



# ANNUAL REPORT

— 2020 —



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



## A MESSAGE FROM ELCA PRESIDING BISHOP ELIZABETH EATON

Dear friends in Christ,

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

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

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

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

Building up the body of Christ together,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Elizabeth A. Eaton". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

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

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

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Our Father's Lutheran Church  
Sunday, January 31st 2021, 9:45am

Meeting called to order – Rick Fuglie

Opening Prayer – Pr. Aaron Fuller

Reading of minutes from 2020 – Sarah Dahl

Motion to accept

Foundation Report – Mark Nelson

Nourishing Hope – Julie Vergin

Council Presidents message – Rick Fuglie

Treasurer's recap from 2020 – Amy Krcil

Reading of proposed budget for 2021 – Amy Krcil

Motion to accept proposed budget

Election of officers

Council President

Vice President

Treasurer

Secretary

Council members (6)

Motion to accept election results

Open mic

Closing prayer – Pr. Aaron

Motion to close meeting

## 2020 ANNUAL MEETING MINUTES

### 2020 Our Father's Lutheran Church Congregational Annual Meeting Minutes

Sunday, January 26, 2020 Fellowship Hall- 10:15 am

- 59 voting members present – 1 member on Zoom for meeting – 48 quorum
- Devotion & Opening Prayer – Pastor Cathy
  
- Announcements
  - Breeze – Watch the beginning of February for an email about logging into Breeze church software. Software can be used to find a phone number or address, check your giving amount, update your contact information to ensure you keep getting the latest information from the church and more!
  - OFLC Foundation – Mark Nelson reviewed what the OFLC Foundation is for; to help fund programs or mission work in OFLC. Volunteers are needed to relaunch activity for the Foundation. Contact Mark Nelson to join the Foundation board.
  
- Call to Order at 10:35am – Rick Fuglie
- President's Remarks – Rick Fuglie
  
- 2019 Highlights & Ministry Reports
  - Car Project – Eric Dahl reported that the car project has gone well. Big thank you to Westside Tires in Corcoran for donating the tires. There is someone picked out to receive the car when it is finished. There have been two more offers of car donations for future projects and Brian Walton offered heated shed space for the work. Let Eric know if you would like to join in the project.
  - Nourishing Hope – Mark Nelson reported that Nourishing Hope is going very well. Recent numbers of people served are 109 families, including 23 veterans and 404 individuals. Along with the food, there have been coat, hat, quilt handouts as well as food donations provided to Brian Walton's work for distribution. Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts and Confirmation students have been helping. Everyone is welcome to the food distribution.
  
- 2019 Annual Meeting Minutes Review – Anthony Wold made a motion and Barb Fuglie seconded the motion to accept the meeting minutes – ayes approved. Discussion included the following corrections:

- Name corrections Pam Hoekstra, Jim Lupino
- Anthony remarks – accountability (sp)
- Corrections will be dated in 2019 Annual Meeting Minutes
- Randy Eberling made a motion to accept the minutes with corrections, Norie Siers seconded the motion, ayes approved.
- Nomination Slate and Vote
  - Kerri Eberling made a motion to accept the slate – Norie Siers seconded – ayes approved
  - Secretary position and one at large position are open.
    - President: Rick Fuglie
    - Vice president: Diane Mutterer
    - Secretary: open: \_\_\_\_\_
    - Treasurer: Rachel Baccam
    - At Large
      - Paul Bolstad, elected 2017
      - Gail Swanson, elected 2018
      - Lynne Greseth, elected 2019
      - Ruth Durand, elected 2019
      - Diane Dorrel, elected 2020
      - Opening: \_\_\_\_\_
- 2019 Financials
- 2020 Budget and Vote
- Building future and Vote
  - Anthony Wold and John Gilb reviewed the two options for the north end of the building. (See attached PowerPoint)
  - Ballot was distributed to all voting members present:

We recognize that something must be done on the North end of our building at OFLC. Based on the project plans presented earlier and what God is putting on my heart, I agree that we should move in the direction of:

Please select one:

\_\_\_\_\_ New Ministry Center

\_\_\_\_\_ Basic Plus

- Ballot results were:
  - 37 New Ministry Center
  - 21 Basic Plus
  - 1 Abstained

- Call team was introduced
  - Amy Blake-Fields
  - Brian Walton
  - Barb Fuglie
  - Pam Hoekstra
  - Kristin Dobozenski
  - Dan Schiller
  - Ainsley Nuytten
- Sending Prayer – Pastor Cathy
  
- Adjourn – Gail Swanson made a motion to adjourn the meeting and Denise Wold seconded the motion. Ayes approved.  
Meeting adjourned at 12:30 pm.

God's grace, peace, and hope be with you through our Savior, Jesus Christ.

In a normal year, I would use this report to highlight the many ways the Synod partners with your congregation to bring good news to your communities. 2020 was hardly a normal year.

Like your congregation, the synod needed to adapt quickly due to the threat of COVID-19, to cancel some programs, introduce new events, and modify most everything else. I have been amazed by the innovation and hard work of congregational leaders. I want – and encourage you as well – to speak a word of deep thanks to leaders for all that has been asked of them to hold our communities together and foster their flourishing.

