



2021 Annual Ministry Report

Our Redeemer's Lutheran Church

3580 North Benton Avenue

Helena, Montana 59602

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www.ourredeemerlives.org

*A congregation of the Montana Synod
of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*

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Ministry Team

| | |
|-----------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Trina Johnsten | Interim Lead Pastor |
| Baird Linke | Student Pastor |
| Carol Will | Deacon |
| Lori Bigwood-Pecarina | Lay Pastoral Associate |
| Jan Martin | Lay Pastoral Associate |
| Jeff Martin | Lay Pastoral Associate |
| Kevin Mathews | Lay Pastoral Associate |
| Lisa Williams-Mathews | Lay Pastoral Associate |
| Jason Callon | Director of Worship & Arts |
| Jackie Bartz | Director of Youth & Family Ministry |
| Liz Swenson | Director of Children's Ministries |
| Sarah Magee | Director of Finance & Facilities |
| Lori Walter | Administrative Assistant |
| Linda Keim | Organist |

Preschool Team

| | |
|----------------------|---------------------|
| Trudy Burke | Director/Teacher |
| Wendy Vukonich | Teacher |
| Alenna Maw | Teacher |
| Kathryn Dunkelberger | Classroom Assistant |

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Agenda ORLC Annual Meeting

January 30, 2022

- Call to Order
- Devotion and Prayer
- Adopt Agenda
- Approval of Minutes of Congregational Meetings
- Ministry Reports
- Financial Report
- Congregational Committee Reports
- Elections
- Church Council
- Committees
- Recognition of members concluding service
- Closing Prayer

Congregational Budget Meeting

December 5, 2021

Jan Martin, Council President, called the meeting to order at 9:50am with a quorum present. Pastor Trina Johnsten, Interim Lead Pastor, opened with prayer. Jan turned the meeting over to Beth Johnson, Council Treasurer, and Sarah Magee, Finance Director. Beth reviewed the proposed budget for 2022. She compared the proposed budget with the 2021 budget and expenses through October. She also presented a review of benevolence paid for the previous five years.

Two comments were made noting that the benevolence paid does not include the \$6000 collected during the milk campaign for the Food Share's Kid Packs. Also, a comment was made appreciating the more transparent information regarding the proposed budget.

Beth Johnson moved to accept the budget as proposed. Jerry Hoover seconded (as did a few others). Jan called for the vote, and the ballots were collected.

Jeff Martin and Jerry Hoover counted the ballots, and the motion was approved. Jan announced the results, and the meeting was adjourned at 10:30.

Respectfully submitted,

Ingrid Childress
Secretary

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ORLC Annual Meeting Sunday, January 31, 2021

Meeting was called to order by Craig Erickson at 11:05 a.m. in-person and via Zoom.

Opening prayer was led by Pastor Arne.

A quorum was present.

Motion was made by Jan Martin to adopt the agenda for the meeting and seconded by Ray Read. Motion passed.

Motion was made by Kristi Antosh to approve the minutes of the 2020 congregational meeting and seconded by Bonner Armstrong. Motion passed.

Ministry Reports:

- Pastor Arne voiced concerns about how we stay together as a congregation. He stated that worship in the sanctuary will begin on Ash Wednesday, February 17th and continue through Lent. Sundays during Lent will offer drop-in communion between 9-11:30 a.m. Plans are to get back together as a group by Easter Sunday, April 4th. Pastor Arne thanked church staff for all their hard work and the active participation of Church Council members as we continue our mission moving forward in 2021.

Finance Reports:

- Sarah Magee reported on the 2020 finances. General Fund offerings for 2020 were \$534,311 or \$26,734 less than 2019, and \$91,118 less than the \$625,429 budgeted amount. Building Fund offerings for 2020 were \$153,784 or \$14,507 more than 2019, and \$38,216 less than the budgeted amount of \$192,000. The church was able to pay out 11% in benevolence commitments which was close to our 12% goal due to a \$41,000 saving in expenses, \$59,000 PPP Loan which was forgiven, and \$10,000 in grants for pre-school teachers. She noted that the 2021 budget was passed at the December 6, 2020, budget meeting.

Congregational Committees:

- Jerry Hoover gave an update on the Property Development Team's efforts. Team members divided the property into two units which saved the congregation \$40,000 in street maintenance fees. The church is proceeding with its partners: Rocky Mountain Development Center, YWCA, Helena Habitat for Humanity, and Trust Montana to pursue affordable residential housing needs, a youth center, and a day care/pre-school program. The City of Helena was awarded a \$40,000 grant through the Department of Commerce and an additional \$16,000 from all partners will pay for the preliminary architectural report and planning needs. ORLC will be preparing its buy/sell agreement with Trust Montana, purchaser of the property.

Questions/Comments:

- Kristi Antosh asked if a vote was taken by the congregation to sell the property. Herb Kulow stated that once development guidelines have been met, it will be presented to the congregation for a vote.

Elections:

- Craig Erickson, out-going President, presented the following Church Council Members who will serve on the 2021 Council:
 - Jan Martin, President
 - Craig Erickson, Past President
 - Ryan Holm, First Vice President
 - Vacant, Second Vice President
 - Janice Kirkpatrick, Secretary
 - Beth Johnson, Treasurer
 - Tom Johnson, Member At Large
 - Drew Sielbach, Member At Large
 - Clint Mingay, Member At Large
 - Cody Salo, Member At Large
 - Lynn Voss, Member At Large
 - Carolyn Meyer, Member At Large

Motion was made by Jeff Martin to approve the members as listed to serve on the Church Council for 2021 and seconded by Herb Kulow. Motion passed.

Recognition of member concluding service:

- Craig thanked Shawn Juers for his dedication and service to the Church Council and his contributions to our music ministry.

Closing Prayer was led by Pastor Kendra.

Meeting adjourned at 11:55 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted,
Janice Kirkpatrick

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Report of the Interim Lead Pastor Rev. Trina Johnsten

Epiphany 2022

By the time you read this, and we are gathered for our annual Congregational Meeting, we will already be to the fourth Sunday in the season of Epiphany. It's an overlooked season of the church year, Epiphany. We've just come off the holiday high of Advent and Christmas. We haven't yet come to the somber seriousness of Lent. We're in this in-between time of Epiphany.

What in the world is this season all about anyway?
Ahhhhh...now that's a good question.

Epiphany is when God's good purposes for us, God's will for us, God's love for us made known in that singular person called Jesus of Nazareth, are being revealed to us.

Slowly.
Over time.
Sometimes in ways that aren't readily apparent at first glance.

It's a bit of an interim time...this season of Epiphany.
Which means it fits us quite well right now,
because we are journeying through an interim time together as a community.

We are in between *what we use to be* and *what we will be* in the future.
We are in between *who we were* and *who God is leading us to be next*.
We are in between the trials and experiences that have shaped us in past years and the joy and promise that are ours for 2022 and beyond.
We are waiting, in true Epiphany style, for God to reveal to us who God is and what that means for us, right here, right now, at 3850 N. Benton Ave., Helena, Montana.

2021 is in the history books, and it was a challenging year here at Our Redeemer's.
Year two of the pandemic,
with the opening ... and closing ... and opening,
with the masking and distancing;
and the unexpected departure of two faithful pastors.

After living through 2020, who knew that 2021 would continue to upend so much in our collective lives?

And even though we've not been able to return to some of our favorite things (food fellowship!), ministry has still happened. Because of your generosity to organizations like God's Love and Helena Food Share, hundreds have felt the love of God through your faithful love. We've continued to offer both in-person and online worship, with our online community steadily growing over the months. We completed the Holy Cow survey and implemented some suggested changes to improve communication and worship. The Transition Team and Call Committee have collected your hopes and dreams for the one who will come and lead you next, and even now, God is preparing that one to join you in ministry.

Which means 2022 will also be a year of great change here at Our Redeemer's! But what else can we expect as followers of the One who promised to make all things new. And indeed, right before our very eyes, God is making good on that promise.

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And in the meantime? You just keep doing what you do so well...

serving, sewing, teaching, encouraging, visiting, baking, mulching,
 ushering, cleaning, counting, quilting, praying, preparing bulletins,
 offering rides, managing technology, picking up trash, strumming,
 setting up the worship space, sharing musical gifts, shoveling walks,
 studying scripture, listening to peoples' lives, beating drums,
 assembling Kid Packs, knitting, planning, envisioning the future,
 maintain the building, worshipping, lighting candles, welcoming,
 weeding, watering, ringing bells, preaching, singing,
 loving one another the list is endless!

It has been such a joy to be in ministry with you, dear sisters and brothers in Christ. May God bring to you a creative, wise, and loving pastor to join with you in ministry in 2022, and may the Lord abundantly bless you and the ministry you do in the years ahead.

