

ANNUAL *Report* 2022



SEMI-ANNUAL MEETING APRIL 23, 2023

Bethlehem Lutheran Church, ELCA
720 S. 2nd St. Mankato MN
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BETHLEHEM LUTHERAN CHURCH
Spring 2023 SEMI-ANNUAL MEETING

Sunday, April 23, 2023

10:45 AM – 11:45 AM

Dining Room

AGENDA

- 1. Call to Order** President Mary Bliesmer
- 2. Opening Prayer** Pastor Jay Dahlvang
- 3. Approval of Minutes** November 20, 2022 Fall Semi-Annual Congregational Meeting
- 4. Old Business** None
- 5. Annual Reports** Written & Posted on Website
- 6. New Business**
 - A. Election of 2023-2024 BLC Officers, Council and Board/Committee Members: Bob Ihrig
 - 1) Nominating Committee report & ballot
 - 2) Additional nominations from the floor
 - 3) Election
 - B. Recognition of Outgoing/New officers, Council & Board/Committee members: Mary Bliesmer
 - C. BLC Strategic Plan Update: Pastor Jay Dahlvang
 - D. WELCOME Update (Refugee/Asylum Seeker Project): Pastor Jacie Richmond
 - E. Other
- 7. Lord's Prayer** Pastor Jacie Richmond
- 8. Adjournment**

Our Mission

Bethlehem is an inviting community that is growing in Christ, loving our neighbors and serving God's world.



**Semi-Annual Meeting of the Congregation
Bethlehem Lutheran Church
Mankato, Minnesota
November 20, 2022
10:55 – 11:32 AM**

MINUTES

ATTENDANCE: 82 (Quorum = 75)

CALL TO ORDER: President-Elect Jason Bruns

OPENING PRAYER: Pastor Jay Dahlvang

MINUTES: **Action:** Minutes of the spring semi-annual meeting held on April 10, 2022, taken by secretary Bob Ihrig, were approved on a motion by Bob Ihrig and second by Derek Brown with all in favor.

Action: Minutes of the special congregational meeting held on August 21, 2022, taken by secretary Bob Ihrig, were approved on a motion by Bob Ihrig and second by Chris Paul with all in favor.

OLD BUSINESS: None

REPORTS: Available on BLC website for member review.

NEW BUSINESS:

A. 2021-22 Council/Board/Committee Goals

Secretary Bob Ihrig highlighted the 2022-23 goals established by the Council and BLC boards/committees. These are available on the BLC website for member access.

Members were encouraged to review these goals to understand the planned goals and activities of our various established formal groups. These provide a focus and direction for each group during the year.

Written reports outlining the results in accomplishing these goals will be presented at the spring semi-annual meeting.

Members should also consider possible groups to join in the future when the nominations process is held in the spring to fill vacancies on the Council and other boards and committees. The goals should help to identify the mission and activities of each group.

B. Strategic Planning Goals Update

Pr. Jay provided an update on the 2022-26 strategic goals. The 5 goals identified by the strategic planning task force and approved by the Council and congregation were reviewed. Specific objectives to implement these goals are being developed and finalized by the pastors and Council.

C. 2021 BLC Financial Review Report Approval

The Financial Review Committee and Financial Secretary Elizabeth Ruiz will meet on December 3 to conduct the official 2021 BLC financial review. Once completed, a report will be submitted to the Council and congregation for review and official approval at future meetings.

D. 2023 Proposed Budget Approval

On a recommendation by the Council, the 2023 BLC proposed budget was presented and discussed. The following major points were highlighted by Financial Secretary Elizabeth Ruiz for income and expenses with a proposed budget of \$829,702. This represents an increase from the 2022 budget of \$813,309 and equals a deficit of \$13,698:

- ❖ Few major changes are proposed overall in the 2023 budget.
- ❖ Summary & Explanation of Line Items: A written summary and explanation of specific budget line items was reviewed as background for discussion. Minor adjustments were made in different accounts to cover current and projected income & expenses.
- ❖ Staff Compensation: Lines 170-197 detail pastoral and lay staff compensation. Pastoral compensation includes a 1% increase for Pr. Jay based upon his personal recommendation and agreement. This will still keep him above synod pastoral compensation guidelines. Pr. Jacie's compensation is proposed in alignment with the synod guidelines. The associate pastor position was increased from $\frac{3}{4}$ time to full time for 2023 to reflect the call process agreement. The lay staff compensation proposal totals a 4% increase. The Personnel Committee proposed an actual 5% increase to account for cost-of-living increases and the need to adjust some salaries to align with national research on comparable church salaries. This was reduced by the Council to 4% given the need to reduce the projected deficit.
- ❖ Message from Pastor Jay Regarding 2023 Proposed Budget: A written message from Pr. Jay regarding details of the 2023 proposed budget was reviewed.
- ❖ Projected Deficit: The proposed budget represents a \$13,698 deficit. This is not customary procedure for the annual budget. Several options for addressing this deficit were presented. These could include an increase in Line 1 General Fund Offerings by \$13,698 or to make reductions in expenses by this amount.

The following questions and information were shared by congregation members and Council members:

- ❖ Will lay staff salaries increase in future years? The Personnel Committee is committed to providing appropriate lay staff compensation that is aligned with national church salary data. It will continue to conduct the necessary research to collect this data.
- ❖ Are capital campaign pledges affecting 2023 annual fund contributions? BLC members have made generous pledges to the annual fund with a total of \$340,000 thus far. The capital campaign Response Team is calling BLC members who have not yet submitted capital campaign and annual fund pledges.
- ❖ The options for addressing the projected deficit include cutting expenses, carrying over any 2022 end-of-year surplus and relying on BLC members to increase their giving for 2023 were discussed.
- ❖ The Budget Committee and Council were thanked for their work on the proposed budget.
- ❖ The projected deficit is only 1.6% of the total budget.
- ❖ The projected 2023 deficit could be cut with an average BLC member giving unit increase of \$52 in annual giving.
- ❖ A variety of giving options are available to BLC members. These include online contributions via checking accounts and credit cards.
- ❖ Members were encouraged to consider contributions to BLC with their IRA distributions.

- ❖ A reduction in the proposed BLC landscaping budget of \$1,000 (Increased from \$500 from 2022) was suggested as a deficit reduction option. No action was taken on this.

Action: The proposed 2023 BLC budget as presented with no changes was approved on a motion by Chris Paul and a second by Bob Brown with a unanimous vote.

CLOSING PRAYER

Pastor Jacie Richmond led the membership in prayer to close the meeting.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned on a motion by Liz Paul, a second by Marian Mallory and a voice vote at 11:32 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted,
Bob Ihrig, Congregation Secretary

Bethlehem Lutheran Church Congregational Council/Boards/Committees

June 1, 2023 – May 31, 2024

April 5, 2023 Update

COUNCIL

24	Jason Bruns	President
25	Marie Slotemaker	President-Elect
25	To Be Determined	Vice-President
24	Bob Ihrig	Secretary
24	Jeremy Carter	Treasurer
26	To Be Determined	Member at Large
24	Matt Drewitz	Member at Large
25	Jessica Auel	Member at Large

ADULT EDUCATION BOARD X

26	Bob Ihrig	CONFIRMED
26	Michael Slotemaker	CONFIRMED
26	Joy Dykema	CONFIRMED
24	Karen Sandersfeld	
24	Chuck Piehl	
25	Cynthia Zacharias	
25	Todd Hanselman	

CHILDREN'S BOARD X

26	Shawna Peterson-Brown	CONFIRMED
26	Abbe Austin	CONFIRMED
24	Josie Lust	
24	Liz Paul	
25	Brittany Renberg	
25	Chelsey Kunkel	

COMMUNITY & GLOBAL MISSION X

26	Amy Haigh	CONFIRMED
26	Sue Larsen	CONFIRMED
26	Barb Glass	CONFIRMED
24	DeAnn Bennett	
25	Werner Fick	
25	Jan Blaisdell	

ENDOWMENT BOARD X

26	Chuck Piehl	CONFIRMED
24	Kristine Rebelein	
24	Dennis Sandersfeld	
25	Ray Beckel	
25	Sara Maslakow	

•**TOTAL Positions for 2023 Election = 29**

•**OPEN represents vacancies & positions to be filled = 7**

•**BOLD Names represent NEW members or extended terms of office to be approved**

•**CONFIRMED: Names Confirmed for Vote**

•**X represents COMPLETE membership for 2023-24**

FACILITIES BOARD X

26	James Arentson	CONFIRMED
26	Jim Christensen	CONFIRMED
26	Noah Nelson	CONFIRMED
24	Brad Groth	
25	Scott Wolner	
25	Joe Wagner	

MUSIC & WORSHIP BOARD

26	Nancy Rorem	CONFIRMED
26	Michaela Kerner	CONFIRMED
25	OPEN	
24	Betty Groth	
24	Linda Frederick	
24	Sheila Stevensen	

STEWARDSHIP BOARD

26	Bob Ihrig	CONFIRMED
26	OPEN	
24	Amy Haigh	
24	Sally Burdick	
25	Heather Hammond	
25	Marian Mallory	

WELCOME & INCLUSION BOARD X

26	Marian Mallory	CONFIRMED
26	Jessica Auel	CONFIRMED
26	Jeannie Phillips	CONFIRMED
24	Marie Slotemaker	
24	Jean Meyer	CONFIRMED
25	Roger Haug	CONFIRMED
25	Melissa Wagner	

YOUTH BOARD X

26	Angela Bruns	CONFIRMED
26	Jessie Schaefer	CONFIRMED
24	Sheila Stevensen	
24	Gina Wibstad	
24	Beth Timm	
24	Danielle Johnson	
25	Tanya Ringgenberg	

Bethlehem Congregational Council/Boards/Committees

June 1, 2023 – May 31, 2024

April 5, 2023 Update

FINANCIAL REVIEW COMMITTEE

*Position To Be Appointed by the Council in 12/23

23 Kristine Rebelein*
24 Frank Larsen
25 Mark Larsen

FAIR TRADE COMMITTEE X

24 Jolene Beckel CONFIRMED
24 Paulette Bertrand CONFIRMED
24 Etta Poole CONFIRMED
24 Betty Groth CONFIRMED
24 Bridget Poole Padilla CONFIRMED
24 Kristen Simon-Frank CONFIRMED

FINANCE COMMITTEE

*To be appointed by the Council

26 OPEN*
26 OPEN*
25 Mark Woelfel
25 OPEN*
24 Diana Olson
24 Mark Larsen

NOMINATING COMMITTEE

24 Mary Bliesmer Past President
24 Aaron Geringer Past Council Member
25 Bob Ihrig
26 OPEN
26 OPEN
26 OPEN

PERSONNEL COMMITTEE X

*Appointed by the Council on 2/21/23

24 Mary Bliesmer Past President
24 Jason Bruns Current President
26 Brad Groth* CONFIRMED
26 Lori Ruthenbeck* CONFIRMED
24 Pru Gushwa
24 Ray Beckel
25 Bob Ihrig
25 Dowain Kerner

GENERAL SERVICE GROUP CHAIR X

25 Donna Engles

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•CONFIRMED: Names Confirmed for Vote

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Southeastern Minnesota Synod



At our 2022 Synod Assembly, we gathered under the theme *Imagine: Endless Possibilities in God's Grace*. As we live into the future God has for us, we see what we had once only imagined start to take shape in concrete ways.