Shortly after lockdown restrictions began in March, synod leaders led training sessions on online worship and pastoral care, as well as conversations on the question of Holy Communion as part of distance worship. In April, our Synod Treasurer and Secretary led two sessions on applying for PPP loans. In May, we were privileged to host Dr. Michael Osterholm for a presentation which drew 400 pastors, bishops, and leaders; as well as 100,000 viewers afterwards. We gave over \$46,000 in Imagination Grants to 25 congregations to strengthen their online worship presence. This fall, we gathered leaders for a well-received conversation on creative ways to celebrate Christmas. The synod staff provided worship services in May, July, and December, giving congregational leaders a much-needed respite.

Yes, 2020 was hardly a normal year. On May 25, 2020, the killing of George Floyd lifted the veil once again on the pandemic of systemic racism that infects our world. Churches near the killing and the uprising turned on a dime to address the immediate needs, supported by partner congregations throughout the synod. Clergy marched in silence led by AME Presiding Elder Stacy Smith. The Minnesota Council of Churches – which includes all six ELCA synods – voted unanimously to support a multi-year process “Dismantling the Structures and Repairing the Damage of Racism in Minnesota.” The synod's new racial justice web page ([mpls-synod.org/outreach/racial-justice](http://mpls-synod.org/outreach/racial-justice)) provides key information for congregations to deepen their work for justice, including the new Center for Leadership and Neighborhood Engagement, led by Rev. Kelly Chatman.

In addition to these efforts, we continue our essential and ongoing work of supporting leaders and fostering congregational vitality. We are blessed with over 700 rostered leaders, 325 serving in calls and 377 retired. We work hard so the church has the loving, faithful, and theologically well-formed ministers it needs. In 2020, we supported 67 persons preparing to become deacons or pastors.

In September, we were honored to receive a Lilly Grant that will support congregational cohorts committed to deepening their faith and neighboring practices. This month, we welcome Rev. Norma Malfatti as Director of Evangelical Mission who will promote our work in starting new congregations and accompanying our strategic ministries.



Our monthly conference meetings and other synod gatherings have revealed a real hunger among leaders to stay connected, learn from each other, and discern best practices for ministry in these times. We are honored and humbled by the calling to serve as convener of such holy conversations.

It is the generosity of congregations like yours that make the synod's work possible. Thank you! We seek to be careful stewards of every gift. With the PPP loan, which we pray will be forgiven, we hope to end our FY2020 year budget without dipping deeply into reserves.

I conclude this annual report with a word of deep gratitude for the privilege of serving as your bishop. And, I look forward to January 2022, when we can once again worship and gather *in person* – with hugs and handshakes and singing.

Bishop Ann Svennungsen

## PASTOR REPORT FROM PASTOR AARON

I can guarantee you one thing: this will be the shortest annual report I will give! However, that does not reflect all we have done together in just 2 ½ short months together. I want to take the time to say THANK YOU to all who have dedicated their time to making sure things happen as I “learn the ropes.” You are an active church!

I also want to highlight the outstanding administrative ministry staff you have. Melissa Ungaro and Kim Haggren are super-talented, dedicated, and passionate about you and your ministry at OFLC. While I’ve learned much about their role at OFLC, I will be spending time with the Council working to make their roles clearer, and better leverage their talents in 2021. That said, I encourage all of you to take time to get to know both Melissa and Kim, and say “thank you” for all that they do!

*What will 2021 bring?* I wish I knew the answer to that. I do know 2020, and really, the couple years prior to that, have been challenging for you all. In listening to many of you, I can sense a hesitation to expend energy that you may not have on “church business” when you’re also so drained from the demands of your own lives. That recalls a similar time for Jesus’ disciples in their ministry with Jesus. In the 6<sup>th</sup> chapter of John’s gospel, many of the disciples “turned back and no longer went about with him” because the future seemed to demand energy they didn’t have to expend. However, when asked by Jesus if they wanted to turn away, Simon Peter responds, “Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life.” (John 6:68)

If there is anything to focus on in 2021, it is to recognize where the source and energy of our life flows from. With so much demanding our time and energy right now, I’m primarily focused on the ways we take care of ourselves and each other. And so, here are my priorities:

- Nurturing our faith and spiritual connection to God/Jesus/Holy Spirit.
- Nurturing our relationships with the entire OFLC family and with community partners.

There are always tasks and work to be done. But as disciples, our greatest commandment is this: Love God and Love our Neighbors. Excited to explore what that means to you all as we journey together in 2021!

In Christ,  
Pastor Aaron

## PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Stability.

I was not sure how to start this year's update. Last year's message started with the word Transition. Little did I know at the time we would be swept up in a pandemic. The year has brought enormous challenges. As we struggled to find creative ways to worship and update our knowledge of technology, we were able to navigate through a world very different from what we were used to.

We stumbled, we learned, and we stumbled again. But in the end, we figured it out, at least enough to continue our relationships with God and each other. And as we went, we kept the goal of calling a new Pastor in the forefront.

And as we navigated through the call process, many members became sad, angry, and disheartened. Not because we called a new Pastor, but because we said goodbye to another that has been a part of our church family for a long time. The call committee had an enormous task because of this relationship, and they prayed, discerned, and made what I feel is a great choice for Our Father's going forward. The membership felt the same, voting to accept their recommendation to call Pastor Aaron Fuller.

So, as we enter a new year, we have a new Pastor in place. In the short time Pastor Aaron has been here he has looked into our ministries with a fresh set of eyes and brought a new perspective to determine what we want to accomplish and how we can do it.

And personally, he has made my job as council president a lot easier.

So, this is what stability feels like..... So far, I like it, and it will get better.

We have a ways to go, but we can see the light at the end of the tunnel. I feel by sometime this summer we will be able to see each other's faces again. By Fall we will be able to worship together and take communion the way we have always done it. Breakfast in Fellowship Hall? Nice!