Rev. Trina Johnsten
 Interim Lead Pastor

| DEATHS | | | |
|---------------------|--------------------------------------|-------------|--|
| Funeral Date | Deceased | Died | Officiant |
| 8/18/2021 | Terttu Sinikka Kajjansinkko Leinonen | 2/4/2021 | Pastor Kendra Wilde |
| 2/19/2021 | Scott Sim | 2/11/2021 | Pastor Kendra Wilde |
| 4/10/2021 | Ralph Nelson | 3/25/2021 | Pastor Kendra Wilde |
| 4/23/2021 | John (Jack) Dunn | 3/28/2021 | Pastor Arne Bergland |
| | Marian Hotvedt | 3/28/2021 | |
| | Gerald (Jerry) Steinmetz | 3/30/2021 | |
| 7/29/2021 | Timothy Burke | 4/30/2021 | Pastor Kendra Wilde |
| | Henrik Juers | 6/26/2021 | |
| 7/26/2021 | Donna Davis | 7/18/2021 | Pastor Kendra Wilde |
| 8/21/2021 | Wesley Tintinger | 8/11/2021 | Pastor Kendra Wilde - preacher Pastor Trina Johnsten - presider |
| 9/14/2021 | Kailey Logan | 9/6/2021 | Pastor Kendra Wilde - preacher Pastor Trina Johnsten - presider |
| | Helen Ellis | 11/4/2021 | |

| BAPTISMS | | |
|-----------------|-------------------|-----------------------|
| Date | Name | Officiant |
| 1/10/2021 | Charlie Mummey | Pastor Kendra Wilde |
| 4/17/2021 | Zayanna Gray | Pastor Kendra Wilde |
| 5/16/2021 | Kavan Kaufman | Pastor Arne Bergland |
| 6/20/2021 | Codie Rummel | Jan Martin LPA |
| 6/26/2021 | Henrik Juers | Pastor Kendra Wilde |
| 7/4/2021 | Adelaide Peck | Jeff Martin LPA |
| 10/17/2021 | Laura O'Bryant | Pastor Trina Johnsten |
| 11/28/2021 | Sawyer Glueckert. | Pastor Trina Johnsten |

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| CONFIRMATION | | |
|---------------------|------------------|---------------------|
| Date | Name | Officiant |
| 5/9/2021 | Brooklynn Haab | Pastor Kendra Wilde |
| 5/9/2021 | Britton Heuser | Pastor Kendra Wilde |
| 5/9/2021 | Bryar Michalson | Pastor Kendra Wilde |
| 5/9/2021 | Lauren Michalson | Pastor Kendra Wilde |
| 5/9/2021 | Kenzie White | Pastor Kendra Wilde |

| FIRST COMMUNION | | |
|------------------------|---------------|---------------------|
| Date | Name | Officiant |
| 4/1/2021 | Alayna Boe | Pastor Kendra Wilde |
| 4/1/2021 | Kruz Green | Pastor Kendra Wilde |
| 4/1/2021 | Adeline Juers | Pastor Kendra Wilde |
| 4/1/2021 | Faith McAlpin | Pastor Kendra Wilde |
| 4/1/2021 | Shane Sampson | Pastor Kendra Wilde |
| 4/1/2021 | Dayna Willcut | Pastor Kendra Wilde |
| 4/4/2021 | Kendall Salo | Pastor Kendra Wilde |
| 5/2/2021 | Tess Jensen | Pastor Kendra Wilde |

| NEW MEMBERS | | |
|----------------------|----------------------|--------------------|
| Date Received | Name | Received by |
| 2/1/2021 | Luanne Tangedal | Transfer |
| 9/20/2021 | Dan Richardson | Transfer |
| 9/20/2021 | Stephanie Richardson | Transfer |
| 9/20/2021 | Letty Richardson | Transfer |
| 9/20/2021 | Signe Richardson | Transfer |

| Date Removed | Removed Members | Reason |
|------------------------------------|---|---------------|
| 5/1/2021 | Patty Muir | Moved |
| 7/1/2021 | Craig & Andi Moore | Request |
| 9/1/2021 | Arne & Susan Bergland | Moved |
| 11/10/2021 | Byron, Rachel, Emmett & Izaak Dike | Moved |
| 11/10/2021 | Stewart & Janice Kirkpatrick | Moved |
| 11/11/2021 | Candy Watzek | Moved |
| 11/16/2021 | Ben, Kendra, Christian, Anya Wilde-Spiger | Request |
| 11/30/2021 | Curtis & Cindy Little | Moved |
| 12/21/2021 | Steve, Julie, Erika & Alex Ackerlund | Request |
| 12/22/2021 | Rick & Susie Elhart | Moved |
| 12/28/2021 | Luanne Tangedal | Moved |
| Statistical Adjustment = 17 people | | |

Report of the Student Pastor Baird Linke

I began work for ORLC in November, taking over some of the responsibilities which Pastor Kendra handled. I preached twice in November for All Saints Day and Thanksgiving Eve, and I began assisting in worship on Sundays and Wednesdays with Pastor Trina. I took over for Pastor Kendra's confirmation class and have been working with the curriculum she established. I've been getting to know the patterns and systems that ORLC uses to organize our work, as well as getting to know the staff. Jackie and I have been coordinating with Flathead Lutheran Bible Camp for the President's Day Confirmation Retreat coming up in February. We decided on a theme called "Wild Life" and we are basing our programming on John 10:10, "I have come to give you, life and life to the full." We are eager to share that work with the kids. I am preparing an adult education curriculum for the spring, which will focus on the ELCA's Social Statements and what Lutheran theology looks like in the public square. I plan to adapt that curriculum to our confirmation students to give tangible tie-ins between our learning about the Bible and the catechism. I have also attended a council meeting and the church's budget meeting, and I will continue participating in these administrative settings.

An average week of work for me includes attending the staff meeting on Monday morning for one or two hours, followed by some organizational work to prepare for the week ahead. I have been touching base with Jackie to make sure our t's are crossed for youth programming for the coming week and for the Confirmation Retreat planning. After that, I try to organize my worship materials for the upcoming services so they are ready to print and go. On Wednesdays, I get to the church in the morning to check in with my colleagues about any concerns that have come up and to prepare for my confirmation class.

Confirmation preparation involves reading through Pastor Kendra's planned lesson, reading the associated passages from Scripture, and reviewing the Small and Large Catechism for the topic of the day. Then I make edits to the plan based on my skills and gifts, look through to make sure I have entry-points for different learning styles, and rehearse the activities so we can flow well once we have gathered. My priorities for the classes are that the kids have the chance to express themselves, ask unstructured questions about their faith, and engage with the topic of the day. If the kids find a theological or spiritual topic that grabs their interest I am happy to set aside the planned lesson to engage with their attention. This only really applies to theological and moral issues as I want them to receive religious formation at church, but I am not married to the topic I chose if they have one they are more interested in.

On weeks in which I preach, I spend between seven and ten hours on my sermon. My process begins with *lectio divina* and prayerfully dwelling in the texts, followed by exegetical research on the passages for the coming Sunday, examining biblical commentaries, and looking at contemporary theology on the topic. As I am doing this research and dwelling with the text, I keep a journal handy to jot down short reflections and possible threads to follow. Then I begin writing and usually have to restart the sermon two or three times as the sermon begins to crystalize. Writing tends to go fairly quickly once I am in a groove and I spend about an hour editing the draft to punch up language and work on rhythm and thematic coherence. I rehearse the sermon twice and then leave it alone until Sunday. If additions or further edits occur to me I'll come back to it, but I don't re-open the sermon without a plan once it is "finished."

In exciting news, I had my endorsement interview with the Montana Synod in early December and I have been endorsed as a candidate for Word and Sacrament ministry. The endorsement interview is the second of three major interviews through the candidacy process and is one of the key milestones in progressing toward ordained ministry. A positive endorsement decision means that I am eligible for a year-long pastoral internship, which I will be assigned in February and begin in August.

Here is the short bio I used to introduce myself to the congregation:

Baird Linke is a Master of Divinity student at Wartburg Theological Seminary and a candidate for Word and Sacrament ministry through the Montana Synod. He grew up with Our Redeemer's Lutheran Church and he is overjoyed to be able to work with ORLC during this time of transition. Baird has worked in ministry settings from Carroll College to Flathead Lutheran Bible Camp to Buenos Aires, Argentina to South Minneapolis and Tacoma, WA. When he isn't doing schoolwork or regular work he loves spending time outside with his dog Kintla, mountain biking, running, and skiing.

Baird Linke
Student Pastor

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Report of the Director of Children's Ministries Liz Swenson

During the last year our Children's Ministry program has continued to thrive despite the changes that have occurred due to the pandemic. Children show up to religious education and other ministry activities with a smile on, happy to be learning about God with and around other children! I feel so blessed to lead them on this journey. As always I appreciate all of the wonderful volunteers, and fellow ministry staff that help make it possible to serve the PreK-5th grade youth of ORLC.

Here are a few highlights from the last year:

Sunday School: We are blessed with a group of kids who are always anxious to learn more about Christ. Children age 3 through 5th grade participate in a *Workshop Rotation Model*. In this model children learn about a new Bible story on a 4 week rotation. Each week the children learn more deeply about the Bible story through art, science or cooking, games and a movie. The kids love and look forward to this activity every week. We have been blessed with several Sunday School assistants including Jason Callon and Baird Linke who play music weekly, and Jessica Salo and Kathy Olson who sub for me and step in when I need an extra hand.