This year has brought a new way of meeting the needs of congregations in transition as we have explored various models for pastoral ministry. Most prominent among them is what we call a Bridge to Settled model. This new model allows congregations to work with a Bridge pastor (different than an intentionally trained interim) while forming a call committee and engaging in the call process with the understanding that both the pastor and congregation are open to transitioning from the Bridge into a settled call. It is not the right model for every congregation, but it has greatly benefited many.

We have also seen a gentle uptick in individual congregations exploring partnerships of all kinds. Some congregations are forming new joint parishes, others are working together to meld two part-time calls into full-time work for a single candidate, and still others are merging weekly confirmation classes. More and more of our congregations are realizing the profound benefits and joy of collaboration.

It has been fun to walk alongside folks as they lead their congregations into new ways of being the People of God in their community in this time and place.

As 2023 approaches, I remain ever hopeful for all that the Spirit will continue to do in and through us as the Southeastern Minnesota Synod. Looking ahead to our next Synod Assembly, I am excited to announce that we will be joined by Drs. Susan Brower and Matt Bloom. Drs. Brower and Bloom will give us tools to understand our communities as they are presently and as they are projected to be. They will also explore ways congregations can ignite flourishing in the communities to which they are called.

I am excited to continue imagining alongside each of you as we discern what God is doing in our midst and calling us to do. What a wonderful time to be the church together for the sake of the world.

In Christ,

Rev. Regina Hassanally

Bishop Regina Hassanally



Annual Report of the Lead Pastor for Semi-Annual Meeting of April 23, 2023

Thank You

It continues to be a delight and honor to serve as your pastor into my fourteenth year. Thank you for your call, your prayers, your encouragement, and your friendship. I ask you to continue to challenge me to work faithfully and skillfully for the advancement of the gospel, the benefit of the world God loves, and for the health of the church. We have opportunities before us and I am confident God's grace will continue to be sufficient for Bethlehem. A special thank you to Pastor Jacie! We are grateful for her ministry and enthusiasm. She has energized our staff and congregation. Speaking of our staff, they continue to do outstanding work on our behalf! Another special thank you to Molly Nelson who joined us in the past year. Molly too has been a great addition. We have some long tenured, loyal staff members, who in this day and age of job jumping have continued to effectively and faithfully serve us and our Lord. We are blessed by their work and dedication.

Call Process

Our call process dovetailed nicely with our strategic plan work. We had an excellent committee guided by Pastor Barb Streed, from the Office of the Bishop. Pastor Kristen Venne ably served as our interim pastor, and finally, this fall, we welcomed Pastor Jacie Richmond. It's been a blessing and joy working with Pastor Jacie. She has made her mark preaching, teaching, working with our youth—especially our high school youth—and leading our collaborative efforts with other area congregations in the formation of WELCOME. It's great to have her aboard!

Strategic Planning Outcome

After prayer, and conversation with one another and the community, together we have come up with five strategic planning goals for the next years. They are: engaging youth, sharing gifts, fostering a climate of respect and appreciation, building community partnerships, and embracing diversity. We have begun meeting objectives in each of these areas and the goals will continue to shape our ministry strategy and allocation of resources going forward.

Capital Campaign

We had a very successful capital campaign, celebrating God's faithfulness to Bethlehem. Our theme was: Imagine-A Vision of Hope. Our leadership team was excellent in working with our consultants and inspiring the congregation. We received pledges for over \$850,000 to reducing our mortgage. We are hopeful that we can finish our mortgage off in the next few years thanks to our generous members!

Endowment

Our endowment has undergone significant change with the beginning of the new board. Bethlehem Member, David Morgan, has volunteered to manage the fund. David is a Certified Financial Planner, who has experience in managing endowment funds. Our hope is to grow the endowment to be even more helpful in funding scholarships, community and global ministry endeavors, and special congregational projects and initiatives.

A Caring Community

Bethlehem has joined the Mankato-North Mankato Caring Community initiative, and filled out a charter statement to share with other community organizations committed to caring. You can find out more at nicbluecares.com.

WELCOME

This fall, we began conversations with the other Mankato area ELCA churches with the hope of welcoming a refugee or asylum seeking family to our area. The coalition became known as WELCOME and has begun by finding a home and a new community and life for a family seeking asylum. Pastor Jacie, Carrol Meyers-Dobler, and Amy Haigh have taken on leadership and we are thankful for their efforts. In March, we had the opportunity to meet the Cruz Family.

Pr. Jay

Annual Report of the Associate Pastor for Semi-Annual Meeting of April 23, 2023

I am so grateful to be here at Bethlehem for these past few months and I am excited to be a part of the ministry we are all doing together in this place. Here is a highlight of what has all been happening during my first 5 months at Bethlehem.

Youth Ministry

The first few months have mostly been having me help out with all of the various children's and youth ministry activities so that I can get to meet all of the children, youth, and families of Bethlehem. I also got the opportunity to help lead some milestone classes like a Bible milestone class and a communion milestone class.

I also have started working with the youth board to potentially start a regularly meeting group for our high school youth. We launched this in March and are hoping to continue offering a gathering at least once a month going forward. Right now our gatherings are just having fun together to build up relationships among the group. In the future though there will be faith formation components added in.

WELCOME

This is the collaboration of 5 Mankato area churches who are helping to assist the family seeking asylum here in the United States. I have been working with this group alongside several other Bethlehem members to assist the family with all of their needs. This family arrived in Minnesota the week before Christmas and the WELCOME team has been helping the family to adjust and to provide for their many needs. The family came to visit Bethlehem on Sunday, March 26th at the launch of a sponsorship campaign to assist them with their day-to-day needs. Kathy Chatelaine from the synod also visited on March 19th to, along with some Bethlehem members, give an adult forum about the family and about efforts across the synod to accompany asylum seeking individuals and families.

Worship

In my first 5 months here at Bethlehem I have had many opportunities to preach and lead worship here both on Sundays and Wednesdays. I also had the opportunity to help craft together the service for RIC Sunday which Bethlehem celebrated on Sunday, January 29th and again on Wednesday, February 1st. We even one Wednesday night had the opportunity to have worship downstairs in the dining room!

Synod Work

I continue to serve in my role as a member of the board for Crossroads Campus Ministry at MSU. Crossroads is undergoing some transition right now and they currently do not have a campus pastor. The board is hoping to find someone to lead the ministries there over the next

several months. This year the Crossroads board began a Sunday evening worship service for students. It takes place at 8pm every week and local area pastors have been helping to lead worship, preach, and give communion at these services each week. Bethlehem continues to support Crossroads as a monthly mission partner. The pastors are also helping to lead worship at least once a semester.

Goals for 2023-2024

I have many hopes of things that we can all do together at Bethlehem over the next year. All of these goals are things that come directly from the larger goals of the congregation outlined in the strategic plan.

Over the next year I would love to see our gatherings for the High School youth continue. My sincerest prayer is that this group would grow, not just in participants, but also with what we are offering to our high school youth. I would like to add appropriate faith formation lessons, discussion, etc. to these gatherings over the next year. I also would like the youth to have some say in helping to craft what this group looks like, what they would like to do together, what their needs are, and how the church can best speak to those needs. This will involve conversations with the high schoolers and the youth board directly and discerning together where the Spirit is calling us.

Also over the next year I would like to also see Bethlehem offering some monthly events for young adults. For clarity, when I say young adult I mean a person between the age of 18-29. My hope for this year would be to perhaps begin a monthly “pub theology” like gathering somewhere in the larger Mankato area.

Another goal that I have for this year is to continue to support Crossroads Campus Ministry at MSU. This is a great opportunity to continue to reach out to students on the campus and to provide them with spiritual support. I plan to continue as a board member of the organization this next year.

After talking with the Faith Formation Staff there has been some thinking about reevaluating the comprehensive plan for all of our Faith Formation programming. This plan was first created before the COVID pandemic when there were different staff members at Bethlehem, a different strategic plan in place, and different goals for Faith Formation. This reevaluation is something that will hopefully happen over the summer and will help to guide us going forward.

I am excited to see where the next year will bring us as a congregation. I am grateful that God has brought us all together to be in ministry together and that we are able to share God’s love with the world together.

Anna Wencil, Family Faith Formation Ministry Director

I chose three words to reflect on this past year of Family Faith Formation Ministry.

JOYFUL. When I returned from my sabbatical last May, after walking 500 miles on the Camino de Santiago, one of the first questions I was asked, somewhat sarcastically, by a congregation member was, “do you feel transformed?” The truth was I didn’t feel transformed as much as I felt sad that the experience was



complete, and profoundly tired now that I felt what 500 miles of constant walking with a pack does to the body. I replied, “not yet”. I trusted that the transformation would come, as I took time over the summer and fall to heal my body and process what I’d experienced. I’m profoundly grateful to have been given this gift of time to do something I’ve dreamed about for so long. This year has been filled with joy as we’ve hit a groove in many of our ministries. When I take time to notice, there are seedlings almost everywhere. I’m excited to see new possibilities for growth, both for myself and for the church. I remain ever grateful for a church community that encourages me to expand, both as a leader and as a person of faith. I feel lucky to experience such joy in my work among you and to experience the joy of our children, youth, and families, too.