As I said last year, and still how I feel today, there is no way I can ever thank our dedicated volunteers enough. All you have to do is read through the ministry summaries to see how much our small church impacts this great community we live in. I take great pride in the fact that we are the church that welcomes anyone, that will provide for funerals, weddings, baptisms, or whatever is needed for folks that are not members of our congregation.

My goal as Council President – our goal as the Leadership Team – was to continue the path to a Pastoral call, to continue the path of the shared vision as to what Our Father's Lutheran Church means to us and to the community of Rockford, MN.

With bumps along the path, mission accomplished.

My term of Council President is coming to an end. As Past President, I will help the incoming President continue the goal of our mission statement:

“Living in Christ’s love, we invite all to worship, learn, disciple, and serve.”

Thank you, Rick Fuglie

## **OUR FATHER’S MINISTRIES**

### **OFLC FOUNDATION REPORT**

This annual report is totally devoted to the memory of Nancy Varner and the generosity of her family. OFLC was truly blessed to have had Nancy and her family members as part of our church family. Without her donation, the Foundation was close to being inactive. Her faith, her foresight and her dedication to Our Father’s Lutheran Church has proven to be unquestionably fantastic, incredible, and forward thinking. Her actions put new life into the Foundation causing an influx of new board members to carry out our mission as it is written, to look into our investments, and have them work for the Foundation in an unbelievably positive way

Thank you to all of the OFLC Foundation past board members for being so dedicated for the past 20 years. Also thank you to the financial advisors we work with for their guidance. Now we can look forward to the future of the Foundation and the great work we can accomplish!

The Foundation will be more visible and hope that members of OFLC will support any membership drives, memorials, gifts in kind and fund raisers which will help the Foundation continue our support in the church and community.

Current Foundation Board Members:

Mark Nelson, Kathy Lunderby, Ken Lunderby, Jim Strehlow, Norie Siers, Becky Miller, Tom Lemmage and Pastor Aaron Fuller; ex officio director

Submitted by,

Tom Lemmage

OFLC Foundation Treasurer

**Our Father's Lutheran Church Foundation****2020 Annual Report****Sum of Checking and Investments 12 31 2019****\$78,184.60****Checking account activity:**

01 01 2020	Balance	\$6,430.24
	Receipts:	
	Gift	\$55,047.85
	Membership	\$0.00
	Memorials	\$250.00
	In Honor	\$0.00
	Amazon Smile	\$65.27
	Disbursements:	
	Safe Deposit Box	-\$35.00
	Service charge	-\$4.25
	Campership	-\$255.00
	Prudential	-\$55,047.85
	Waddell & Reed	-\$3000.00
	Riverworks	-\$500.00
	ELCA Mpls. Synod	-\$620.95
	Love Inc. Hearthland	-\$300.00
	Nourishing Hope	-\$379.60
	R.F.D. Christmas presents	<u>-\$1000.71</u>
12 31 2020	<b>Balance</b>	<b>\$620.95</b>

**Prudential:**

02 03 2020	Nancy Vamer Fund	\$55,047.85
	Interest	<u>\$29,027.33</u>
12 31 2020	<b>Balance</b>	<b>\$84,075.18</b>

**Thrivent:**

01 01 2020	Moderate Allocation, Diverse Income	\$35,237.34
	Interest	<u>\$4,106.04</u>
12 31 2020	<b>Balance</b>	<b>\$39,343.38</b>

**Waddell & Reed:**

01 01 2020	Ivy Investment Fund	\$36,517.02
	Deposit 02 26 2020	\$3,000.00
	Interest	<u>\$7026.86</u>
12 31 2020	<b>Balance</b>	<b>\$46,543.88</b>

**Sum of checking and Investments 12 31 2020:****\$170,583.39**

2010	\$33,031.55	2011	\$34,966.00	2012	\$41,451.64	2013	\$48,034.62
2014	\$51,392.59	2015	\$52,407.33	2016	\$57,324.38	2017	\$65,803.65
2018	\$63,085.67	2019	\$78,184.60	2020	\$170,583.39		

Tom Lemmage Treasurer    Our Father's Lutheran Church Foundation

## PRAYER CHAIN MINISTRY

The year 2020 was a year like no other in our lifetime and many changes have been made to accommodate the difficulties confronted by the pandemic. In many cases, the pandemic actually has pushed forward changes that would have come eventually anyway. That is so with the prayer chain.

Since the beginning of the OFLC prayer chain ministry many years ago, there was a leader of the prayer chain who received prayers by phone or e-mails and then forwarded those prayers to our prayer warriors. However, in April of 2020, with the encouragement of Pastor Cathy and the nod of the Church Council, Melissa Ungaro set up our prayer chain on a Microsoft Program, enabling all members of the prayer chain to send out prayers themselves by e-mail to others on the prayer chain, without having to first go through a coordinator. With the COVID-19 crisis, it seemed unwise to depend on one person for such an important job. Looking back, this change seems like something that should have been done earlier and probably would have come in the near future.

This new system seems to be working well, and similar to what happened in 2019, we had close to 200 prayer requests in 2020. Our ministry includes 63 faithful prayer warriors who are ready to pray for all requests, whether they are for healing, comfort, support, hope or thanksgiving. Also know that all prayers are confidential. If you have a prayer request and are not a member of our prayer chain, please contact Shirley Bolstad, Pastor Aaron or the office, and your prayer will be forwarded to our prayer chain warriors. Please also seriously consider joining this vital ministry of OFLC!