Sunday School took place online via Zoom until mid March 2021. During this time I had a consistent group of children who attended weekly. They always seemed to have a blast, and I did too. When Sunday School reconvened in March, we held it in the Community Room where there was more space. The kids were ecstatic to be back in person! Starting in mid September we were able to move back to the Sunday School room! I ordered an air purifier to help cleanse the room during and after each use. It has been a true blessing to be back in this classroom, and no longer floating from place to place via a mobile cart of materials!

KidzEd: We have a great group of children who join us on Wednesday evenings for KidzEd. Children age 3 through 5th grade get the opportunity to learn more about the Sunday sermon during the Spark worship service then a new story from the New Testament during KidzEd. The lessons at KidzEd explore a new story of the New Testament on an age-appropriate level. Jessica Salo and Brennan Jensen have volunteered their time this fall and winter to assist with our group. I certainly couldn't have done it without them!

Wednesday Night Service Projects:

Campus Clean-Up Day - In September our service project for the month was a campus clean-up day on Wednesday night! We had several yards of bark delivered and spread bark all along the boulevard in the garden beds, and then we covered all of the beds along the courtyard in the back of the church. Finally, we had a crew go out to Green Meadow and clean-up trash from the ditch! It was a successful night full of service and fellowship of all ages! It is always fun to be a part of something like this.

Operation Christmas Child - During the month of November, the Sunday School offering went toward funding OCC boxes. All kids were invited, and we bought supplies for, and put together 10 Operation Christmas child boxes for those less fortunate! It was a blast.

KidTime: Children age 3 through 2nd grade have the opportunity to begin worship with their family and then, if they wish, be excused for about 20 minutes of children's activities, called *Kid*. The curriculum is a lectionary curriculum which follows the lessons being used during the church service. The children return to the sanctuary for Communion and the conclusion of the service. This program continues all year long and continues to be a very popular educational choice for families. Thank you to Mary Robertson and Jackie Bartz for volunteering to lead these lessons a couple times a month!

We were so blessed to be able to reconvene KidTime in the early summer. It was met with so much gusto from parents and kids alike - who had missed this program throughout much of 2020 and 2021. In September we started holding KidTime again during both the 8:30 and 11:00 services. We have a consistent number of children who join each week, and have a blast learning about the gospel lesson in a more age appropriate way!

Youth Ice Skating Night: In January, all elementary, middle and high school youth were invited to come ice skating at the Memorial Park skating rink! It was great to see these families in person since we had not been together for a few months. We had a phenomenal turn-out. All families were so excited to get together. Unfortunately, the rink would only allow 25 people at a time, so Jackie and I created a scavenger hunt for families and youth to do while waiting. They LOVED the scavenger hunt so much that it even encouraged some to have a shorter time on the ice so that they could also take part in the hunt!

Share your Heart and Spread the Warmth Event: In February, Kendra, Jackie, and I hosted this service project event. All ORLC families and youth were invited to join. We made tie blankets indoors and built snowmen outdoors. Families brought their new/lightly used winter gear to add to the snowman. It was great to see everyone! We had some leftover (un-tied) blankets at the end that we gave out to families at the Spark worship service. Families took them home and brought them back the following week. All blankets and winter clothing were donated!

Lent in a Bag: Jackie and I compiled 25 Lent themed activity bags for families of all ages. Families were excited about these kits. We offered them each week during the Spark worship service. Each kit had 6 weeks of materials. Each week contained a story to read, a Bible reading, discussion questions, a prayer and a hands-on activity.

Come to the Table - First Communion: Seven children completed their Come to the Table classes! During the Communion 101 class Pr. Kendra taught about the mystery of Holy Communion, what a sacrament is, and how to receive Communion with the proper respect. I made communion bread with the children and their families, talking about the ingredients and the mystery of Jesus' presence in the bread. Due to Covid, each family made their own bread - this was a fun new twist that everyone seemed to enjoy. I think we will make this a tradition.

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On Palm Sunday, seven children and their families participated in the Seder Meal. During the meal we went through the traditional Seder Meal, the meanings and how our tradition of Communion came from this meal. Unfortunately, this year, due to Covid, we did not provide a full meal for the families, just the food items used to symbolize the traditional Sedar.

Eight children received their First Communion on or near Maundy Thursday. We were so excited for such a big turnout!

Vacation Bible School 2021: We had a little over 40 children register and attend VBS this year. I was very happy with this smaller number, since we were navigating social distancing and mask requirements of all ages. Instead of a group for every grade level, we had three groups: Preschool/Pre-K in one group, K/1st/2nd grades in one group and 3rd/4th/5th grades in one group. We had 6 very excited teachers who graciously decided to lead those groups!

I was unable to find anyone to help with decorations this last year, so I have solicited the help of other staff members (and family members) to help me with the sets. The decorations were simple, but still very engaging. I was blessed that our community pulled together to help out with the sets and decorations!

Volunteers spent the week telling the stories of Jesus' power pulling us through when times are hard. This theme was really relatable especially during a pandemic! The children worked in the Food Share garden plot, made crafts, sang lots of great songs, played games, and visited the storyteller. We also had a special offering during VBS which went toward buying pigs for people around the world who are most in need. This is an ELCA World Hunger Project. Finally, we had the pleasure of hosting the Tour Train one morning during VBS. The kids climbed aboard the train on Thursday morning and rode around the neighborhood listening to the Bible story for the day! It was a blast.

Finally, we had a great response from the congregation in buying items, donating gift cards and volunteering their time. It is wonderful to see so many people come together sharing their gifts, time, talents and money to create a truly memorable week for children and volunteers alike. What a blessing to have a church where children are truly valued and taught about the love and grace of our God.

FLBC: I had the opportunity to attend camp with the 5th-8th grade girls during the first week of August! All kids participated regularly and gave great insight and introspective during Bible Study and discussion times. Each one of the girls who attended brought something special to our group. We all enjoyed the time away from reality and learned more about our faith in God and how to love everyone! What a beautiful experience.

Blessing of the Backpacks: In September, we had a blessing of the backpacks milestone event! We had several children attend and we shared a small backpack token for each child's bag as a reminder of God's love! As always this event brings so much life back to the church after the summer break!

Trunk or Treat: Trunk or Treat was a complete success! We had over 20 people volunteer their trunks, one family volunteer to pass out hot dogs and one family to make and pass out hot cocoa/cider. We had hundreds of kids come through. We are so thankful to everyone who donated candy and volunteered their trunk for this event!

Walk through the Bible: Walk Through the Bible will take place in mid November. We distributed five Bibles during the Sunday and Wednesday services. We had four children and their families join us for the class. During the Walk through the Bible class, the kids had fun learning all about their new Bible. Thank you to the WELCA for your donation of these beautiful Bibles!

Children's Message: After a few requests from parents, we decided to start offering a Children's Message during our Sunday services that have several kids who are 3rd grade and up! The message is simple and concise and offers kids a deeper more relevant understanding of the weekly lesson. Kids are asked to join the pastor in the front row during the message. This has been a great addition to our Sunday services!

Faith Chests Milestone Ministry: Faith Chests were given to newly baptized children in 2021. Each chest includes an age-appropriate book, and a Thrivent piggy bank. This year the Men's group completed staining the remainder of our wooden Faith Chests.

Advent in a Box: Jackie and I created Advent in a Box kits for all generations. This year we put together a kit that focused on the nativity. Each week the family read the story of a nativity character(s) and then decorated the wooden characters accordingly. At the end of Advent, each family had a full nativity to keep and bring out every year! We created 50 kits.

Intergenerational Christmas Event: ICE was a great success! We had 25 people join us for holiday themed crafts, games, music, and snacks. We also held an Instant Christmas program – and every child who attended chose to dress up and be apart of this. The children seemed to enjoy the event, it was such a blessing! I am very grateful to all of the volunteers who made it possible; Kalley May, Kennedy Bartole, Kash Helfert, Dane Quinn, Kaela Burke, Lori Walter, Lisa Williams-Mathews. As usual, I am also very thankful for all that Jackie Bartz did to help!

Prep for Vacation Bible School 2022: We are currently coordinating with FLBC to help lead our VBS this summer! VBS will take place on July 5th-8th, 2022 . FLBC will provide all programming, activities and music. We will still need volunteers from our church to make it all possible. The FLBC staff will be staying at our church, and we will be reaching out to families to host the staff for meals. We are very excited about partnering with FLBC for VBS 2022!

Christ's Peace,

Liz Swenson,
Director of Children's Ministries

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Report of the Director of Youth and Family Ministries

Jackie Bartz

"Therefore encourage one another and build each other up, just as in fact you are doing." ~ 1 Thessalonians 5:11

With the beginning of 2021, we had hoped for a miraculous end to the pandemic. We quickly learned that thinking *outside-the-box* to care for, encourage, and inspire hope in one another is how we needed to support others in the family of God. While many traditions were put on hold, we have found other ways to assist and uplift one another. Whether it be through outdoor activities or masking in doors to keep each other safe, we have remained connected and supported as members of God's beautiful and loving family. With Christ as our example, we continue to let His light shine uniquely through each of us in both big and small ways, always encouraging one another along the way!