EXPANDING. We have so much growth and expansion happening all around us!

For the first time since I was called here nearly seven years ago, we have a big group of kids and youth attending camp at Green Lake Lutheran Ministries. Eleven kids and youth will go to Green Lake Lutheran Ministries the week of July 30th. I’m proud that we were able to cover 50% of the camp costs for each of them. In addition, for the first time since 2019, we are going on a youth trip. Eight youth and three adults will take the Amtrak to Montana for a week of kayaking, hiking, fishing, and more at Flathead Lutheran Bible Camp at the end of June. Our kids and youth are empowered to be leaders in worship. Our Christmas program, Epiphany program, and Palm Sunday worship were all led by children and youth. Pastor Jacie has a new emphasis on forming relationships and ministries with high school youth. It’s been a blessing to have a collaborator for a ministry that has needed more time and attention.

COLLABORATIVE. One of the parts of ministry that I deeply missed during the pandemic was collaboration among other ministry leaders, especially those in the Mankato area. This last summer, we partnered with Centenary UMC for our Duluth Mission Trip, which BLC youth attended. We’re also planning to partner together with Centenary to host our community-centered VBS this July 24th-27th. In early July, we’ll also partner with the Mankato-area ELCA churches for Service & Sun, a half-week of service projects and fun activities in the Mankato area for 6th-9th grade youth. I remain very grateful for our collaborative staff, too. I’d especially like to lift up Kaitlin Carter, who is a huge asset to our children’s ministry with her hospitality, creativity, and organization.



Bethlehem Lutheran Church: Office Report 2022
By Congregation Services Coordinator, Molly Nelson and
Office Assistant, Christine Schulz | April 2023

2022 by the numbers:

7 Baptisms

- Linden Halvorson, Parent(s) Joshua & Sadie Halvorson, January 16
- Dowain Kerner, March 13
- Everlee Glaser, Parent(s) Heather & Jesse Glaser, April 3
- Joshua Herzberg, May 18
- Crosby Janssen, Parent(s) Ashley & Luke Janssen, June 5
- Aubrey Matter, Parent(s) Angela Bakke & Travis Matter, Nov. 20
- Norah Blanck, Parent(s) Kate & Billy Blanck, December 11

5 Weddings

- Nick Thul & Izzy Sullivan, August 27
- Heather Hammond & Wayne Luebbert, September 17
- Molly Butler & Noah Nelson, Oct. 22
- Daniella Elker & Ben Johnson, November 12
- Michaela Bruder & Dowain Kerner, December 3

19 Funerals

- Ruth Wood, March 10
- Pastor Al Girtz, March 18
- Darlene Nelson, April 1
- Kathryn Hanson, April 9
- Lowell Carpenter, May 11
- Betty Warnke, May 12
- Lavon Mutch, May 13
- Kathleen Yale, May 14
- Carol Hauge, June 18
- Donald Ziemke, June 30
- Bruce Sherwood, July 30
- Alice Kollos, August 5
- Henry Torgerson August 12
- Bronwyn Hughes, August 23
- Robert "Bob" Qualset, September 14
- Ann Widness, October 7
- Dorwin "Andy" Anderson, Oct. 10
- Shirley Ann Peterson, October 19
- Steven Braun, December 5

Attendance: In-person attendance went up, averaging 197 per week in 2022 compared to 150 in 2021. Online worship attendance trended down, averaging 20 views per week in 2022 compared to 60 in 2021.

BLC Online:

Website traffic 13,000 views in 2022, and we have averaged about 1,000 views per month since 2021.

Facebook Our Facebook reached 20,440 in 2022, down from 31,781 in 2021.

Instagram Up 67 compared to 0. We just unlocked and reactivated our page in October, but already in 2023 we have tripled, with 213 people reached.

Hours: Our building is used 7 days a week, nearly every week, during the program year. Our office is open to the public 9-5pm Tuesday-Thursday. Church meetings and building rental occupy, on average, another 15 hours a week outside the public hours

Organizations Using Our Building

- Long Term: Lutheran Social Services (LSS) has been a tenant in our building since 1975 and The REACH joined them in 2011.
- Weekly: VITA Tax Services, Musicorum, YWCA's Girl's on the Run
- Monthly: Sons of Norway, Lincoln Park Neighborhood Association, Lifelong Learners Council, Riverbend 4-H Club
- Occasionally: Scouts of America, Via de Cristo, South Front St Block Party Committee, Organ Recitals, Grief Support, Cancer Support, Minneopa Bison Herd, A Fresh Start, Teens Encounter Christ (TEC), Connections Ministry, Elections Precinct, Red Cross Blood Drive, Mankato Public Safety, Flu/Covid Immunization Clinics, NicBluCares, Night to Unite, YWCA Day Camp

Member events include: Graduation parties, birthday parties, baby showers, anniversary celebrations, funerals, funeral lunches, and small group gatherings.

Volunteers: We have well over 100 volunteers assisting in everything Bethlehem does, from worship services, Wednesday night suppers, funeral serving, Family Faith Formation events and education, adult education, and so much more. Our volunteers regularly meet the needs of Connections shelter and Crossroad's Lunch-for-a-Buck.

In the words of pastor Jay, "No one person knows everything that goes on here at Bethlehem." That includes the office staff! Despite coordinating volunteers, we are always amazed at the initiative and helpfulness of Bethlehem members, who often meet needs before we are even made aware of them. Bethlehem wouldn't be Bethlehem without your numerous behind-the-scenes miracles. Thank YOU.

Financial Update 2022

Life at Bethlehem Lutheran Church continued in 2022 in a new post-pandemic form. Worship and activities returned to normal. Pastor Jacie joined the flock as the new Associate Pastor. There were financial ups and downs, but by the end of the year, the finances of the church were in a good place. The following report highlights some of the financial happenings of 2022.

The year began with a positive general fund balance of \$2,082. The general fund balance fluctuated over the course of the year between a small positive balance and a very large deficit balance of \$43,000 at the end of September. The year-end general fund balance was \$0. About \$15,000 of general funds were placed in savings to cover shortfalls in 2023. The budget for 2023 is a \$13,700 deficit budget. The Budget Committee worked hard to present a budget which meets the needs of the congregation, but is fiscally responsible. Member giving by year end was at 99% of budget (budget of \$525,500 vs. actual of \$518,464).

Benevolence giving, as always, was strong in 2022. Total benevolence giving was \$145,147. A total of 28 organizations (local, national and international) benefitted from your generosity. A full list of the organizations and amounts contributed is included with this report. The monthly mission projects continue to provide much needed assistance to deserving organizations.

The Stewardship Board held its annual general fund pledge campaign for 2023. A total of 172 pledges were received. The total dollar amount pledged was \$354,789. The number of members using electronic giving continues to increase. Many members are now using the Breeze program for personalized electronic giving. Any questions about electronic giving should be directed to the church office.

Along with the general fund pledge campaign, a new three-year capital campaign (2023 – 2025) called “Imagine, A Vision of Hope” was initiated. A total of 146 commitments were received for this three-year campaign. The total amount pledged was \$854,186. The balance year-end in the Mission Investment Fund demand account (money held for mortgage payments) was \$245,414. The Church Council passed a motion that any funds held for the mortgage in excess of \$98,000 (one year of mortgage payments) will be paid directly to the principal balance. The year-end principal balance of the mortgage was \$1,015,207. A principal payment of \$175,000 was made in early 2023.

As of December 31, 2022, Bethlehem had cash on hand of \$350,313. This consisted of four things. The general checking account at MinnStar Bank had a balance of -\$100. Second, the MinnStar Bank savings account had a balance of \$104,899. These are funds that have been restricted by the donor and are being held for specific purposes. Third, petty cash had a balance of \$100. And finally, the Mission Investment Fund account had a balance of \$245,414.

The budget for 2023 is not a balanced one, so effort needs to be made on both increasing contributions and controlling expenses to make this a reality. Emphasis on electronic giving will continue in the future with various options available – sign up in the church office, look for the “Donate Now” button on the Bethlehem web page, or download the Breeze app to any smart phone.

Thanks to all of you for your continuing support of the ministry and mission of Bethlehem Lutheran Church.

Respectfully Submitted,
Elizabeth Ruiz, Financial Secretary
Jeremy Carter, Treasurer

BETHLEHEM LUTHERAN CHURCH

Financial Review 2022 Report

On February 4th, Elizabeth, Frank Larsen and Kristine Rebelein met to review year-end financial information.

We looked over and reviewed the bank reconciliations. There were no discrepancies and everything reconciled to \$0. We reviewed a few checks and they tied back to the recs correctly.

We reviewed the estimated budget vs the actual budget numbers. We discussed some larger differences and they all reconciled correctly.

Payroll was reviewed and it checked out correctly.

We reviewed some payable accounts and they all checked out correctly as well.