I will leave you with this Bible verse, one of my favorites:

Philippians, Ch. 4: 6-7 - "Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus."

Blessings to all!  
Shirley Bolstad  
[pbolstad@aol.com](mailto:pbolstad@aol.com)  
763-478-9480

## BIBLE STUDY

Our group has been meeting on Zoom for several months. We finished up with reading the book a life of being, and doing enough by Wayne Muller at the beginning of Advent. We are now focusing on the Scripture readings for the week. We are usually a group of 7 or 8. Pr. Aaron has joined us recently and has some good questions for us to focus on each week. We would be happy to have more folks join us. Spending time in God's Word is a wonderful way to grow in our love of God and others.

Blessings and Peace,  
Norie

## WOMEN'S MINISTRY BY DIANE DORREL

### **Cookie Walk & Silent Auction**

With heavy hearts we decided not to hold our 32nd Annual Cookie Walk/Silent Auction/Craft Sale.

On December 7th, 2019 we held our 31st Annual Cookie Walk/Silent Auction/Craft Sale. This event is part of the day long "Crow River Christmas" community celebration. The Sunday before the sale we were again blessed with young volunteers to help decorate some of our cookies. We had another successful event with people lining up an hour before the sale began. We sold 97 packages of Lefse, 126 sloppy jo lunches and we were blessed with many cookies and other baked goods as well as a raffle for a beautiful quilt. With everyone's help we were able to raise \$4,200.

## EDUCATION

### **Confirmation 2020**

Engage & Confirm started this year with a Rally Night around a bonfire & s'mores on Sept 30 at OFLC. We celebrated Confirmation with the 10th graders on a beautiful fall afternoon on Sept. 27. This year's E&C lessons started with the Lord's Prayer with our curriculum written by Pam Hoekstra. We are now learning about 8 different prophets. These lessons are being written by David Kosfeld & Tiffany Distad with guidance from Pastor Aaron. Dates for our 5th graders 1st Communion are TBD.

E&C meets on Wednesday nights from 6-7pm. We meet in the large education room & on Zoom. We serve a light snack, individually wrapped, for the grades meeting at OFLC. Each Wednesday we rotate with one grade meeting at OFLC and the others on Zoom. This worked out well for us this year because we only had 2 mentors signed up to help with OFLC. Since we anticipate that for the 2021-22 year we will be able to meet as a large group and serve a meal, we are hoping to have more mentors to help out.

## **SUNDAY SCHOOL**

**2020**

The past year has brought a whirlwind of changes to OFLC Sunday School, but the commitment of our leadership, volunteers, and families to providing a Christian education to our youngest members has not waived!

When in-person learning was suspended in March, we transitioned to an interactive on-line learning environment. Through the online platforms of YouTube, Facebook Live, and Zoom, we were able to provide a Sunday School Lesson each Sunday. Though virtual interaction proved more difficult, we were still able to share videos, play games, and have discussions that were fun, educational, and (hopefully!) inspiring.

Over the summer, OFLC Children's Ministries held a virtual VBS experience called "Compassion Camp: Be Loved, Be Kind, Be You". Each lesson was presented over Zoom and included a song, Bible story, movement break, craft item, and discussion time. We even had some help from a few of our own Confirmation students! We were able to hold outdoor parties to celebrate the beginning and end of Compassion Camp, complete with food, games, and t-shirts!

Sunday School returned to in-person learning this fall with a few pandemic-related changes, including mandatory masks for students and volunteers, as well as individual supply baskets to avoid sharing of utensils. For our curriculum this fall, we utilized a six-session curriculum about The Lord's Prayer from Illustrated Ministry. Despite pandemic restrictions, we were still able to hold a Presentation of Bibles for our third-grade students, an Operation Christmas Child packing party, and our annual Christmas Program.

Attendance this year has ranged from 5 students up to 19!

I would like to take this opportunity to recognize our Sunday School volunteers for their dedication and commitment to our youngest members!

- Kristin Doboszenski
- Lynne Greseth
- Dan Reed
- Rachel Reed
- Gail Swanson

Thank you for the creativity, warmth, and cheerfulness you show our students each week. You are a blessing to our children and our church, and I couldn't feel more honored to work with each one of you!

Looking forward to a year of continued growth and creativity in 2021!

Lindsey Bervig – Sunday School Coordinator



## MUSIC MINISTRY BY TAMMY JARVI

The 2020 pandemic sure brought everything to a screeching halt for everyone and everything, including music at OFLC. Due to CDC restrictions and logistic challenges, our choirs experienced little activity since March.

But God has brought us through some very tough times and we are finding hope in the opportunities as things improve and restrictions ease. What better time for the bell choir to gather again and ring out the message of hope in "Joy to the World" during Christmas!

The bell choir practices have now resumed in January 2021 and will play for services at least once a month. As the pandemic continues to improve and logistics are not as challenging, we are hopeful to resume to a larger bell choir again. We continue to welcome new ringers!

Our Rejoice Singers choir has been confronted with some even greater challenges and, therefore, has not had an opportunity to resume activity yet. We are hopeful that things will improve considerably in the next few months and we can resume again soon! If you wish to join the Rejoice Singers choir, we welcome you!

Looking forward, consideration is being given to changes in the choir with the addition of a choir director. We plan on continuing to offer the opportunity to sing a variety of music and hope to be able to add some support of a few musicians on occasion as well.