Here are some highlights from this past *outside-the-box* year:

- **Spark on Ice** – Pr. Kendra, Liz, and I collaborated to have a safe night of fun and fellowship on the ice at Memorial Park rink on Jan. 6. With limited numbers on the ice to maintain social distancing, we created a glow in the dark scavenger hunt in the park for families to enjoy while waiting their turn to skate. Everyone was grateful for a night together (but distanced) and really enjoyed all the activities!
- **Extravaganza** - Although the event was quite different this year and virtual, it was wonderful to engage others in our congregation in this continuing education event. This year's theme was "Holding Loosely." The scriptures are full of stories of God's people holding loosely to their plans and learning to trust in the grace and the mission of God. And so, as God's people in 2021, we were reminded that grace is a gift of God, and trust follows grace. Although I greatly missed conversations and collaborations with my peers in person, I was moved in worship, and enriched through the workshops. I am so grateful for the support and encouragement of staff, council, and our congregation to attend the Extravaganza as a part of my continuing education.
- **WOW Youth Retreat** – This retreat has had such a positive and powerful impact on youth faith formation in the past that Pr. Kendra and I worked to find an alternative and safe way to make it happen. We worked with Flathead Lutheran Bible Camp to plan a "L.O.L.: Love Out Loud" Retreat inviting ORLC families as a safe alternative to the usual WOW middle school retreat. However, as only one family signup by the deadline, the retreat was canceled.
- **Share your Love & Spread the Warmth** – This snowman building and tie blanket making event on Monday, Feb. 15th was an enormous success despite the snow being a little dry for building snowmen. We had a great turn out and all had a blast in the courtyard making a snowman, warming up with hot chocolate, and/or tying a blanket for the Linus Project for children in need. We made 19 blankets and filled a car full of winter gear donations for God's Love.
- **Youth Ski Night at Great Divide** – In an effort to continue to create outdoor activities in which youth are still able to connect and fellowship with each other, ORLC sponsored a Friday Night Ski where youth were able to ski under the lights. It was a great turn out and exactly what our youth needed amidst so many changes and challenges.
- **Passion Mime** –With the cancellation of the Passion Mime in 2020, the high school youth were extra enthusiastic and willing put in the extra time and effort to make a recorded version of the Passion Mime to share the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ in this most meaningful way. There were a lot of extra things to think about with this project and I am so thankful for their creativity, patience, and dedication. I am also grateful for the many adults that went the extra mile to make this happen behind the scenes, especially, Jason Callon, Eric Spangenberg, Lynnette Avery, and Ryan and Liz Swenson!
- **Spring Wednesday evening Safehouse** –It was clear that many if not all of our youth have struggled during the past months with all the pressures and expectations that came with the pandemic as well as their need to be in face-to-face relationship with one another. With social distancing and masking, Safehouse met in person with social distancing even when other groups were not. It became a consistent group of youth spending lots of time just checking in, praying with each other, and offering support and hope. It was beautiful and I was humbled to create that space for them.
- **Lent in Bag** – Liz and I collaborated on *Lent in Bag* as a way for families to engage in the season of Lent at home. These bags contained a weekly devotion, scripture, discussion questions, story, prayer, and activity. This was a very successful outreach project as the demand was so great that we ran out bags and had to make some more!
- **Lutheran World Relief Personal Care Kits** – Our youth worked together again to collect items and assemble Personal Care kits for Lutheran World Relief in April. They applied for and received a Thrivent Action Team Grant to assist with the cost of some items that were less expensive when ordered in bulk (nail clippers, combs, toothbrushes). We were able to assemble 138 kits in approximately 20 minutes. Many hands truly make light work!
- **Confirmation** - We celebrated Confirmation for our 8th graders as our high school youth catered a special banquet for the Confirmands and their families as well as welcomed them into Safehouse with a fun night of fellowship. By assisting with the banquet, our high school youth were able to fundraise a portion of their trip to FLBC in the summer. It is always a wonderful to see one ministry support another!
- **Graduation Banquet & Blessing** - We had 12 graduates participate in the Graduation Celebration this year. Although neither Pr. was able to be at the banquet, both left lovely video messages for the youth (thanks to Jason for editing them). I am grateful for those that stepped up and made it all go so smoothly including Jane Peachy, Lori Bigwood-Pecarina, Kennedy Bartole, Ryan Swenson, and Lynnette Avery.
- **Summer Fun Events** –May provided a time for youth to gather along with 8th graders to decompress, build relationships and have a lot of fun with Cinco De Mayo and games, a hike up Mt. Helena, a digital escape room and of course playing the game of Shoe! Summer fun nights included frisbee golf, bike rides, four outdoor movie nights, a water fun night, and we partnered with the other Lutheran churches for an evening at Last Chance Splash!
- **Flathead Lutheran Bible Camp** – In lieu of a mission trip this last summer with the uncertainty of COVID-19, we decided to take groups to camp in 2021. I had four high school youth accompany me to FLBC July 18-23 and five 5th-8th grade youth accompany Liz and myself August 1-4. We had a wonderful time in fellowship, discussion, water activities, facing our fears on the high ropes course and flying squirrel, so much more! Although we had lower numbers as some regular weeks of camp took place, these weeks at camp were just as powerful! Plus, it was amazing to see youth from ORLC in full action as camp counselors: Maddie Robertson, Ella Krumm, and Clay Perry!

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- **Rest and Rejuvenation Leave** - Just as Jesus and his disciples went away from the crowds to a place of rest (Mark 6:30-34), it is important that church leadership take a time of rest, or sabbath, to continue ministry renewed in the Holy Spirit. After 8 years of ministry at ORLC, I was so grateful that our church offers such time and space for rest and renewal. Early this year, I was approved to take a Rest and Renewal Leave for four (4) weeks from August 8-September 7, 2021. It was such a blessing to take this time to rest, renew my daily spiritual practices and be in God's beautiful creation, as well as spend time with my family. I was also able to spend time in God's Word and Creation at Holden Village. It was truly a rejuvenating inspiring place, and I am grateful for the conversations I had and friendships I made while I was there. I am so grateful for the support of this congregation as I took this Rest and Rejuvenation Leave.
- **Blessing of the Backpacks** - We had a great turn out during at the beginning of September as we celebrated this milestone by presenting youth with backpacks tags, blessing, and praying over them.
- **Spark Worship** – This fall, we resumed Spark worship in person with masks. Although it has been a smaller attendance, it is still wonderful to be back together in worship.
- **Fall Safehouse** - This year has been a building year at Safehouse, but exciting nonetheless! We began regular youth group meetings on Wednesday nights starting September 15th. Net Leadership was different this year as there was not a specific leadership team. Instead, I have engaged youth for specific projects and invited all to brainstorm discussion topics and activities. While the youth group is smaller, they are dedicated and mighty! They participated in a youth cottage meeting on Sept. 22nd with Eric Spangenberg from the Transition Team and gave input to Gretchen Krumm on the development of the church property in Oct. What a blessing to have youth that are so engaged and willing to take on leadership roles in our church and community!
- **Preschool Chapel** – Trudy asked for assistance with preschool chapel this year as she is teaching as well as the preschool director. It has been a delight to assist and lead preschool chapel at least once a month.
- **Nursery** – Unfortunately with the pandemic and keeping the safety of children and nursery attendants at the forefront, the nursery was closed for the majority of the year. However, it was reopened in September with new HEPA air purifier and a more consolidated number of toys which are easily and frequently cleaned. The Prayground toys and weekly bulletins remain in the narthex for family to take and use during worship.
- **Fall Campus Clean Up** - On Sept. 29th, all ages of Our Redeemer's came together to assist with much needed service projects on our own campus. We focused on adding new wood chips to the boulevard and courtyard as well as picking up garbage in the field and along Green Meadow. It takes a lot of hands to keep our property looking nice and what a HUGE impact was made that day with 4 yards of mulch spread and a dumpster filled with garbage! Thank you for the many hands that helped!
- **Carroll College Concessions Fundraiser** – This fall, our youth group was invited back for its fifth year partnering with Sodexo to work Carroll College Concessions for both the football and basketball seasons. Our youth group enjoys serving in our local community and are grateful for this partnership and fundraiser opportunity that goes beyond the walls of our church. Many of our youth have been able to fully fundraise their youth trips, FLBC summer camp and more!
- **Trunk or Treat** – In 2020, I filled out the 10-page form for the LCC Health Department to hold Spooky Spaces, a socially distant Trunk or Treat with a scavenger hunt. This year, while the health department is not requiring approval for events, Pr. Kendra, Liz, and I still wanted to create a safe fall experience for all. With the help of our congregation, we held a Trunk or Treat for the community, keeping the event completely outside with trunks, lawn games, a scavenger hunt, and cocoa and cider for all to enjoy on Oct. 30. There were about twenty trunks, and the kids had a wonderful time finding all the scavenger hunt rubber ducks. Thank you to all those who decorated their trunks and donated extra candy. Special thanks to Liz and Pr. Kendra for tracking all the details the day of the event, Gretchen, and Blair for making hot dogs, for Shar for the hot cocoa, and Steph for staffing the scavenger hunt.
- **Advent In A Box** – Liz and I collaborated with Becky Cole to create *Advent in a Box*. This box is geared toward families, although any age could take one, as way for them to celebrate the season together in their home. Each box included scripture, discussion questions, activity, and prayer for each week of Advent. Jane Peachy assisted with assembly and we distributed about 40 boxes.
- **Outdoor Christmas Display** – Last year, I headed up a group of volunteers to work with Jerry Hoover to create our outdoor Christmas display. The community and congregation were very appreciative and found its simplicity to be a very meaningful experience. With such great positive feedback, we set it up again with a few minor tweaks and improvements. I applied and was approved for a Thrivent Action Team Grant to help cover the costs of replacement stakes, lightbulbs, bales of straw and anything else we may need. Jerry Hoover rallied a team to light the trees again while I found other to help setup the stable and luminary lights. It turned out beautiful again and I am so grateful for the many hands that made this project such a success!
- **Intermountain Children's Christmas** – Our high school youth decided to sponsor 24 youth at the Intermountain Children's Residential Treatment Center by providing them with Christmas stockings. They applied for a grant from Town Pump to assist with the funds donated by youth, family, and friends to shop and fill stockings for each youth. We are so blessed to have youth with such big hearts and a willingness to ensure other youth know they are loved and remembered at Christmas!