Submitted by Kristine Rebelein, Financial Review Committee Chair

Bethlehem Lutheran Church

2022 Benevolence

The following benevolences were paid in 2022					
Bethlehem Endowment Fund		3,000.00			
CADA House		200.00			
Connections Ministry		2,400.00		budgeted benevolence	
Connections Ministry		2,381.75		March mission project	
Doctors Without Borders		100.00			
ECHO Foodshelf		2,989.49		October mission project	
ELCA Disaster Relief		120.00		Ukraine	
Global Health Ministries		5,371.80		April mission project	
God's Global Barnyard		9,553.57		December mission project	
Green Lake Lutheran Ministries		800.00		budgeted benevolence	
Holy Grounds		1,008.91		November mission project	
House of Hope		1,888.75		January mission project	
Iambi Secondary School		9,199.97		September mission project	
Lutheran Campus Ministry		1,393.73		August mission project	
Lutheran Social Services		5,400.00		The REACH meal program	
Lutheran Social Services		300.00		The	

				REACH
Lutheran Social Services		200.00		
Lutheran World Relief		60,947.70		School Kits
Lutheran World Relief		8,476.98		June mission project
Missionary - Pastor Kristin Engstrom		2,480.00		
Open Door Health Center		1,026.25		May mission project
Partners for Affordable Housing		846.48		February mission project
Restricted memorials		5,655.00		various destinations
Samaritan Fund		3,275.50		assistance for church members
SE MN Synod Support		14,000.00		budgeted benevolence
SE MN Synod Support		1,500.00		Add'l Contribution
World Hunger		200.00		
YWCA Girls, Inc.		430.66		July 2022 mission project
TOTAL		\$ 145,146.54		

BETHLEHEM LUTHERAN CHURCH

Budget & Actual 2022 and Budget 2023

		<u>2022 Budget</u>	<u>2022 Actual</u>	<u>2023 Budget</u>
	INCOME			
1	General Fund Offerings	525,500.00	518,464.05	525,000.00
2	Loose Offerings	2,000.00	3,041.36	2,500.00
3	Initial Offering	200.00	111.00	150.00
4	Lent & Holy Week	2,000.00	1,451.00	2,000.00
5	Christmas	<u>3,500.00</u>	<u>1,932.25</u>	<u>3,500.00</u>
6	Offerings (unrestricted)	\$ 533,200.00	\$ 524,999.66	\$ 533,150.00
7				
8	Benevolence	60,000.00	51,168.34	60,000.00
9	LIGHT Offerings	100.00	-	100.00
10	Capital Fund	7,500.00	10,051.05	7,500.00
11	Samaritan Fund	1,000.00	1,260.00	1,000.00
12	Landscaping	1,000.00	25.00	1,000.00
13	Memorial (restricted)	1,500.00	5,655.00	1,500.00
14	Music & Worship	1,000.00	1,524.42	1,000.00
15	Technology Fund	-	3,000.00	-
16	School Kits	-	65,300.00	-
17	LIGHT Program	-	5,347.26	-
18	Youth	<u>5,000.00</u>	<u>4,836.27</u>	<u>5,000.00</u>
19	Offerings (temporarily restricted)	\$ 77,100.00	\$ 148,167.34	\$ 77,100.00
20				
21	Mortgage Reduction	\$ 25,000.00	\$ 248,649.00	\$ 98,244.00
22				
23	Memorials (unrestricted)	10,000.00	4,298.26	10,000.00
24	Thrivent Choice Funds	2,000.00	1,981.00	2,000.00
25	Serving Groups	2,500.00	4,176.88	3,000.00
26	Radio Broadcast	5,200.00	3,988.66	5,200.00
27	Taxi	150.00	175.00	150.00
28	Wednesday Night Suppers (free will)	1,000.00	3,554.49	2,500.00
29	Adult Education Programs	250.00	218.00	250.00
30	Confirmation Fees	300.00	375.00	300.00
31	Facility Usage Fees	13,000.00	16,164.35	14,000.00
32	Lease Payment - LSS	44,000.00	44,000.04	44,000.00
33	Lease Payment - The REACH	25,200.00	25,200.00	25,200.00
34	Interest on Checking	65.00	54.73	60.00
35	Interest on Savings	500.00	204.50	250.00
36	Fair Trade Coffee	500.00	2,373.58	500.00
37	Miscellaneous Income	<u>100.00</u>	<u>428.28</u>	<u>100.00</u>
38	Other Income (unrestricted)	\$ 104,765.00	\$ 107,192.77	\$ 107,510.00
39				
40	Transfer from MIF savings for mtg pmnt	\$ 73,244.00	\$ -	\$ -
41				

42				
43	TOTAL INCOME	\$ 813,309.00	\$ 1,029,008.77	\$ 816,004.00
44				
45				
46				
47				
48				
49				
50	EXPENSES			
51	Boards			
52	Church Council	450.00	333.66	450.00
53	Community & Global Missions	100.00	-	100.00
54	Adult Education	500.00	365.97	300.00
55	Welcome and Inclusion	750.00	1,006.69	500.00
56	Personnel Committee	100.00	-	100.00
57	Stewardship	<u>400.00</u>	-	<u>200.00</u>
58	Board Totals	\$ 2,300.00	\$ 1,706.32	\$ 1,650.00
59				
60	Music & Worship			
61	Music Supplies (adult choirs)	500.00	-	500.00
62	Music and Worship (savings)		655.10	
63	Bell Choir Supplies (Sr Bells)	350.00	90.45	350.00
64	Youth Music	50.00	-	100.00
65	Organ & Piano Tuning	1,200.00	1,029.00	1,200.00
66	Worship Technology (from savings)	-	2,986.18	-
67	Copyright Costs	465.00	405.00	465.00
68	Worship Supplies	500.00	112.54	250.00
69	Communion Supplies	1,000.00	480.95	600.00
70	Church Decorations	200.00	171.13	200.00
71	Guest Musicians	1,000.00	375.00	1,000.00
72	Pulpit Supply	600.00	-	300.00
73	Organist music & expenses	250.00	169.88	250.00
74	Bethlehem Brass	<u>200.00</u>	<u>49.57</u>	<u>150.00</u>
75	Music & Worship Total	\$ 6,315.00	\$ 6,524.80	\$ 5,365.00
76				
77	Family Faith Formation			
78	LIGHT & NightLIGHT	2,500.00	1,121.70	2,500.00
79	LIGHT & NightLIGHT (savings - library)	-	918.02	-
80	Milestones Ministries	900.00	1,245.64	1,000.00
81	Nursery/Manger/Worship Bags	500.00	207.03	300.00
82	FLIGHTS: Family Fun Nights	600.00	401.35	500.00
83	Faith at Home Resources	600.00	-	100.00
84	Children's Retreat & Summer Camp	1,300.00	548.58	1,500.00
85	Vacation Bible School	3,000.00	3,444.26	3,000.00

86	Christmas Program	100.00	132.26	100.00
87	Background Checks	300.00	159.50	200.00
88	Youth Curriculum & Resources	300.00	230.19	250.00
89	Middle Grade Ministries / Confirmation	1,400.00	1,287.03	1,400.00
90	Confirmation Camp	1,200.00	900.00	1,200.00
91	Youth (from savings)	-	1,151.26	
92	Relational Ministry	100.00	51.14	100.00
93	Youth Retreats & Activities	2,000.00	1,884.69	1,800.00
94	Summer Mission Trip	<u>1,000.00</u>	<u>2,009.90</u>	<u>1,000.00</u>
95		\$ 15,800.00	\$ 15,692.55	\$ 14,950.00
96				
97				
98				
99				
100	Benevolence			
101	Southeastern MN Synod	14,000.00	15,500.00	15,000.00
102	Green Lake Bible Camp	800.00	800.00	MMP
103	The REACH Meal Program	5,400.00	5,400.00	MMP
104	Samaritan Fund	3,000.00	5,675.50	5,000.00
105	Monthly Mission Projects	60,000.00	51,168.34	60,000.00
106	Memorials - Restricted	3,000.00	5,655.00	3,000.00
107	Sunday School Missions	100.00	-	100.00
108	School Kits	-	<u>60,947.70</u>	-
109	Benevolence Total	\$ 86,300.00	\$ 145,146.54	\$ 83,100.00
110				
111	Administration			
112	Office Supplies	3,000.00	3,295.03	2,750.00
113	Postage	2,000.00	2,553.79	2,250.00
114	Copy Machine	6,000.00	6,526.29	5,500.00
115	Telephone & Internet	3,300.00	3,974.16	3,500.00
116	Website Design & Support	200.00	418.00	200.00
117	Computer Support / Updates	3,000.00	5,327.24	3,000.00
118	Computer Equipment	6,000.00	114.34	6,000.00
119	Capital Campaign Expense		61,995.30	
120	Rally Sunday / Wednesday	400.00	504.97	400.00
121	Advertising	180.00	185.00	180.00
122	Radio Broadcast	5,600.00	5,512.80	5,600.00
123	ACH / Simply Giving Fee	1,200.00	905.72	1,000.00
124	Taxi	2,000.00	1,496.50	2,000.00
125	Devotionals	500.00	570.25	500.00
126	Serving Groups	1,000.00	3,651.33	1,500.00
127	Wednesday Night Supper	5,000.00	5,610.61	6,000.00
128	Offering Envelopes	500.00	1,023.50	500.00
129	Synod Assembly	200.00	600.00	600.00
130	Theological Conference	350.00	-	350.00

131	MN River Conference Membership	150.00	150.00	150.00
132	Reconciling Works	1,000.00	1,000.00	1,000.00
133	Softball Team	380.00	380.00	380.00
134	Staff Recognition	125.00	922.93	125.00
135	Volunteer Recognition	100.00	-	100.00
136	Misc Expense	100.00	132.72	100.00
137	Fair Trade Coffee	500.00	2,238.98	500.00
138	Workers' Compensation Insurance	<u>4,970.00</u>	<u>5,281.00</u>	<u>5,300.00</u>
139	Administration Total	\$ 47,755.00	\$ 114,370.46	\$ 49,485.00
140				
141				
142	Mission Investment Fund Mortgage	\$ 98,244.00	\$ 165,706.00	\$ 98,244.00
143				
144				
145				
146				
147	Property			
148	General Property			
149	Repairs & Maintenance (general)	15,000.00	10,147.22	15,000.00
150	Repairs & Maintenance (major)	15,000.00	1,017.50	15,000.00
151	Facilities Savings	-	4,634.78	-
152	Inspection / Service Contracts	3,000.00	3,627.17	3,000.00
153	Custodial Supplies	2,000.00	1,648.48	1,500.00
154	Property Insurance	13,200.00	13,951.68	14,000.00
155	Grounds Maintenance (snow removal / lawn)	6,000.00	3,125.63	5,000.00
156	Landscaping (savings)	-	458.00	-
157	Equipment	<u>500.00</u>	<u>832.78</u>	<u>500.00</u>
158	General Property Total	\$ 54,700.00	\$ 39,443.24	\$ 54,000.00
159				
160	Utilities			
161	Gas	15,000.00	20,264.23	18,000.00
162	Electric	22,000.00	24,493.28	21,000.00
163	Water & Sewer	4,250.00	4,037.89	4,250.00
164	Waste Removal	<u>3,200.00</u>	<u>4,624.09</u>	<u>4,800.00</u>
165	Utilities Total	\$ 44,450.00	\$ 53,419.49	\$ 48,050.00
166				
167	Property Total	\$ 99,150.00	\$ 92,862.73	\$ 102,050.00
168				
169	Personnel			
170	Pastors			
171	Salary / Housing	151,434.00	115,438.48	142,087.00
172	Pension / Medical	37,726.00	42,949.36	53,449.00
173	Continuing Education	1,250.00	897.68	2,250.00
174	Travel Expense	1,800.00	1,698.95	3,000.00