We continue to look for vocalists and/or instrumentalists (guitar and piano only for now) to participate in our worship services. We continue to follow safe practices to ease concerns for those willing to share their musical gifts.

A greater vision of music ministry at Our Father's includes music concerts, musical dramas, Christmas and Easter cantatas, opportunities for vocal and instrument participation during worship services and other music events, and music workshops.

Please contact Tammy Jarvi if you wish to share your gift of music and/or participate in choir(s) or if you wish to receive more information about practices and schedules. 763-732-8920

God has blessed us in so many ways and we look to Him to continue to grow and expand our music ministry in the days and years ahead! It is our hope that you, too, are richly blessed and encouraged in worship and in life by the gifts of music He enables us all to continue to share with one another.

"Sing and make music in your heart to the Lord, always giving thanks to God the Father for everything."

Ephesians 5:19-20

## **OUTREACH MINISTRIES**

### **REPORTS FROM GAIL SWANSON**

#### **Quilting/Sewing Ministry**

The Quilting/Sewing group started the year as usual, making quilts for Vinland Treatment Center. We also made a number of embroidered communion cloths and baptismal cloths. And then life as we know it was interrupted by Covid19. While our in-person meetings ceased, our group worked from our homes making many hundreds of masks for our first responders and the community at large.

While only four quilts were delivered in 2020, we look forward to being able to get together in 2021 for more sewing and conversation. Books and book recommendations are shared, we catch up on each other's families, commiserate on friend and family concerns, and get things done. As with the church as a whole, we each bring our gifts to the table. Some enjoy planning and cutting; others do machine stitching. Some get the quilts sandwiched and tied, and others do the binding. The results are beautiful and useful expressions of warmth and caring.

Have an unfinished quilt top lying around? We'll do our best to turn it into a completed item for Vinland. We are also accepting cotton fabric you may have. Most of our quilts are made entirely of donated fabrics.

Come join us if you have an interest in learning or sharing your sewing gifts. All skill levels are welcome.

#### **Riverworks Thrift Store Volunteers**

There's a great opportunity for local volunteer work right in our community. The Riverworks Thrift Store receives mounds of good, usable items. Proceeds from the resale of these items goes to support the Riverworks Food Shelf and other Riverworks programming to strengthen our community. However, it takes lots of hands to sort, tag and hang, or display all of these donated items. And that's where we come in. We work under the direction of in-the-know staff, so it's easy to feel useful almost immediately. Join us for some active conversation and a chance to see how our donated items are used to benefit local and not-so-local (think Haiti) individuals.

To coordinate our volunteer times, you may contact Gail at [dgswan00@msn.com](mailto:dgswan00@msn.com). Or communicate directly with Riverworks by calling 763.477.5480.

#### **Riverworks Food Shelf**

OFLC has committed to staffing the Riverworks Food Shelf on the 5th Monday of the month. While this does not occur regularly, it does happen several times per year. With just a little training it's easy to assist shoppers as they navigate aisles and choose from the canned goods, fresh produce, baked good, and dairy cases.

Much of this year operated under a slightly different system. Shoppers filled out their grocery lists from their cars. Workers then filled the list, and pushed the filled cart to their cars. Shoppers took it from there. This system worked great to serve the needs of our community, while keeping everyone safe.

Let me know if you are interested in helping out a few hours on an occasional Monday evening. It's a great way to become involved in your community. Call Gail at 763.242.0351.

### **Compassionate Care Meals**

Thanks to a Thrivent Action Grant, a group got together twice this fall and made pre-cooked frozen meals. These meals are available to anyone in the community who is experiencing temporary need, whether that need is due to health challenges, temporary financial difficulties, or other stressful events.

Many of these meals have been delivered, but more are available for those in need.

If you could gain some relief by having some meals delivered to your freezer, please call Kim Hagen, our Community Connector. Or if you know of someone in our community who would benefit from this program, give her a call. This is a way we can minister to our community as people experience temporary challenging situations.

<b>MEN'S GROUP</b>
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The year has been an unusual year for our group just like everyone else; at first we were not able to meet at all, but later we were able to have a few meet at church with others connecting by Zoom.

We like, most groups, look forward to 2021 when we can again meet together in person, with coffee and donuts... We also look forward to new projects we can do together, service projects as we have done in the past. Some of the projects we have done were general construction at Grace Place in Montrose, reconditioning a donated car into good working condition and then providing it to a family in need.

We continue with providing a place where good conversation can take place, where the sharing of burdens and concerns can take place among friends and also learning can take place: studying the text for the coming Sunday and perhaps a more structured plan of Bible Knowledge in 2021.

We also look forward to getting to know our new pastor, Aaron Fuller, when he is able to join us and guide us into a "fuller" knowledge of our Christian faith...as we meet twice a month, on the first and third Saturdays, starting at 7.30 in the morning, either at church with masks on and observing social distancing (no coffee and donuts provided yet) or by zoom...and we finish

up by 9 am...most of the time! Contact the church office or check the website for the Zoom link. We are open to suggestions for our next service project, so contact Jim Lupino or Dan Reed with your ideas...

Paul Bolstad

## NOURISHING HOPE

The season of COVID brought countless changes for all of us in 2020. The impact on our feeding ministry, NourishingHOPE was overwhelming and humbling.

With nearly 2 years' experience NourishingHOPE had settled into serving about 150 families per month. We offered fresh produce and staples in a 'shop for yourself' format hosted in the fellowship hall. The process was comfortable. Then came COVID with needs to attend more closely to sanitization, air circulation, food handling and physical distancing. And with all this came a need for food in our area that exploded exponentially.