My goals for the coming year include:

- Continue to inspire, encourage, and guide our youth as leaders for service opportunities and other leadership roles in our congregation and community.
- Participate in the Extravaganza Youth Director's Conference to continue to find new ways to encourage our youth in their faith journeys, to remain an active part of the church, and engage in them in leadership roles.
- Lead a group of youth to the ELCA National Youth Gathering.
- Continue to encourage and foster intergenerational relationships within our congregation through service, sharing of skills, and meaningful conversations.

In Christ's Service,

Jackie Bartz

Director of Youth and Family Ministries

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Report of the Director of Worship & Arts Jason Callon

This year has presented Our Redeemer's with many challenges, from COVID-19 to saying goodbye to two pastors. My job, as Director of Worship and Arts, is to move forward with leading worship in the most Spirit-filled manner possible and to find ways to support Our Redeemer's through these uncertain times.

Duties

I would like to take a moment to go through how my time is spent and the various duties I have undertaken. I am responsible for managing most of the technical (non-pastoral) aspects of worship, which includes most elements outside of preaching and Eucharist. I spend my time:

- Building an order of worship for each service (three per week)
 - Each part of worship is reviewed, described, and assigned.
- Developing seasonal changes to the liturgy
 - I work with the pastor(s) on changes to prayers, litanies, and liturgy as the church season changes.
- Working up a set list of music
 - For three services, each with different ensembles and musical styles, the pastor(s) and I choose music that is thematically fitting.
- Arranging music
 - One of my favorite parts of the job is to take music that exists and arrange it to work for the musicians we have; this could mean analyzing hymns and translating them into guitar chords, re-writing parts as needed for different instruments, etc.
- Managing volunteers
 - Worship is an act of the whole congregation, and we utilize many people to execute it. I work to engage and involve people in a variety of tasks.
- Building slides for worship
 - Making sure the congregation can follow along with worship is very important in our tradition; I try to keep up with industry standards as they develop.
- Managing the sound system
 - Assigning microphones, sound checking, and keeping up with changes in our live sound reinforcement, with a goal of making what is happening in worship as clear as possible.
- Producing a live stream
 - Building a stream each week and managing volunteers so that we can involve our distant congregation.
- Elevating festival days
 - Arranging for and bringing in guest musicians on special days helps lift up the importance of these days and enhances worship.
- Leading ensembles
 - I direct the choir, the Rejoice band, and the Spark band, as well as working with others and building special ensembles for festivals such as Christmas.
- Other duties
 - Publishing weekly email news, posting to the website, helping to build bulletins, producing slides for the TV screens in the narthex, working with the preschool, and long-term planning are some of my additional duties.

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People and Groups

This year, we hired Chas Elliot to play piano for our Spark worship on Wednesday evenings. Our organist Linda Keim is currently on hiatus for medical reasons. I hope to have her back with us soon or to find another solution to hold us over. Member Toni Guay has been stepping up to help out during this time.

Autumn Keller continues as director of our Grace Notes Bell Choir. The bell choir aims to play the first Sunday of each month in worship (during the school year) and alternate between 8:30am and 11:00am. As with all our ensembles, the bell choir is searching for new players to join their ranks. If you are interested in learning to ring bells, contact Autumn Keller (or I can put you in contact with her).

Our Chancel Choir is struggling to fill out enough to bring special music to worship. The challenges of Covid have put a tremendous strain on us. The choir will work on recruiting and inviting new members to join, breaking into smaller, more agile groups (such as quartets) to present pieces, and presenting virtual choir videos. Covid is not over and so our need to be creative continues. The choir will work to bring special music at least once a month to worship, hopefully more often.

The Rejoice band is consistently 4-5 members strong, with a pianist, 2-3 guitars, a drummer, and singers. We are working to elevate worship at the 11:00am worship in a way that is accessible and welcoming to all people, with an emphasis on more contemporary musical styles. We sing tunes from contemporary Christian music to upbeat hymns, to praise songs, to world music. We also work to sing the liturgy in a contemporary way.

The Wednesday evening Spark band has me on guitar, Chas Elliot on piano, and then 2-3 youth musicians. We sing 3-4 pieces of music during worship each week.

Guest musicians and special music for festival days is something in which I am particularly interested. Times such as Advent, Christmas, Lent, Easter, Pentecost, Reformation, All Saints, and more should have excellent music in a way that enhances the worship experience. I plan to continue bringing in musicians to elevate our music. In 2021, we were joined by various guest brass players, a 7-piece jazz band, a string orchestra, and a brass quartet from the symphony at various times.

We have a strong group of Lay Pastoral Associates (LPA) in Lori Bigwood-Pecarina, Jan Martin, Jeff Martin, Kevin Mathews, and Lisa Williams-Mathews. These folks are crucial to our worship during this time of transition and are very helpful to Pastor Trina. I am grateful to them and all they do, along with Deacon Carol Will, who leads Bible studies and spearheads Christian education efforts.

We also have a large group of volunteers that usher, greet, help with communion, read scripture during worship, run technology, and so much more.

Looking Forward

In 2022, I plan to continue to build our music ministries. I would like to bring in more guest musicians and hear a wide variety of music in worship. I look forward to meeting a new pastor that will lead us into the future as a congregation, and I will continue to evaluate how we do worship and try new things to elevate our worship.

Thank you for your continued support of my ministry, as I seek to make worship an accessible time for everyone, as we move closer to God together.

Yours in Christ,
Jason Callon
Director of Worship and Arts

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Report of the Director of Our Redeemer's Lutheran Preschool Trudy Burke

Twenty-three years ago the members of Our Redeemer's took the bold step of opening a preschool. Over the past two decades, this ministry has offered classes for three-, four- and five-year-olds and has served many families in the Helena community - some who are part of the ORLC congregation and many who come to us from other faith backgrounds. We are proud of our reputation as a caring and quality preschool with a Christian emphasis and experienced staff.

At present we serve 52 students in five different classes- two sessions of three year olds, one session of four year olds, and two sessions of pre-kindergarten students (older four- and five-year-olds). Families come to us from throughout the Helena area to attend preschool, and many families return with siblings. We work hard to build relationships with our students and their families, and are we often maintain connections even after our students "graduate."

Our current staff is comprised of Wendy Vukonich, who teaches Pre-Kindergarten, Alenna Maw, our three-year-old teacher, Kathryn Dunkelberger who runs our Lunch Bunch program and serves as a classroom assistant. Trudy Burke serves as Director and also teaches a four-year-old class. We are fortunate to have such a wonderful team of experienced and caring teachers who thrive working with the smallest learners.

Highlights of 2021:

- January - This month marked the midpoint of the 2020-2021 school year, and is the time we hold Parent-Teacher conferences. The decision was made to hold these meetings via Zoom, which worked quite well, overall. All of our families participated in a conference.
- February - Registration opened for the 2021-2022 school year, and because we didn't feel able to offer visits to prospective families (as we have in the past), we made a short video to highlight our program and give parents a feel for the environment here at Our Redeemer's Preschool.
- March - It has been a tradition for the Preschool students to sing in church each spring. This year we made a "music video" to share with the congregation as it wasn't feasible for families to join us at a service. Jason Callon was a great help with this project, and many families commented that they enjoyed sharing the video with family who live in other places (it currently has over 250 views on YouTube!)
- April - We combined our Spring Fundraiser with the annual Preschool Art Show. It was great to see the colorful artwork of our students on display throughout the building.

April was also the month we cautiously started a return to more "normal" preschool programming. Prior to that, we had kept each class of 10-11 students in their own "pod", separate for the whole class time. We started to join classes for chapel and outdoor play times and we were so thankful to be able to move in that direction!