175	Books & Publications	250.00	130.49	500.00
176	Professional Expenses	<u>300.00</u>	<u>375.15</u>	<u>600.00</u>
177	Pastors' Total	\$ 192,760.00	\$ 161,490.11	\$ 201,886.00
178				
179	Sabbatical Expense	\$ -		\$ -
180				
181	Lay Staff			
182	Wages	213,038.00	218,339.51	219,463.00
183	FICA / Medicare Taxes	17,123.60	17,724.70	17,615.00
184	Pension Plan	9,193.40	8,692.08	9,575.00
185	Health Insurance	18,530.00	18,530.04	18,919.00
186	Supplemental Health Insurance	2,400.00	2,400.00	2,400.00
187	Travel Expense: Family Faith Formation	1,200.00	1,002.17	1,200.00
188	Cont Ed / Prof Exp: Family Faith Formation	1,600.00	1,381.88	1,600.00
189	Continuing Education: Office Staff / Music Staff	<u>1,600.00</u>	<u>876.79</u>	<u>2,200.00</u>
190	Lay Staff Total	\$ 264,685.00	\$ 268,947.17	\$ 272,972.00
191				
192	Personnel Total	\$ 457,445.00	\$ 430,437.28	\$ 474,858.00
193				
194	TOTAL EXPENSES	\$ 813,309.00	\$ 972,446.68	\$ 829,702.00
195				
196	Projected Budgeted Surplus / (Deficit)	\$ -		\$ (13,698.00)

BETHLEHEM LUTHERAN CHURCH
2022-23 Council/Board/Committee Goals & Activities

Board/Committee:	<u>Council</u>		
President:	<u>Mary Bliesmer</u>	Member at Large:	<u>Aaron Geringer</u>
President Elect:	<u>Jason Bruns</u>	Member at Large:	<u>Matt Drewitz</u>
Vice-President:	<u>Marie Slotemaker</u>	Member at Large:	<u>Jessica Auel</u>
Secretary:	<u>Bob Ihrig</u>	Lead Pastor:	<u>Pr. Jay Dahlvang</u>
Treasurer:	<u>Jeremy Carter</u>	Associate Pastor:	<u>Pr. Jacie Richmond</u>

2022-23 Goals

1. 2022-2026 Strategic Plan

We will support implementation of the new strategic plan for the church.

2. 2022 Capital Campaign & Mortgage Payoff

We will support the 2022 capital campaign to pay off the BLC mortgage.

3. New Associate Pastor

We will welcome and provide support and encouragement to the new Associate Pastor.

4. Zambia Ministry Partnership

We will cultivate and support a partnership with Pastor Kristin Engstrom in her pastoral ministry in Zambia.

5. Connections Shelter Ministry

We will affirm and support Bethlehem’s relationship with Connections Shelter Ministry through a continued commitment of financial resources and volunteerism by members of Bethlehem.

6. Welcome & Inclusion

We will continue to emphasize efforts to proclaim the gospel; become a more welcoming congregation, and invite participation in our mission and ministry. This will include supporting the implementation of the Reconciling in Christ resolution by the Welcome & Inclusion Board and the congregation.

7. Bethlehem Pastoral and Lay Staff

We will value and support our pastoral and lay staff with fair compensation, a good work environment, encouragement to develop their professional skills, recognition of their accomplishments, and challenge to strive for excellence in their areas of responsibility.

2022-23 Activities & Accomplishments

1. 2022-2026 Strategic Plan

We finalized 5 new strategic goals, established measureable objectives and practices and identified BLC individuals and groups to be responsible for addressing specific goals. This process was completed on January 17.

This information has been posted on the BLC website for congregational members, staff and groups to implement.

2. Capital Campaign & Mortgage Payoff

- A. We monitored and were updated on the capital campaign planning & implementation process at monthly meetings of the Council.
- B. President Mary Bliesmer attended meetings of the capital campaign steering committee to be informed and provide appropriate input and service to the campaign.
- C. Secretary Bob Ihrig served as a member of the steering committee in his designated role as Information Chairperson.
- D. We approved the required financial support for the GSB Company to coordinate the capital campaign.
- E. Council members attended the campaign's October 8 leadership event and October 23 congregational dinner to provide support to the campaign.
- F. Council members provided individual financial commitments to the capital campaign.
- G. We approved advance payments of the mortgage principal in November and February/March as member contributions became available to reduce overall mortgage interest payments and accelerate the payoff process. This has been a consistent practice by the Council since the mortgage was originally established.
- H. On December 20, we approved maintaining a 1-year fund balance of monthly mortgage payments in the Mission Investment Funds with all funds received in excess of this balance to be applied to principal payoffs. Plans were approved to celebrate \$100,000 mortgage payoffs as they are made during the next 3 years.

3. New Associate Pastor

- A. We monitored and supported the process conducted by the call committee during June – August.
- B. We participated in the special congregational meeting to support the call of Pastor Jacie Richmond on August 21.
- C. We approved a special gift and participated in the pastoral installation reception for Pastor Jacie held on December 4.
- D. We approved 2023 pastoral compensation consistent with SE MN Synod compensation guidelines for Pastor Jacie.
- E. We welcomed Pastor Jacie to her first BLC Council meeting on November 15.

4. Zambia Ministry Partnership

- A. We welcomed Pastor Kristin Engstrom on September 4. She preached, led an adult forum, and made a presentation of a cloth from the Zambian Lutheran Church that hangs in our library.
- B. We initiated and approved funding for Pastor Engstrom through the Bethlehem Endowment Fund.
- C. Pastor Engstrom has been invited to participate in our Good Friday worship service via video.
- D. We continue to pray weekly for Pastor Engstrom.

5. Connections Shelter Ministry

A. Member Support

We continued to encourage Bethlehem members to support the Connections Shelter Ministry with individual financial contributions and volunteerism during the multiple weeks designated for

Bethlehem from October 2022 to April 2023. Individual Council members were included in providing such support.

B. Monthly Meal Support

We continued congregational support for Connections Shelter Ministry in the 2023 annual budget with a monthly designation of funding to support its daily meal program.

6. **Welcome & Inclusion**

A. Reconciling Works

We continued financial support for the Reconciling Works national organization in the 2023 BLC annual budget. This is an annual allocation to facilitate the organization's work with church Reconciling In Christ (RIC) efforts.

B. Welcome Statement

We reviewed and approved an amended BLC Welcome Statement on August 16 as proposed by the Welcome & Inclusion Board.

C. Adult Forum

Council members attended the adult forum on January 29 sponsored by the Welcome & Inclusion Board to update the congregation on Welcome & Inclusion Board activities pertaining to the Reconciling in Christ resolution.

D. New Members

We approved and welcomed 8 new BLC members on October 18 and 7 new members on February 21.

7. **Bethlehem Pastoral and Lay Staff**

A. Lay Staff Compensation

We approved adjusted recommendations of the Personnel Committee and the Budget Committee for salary increases for lay staff, weekend janitors, Wednesday evening supper coordinator and the nursery attendant for 2023.

B. Pastoral Compensation

We approved a 2023 salary increase for Pastor Jay Dahlvang and developed a 2023 compensation package for new Associate Pastor Jacie Richmond based upon the compensation guidelines of the SE Minnesota Synod.

C. Lay Staff Performance Reviews

We were informed of and encouraged by the positive outcomes of annual lay staff performance reviews conducted in June & July by Pastor Jay and members of the Personnel Committee. We were also informed of and encouraged by the positive outcome of the 6-month performance review of Molly Nelson, Congregational Services Coordinator, on February 6 by Pastor Jay and 2 members of the Personnel Committee.

D. Revised Job Descriptions

We reviewed and approved revisions of Family Faith Formation Director & Office Assistant lay staff job descriptions based upon lay staff performance reviews and recommended by the Personnel Committee.

E. Pastoral Performance Review

The President, President-Elect and Secretary conducted the annual review of Pastor Jay on September 19 with positive results.

F. Congregational Services Coordinator

We approved the hiring of Molly Nelson as the new BLC Congregational Services Coordinator effective July 5. Molly was interviewed and recommended for hiring by Pastor Jay and members of the Personnel Committee.

G. Lay Staff Compensation Framework

We continued our discussion and collaboration with the BLC Personnel Committee to develop a comprehensive lay staff compensation framework that reflects priorities and essential criteria for future compensation as well as comparable national church salaries.

H. Family Faith Formation Director Sabbatical

We reviewed and welcomed the Personnel Committee report that highlighted the positive outcomes of the first sabbatical leave for Anna Wencl as the BLC Family Faith Formation Director.

Members of the Council attended the adult forum held on September 25 by Anna to review the details of the sabbatical.

We reviewed and approved proposed revisions of the FFF sabbatical leave policy by the Personnel Committee

I. Wednesday Night Supper Coordinator:

We reviewed and approved a Personnel Committee revision of the Wednesday Night Supper Coordinator position job description and compensation.

We interviewed and hired Amy Haigh for this position.

J. Pastor Jay Ordination Anniversary Celebration

We approved financial support for the July 31 celebration of the 25th anniversary of the ordination of Pastor Jay. Members of the Council personally contributed to an anniversary gift and attended and participated in the celebration event.

We will work with the Community & Global Mission Board to provide adult forums about established monthly mission partners.

4. **Lifelong Learning Programs**

We will schedule adult forums throughout the year on a variety of topics of interest to BLC members to promote life-long learning.

5. **Use of Video Technology in Grounds for Joy**

We will encourage other BLC groups to become familiar with and use the video technology in Grounds for Joy for their meetings.