In late April NourishingHOPE added five partner churches that would become dependable distribution sites allowing us to reach more deeply into our surrounding towns to meet the growing need for additional food. These partners are a beautiful Ecumenical mix working together as Christ's hands and feet in our community: United Methodist Church and House of Grace in Montrose, Buffalo Covenant Church in Buffalo, Alleluia Lutheran in St. Michael, St. Thomas Catholic Church in Corcoran and Light of Christ Lutheran Church in Delano.

Along with the addition of solid partners, our distribution model changed dramatically. We began receiving pre-boxed produce from Second Harvest Heartland and re-formatted our distribution into a drive-through model. Later in the summer we were able to add both dairy products and frozen meats to our offering. Since July we have been consistently serving more than 700 families, representing well over 2000 individuals each month.

Since August NourishingHOPE has worked alongside Wright County Community Action (WCCA). Through WCCA and Untiedt's Produce we received an additional 3000-5000 pounds of produce each month which we were able to share. We, as part of OFLC outreach, also became an extension of WCCA's senior meal program wherein we deliver frozen meals to seniors, 14 at a time, twice a month. We reach as far east as Hamel, north to Rogers and south to Maple Plain with this program. All meals are free of charge both to us and to the senior participants. There is an enormous amount of room to grow this program.

NourishingHOPE also began an in-house program of 'compassion' meals. Our freezers are filled with meals, available to our congregants and those of our partners, for times of need: bereavement, illness, etc.

In the past year NourishingHOPE has purchased additional equipment including commercial freezers to support meal programs and rolling conveyors to aid in moving boxes of produce. We have received funding from several Lions groups, St. Michael Legion, private donations and from grant monies awarded through various hunger relief programs. We have also continued our strong and cooperative relationship with Riverworks Food Shelf in Rockford.

We who participate in NourishingHOPE feel blessed to be in the midst of what God is doing to bring about connections of love by offering food where it is needed most.

We pray for a time, soon, when this crisis of food insecurity begins to wane. We pray for God's continued good work to bring us to a season in which all are fed.

## BEDDING MINISTRY

Our Father's, as part of Love in the Name of Christ Heartland, continues to receive bedding/linens requests for our neighbors. We know this has been a very difficult year, in so many ways, and this has been shown in our decreased requests. We have worked with 8 families, about 30-35 family members, this year, about 1/4-1/3 of our usual amount. We are happy and honored to meet them, and provide needed items and support, in a socially distant way of course. We pray that those who have needs, including the need to move to a new place, are able to be safe and receive the support they need. We have visited with neighbors with health issues, with a new baby during the pandemic and those with job concerns. We pray for wholeness.

OFLC is blessed with this ministry, to give us a way to show Christ's love! Please keep Love INC and our neighbors in your prayers. We do continue to take clean bedding items, new pillows, towels and kitchen linens, and a small collection of baby items (crib sheets, receiving blankets, quilts). These items can be placed in the community room in the classroom hallway. If you can occasionally help sort bedding or do a few phone/in person (safe) visits, please let Lynne Greseth or Laurie Hanson know. Thank you!

Also check out the Love INC stores, in Delano and Howard Lake, and the Love INC volunteer opportunities on their website or listed in our Gather and Serve.

Come to me, all you that are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest.  
Matthew 11:28.

## OUTSIDE ORGANIZATIONS

### BNI

BNI Chapter is still meeting every Tuesday morning just virtually on Zoom until we can get back to in person meetings. We are a networking group of local businesses that make it a point to help one another succeed. We currently have 16 members and are growing.

### AA

Rockford Monday Night AA meeting

7:00 to 8:00 weekly

About 2-6 attend

Masks are worn, distancing is observed, cleaning/sanitizing is done with the materials provided. We so appreciate the opportunity you have given us to meet weekly at your facility. As some members do not have access to computers, it is essential to their sobriety to meet at a personal meeting.

Thank you greatly.

Contact: Sandi

The Friday Night AA group continues to meet weekly. We as a group are very grateful to be welcomed at Our Father's.

It has been a blessing to meet in person during the pandemic, especially when so many locations are closed to those in need of support and fellowship.

Our members number two to seven attendees each week. We carefully follow the cleaning guidelines, wear face coverings and maintain social distancing. Thank you for providing the sanitizing supplies.

We are so very grateful for your generosity in providing a meeting place for us. God has richly blessed this meeting.

Sincerely,  
Lynnette

## TOPS

TOPS (Take off pounds sensibly) is a low-cost weight loss/maintenance support group. It is an international organization that has groups all over. Our group meets in Rockford on Thursday nights at Our Father's Lutheran Church. Weigh in takes place between 5:30 pm and 6:30 pm. The meeting starts at 6:30. We are a fun group of both men & women. Kids age 7 and up are also welcome. We have educational programs, games, contests and laughs. Our dues are \$5 per month but there are ways to earn money toward them.

The cost to join TOPS is \$32 for the year. This includes a bi-monthly magazine. Any questions about the Rockford chapter please call Lori at 612-282-4447 or feel free to come to a free meeting and check us out!

Check out [TOPS.org](https://www.tops.org) for more info.