- May - We end our school year the week before Memorial Day, so this was our final month together - and we squeezed in a lot of fun! Walking field trips to the park, our annual bike day in the parking lot, and good-bye celebration were some of the ways we marked the year end.
- June and July - Summer is usually a quiet time in the preschool, but we shook things up this year by reintroducing a program called Summer Preschool Fun. We offered three sessions of day-camps for our preschool students, and were thrilled to fill them all. Children attended five mornings of outdoor and indoor play, crafts and activities with new and old friends. In addition to being a fun event for the campers, it was a new revenue source for the Preschool.

The summer months were also a time of searching for new teachers. We said goodbye to three teachers - Audra Shropshire, Jan Kiely and Emily Haerter at the end of the 20-21 school year. Finding new staff in the current job marked proved to be a challenge. We have been blessed by the addition of Alenna Maw, as our threes teacher. We were unable to hire a new fours teacher, so cancelled one class of fours. Trudy Burke took on the role of teacher for the remaining four-year-old class.

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- August/September - And just like that, a new school year was upon us. We held our annual orientation meetings with parents and students and we were off and running. Our first family event was a hike around Spring Meadow Lake which was well attended by students and families. These "Family Field Trips" are a way for us to offer optional, offsite experiences for our students, parents, siblings, and often grandparents. Safety and health of our students continues to be a priority. Teachers and any adult who comes inside wear masks. Families have the option to mask their child, and a few choose to do so. We are allowing classes to interact, and we did restart our popular Lunch Bunch program this school year.
- October - Classes visited the garden to see pumpkins, dig carrots and feed the chickens. We practiced fire/safety drills and also got to know church staff and volunteers who lead our chapel times each week. Our annual Halloween Parade was a lot of fun, as parents and others came to watch us walk through the courtyard in costume.
- November/December - We held two more Family Field trips- our popular Pickle Making Party in November and a Gingerbread House Day in December. Both events were made possible through Thrivent grants with which we made supply purchases. We also held small Christmas programs for each class in the Great Room.

We are deeply grateful to the Church Council and this congregation for their prayers and ongoing support of the Preschool program. Know that our Preschool ministry is making a positive impact in the lives of children and families in this community.

In His Service,
Trudy Burke, Director

2021 Annual Report of the Women of the ELCA

WELCA is a community of women who meet together for fellowship, growth and service. Called to discipleship in Jesus Christ and empowered by the Holy Spirit, we commit ourselves to grow in faith, affirm our gifts, support one another in our callings, engage in ministry and action, and promote healing and wholeness in the church, society and the world. **All women who are members of Our Redeemer's are also members of WELCA.** All women are invited to attend WELCA functions and Bible study.

Bible study is one of our core activities. Our two Bible study groups started the year meeting as a combined group but returned to individual groups in October for the remainder of the year. Our quilting group continued their work throughout the year, and in May we sent 175 quilts to Lutheran World Relief. The Sew in Love service group was also able to continue making items for the women and children at the Friendship Center.

During the year we continued to collect items for Lutheran World Relief Kits, and in May we sent out 70 Baby Care Kits and 95 School Kits.

After our annual Fall Festival was canceled last year due to the pandemic, we were delighted to hold it this year with some modifications. In addition to the usual craft and collectible items, we were able to offer prepackaged cookies and baked goods. While we were unable to have a luncheon, we sold frozen homemade chicken pot pies which proved to be very popular. Our net income from this event was \$4680, which will enable us to continue supporting most of our projects. In 2022, we will again be providing scholarships to any students needing financial help to attend Flathead Lutheran Bible Camp. We have also been able to support many local charities as well as Lutheran World Relief. The accompanying WELCA Treasurer's Report shows how the proceeds were allocated.

The WELCA Board oversees all aspects of the WELCA program and plans the events for the coming year. Serving on the Board this year were: President, **Pat Lumma**; Vice President and Secretary, **Charlene Mayala**; Treasurer, **Kim Randall**; and Bible Study Chairs, **Hildegard Krumm and Kay Patterson**. The WELCA Board meets the second Tuesday of the month at 10:15am in AD-1 and we invite all interested women to attend any of our meetings.

In Christ's service,
Pat Lumma, WELCA President

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2021 Annual WELCA Treasurer's Report

Beginning Balance: 6,595.99

Income 2021

| | |
|--------------------------|----------|
| Fall Festival 2021 (net) | 4,696.72 |
| Circle Offerings | 315.50 |
| Pool of Living Water | 22.26 |
| Thank Offering | 479.50 * |
| Bank Interest | 1.35 |
| Total Income: | 5,515.33 |

Disbursements 2021

| | |
|---|----------|
| Synodical Payments: | |
| Circle Offering | 173.50 |
| Thank Offering | 64.50 |
| Our Redeemer's Lutheran Church: | |
| Bibles for Third Grade | 332.00 |
| Emergency Assistance (gift to ministry) | 250.00 |
| Family Promise Fund | 400.00 |
| Middle School Retreat Fund | 100.00 |
| Flathead Lutheran Bible Camp | 400.00 |
| God's Love | 400.00 |
| Lutheran World Relief | 400.00 |
| LWR kits and delivery expenses | 174.80 |
| LWR Quilting Supplies | 492.10 |
| Scholarships: Bible Camp | 1,192.00 |
| Total Disbursements: | 4,378.90 |

Bank Balance 12/31/21 7,732.42

1/4/2022

*balance to be disbursed in 2022

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2021 Personnel Committee Report

Our Redeemer's Personnel Committee consists of the following members: Jan Martin, Ingrid Childress, Bob Oldenburg, Lynda Hanson, Clint Mingray, Sharon Redfern, and the current or interim Lead Pastor. This past year has been devoted to updating staff job descriptions and revising the Personnel Policy Manual.

We completed job descriptions for the Youth and Family Ministries position and the Administrative Assistant position. Both were presented to and accepted by the Church Council. Currently, the committee is developing a job description for the Preschool Director position. With this document completion, all staff job descriptions should be current and on file.

Changes in the Personnel Manual included an update on Family Leave. Revisions were made by the committee, presented to the Council, and approved. The manual was also updated in terms of placement of content and formatting changes. The committee's goal was to meet with staff following the handbook revision to discuss the changes and answer any questions; unfortunately, all was canceled due to the pandemic. Our Interim Pastor, Trina feels that the staff would welcome such an exchange, so this will be scheduled for one of the weekly staff meetings this year.

Future work will include discussion on other types of leaves, including Educational Leave, and possible updates or changes to the existing policy. Due to the Covid pandemic, remote work has been allowed. The committee feels that this policy should be revisited when possible to determine if the practice should continue. In addition, the duties and function of the Personnel Committee should be examined and defined in light of the ORLC constitution.

Two, possibly three, committee members will be transitioning off the committee this year, and replacements will be needed. Thank you to Bob Oldenburg and Sharon Redfern for their service.

Sharon Redfern
ORLC Personnel Committee Chair

2021 Perpetual Fund Committee

Our Redeemer's Lutheran Church (ORLC) established an endowment fund titled Perpetual Fund to receive and administer gifts from wills and other bequests in January 1991. Gifts are invested with income earned from the investments available for grants as approved by the Perpetual Fund trustees. Trustees are appointed by the ORLC congregational Council for a three-year term and can serve only two consecutive terms. There are two sub-funds of the Perpetual Fund, a Debt/Service Fund, and a Seminary Scholarship Fund. The Perpetual Fund trustees announce the availability of grants in the church bulletin and Voice during the month of April. Grant applications are reviewed with approved grants funded thereafter. The Fund's investment balance at the end of the year can be found in the investment category of the balance sheet in the financial report.

PERPETUAL FUND: SEMINARY SCHOLARSHIP FUND

No grant requests were submitted for 2021

PERPETUAL FUND: ENDOWMENT FUND

The trustees awarded \$445 to assist with the expenses of holding a neighborhood picnic titled "Homecoming Celebration & Commemoration" on September 12, 2021. Regrettably, the Covid virus spiked and the neighborhood picnic was cancelled.

Respectfully submitted,
Lori Chase, Glenn Erickson, Christopher May, Jim Penner
Perpetual Fund Trustees

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2021 Gifts and Memorials Committee Report

Dear Friends in Christ,

The Gifts and Memorial Committee (GMC) at Our Redeemer's Lutheran Church (ORLC) did not meet this past year due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The GMC received and reviewed monthly financial reports to ensure that all gifts/ memorials were properly directed to fund(s) as specified the donor(s).

The GMC general fund balance was \$6,977.14 on January 1, 2021 and \$9,562.14 on November 7, 2021. There were no expenditures this year.

Prayerfully submitted by,

ORLC Gifts and Memorial Committee
Norm Midtlyng, Chair
Ingrid Childress
Autumn Keller

2021 St. John's United Report

Sharon and I were Saint John's United delegates this past year. We were able to meet once in person at the new downtown facility, and also once via Zoom. St. John's continues to emphasize its wellness philosophies around the development of its communities. They are working to provide a continuum of care along every step of the aging process.