2022-23 Board Activities & Accomplishments

1. **Small Group Directory**: Updating of the small group directory has not been discussed yet with Molly Nelson given the many other responsibilities she has had during her first 6 months as Congregational Services Coordinator. This will be pursued for next year.
2. **Spiritual Learning**: The Wednesday morning **Book of Faith** and **Life in the Spirit** groups met regularly in-person this fall and winter facilitated by the pastors.
3. **Monthly Mission Forums**: The monthly mission of ECHO Food Shelf was presented as an adult forum topic on October 16.
4. **Lifelong Learning Programs**: Adult forums were scheduled throughout the year on a variety of topics of interest to BLC members to promote life-long learning. See Below.

SEPTEMBER

	4	Mission Partnership in Zambia	Pastor Kristin Engstrm
	18	Dragonfly Project	Julie Bonde & Janelle
Spelbrink			
	25	“I Will Walk 500 Miles: Anna’s Sabbatical Adventure”	Anna Wencil

OCTOBER

	2	YMCA Mentoring Program	Allison Braswell
	9	How We Count The Vote in Blue Earth County	Michael Stalberger
	16	ECHO Food Shelf	William Broussard (Board
Member)			

NOVEMBER

	6	Bethlehem Endowment Fund	Chuck Piehl & David
Morgan			

DECEMBER

	11	Christmas Hymn Sing	Christine Schulz
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JANUARY

	8	Meet The Pastors	Pr. Jay Dahlvang & Pr.
Jacie Richmond			
	22	New Member Orientation	Pr. Jacie Richmond &
Welcome/Inclusion			
			Board
	29	Reconciling in Christ – More Understanding	BLC Welcome &
Inclusion Board			

FEBRUARY

Staff)	5	The REACH	Tasha Moulton (REACH
	12	Guardianship & Conservatorship Planning	Shannon Butler
	19	Reconciliation & Diversity Initiatives	Mohamed Asladig (Mankato Diversity Council)
Bethlehem Members	26	Bible & Church Trivia Pursuit Contest: What Do You Know?	Pr. Jay Dahlvang &

MARCH

	5	Connections Ministry Shelter	Pr. Collette Broady-Grund
	12	Health Care Workers: Challenges & Changes	Mary Bliesmer & Others
Representatives	19	Refugee/Asylum Seeker Synod WELCOME Project	Kathy Chatelaine & BLC
	26	My Journey on the Appalachian Trail	Jeannie Phillips

APRIL (Planned)

	2	Hymn Sing	Christine Schulz
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MAY (Planned)

	7	Teachers: Challenges & Changes	Todd Hanselman & Others
Mission Board &	21	Celebration of 100,000 School Kits	Community & Global Lutheran World Relief

5. Forum Meeting Room & Attendance: Adult forum attendance has improved significantly with the move from the Heritage Room to Grounds for Joy. We continue to become more familiar with the sound and video systems for use in forum presentations.

BETHLEHEM LUTHERAN CHURCH
2022-23 Board/Committee Goals & Activities

Board/Committee: Children’s Board

Co-Chairperson: Shawna Petersen-Brown

Co-Chairperson: Liz Paul

Secretary: _____

Members: Abbe Austin _____ Josie Lust _____
Chelsey Kunkel _____ Brittany Renberg _____

Staff Liaison: Anna Wencel – FFF Director

Staff Liaison: Kaitlin Carter –LIGHT/NightLIGHT Coordinator

Council Liaison: Marie Slotemaker

2022-2023 Board Goals and Activities (Includes 5-Year Strategic Plan and Other Identified Goals)

Goals

1. We will provide needed support, feedback, and consultation to Family Faith Formation staff as they plan programming for families and children to ensure continued engagement.
2. We will plan and execute events to engage families, including parents and children.
3. We will collaborate with staff to provide resources to families, including parents and children, to facilitate a connection to church and engagement in worship.
4. We will increase engagement with and support of the community through Family Faith Formation activities in consultation with staff.

Planned Activities

1. We will lead the planning and execution of family (FLIGHT) events twice during the year.
2. We will lead the planning and execution of special events and projects on behalf of children and their families.
3. We will collaborate with staff to develop and provide resources to families, which may include bulletin board content, resources to support families going through changes and challenges, and/or gatherings of parents.
4. We will collaborate with staff to develop and maintain resources for children in worship.
5. We will provide consultation to staff and other needed support regarding the execution of children’s programming in response to staffing changes and the needs of the surrounding communities.

2022-2023 Board Activities & Accomplishments

1. We led the planning and execution of two family (FLIGHT) events, one at Tourtellotte Pool in Summer 2022, and one at All Seasons Arena in Winter 2023.
2. We led fundraising efforts to supplement the financial support Bethlehem provides to children going to Green Lake Lutheran Ministries camp in Summer 2023.

3. We provided consultation and support for several Family Faith Formation events during 2022-2023, including Vacation Bible School (VBS), the Fall programming kickoff, and the Christmas and Epiphany programs. This includes consulting with staff in community engagement efforts for events such as Trunk or Treat.
4. We provided consultation and support to BLC staff regarding the acquisition of materials for the church library, which has been converted to provide space and materials to engage children.

**BETHLEHEM LUTHERAN CHURCH
2022-2023 Board/Committee Goals & Activities**

Board/Committee: Community & Global Mission Board
Chairperson: Sandy Abild
Secretary: DeAnn Bennett
Members: Jan Blaisdell
Werner Fick **Staff Liaisons:** Pastor Jay Dahlvang
Amy Haigh Pastor Jacie Richmond
Sue Larsen **Council Liaison:** Matt Drewitz

2022-23 Board Goals & Activities (Includes 5-Year Strategic Plan and Other Identified Goals)

Goals

1. We will support our Monthly Mission Partners.
2. We will provide mission partners/goals and posts for congregation to view in Narthex; engage more Bethlehem members in the support through volunteering with ongoing missions, such as Connections Shelter & Lunch 4 Buck/MSU
3. We will work with Elizabeth Ruiz for monthly financial updates
4. We will watch for organizations in the community for mission opportunities
5. We will work with existing mission partners and organize a Temple Talk (before service) or adult forum

Planned Activities – Monthly Missions

1. We will continue to support long-time missions and look for new possibilities for monthly mission partners.
2. We will promote Monthly Missions using STAR articles, display boards and Temple Talks, Adult Forum or videos.
3. We will set financial contribution goals each month for Monthly Missions and post the goals in the STAR article and on the Narthex display.
4. We will work with Connections Shelter and Lunch 4 a Buck/MSU (Jan Blaisdell, contact) programs to provide meals/services
5. We will give consideration to maintaining a permanent box located in the narthex for donated items for Holy Grounds.
6. We will encourage our Monthly Mission Partners to take on responsibility for promoting their missions and encourage the participation of BLC members.

2022 Monthly Missions

July	YWCA Girls Inc.	October	ECHO Food Shelf
August	Crossroads Campus Ministry	November	Holy Grounds
September	Iambi Secondary School Scholarships	December	Gods Global Barnyard – ELCA World Hunger

2023 Monthly Missions

January	The REACH	April	WELCOME (the Cruz Family)
February	Green Lake Bible Camp	May	Global Health Ministry
March	ECHO Food Shelf	June	Partners for Housing

2022-23 Board Activities & Accomplishments

1. We raised a total of \$37,704.25 in 2022 for our monthly missions. We raised \$21,152 from July to December of 2022.
2. Our planning is in the works for a May 21st Celebration for Werner Fick of 100,000 School Kits delivered. Amy Haigh is organizing details and Pastor Jay has arranged for Pastor Lisa Kipp from Lutheran World Relief to attend in recognition.
3. We are involved in an ongoing project for produce Newborn Kits. Amy Haigh is the board contact. We are gathering new/gently used items for newborn kits. A collection box has been located in the BLC narthex for donated items.
4. Our ongoing project of supporting Lunch 4 Buck at Crossroads Campus Ministry continues. Jan Blaisdell is the board contact. Jan has done a fantastic job of providing meals for up to 40 students the 1st Tuesday of every month. Jan will continue to reach out when help is needed to cover food/serving students
5. We updated the bulletin boards in the narthex with the current monthly mission partner and monthly donations collected.

BETHLEHEM LUTHERAN CHURCH

2022-23 Board/Committee Goals & Activities

Board/Committee: Endowment Board
Chairperson: Chuck Piehl
Treasurer: Kristine Rebelein
Members: Ray Beckel **President-Elect:** Jason Bruns
 Dennis Sandersfeld **Staff Liaison:** Pr. Jay Dahlvang
 Sara Maslakow

2022-2023 Board Goals & Activities (Includes 5-Year Strategic Plan and Other Identified Goals)

Goals

1. We will continue the long tradition of fiscal responsibility in the management of the Bethlehem’s Endowment Fund.
2. We will grow the Endowment Fund through prudent investments consistent with the purpose of the Fund and future donations.
3. We will grow the Endowment Fund by encouraging future contributions.
4. We will share income produced by the Fund in support Christian ministries in the local community and the world at large.
5. We will support the future of the church through scholarships for further education for Bethlehem members, particularly its youth.

Planned Activities

1. We will promote the growth of the Fund through judicious investments that will insure the sustainability of the fund in years ahead.
2. We will support special mission programs of the congregation within the local community and the world at large.
3. We will select and fund recipients of the annual Endowment Scholarship Program at Bethlehem Lutheran Church.
4. We will develop ways to inform congregation members of donation opportunities available through the Endowment Fund.
5. We will identify ways to explain to the congregation the goals and activities of the Endowment Fund.

2022-23 Board Activities & Accomplishments

1. To strengthen financial management of the Endowment Fund into the future, the Board approved an investment plan and authorized consolidation of assets into a single investment portfolio, which was completed in February 2023.
2. The Endowment Fund’s *Year End 2022 Endowment for Annual Report* is attached. The Board established a budget for grants to be made during the year 2023 from income generated by Fund investments.
3. The Board will continue the long-standing process of awarding Endowment Scholarships at Bethlehem Lutheran Church.
4. The Endowment Board is reviewing ways of informing the congregation of the process for requesting grants from the Endowment Fund.
5. The Endowment Board made a presentation at a Sunday Adult Forum on November 6, 2022, which included a PowerPoint presentation and question-and-answer session about the past, present, and future plans of the Endowment.