## STATISTICAL ATTENDANCE REPORT

Number of Baptisms – 4

Number of Memorials/Funerals – 3

Number of Weddings - 0

Sundays Worship (Sept – May): In person Average: 32; Virtual Average: 25  
(June – Aug): In person Average: 25; Virtual Average: 23

Engage Worship

Saturdays (Sept – May): In person Average: 7

Wednesdays Worship (Sept – May) In person Average: 13; Virtual Average: 9

(June – Aug): In person Average: 2; Virtual Average: 7

\*Virtual averages based on 40 weeks of online service – as we never offered it virtual before.

## TREASURER REPORT

### **2020 in Review:**

It has been said many, many times in the last several months; 2020 was an interesting year. I'm sure many of you are wondering how Our Fathers withstood the tests of 2020 from a financial standpoint.

Overall, it has been business as usual with our church. As a reminder, contributions in 2019 was approximately \$259,000. For the year 2020, contributions went down to \$239,000. While this is a 7% decrease from 2019, I still think this is a tremendous effort among our congregation given that many of us could not be present for service.

As you may remember, in late 2019 and early 2020, we began looking into tearing down our fellowship hall and reconstructing a new one. While that plan was put on hold for 2020 and 2021, we did spend nearly \$10,000 for an architect/consultant to advise us on the best course of action. We also transitioned our bookkeeping services from internal personnel to Clergy Financial, which cost OFLC \$1,900. That relationship has gone well and they provide a valuable service to our church to ensure record keeping is done completely and accurately.

The mortgage was paid down in 2020 by \$31,838. The interest paid was \$15,964 while principle paid was \$15,874. The interest rate is 4.375%.

Our Fathers has a financial commitment to Benevolence which includes ELCA (5% of annual giving), RiverWorks (1% of annual giving) and Love, Inc (\$50 per month.) I am happy to report that we kept our commitment and paid approximately \$11,000 to these ministries. We will continue our commitment in 2021.

### **2021 Budget:**

While actual 2020 contributions were \$239,000, the 2021 budget for contributions are \$259,000. This is flat with 2019 with the assumption that we could resume normal church services a little later this year. This is a 9% increase from our 2020 actual.

Expenses will increase slightly from 2020 to \$217,000 for the year. In addition to our "business as usual" expenses, there are a couple of highlights in the budget worth mentioning.

- \$10,000 for building maintenance and repair—since our reconstruction plans are on hold, there are some repairs that will need to be done in order to maintain our building's integrity.
- \$1,500 imagination fund—this is for those of you who have a vision for Our Fathers! If you have any ideas for ministries you'd like to implement, please contact Pastor Fuller or any member of Council with your idea.

Actual 2020 Net income for the year was \$28,738. For 2021, the budgeted net income is \$42,126 which is an increase from 2020 by approximately \$13,000.

Please refer to the income statement in the annual report for additional detail.



## OUR FATHERS LUTHERAN CHURCH

	YTD 2020 December Actual	For the Year 2021 Budget	Higher/(Lower) than 2020	% Change
<b>Income</b>				
Total Restricted Use Funds	64,962	78,936	13,974	
Total Unrestricted Use	173,660	180,064	6,404	
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>\$ 238,622</b>	<b>\$ 259,000</b>	<b>\$ 20,378</b>	<b>9%</b>
<b>Expense</b>				
Advertising and Promotion	115	65	(50)	-43%
Bank Service Charges	850	900	50	6%
Building and Property Security	266	240	(26)	-10%
Charitable Contributions	11,306	16,140	4,834	43%
Computer and Internet Expenses	917	888	(29)	-3%
Conferences and Meetings	1,332	1,296	(36)	-3%
Dues and Subscriptions	632	150	(482)	-76%
Imagination Fund		1,500	1,500	100%
Food & Beverage	601	-	(601)	-100%
Furnishings	1,881	1,500	(381)	-20%
Insurance Expense	8,055	8,469	415	5%
Interest Expense	15,964	15,600	(364)	-2%
Landscaping Expenses	5,107	5,460	353	7%
Miscellaneous Exp	62	-	(62)	-100%
Outside Services	176	-	(176)	-100%
Total Payroll Expenses	104,224	119,376	15,152	15%
Postage and Delivery	386	1,400	1,014	263%
Printing and Reproduction	2,832	2,832	-	0%
Professional Fees	19,513	5,260	(14,253)	-73%
Rent Expense	1,586	-	(1,586)	-100%
Repairs and Maintenance	2,738	10,000	7,262	265%
Small Tools and Equipment	2,841	504	(2,337)	-82%
Stipend	8,327	2,000	(6,327)	-76%
Supplies	6,950	6,984	34	0%
Telephone Expense	1,610	1,620	10	1%
Utilities	11,614	14,690	3,076	26%
<b>Total Expense</b>	<b>209,884</b>	<b>216,874</b>	<b>6,991</b>	<b>3%</b>
<b>Net Ordinary Income</b>	<b>\$ 28,738</b>	<b>\$ 42,126</b>	<b>\$ 13,387</b>	