The six campuses of St John's are:

- Billings Mission Ridge, Montana's first not-for-profit life plan community,
- Billings West End Campus, which include Cottages, the newly completed Chapel Court, and Billings Legacy Building.
- Billings Heights, where Wyndstone, Meadowlark Landing, and Novack Cottage are located.
- Laurel, which contains Richardson Cottage, Patio Homes, The Crossings, and Browns' Landing.
- Hamilton, where the Sapphire Lutheran Homes campus is located.

All of these locations include care for all levels of supportive living.

Additionally, a facility in Red Lodge, The Willows, offers supportive living options consistent with the St. John's Service Partnership Structure.

These locations and the services provided make fundraising an important part of St. John's mission. Much of our meeting discussions centered around efforts and campaigns to raise funds. The current endowment campaign, for resident care updates, has a goal of \$8 million by April 1, 2022. \$6.8 million has already been raised. This fund is used when residents at St. John's United exhaust their resources. We also met the Philanthropist of the year, Stan Hill, and the business partner of the year, Miles Community College. MCC nursing program is now affiliated with the St John's program, which will help to provide for nursing care in the future.

Much additional information is available on the St. John's website, and we encourage congregational members to learn more about our partners through this resource. We have enjoyed being the ORLC representatives.

Mark Redfern

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2021 Financial Review Committee

The Financial Review Committee is annually re-established by the Council President and met periodically in 2021. Committee members reviewed documents pertaining to the financial status of the church on a regular basis, advised the Council with respect to budget issues, advised the Council Treasurer on bookkeeping issues and proper accounting procedures, and responded to the Audit Committee's annual review. The committee routinely reported recommendations regarding financial matters to the Church Council. The Committee members in 2021 were Craig Erickson, Jan Martin, and Beth Johnson. Sarah Magee attended meetings as a non-voting member.

In Christ's Service,
Beth Johnson
Council Treasurer

2021 Generosity Committee

Dear church family of Our Redeemer's Lutheran Church,

Once again, we find ourselves in a time of transition. In 2020, we had to adapt to the challenges of the pandemic. In 2021, our struggles with Covid continued. We also said goodbye to Pastor Arne and Pastor Kendra. We welcomed Pastor Trina. We began the search for a new lead pastor; we continue to consider the results of the survey conducted by Holy Cow! Consulting, and we continue to explore the scope of ORLC's ministries through the opportunity presented by our partnership with the City of Helena, Habitat for Humanity, Trust Montana, Rocky Mountain Development Council, and YWCA. We are on the threshold of offering new and wonderful ministries, including a ministry of giving.

Covid has taught us there is no longer a business as usual, which is why this fall, the Generosity Committee, began working with Dennis Trotter and became a participant in the Montana Synod's Fed by Ravens program. Dennis assists the Synod with the facilitation of the Fed by Ravens program, which is a pilot project sponsored by the Montana Synod ELCA to work with pastors and congregational leaders to re-envision and revitalize stewardship and generosity. Fed by Ravens engages biblical teachings and financial management principles to explore our relationship with money and personal finances and seeks to develop new narratives to address the stigma and misunderstanding associated with stewardship and congregational giving. Using 1 Kings 17 as a foundational text and exploring God's provision for Elijah and others in scripture, the purpose of Fed by Ravens is to reframe our relationship with money and reestablish our reliance and trust in God, giving back for God's use what has been given to us.

Fed by Ravens is not a prepackaged program or a passive experience. It is a journey of education and exploration as participants actively discover and create new opportunities for congregational giving. We will soon invite you to participate in discussions around financial management, stewardship, fundraising, communications, and strategic planning, contributing to and shaping a new stewardship plan for ORLC.

Finally, we want to thank you for your continued support of ORLC and its ministries. Your generosity is amazing, and we, the members of the Generosity Committee, wish to express our deep gratitude for your support. We also urge you to prayerfully consider how you can share your time, your talents, and your financial resources during this time of transition.

We need to hear your voice, and we need the blessing of your time, your experience, and your wisdom. The church needs you, and we believe Christ is calling each of us to share our abundance. We invite you to join our committee. If you're interested, please get in touch with Craig Erickson at 399-0104 or ericksoncr@yahoo.com.

In Christ's service,

Jan Martin
Beth Johnson
Ingrid Childress
Karen Armstrong
Pastor Trina Johnsten

Mark Redfern
Craig Erickson

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2021 Justice and Peace

Hunger Team

The partnership with Helena Food Share continues to be a blessing for both our community and our congregation. With the help of a \$6000 grant from a local foundation, we presented a check to Helena Food Share for \$13,149.68 from the summer milk campaign. In the fall we were finally able to resume kid pack assemblies, and we began to assemble about 1000 kid packs on the first three Tuesdays of each month. Our productive community garden offered 1500 pounds of produce to Helena Food Share. And the congregation generously donated 1366 pounds of food for their holiday food baskets.

The Kendra Wilde Hunger Endowment Fund was established to meet hunger needs in the community. The ELCA Foundation manages these funds, and the Hunger Team will manage disbursement of interest from this investment on a quarterly basis. At the end of December, a check for \$30,670 was sent to the ELCA Foundation. Donations may be made to the foundation at any time.

Kathy Olson
kathyolson8686@gmail.com

Family Promise of Greater Helena

This was a challenging year for Family Promise. How to provide hospitality while keeping the families and the volunteers safe during a pandemic, finding affordable housing, limited space at the day center and an inability to host their normal fundraising events really kept the Family Promise staff on their toes. But thanks to the dedicated staff and partner churches, Family Promise served a record number of families this year.

One of the ways that this was able to happen is that First Christian Church graciously offered to allow the families to stay in their church building with host churches providing the meals and overnight hosts. Our Redeemer's hosted in February, May, August, and November of last year.

The ORLC Coordinator for Family Promise, Janet Whitmoyer, stepped down to enjoy retirement with her husband, Ron. We are very thankful for her leadership, commitment, and dedication, and we wish her every blessing in her retirement.

There is a great ministry opportunity to serve as overnight and meal hosts. Please contact Linda Coty if you would like to serve as an overnight host or Linda Nelson if you would like to help provide meals for our families. Kathy Olson serves as the ORLC Coordinator for Family Promise.

Kathy Olson
kathyolson8686@gmail.com

GOD'S LOVE

Affordable housing, mental health, addictions, pandemic - any or all have varying degrees of impact on a life. Whether an individual or a family suffering from low to no income or no place to go, we are not here to judge, but here to help. Your continual contributions to God's Love throughout the year make a difference. Your generosity and support may feel insignificant at times, but please know it makes a huge impact for those who are suffering and struggle to see a brighter tomorrow. You provide a light our vulnerable can use in helping to shape their tomorrow. A day at a time takes on new meaning when struggling; random acts of kindness can warm a soul. Thank you.

Judy McMaster
judy1950@bresnan.net

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Report of the Audit Committee For Calendar Year 2021

The Audit Committee, consisting of Karen Armstrong, Jeff Martin and Herb Kulow, has been charged with reviewing the financial policies, a review of bank statements and monthly church council reports for years 2019 and 2020.

It was our responsibility to review the compliance with existing financial policies, a review of bank statements for compliance with the Bank Account Reconciliation Policy and a review of the financial and building reports prepared by the Treasurer and the Director of Finance and Facilities and presented to the Church Council and included as part of the minutes of the Church Council meetings.

The internal audit was intended to provide the oversight necessary to promote a strong control environment and to afford reasonable assurance that good stewardship is being used in handling and accounting for the assets of the congregation. It was not an audit performed by professionals in accordance with generally accepted auditing standards.

The following is a summary of our reviews and our findings and recommendations.

The Audit Committee reviewed the following financial policies:

1. Bank Account Reconciliation Review and Approval Policy dated July 7, 2010 and approved March 19, 2019;
2. Credit Card Policy dated August 22, 2006 and approved July 21, 2020;
3. Check Signing Policy dated August 21, 2-18 and no approval noted on policy;
4. Money Counting Policy dated October 15, 2019 and approved October 15, 2019;
5. Petty Cash Accounts Policy dated August 21, 2019 and approved August 21, 2019;
6. Purchase Order Signing Policy dated May 19, 2016 and approved October 15, 2019.

GENERAL FINANCIAL POLICY FINDING

Not all of the financial policies were reviewed and approved by the Church Council each year.

GENERAL RECOMMENDATION

All policies should be reviewed and approved by the Church Council annually. Any revisions to a policy should result in a change in policy date consistent with the Church Council approval date. If there is no revision to policy, the policy date will not change, however the policy should still be approved by the Church Council annually.