BETHLEHEM LUTHERAN CHURCH

2022-23 Board/Committee Goals & Activities

Board/Committee Fair Trade Committee

Co-Chairperson: Paulette Bertrand Secretary: Betty Groth

Co-Chairperson: Jolene Beckel Member: Etta Poole

2022-2023 Committee Goals & Activities (Includes 5-Year Strategic Plan and Other Identified Goals)

1. We will promote Fair Trade Products.

- Objective #1: We will maintain and sell fair trade products at BLC through the front office.
- Objective #2: We will provide opportunities for BLC members to sample Fair Trade products.
- Objective #3: We will sell Fair Trade products in the narthex during the month of October after services.

Person-to person contact objectives, i.e. selling products, sampling, will only occur when it is deemed safe by COVID-19 guidelines.

2. We will promote Fair Trade in the community.

- Objective # 1: Participate in one MAFTTI event per year, or as available.
NEW: This can include virtual events sponsored by MAFTTI.

3. We will educate BLC members about Fair Trade practices and products.

- Objective # 1: We will speak in front of the congregation about Fair Trade one Sunday during the year.
- Objective # 5: We will work with LIGHT program coordinator to incorporate a Fair Trade education component (game, skit, etc.)

4. We will be financially self-sufficient.

- Objective # 1: Fair Trade products will be sold at cost. Our objective is to break even each year.

Planned Activities

1. We will increase purchase opportunities on Sunday morning during Fair Trade Month and certain holidays.
1. We will donate a Fair Trade basket for the Fat Tuesday silent auction.
2. We will participate in Trunk or Treat at Halloween.
3. We will maintain Fair Trade stock in the kiosk at the front office.
4. We will participate in the Mankato Fair Trade Christmas Bazaar.
5. We will make MAFTTI materials available at all functions and in the church office.
6. We will use Fair Trade coffee with church functions.

2022-23 Activities & Accomplishments

1. We donated a basket of Fair Trade items for the Fat Tuesday silent auction in February.
2. We sold Fair Trade items at the SE Minnesota Synod Assembly in Mankato in May of 2022
3. We sampled and sold Fair Trade items during four Sundays in October after services at BLC.
4. A committee member spoke in front of the congregation in October about Fair Trade.
5. We provided Shopping Guides for Fair Trade products in area stores at the BLC information booth.
6. We held a Holiday Fair Trade Bazaar at BLC in conjunction with Mankato Fair Trade and New Ulm's Own.
7. We keep a small inventory of coffee, tea and chocolate for purchase in the church office.

BETHLEHEM LUTHERAN CHURCH

2022-23 Board/Committee Goals & Activities

Board/Committee: **Music & Worship Board**

Chairperson: Nancy Rorem

Secretary: Betty Groth

Members: Marilyn Biedscheid Sheila Stevensen

Linda Frederick

Staff Liaison: Charlie Leftridge

Council Liaison: Jessica Auel

2022-2023 Board Goals & Activities (Includes 5-Year Strategic Plan and Other Identified Goals)

Goals

1. We will support Charlie Leftridge as music & worship director.
2. We will administer seasonal and festival decorations.
3. We will be responsible for Communion set-up, Ushers, Paraments and Décor.
4. We will explore and support the “Musician Scholar” program.
5. We will support choirs and directors with space and equipment.

Planned Activities

1. We will continue to decorate sanctuary for Fall, Advent, Christmas, Palm Sunday and Easter.
2. We will support Charlie Leftridge as the new music and worship director .
3. We will use the time & talent sheets to set up rotating volunteers to set -up communion and usher.
4. We will set-up communion, place appropriate Paraments on alter, and decorate the entryways to church.
5. We will propose the inclusion of the “Musician Scholar” program to our board and work for ways to fund it.

2022-23 Board Activities & Accomplishments

1. We decorated the sanctuary for fall, Advent, Christmas, Palm Sunday and Easter.
2. We continue to support our Music Director, Charlie Leftridge.
3. We set-up and maintained volunteer usher teams.
4. We updated the information sheet for communion set-up and taught any new volunteers.
5. We decorated the entry areas to church and rotated the seasonal paraments on the altar.
6. The Musician Scholar program continues with students from colleges participating in the BLC music program including the choir.
Charlie will have students provide information on how the program is affecting their education.

BETHLEHEM LUTHERAN CHURCH

2022-23 Board/Committee Annual Report

Board/Committee: Personnel Committee

Chairperson/Secretary: Bob Ihrig

Members: Ray Beckel

Pru Gushwa

Brenda Boyer

Dowain Kerner

Brad Groth

President: Mary Bliesmer

Past President: James Arentson

*****I
2022-2023 Committee Goals

1: Lay Staff Performance Reviews

Complete all 2021-22 non-pastoral lay staff performance reviews during the summer of 2022. Complete needed 6-month reviews for new employees.

2: Lay Staff & Music Staff Compensation

Make appropriate recommendations for 2023 non-pastoral lay staff & music staff compensation as part of the 2023 Bethlehem annual budget.

3: Lay Staff & Music Staff Vacancies

Conduct job postings, interviews and make recommendations to fill any vacancies that occur in non-pastoral lay staff positions during 2022-2023. This will include the Congregational Services Coordinator position in July and the Wednesday Evening Supper Coordinator position in August.

An orientation process and checklist shall be developed for all new lay staff assuming positions at Bethlehem.

4: Personnel Policies & Handbook Update

Review and update the personnel policies and handbook as appropriate from the last update approved in February 2022.

5: Updates of Current Lay Staff Job Descriptions & Development of New Job Descriptions

Complete appropriate updates of non-pastoral lay staff job descriptions and develop new job descriptions as needed.

6: Lay Staff Operating Handbooks & Calendars

Operating handbooks & calendars that detail responsibilities completed on a daily, weekly and monthly basis during the year will be updated for all BLC non-pastoral lay staff positions. These are designed to facilitate any future transition in non-pastoral lay staff personnel.

II. 2022-23 Planned Activities

1: Lay Staff Performance Reviews

ACTIVITIES: Annual reviews shall consist of individual meetings with each staff member, the pastors and representatives of the Personnel Committee in the. Staff self-appraisal of performance based upon established questions and goal accomplishment during 2021-2022 will be reviewed and discussed. Performance goals will be established for 2022-2023. Current job descriptions and staff operating handbooks will be updated as needed. Reviews will be completed during the summer and at other appropriate times during the year. Required 6-month reviews of new employees shall be conducted during the year as appropriate.

STATUS: Annual performance reviews have been completed for the 6 major lay staff positions. Reviews have also been completed for the weekend janitors, nursery assistant & Congregational Services Coordinator. The 6-month review for the Wednesday Night Supper Coordinator will be completed in March or April.

<u>Name</u>	<u>Lay Staff Position</u>	<u>Review Date</u>	<u>Completed</u>
❖ Kevin Liebl	Custodian	Summer 2022	X
❖ Charlie Leftridge	Music Director	Summer 2022	X
❖ Elizabeth Ruiz	Financial Secretary	Summer 2022	X
❖ Christine Schulz	Office Assistant and Organist	Summer 2022	X
❖ Anna Wencel	Family Faith Formation Director	Summer 2022	X
❖ Kaitlin Carter	LIGHT/NightLIGHT Coordinator	Summer 2022	X
❖ Molly Nelson	Congregational Services Coordinator (6-Month)	February 2023	X
❖ Marci Rossow	Nursery Assistant	March 2023	X
❖ Grayson Bolstad	Weekend Janitor	March 2023	X
❖ Kellen Schaefer	Weekend Janitor	March 2023	X
❖ Alexa Bolstad	Weekend Janitor	March 2023	X
❖ Amy Haigh	Wednesday Night Supper Coordinator (6-Month)	March/April 2023	

Goal 2: Lay Staff & Music Staff Compensation

ACTIVITIES: Lay staff performance reviews and the financial capabilities of the church will be reviewed to establish appropriate compensation recommendations for the 2023 budget. Recommendations to the Budget Committee will be completed at the September 13, 2022 meeting of the Personnel Committee.

The lay staff compensation framework will be reviewed and updated at committee meetings during the year based upon current employee salary information.

STATUS: Lay staff compensation background information and proposed recommendations were discussed at the August meeting and finalized at the September meeting. These were based upon cost of living increases and needed adjustments to align with national church salary data.

Recommendations were presented to the Budget Committee and Council for review and approval in September and October. Adjustments were made prior to presentation to the congregation for approval at the November 20 semi-annual meeting. The congregation approved these finalized compensation recommendations.

Goal 3: Lay Staff & Music Staff Vacancies

ACTIVITIES: Should vacancies occur in non-pastoral lay staff positions including the Congregational Services Coordinator and Wednesday Night Supper Coordinator positions, appropriate steps will be taken, in accordance with established committee procedures, to post positions, interview candidates and make recommendations of candidates to be hired. Recommendations shall be forwarded to the Council for official approval at appropriate times during the year.

In cooperation with the BLC lay staff, an orientation process and checklist will be developed for all new lay staff personnel assuming positions at Bethlehem.

STATUS: The vacancy in the Congregational Services Coordinator position was filled with a job posting, interview and selection of Molly Nelson who assumed responsibilities on July 5. The vacancy in the Wednesday Night Supper Coordinator position was filled with a job posting, interview and selection of Amy Haigh who assumed responsibilities in August. The Council approved both of these recommended hires.

Proposed new staff orientation procedures were presented to the lay staff and committee members in December for review and feedback. These were finalized at the January meeting and presented to the Council as background information.

Goal 4: Personnel Policies & Handbook Update

ACTIVITIES: The current personnel policies and handbook will be reviewed to determine the need for appropriate updates. Approved changes will be made in the handbook to maintain a current version. This will include revision of the FFF Director sabbatical leave policy.

STATUS: This will be an ongoing process during the year. The revision of the FFF Director sabbatical leave policy has been completed, presented to the Council for approval and incorporated into the handbook.

