord of Life hosted an American Red Cross Blood drive on July 9, 2021 and 29 pints of blood were collected. The drive scheduled on January, 14, 2022 was cancelled due to a snowstorm. Next drive is scheduled for July 8, 2022.

Women's Bible Study (Submitted by Carol Rodseth):

During this past year, we have completed our study of Psalms which lasted nearly a year. In January of this year, we began the study of the Gospel of Luke. We meet regularly during the year except for a Christmas break of two weeks and then a break during the summer in June through August. However, we meet once a month for fellowship and connection during the summer break. In addition to Bible study, we maintain an active prayer list and pray for one another on our own during the week.

We continue to meet on Zoom and our average attendance is 8 – 10. We may consider returning to the church for meetings depending on consensus of the group. We began meeting together in the Fall of 2019 and plan to start up again in the Fall 2022.

Thursday Men's Fellowship (Submitted by Ted Anderson):

In addition to offering men of the Congregation a place to be in fellowship with one another and reflect on their faith, Men's Fellowship donates the offering it collects to the Church and other organizations. This year, the group donated \$900 toward new thermostats for the building.

Generosity Team (Submitted by Ann Smallman):

In the spring of 2021, the Generosity Team adopted the Live Generously campaign for the fall 2021 giving campaign.

Live Generously is part of an on-going series:

Take Hold of The Life That Really is Life:

“Live Free; Live Simply; Live Generously; Live Courageously”

During the summer months, messaging around giving an extra .50 a day to the general fund to help close the budget gap for 2022 was circulated. Justin Halbersma generously contributed his time and created a video to inspire the congregation to increase giving in small, management amounts. The video was shared in service and on social platforms. 45 out of Lord of Life's 270 contributing households committed to this campaign.

Fall Stewardship campaign kicked off on Wednesday October 20th with Gratitude Sunday held on Sunday November 21st, followed by a pie social.

Representatives from the Missional Councils, Upward, Outward, Ground, Inward, and Youth teams created Basin Talks fall giving campaign videos that shared the meaningful works of groups with the support provided through congregational giving.

Our Fall giving campaign resulted pledges being static from 2021 to 2022. Giving to the General Fund and Capital Campaign in 2021 was \$528,945 combined. Pledges generally account for about 2/3rds of our annual giving.

Thank you to those who participated in our request to increase their giving by \$15 per month.

The generosity team was grateful, and handwritten thank you cards were sent to families who made a financial pledge to Lord of Life.

Other team efforts included campaign development to help close the \$20,600 FY 2021 shortfall to support the staff needs for a Music Director and Children's Ministry Coordinator for those important services within our congregation.

Thank you for your generous support of Lord of Life!

Synod Assembly Report

The ELCA's Northeastern Minnesota Synod's annual assembly was held Friday, April 29 - Sunday, May 1 at Cragun's Resort in Brainerd. The theme for the assembly was "Deeply Rooted in a Boundless God"

Lord of Life's voting members included Bob and Shari Nelson, and Tom Koop, and Pastors Steve and Erika also attended.

Catherine Anderson, Synod Minister for Discipleship & Christian Community, and Lord of Life's own Pastor Erika, led the group in how to encounter scripture using the 2022 Synod Journey and National Youth Gathering.

The Rev. Barbara Lund, the ELCA's Sr. Director for Service and Justice informed the assembly that more than \$4.5 million was raised across the ELCA for Lutheran Disaster Response in Eastern Europe. It was also announced that the Northeastern Minnesota Women of the ELCA had raised \$10,000 for the Circle of Welcome, which helps refugees from Afghanistan.

The Assembly passed the 2023 Budget totalling about \$1.23 million, up from \$1.17 million in 2021.

A resolution calling for a 50 percent reduction in US Greenhouse Gas Emissions by 2030 was approved 232 to 16.

A resolution calling for Congress to pass the Afghan Adjustment Act, which would allow refugees from Afghanistan to apply to become permanent residents, was approved unanimously.

A resolution encouraging all congregations and members to be generous in supporting Ukrainians and others who have been displaced by the war in Ukraine was approved unanimously.

Lutheran Social Services presented the Servant of Christ Award to Knife River Lutheran Church for their work in honoring more than 80 Lake County first responders and law enforcement officers.

The "Holy Cow! Look What We Did for Hunger Award was presented to Salem Lutheran Church in Longville, which contributed an average of \$70.27 per member toward fighting hunger.