**OUR FATHERS LUTHERAN CHURCH  
MORTGAGE ANALYSIS FOR THE YEAR 2020**

<b>MONTH</b>	<b>Mortgage Expense</b>	<b>Principal Pd. Down</b>	<b>Mortgage Interest Paid</b>	<b>Mortgage Balance</b>
<b>December 2019</b>				<b>\$ 381,184.57</b>
<b>January</b>	2,653.17	1,267.87	1,385.30	379,916.70
<b>February</b>	2,653.17	1,267.87	1,385.30	378,648.83
<b>March</b>	2,653.17	1,410.26	1,242.90	377,238.57
<b>April</b>	2,653.17	1,277.13	1,376.04	375,961.44
<b>May</b>	2,653.17	1,281.79	1,371.38	374,679.65
<b>June</b>	2,653.17	1,240.90	1,412.27	373,438.75
<b>July</b>	2,653.17	1,290.98	1,362.19	372,147.77
<b>August</b>	2,653.17	1,250.45	1,402.72	370,897.32
<b>September</b>	2,653.17	1,345.03	1,308.14	369,552.29
<b>October</b>	2,653.17	1,304.82	1,348.35	368,247.47
<b>November</b>	2,653.17	1,343.28	1,309.89	366,904.19
<b>December</b>	2,653.17	1,593.26	1,059.91	365,310.93
<b>2020 TOTALS</b>	<b>\$ 31,838.04</b>	<b>\$15,873.64</b>	<b>\$15,964.39</b>	<b>\$365,310.93</b>

Current Rate                    4.375%  
 Current Amortization        25 years  
 Maturity of Loan            November 2021

# LITANY

L. O God of all power and love ...

**C. ... we give thanks for your unfailing presence.**

L. O God of all power and love, we give thanks ...

**C. ... for the hope you provide in times of uncertainty and loss.**

L. O God of all power and love ...

**C. ... we ask you to send your Holy Spirit to enkindle in us your holy fire.**

L. O God of all power and love, we ask you ...

**C. ... to revive us to live as Christ's body in the world.**

L. O God of all power and love, we ask to be ...

**C. ... a people who pray, worship, learn, break bread, share life, heal neighbors, bear good news, seek justice, rest and grow in the Spirit.**

L. O God of all power and love, we ask you to be with us ...

**C. ... wherever and however we gather. Unite us in common prayer and send us in common mission, that we and the whole creation might be restored and renewed, through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.**

## Build Us Up, Lord

1 Build us up, Lord, build us up, set in  
2 Build us up, Lord, build us up, let our

on a strong foundation Lead us to do your  
love reflect your glory. Cast a way all our

ho - ly will, form and shape your new cre - a - tion,  
doubts and fears, help us tell the world your sto - ry.

Build us up, Lord, build us up, as we  
Build us up, Lord, build us up, help us

guide and teach each oth - er, help us to share your love with the  
bear good fruit for you, Lord, give us vi - sion and keep us

world ev - 'ry sin - ner, ev - 'ry broth - er,  
one. Grant us faith, dar - ing, steady and true.

action

Grow - ing in Christ, we plant seeds for the king - dom, we fol - low in

faith what's be - gun? Lord, set in our hearts the pow - er of your

word to spread the news of your Son!

Text: Mark Glaeser, b. 1956, and Donna Hanna, b. 1952  
Text © 2003 Augsburg Fortress

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In the early verses of Ephesians 4, the apostle Paul writes to the Christians in Ephesus, a city on the Aegean Sea at the mouth of a river and at the intersection of three trading routes. The letter was written about ten years after the church had started. During the early years of this congregation, Jews and Gentiles from several ethnicities and nationalities had come together to form "one body." Paul was aware that they had done well and commended them for their faith and love.

The word "one" appears more than seven times in the first four verses. This reflects the importance Paul gave to being called into the "unity of Christ." He wanted to note that, although many of the church members came from far off, there is "one Lord, one faith, one baptism." This oneness reflects God's gift of reconciliation in Christ.

A second emphasis from Paul was that, as believers, they were to "bear with one another in love." This would require humility, gentleness and patience as each of them practiced their faith. It would require tolerance to "maintain unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace."

A third emphasis was that each person had been given gifts by God and that these gifts were given to increase the whole. Because the Ephesian church was a young congregation and its members were just beginning in their faith journey, their understandings were often tossed to and fro. But as they grew in faith, each person contributed to building up the body of Christ.

The fourth and final emphasis was that by "speaking the truth in love," each person must grow into Christ. This means taking time to learn about one another and their gifts. Knowing these gifts, we can do God's work both within and beyond the faith community. When there are decisions to make or relationships to reconcile, we know to begin with prayer and reflection, always desiring to speak the truth in love — not for our own benefit but for God's glory, that we might become more complete.

As our members and friends gather today, whether face-to-face or online, we are reminded of our calling into "unity in Christ." We come from many places and work in many contexts, and yet we recognize "one Lord, one faith, one baptism."

Whether new to a worshiping community or further along the journey, we realize that humility, gentleness and patience are required both in the good times and especially in times of uncertainty and struggle. God wants us to be more complete through our work. Christ provides the way. The Holy Spirit is with us for guidance and courage. Each of us has been given the gifts to be complete, and through our faithfulness we will grow stronger and work together as one body.

**LET US PRAY: LORD, LET THE WORDS OF THE APOSTLE PAUL DWELL IN US DEEPLY. MAY WE EMBRACE THE RECONCILING POWER OF ONENESS WITH CHRIST. MAY THIS ONENESS GUIDE OUR CONGREGATION AS WE LIVE INTO THE NEW REALITIES OF THESE TIMES. AS WE MEET NEW PARTNERS IN MINISTRY, MAY WE TAKE TIME TO GET TO KNOW THEM WITH PATIENCE, HUMILITY AND LOVE. HELP US TO SEE HOW SHARING OUR GIFTS WILL MAKE YOUR WORK EASIER AND MORE FULFILLING WHILE BRINGING ALL OF US CLOSER TO CHRIST. MAY THE BLESSINGS YOU GIVE EACH DAY STRENGTHEN US TO A LIVING, DARING CONFIDENCE IN YOUR GRACE. AMEN.**