Goal 5: Updates of Current Lay Staff Job Descriptions & Development of New Job Descriptions

ACTIVITY: Existing lay staff job descriptions will be reviewed after the annual performance reviews of lay staff to determine the need for any appropriate revisions.

STATUS: Updates reviewed & approved include: Organist & Pianist, Office Assistant and Family Faith Director at the July 12 committee meeting and the LIGHT/NightLIGHT Coordinator position at the August 9 committee meeting.

Goal 6: Lay Staff Operating Handbooks & Calendars

ACTIVITIES: Staff handbooks will be updated based upon feedback provided by staff during the annual performance reviews.

A new staff handbook will be developed for the LIGHT/NightLIGHT Coordinator position.

STATUS: Updates reviewed & approved include: Office Assistant and Family Faith Formation Director at the July 12 committee meeting. The LIGHT/NightLIGHT Coordinator staff handbook will be developed this spring and summer in cooperation with Anna Wencil and Kaitlin Carter.

BETHLEHEM LUTHERAN CHURCH

2022-23 Board/Committee Goals and Activities

Board/Committee: Stewardship Board

Chairperson: Amy Haigh

Secretary: Bob Ihrig – Council Liaison

Members: Sally Burdick Heather Hammond

Carrol Meyers-Dobler Marian Mallory

Staff Liaison: Pastor Jay Dahlvang

2022-23 Board Goals & Activities (Includes 5-Year Strategic Plan and Other Identified Goals)

Goals

1. **Pledges**: We will increase the percentage of financial gifts toward the 2023 BLC annual budget. We will emphasize personal contacts with members.
2. **Time & Talent Survey**: We will promote an increase in member responses to the Time and Talent Survey in the fall to identify and utilize member talents and willingness to serve Bethlehem.
3. **Time & Talent Recognition**: We will recognize the contributions of time, talent and effort by BLC members in support of the church mission and ministry.
4. **Planned Giving Reading**: We will read and implement appropriate planned giving ideas from the book Legacy of a Lifetime: A Planned Giving Implementation Resource.
5. **Legacy Giving**: We will increase our understanding of legacy giving and promote financial legacy gifts from members to enhance the ministry and mission of the church. We will update Stewardship “Dream Projects” to identify specific legacy gift opportunities for designation by members.
6. **Narrative Budget**: We will share 2023 narrative budget information with the congregation to communicate the programs and successes of the BLC mission and ministry that relate to our financial stewardship.
7. **Electronic Giving**: We will continue to promote electronic giving by BLC members to complete annual pledges and special contributions. An increase in the current member electronic giving totals is the goal. This will facilitate regular member giving and provide the revenue stream needed to meet regular church expenses during the year.
8. **Capital Campaign**: We will promote and support the 2022 fall Bethlehem capital campaign.
9. **Thrivent Action Grants & Thrivent Choice Giving**: We will promote and coordinate Thrivent Action Grants and Thrivent Choice Giving by BLC members.

Planned Activities

1. **Pledges**: A goal of getting an increase of 10% in financial contributions from members during the fall stewardship campaign has been established. The fall campaign will be developed and designed by the GSB Company in coordination with the capital campaign.
2. **Time & Talent Survey**: The board will update, distribute and promote completion of the Time & Talent Survey in the fall. We will provide the compiled information to boards/committees to use to promote their membership and activities.
3. **Time & Talent Recognition**: We will write and send thank-you notes to BLC members at our board meetings to acknowledge their contributions of time, talent and effort.
4. **Planned Giving Reading**: Discussion will be held each meeting on the contents of the book Legacy of a Lifetime: A Planned Giving Implementation Resource to identify and implement new planned giving concepts and activities.

5. Legacy Giving: Legacy-giving information will be updated and mailed to all members in March/April with follow-up provided by the lead pastor with members who have chosen to participate. We will update and provide current Stewardship “Dream Projects” in the mailing to identify specific legacy gift options for designation by members. Legacy-giving information will be provided in worship services via printed bulletins and verbal presentations as well as in the monthly STAR newsletter.
6. Narrative Budget: Information about BLC programs and activities will be highlighted in the financial details of the 2023 narrative budget.
7. Electronic Giving: Information and sign-up opportunities will be provided during the fall stewardship pledge campaign. Additional information and reminders will be provided throughout the year in worship bulletins and the STAR newsletter.
8. Capital Campaign: Board members will serve in leadership and support roles during the fall campaign.
9. Thrivent Action Grants & Thrivent Choice Giving: Activities will be conducted to identify BLC needs for Thrivent Action Grant funding and facilitate the application process to secure such grants. Thrivent Choice dollars will be actively promoted as contributions to support Bethlehem.

2022-23 Activities & Accomplishments

1. Pledges: **172** BLC members pledged a total of **\$354,789** for the 2023 annual budget. For those who pledged, this represents an increase of **11.09%** over 2022. We are grateful for the continued generosity of Bethlehem members to advance the mission and ministry of Bethlehem in 2023.
2. Time & Talent Survey: The Time & Talent Survey was updated and made available in September on Rally Sunday to members in print and online for completion. Another opportunity was provided at worship during the winter to increase responses. The BLC website provides ongoing information and survey completion opportunities. BLC member names and sign-up for corresponding activities and groups have been compiled and are available to appropriate groups seeking volunteers and members during 2022-23. A total of 76 members have completed the 2022-23 survey thus far.
3. Stewardship Reading: Board members have discussed a number of chapters in the Legacy of a Lifetime: A Planned Giving Implementation Resource book and plan to apply principles and ideas to board stewardship activities.
4. Legacy Giving: The legacy giving mailing to all BLC members was updated and completed in March.
5. Electronic Giving: Electronic giving information is available on the BLC website. Worship service electronic announcements provide a QR code for members and visitors to make electronic contributions during the service. The weekly email newsletter distributed each Monday to registered members provide encouragement and details about electronic giving for members who wish to enroll or give during the year. The number of electronic givers continues to increase as members become familiar and comfortable with this giving option. Approximately 1/3 of BLC members currently use electronic giving on a regular basis.
6. Capital Campaign: A total of **146** BLC members pledged a total of **\$850,286** to the 2022 capital campaign to pay off the \$1 million building mortgage over the next 3 years. We are grateful for this extraordinary generosity!

Members of the Stewardship Board served in the following leadership roles in the campaign:

Campaign Chairperson:	Carrol Meyers-Dobler
Commitment Chairperson:	Heather Hammond
Communications Chairperson:	Bob Ihrig
Special Events Chairperson:	Amy Haigh

7. Thrivent Action Grants & Thrivent Choice Giving: 3 Thrivent Action Grants of \$250 were applied for and received thus far for summer Vacation Bible School meals, the December capital campaign thank-you reception and the February Fat Tuesday dinner. A plan of action has been developed to identify future BLC needs for Thrivent Action Grant funding and facilitate the application process to secure such grants. Thrivent Choice dollars are being promoted with eligible members to provide contributions to support Bethlehem programs and activities.

BETHLEHEM LUTHERAN CHURCH

2022-23 Board/Committee Goals & Activities

Board/Committee: Welcome & Inclusion Board

Chairperson: Marcia Nagel

Secretary: _____

Members: Marie Slotemaker

Kathryn Freyberg-Wills

Roger Haug

Melissa Wagner

Kathryn Sargent

Staff Liaison: _____

Council Liaison: Jessica Auel

2022-2023 Board Goals & Activities (Includes 5-Year Strategic Plan and Other Identified Goals)

Goals

Strategic Goal #5: We will embrace diversity by demonstrating welcome and respect for differing identities; listening to growing relationships with diverse communities; and working for the good of all in the community.

1. We will improve the telling of our welcome story so that all in the community might feel drawn to be part of what God is doing among us and through us.
2. We will clarify understandings of welcome and inclusion through education about various components of the BLC Welcome Statement.
3. We will educate about and support specific ways that individuals and BLC programming and worship might message increasingly clear and thoughtful welcome and acceptance.
4. We will support our RIC status and RIC expectations with continuing efforts and member participation of welcome to the LGBTQIA+ community.
5. We will continue W&I assistance with new member orientations and welcome activities.

2023-24 Planned & Actual Activities

1. We maintained BLC Welcome Statements and worship information in the pew racks.
2. We maintained a self-checkout, RIC diversity lending library behind the kiosk in the narthex.
3. We led a forum on January 29, 2023 Reconciling in Christ Sunday, educating about the Progress flag, pronouns, and understandings of welcoming ways. We explored and discussed the meaning of the full diversity of the BLC Welcome Statement.
4. We demonstrated Bethlehem’s welcome with a Welcome & Inclusion table at West Mankato’s Night to Unite in August on the BLC parking lot.
5. We participated with a Bethlehem RIC church presence in September in the Pride parade and with a Pridefest booth.
6. We continued to assist with the welcome of new BLC members with orientation and info packets/bags and tours.

BETHLEHEM LUTHERAN CHURCH

2022-23 Board/Committee Goals & Activities

Board/Committee: Youth Board

Chairperson: Tanya Ringgenberg

Secretary: _____

Members: Angela Bruns Beth Timm

Danielle Johnson Gina Wibstad

Jessie Schaefer **Staff Liaison:** Anna Wencil – Family Faith Formation Director

Sheila Stevensen **Council Liaison:** Jeremy Carter

2022-2023 Board Goals & Planned Activities (Includes 5-Year Plan and Other Identified Goals)

Goals & Planned Activities

1. We will welcome and integrate Pastor Jacie Richmond as a leader into our confirmation and youth program by planning an event for youth to meet and get to know her.
2. We will reach out to community leaders to curate and share a list of available mental health resources for our youth and families.
3. We will reach out to post-confirmation youth and plan an event geared toward them on a quarterly basis.

2022-2023 Board Activities & Accomplishments

1. We planned two youth events for Pastor Jacie to connect with middle school and high school youth. We will continue to plan them quarterly.
2. We planned an event for 9th grade confirmation youth to make and sew their stoles for Confirmation Sunday.
3. We worked together to make our own food for Fat Tuesday for the first time as a board.
4. We will continue to work on creating a compilation of mental health resources for our youth and families.