Finance Team Report

(Submitted by Darren Larson)

The Lord of Life finance committee meets monthly to review and discuss the general oversight and performance of the church when it comes to its financial performance. The financial year for the church begins on July 1st, and ends on June 30th, which means the church books are almost closed on the year!

The church also has two sides to its operations, and you may notice on your contribution envelopes that you have an option to contribute funds to the “general” fund or the “capital” fund. It is very simple, if you give to the “capital” fund, those funds are put toward the church’s monthly mortgage payment. If you give to the “general” fund, that covers everything else. If you make a contribution to the church and do not specify a fund, the funds will go to the “general” account.

We would also like to note that the expenses of the church are very predictable, with more than 80% of the expense being directly related to pastoral and lay staff of the church.

The church again has financial challenges, which is not unlike the long history of Lord of Life. The church set forth an ambitious goal of increasing giving by \$60,000 in the past year. This goal was not met and we are also looking at overhead costs that will be higher in the coming year due to inflationary pressures in the economy. This is no different than what you face in your own home or business, such as higher heating, cooling and electricity costs, as well as consumables we use every day.

You will hear more about this need from the church council and Mission Support teams in the very near future about programs to help with the financial needs of the church.

What are the positive takeaways?

Our “capital” account giving was adequate to cover the church mortgage payments in the past year.

Our cash balance was healthy enough to handle the operations of the past year.

Our church had a 8% increase in overall “giving units” in the past 12 months.

Our church continued its external benevolence to the ELCA and other missions.

As we all prayerfully consider our budgets for the coming year, the finance team would like for all Lord of Life members to remember the benefits of your church family and not only the wonderful place of worship we have been blessed with at Lord of Life, but also the mission of our staff to deliver the Good News of Jesus! Thanks be to God!

Statement of Financial Position

Lord of Life Lutheran Church

Statement of Financial Position
Annual Meeting
 April 30, 2022

	<u>Year to Date Balance</u>
Assets	
Checking Account Totals:	83,274.67
Cash Totals:	150.00
Land and Building Totals:	2,941,557.70
Totals:	0.00
Total Assets:	<u><u>3,024,982.37</u></u>
Liabilities	
Payroll Withholdings Totals:	12.41
Mortgage Totals:	666,671.48
Accounts Payable Totals:	0.00
Notes Payable Totals:	0.00
Total Liabilities:	<u>666,683.89</u>
Net Assets	
Totals:	2,289,883.31
Without Donor Restrictions	79,801.98
With Donor Restrictions	5,058.61
Dedicated Accounts Totals:	<u>84,860.59</u>
Current Period Changes to Net Assets	(16,445.42)
Total Net Assets:	<u>2,358,298.48</u>
Total Liabilities & Net Assets:	<u><u>3,024,982.37</u></u>

Activities and Proposed Budget

Lord of Life Lutheran Church

Statement of Activities

Annual Meeting

April 30, 2022

	<u>YTD Actual</u>	<u>YTD Budget</u>	<u>Annual Budget</u>	<u>Next Year Annual Budget</u>
Income				
Offerings Totals:	403,326.40	456,686.97	529,000.00	506,943.00
Rent Totals:	1,682.00	3,173.25	4,000.00	4,000.00
Other Income Totals:	2,790.63	0.00	0.00	0.00
Income Totals:	<u>407,799.03</u>	<u>459,860.22</u>	<u>533,000.00</u>	<u>510,943.00</u>
Expense				
Pastoral Ministry - Personnel Totals:	147,372.90	150,990.00	180,748.00	180,748.00
Lay Ministries - Personnel Totals:	157,716.74	180,230.72	216,670.00	209,436.00
Ministry - Ground Totals:	85,955.24	82,325.85	94,315.00	92,972.00
Ministry - Outward Totals:	22,406.60	23,011.16	26,225.00	24,375.00
Ministry - Upward Totals:	2,820.70	3,962.52	4,665.00	4,640.00
Ministry - Inward Totals:	7,972.27	6,249.98	7,500.00	8,100.00
Expense Totals:	<u>424,244.45</u>	<u>446,770.23</u>	<u>530,123.00</u>	<u>520,271.00</u>
Income - Expense:	<u>(16,445.42)</u>	<u>13,089.99</u>	<u>2,877.00</u>	<u>(9,328.00)</u>