SPECIFIC FINANCIAL POLICY FINDINGS

- **Purchase Order Signing Policy Finding** - A purchase order is being completed for the internal transfer of funds; however, there is no supporting invoice for an internal transfer.
- **Purchase Order Signing Policy Recommendation** - Since an invoice is not available or necessary for an internal transfer of funds, it is recommended a "Church Internal Funds Transfer" form be originated and implemented for all internal transfer of funds to be signed as provided by policy. The Purchase Order Signing Policy should reflect this change with the approval of the Church Council.
- **Money Counting Policy Findings** - Not all deposit tickets were signed by both counters. All deposit tickets sampled in 2019 complied with policy. There were 18 exceptions during 2020, 16 of which occurred during remote church services due to Covid. Since there were no Sunday or Wednesday services, offerings were either sent electronically or by mail. As a result, there was not always two people available to count offerings and prepare deposit tickets, resulting in deposit ticket signing exceptions.
- **Money Counting Policy Recommendation** - Although there were only two noted deposit ticket signature exceptions during 2019 and 2020, during in-person church services, the Church Council should consider a policy/procedure for counting and depositing offerings during remote church services.

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The Audit Committee reviewed each 2019 and 2020 bank statement for compliance with the Bank Reconciliation Policy.

GENERAL BANK STATEMENT RECONCILIATION FINDINGS

- Generally, the reconciliation of bank statements is acceptable, however there were two checks that were reissued during 2019 without any cross referencing to the originally issued check. Additionally, one check was voided with no explanation noted.

GENERAL RECOMMENDATION

- The Director of Finance and Facilities should reference the reissue of a replacement check on the original account reconciliation by date and number and explain the reason for any voided checks.
- The Audit Committee reviewed the financial and building reports prepared by the Treasurer and the Director of Finance and Facilities and presented to the Church Council for 2019 and 2020.

GENERAL CHURCH COUNCIL FINANCIAL AND BUILDING REPORT FINDINGS

- A number of reports to the Church Council were misfiled or not included in the minutes of the Church Council.

GENERAL RECOMMENDATION

- The Secretary of the Church Council or the Church Council's designee, should ensure all reports presented to the Church Council are included in and accurately represented in the minutes and Church Council information packets.

SPECIFIC CHURCH COUNCIL FINANCIAL AND BUILDING REPORT FINDINGS

- **Specific Findings Number 1** - During 2019 and 2020, there was one instance where the minutes did not include a vote conducted by email (see Specific Finding Number 3 below) and there were five instances of misfiled reports.
 - **Specific Recommendation Number 1** - The Secretary of the Church Council should ensure the accuracy of the minutes for each monthly meeting of the Church Council. A checklist could be originated of the ministry and financial reports to be included in the minute's packet.
- **Specific Finding Number 2** - In October and November 2020, a new cash flow report was presented to the Church Council with inaccuracies. In addition, amounts determined as payable to benevolence were properly excluded from the balance sheet. The minutes did not include a discussion of the reason for the changes.
 - **Specific Recommendation Number 2** - Management should ensure the accuracy of the financial information presented to the Church Council. If new financial presentations are presented to the Church Council, the minutes should reflect the reason for the change.
- **Specific Finding Number 3** - In December 2020 the Church Council did not meet. However, there was a financial decision the Church Council had to address and approve. The President of the Church Council sent an email asking the members of the Church Council for their consideration and approval of the transferring of funds before year-end. The Church Council members ultimately approved the proposal, via email. There were no copies of the approval emails in the minutes.
 - **Specific Recommendation Number 3** - Any and all remote Church Council member votes should be documented and a copy of the individual decisions made a permanent record of the minutes.

Future Audits

- The ELCA Congregational Audit Guide suggests, "Congregations with annual receipts in excess of about \$400,000 should seriously consider engaging an outside auditing firm to perform the audit. An annual fiscal review of the congregation financial operation is imperative given the size of funds collected by Our Redeemer's Lutheran Church. The ORLC Constitution states that an outside audit shall be done minimally every five years.
- We would like to thank all the staff members for their cooperation in the conduct of the 2019 and 2020 audit and especially recognize Sarah McGee and Lori Walter for their prompt response to the numerous requests we made in the conduct of this audit.

Respectfully submitted,
Herbert J. C. Kulow

Report of Deacon Carol Will

Getting Down to Basics Fall 2021

Getting Down to Basics looked in detail at two main documents: the Augsburg Confession and the Small Catechism with some other Lutheran confessions found in the Book of Concord. In this course, we discovered that Lutherans are people caught in the act of confessing their Christian faith. The topics covered were: Confessing Justification; Law and Gospel: Theology of the Cross; God's Two Hands; Good Works and Christian Vocation; Sacraments; Church and Ministry; Other Lutheran Confessional Documents; Ten Commandments and Creed; The Lord's Prayer, Baptism, and Confession; and The Lord's Supper and Christian Household. Throughout the course, there were 10 people who participated on various Sunday mornings between worship services. Instruction was led by Deacon Carol Will along with video clips from Dr. Timothy Wengert, an ELCA pastor, professor emeritus of Reformation history at the Lutheran Theological Seminary at Philadelphia. Included in this report is an article that Dr. Timothy Wengert published in *Living Lutheran* on October 13, 2015 regarding Luther's Small Catechism.

Tasting it again for the first time By Timothy J. Wengert

The old advertisement for Kellogg's Corn Flakes ("taste them again for the first time") helps introduce Martin Luther's Small Catechism, in part because many Lutheran adults—having been subjected to it as eighth-graders—have developed a resistance allergy to it. Only while preparing to teach a seminary course on Luther's catechisms did I hold a facsimile of the 1536 edition in my hands and realize what a remarkable gift Luther gave to the church when he wrote it in 1529.

For one thing, the originals had pictures: A woodcut of biblical stories for every commandment, article of the Apostle's Creed, petition of the Lord's Prayer and the sacraments. It was meant for everyone in the household—even those who couldn't read. More than that: the Small Catechism started its life on posters, not as a booklet, with individual sheets for the Ten Commandments, creed, Lord's Prayer, baptism, the Lord's Supper, prayers at table, and morning and evening prayers. At the top of each sheet was a caption addressed to the heads of households (e.g.: "The Lord's Prayer in a very simple way in which the head of a house is to present it to the household"). Luther intended the Small Catechism to serve as a teacher's guide for beleaguered parents.

Similarly, when the booklet form came out, besides pictures, Luther added things for the family: "The Household Chart of Some Bible Passages for All Kinds of Holy Orders and Walks of Life" (sometimes called "The Table of Duties") and versions of German marriage and baptismal services. His preface, addressed to parish pastors and preachers, reminded them: "Our office has become ... serious and salutary." The catechism was serious indoctrination, to be sure, but the word "salutary" reveals that it also strengthens faith, provides comfort in the face of spiritual attacks and bears the saving gospel of Christ. In short, Luther intended the catechism for the entire Christian community—children, parents and guardians, pastors and teachers—for their whole lives.

And thus it continues to provide insight into the Christian life of faith. For one thing, Luther moves from explaining the law (commandments that reveal our sin) to the gospel (promises of what God does in creating, redeeming and making holy). This progression reflects the movement of baptism from drowning to rising, as Luther said: "[Baptism] signifies that the old creature in us ... is to be drowned and die through daily contrition and repentance, and on the other hand that daily a new person is to come forth and rise up to live before God in righteousness and purity forever."

For another, the movement from God's word (commandments, creed, prayer) to the sacraments (baptism, the Lord's Supper and absolution [our daily baptism]) creates church—both the "house church" and the congregation. These are places where the catechism's parts are not only taught but also enacted in worship by confessing sin and receiving forgiveness, reciting the creed, praying the Lord's Prayer and celebrating the sacraments.

Finally, the Small Catechism clearly proclaims the center of our Christian life. On the one hand, it's the daily dying and rising of baptism. On the other, it's our confession that God alone is in charge of our lives and of this world, as creator ("I believe God created me and all that exists"), as redeemer ("I believe that Jesus Christ ... is my Lord who has redeemed me"), and as the one who makes us holy through faith alone ("I believe that ... I cannot believe in Jesus Christ my Lord or come to him, but instead the Holy Spirit has called me through the gospel..."). Truly we have no other God but this one.

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Development Planning Team Report - 2021

Our Redeemer's Lutheran Church, along with our partners; The City of Helena, Helena Area Habitat for Humanity, YWCA, Rocky Mountain Development Council (RMDC), and Trust Montana were granted \$40,000 of planning money through the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Program. This, along with partner matching funds and City funds of \$28,000, are funding a development planning process for our land with the goal of seeing the land put into service to address the affordable housing crisis confronting our community. Helena Area Habitat for Humanity builds affordable owner-occupied homes for sale to qualifying families. RMDC develops, owns, and manages affordable rental units and the YWCA is seeking to provide transitional housing for women and children.

A series of meetings were conducted through September and October to help the church identify and understand future mission ideas in order to clearly describe the amount of land that should be retained by the church for these future opportunities. At a meeting held November 14th, the congregation voted to affirm the proposed future boundary for the church property for the purposes of allowing our planning partners to begin planning housing for the remainder of the property.

Since that time, the design consultant team has led the first two all-partner meetings to establish project goals and to begin evaluating site planning ideas. Broad goals identified for the project include:

- Create a neighborhood that connects to the larger community.
- Create living units that prioritize individual privacy and dignity.
- Prioritize sustainable development principles.
- Create a financially feasible development.
- Seek & encourage partner collaboration.

The potential opportunities for ORLC to support this new neighborhood with community-use spaces, community gardens, preschool services, and future visions of offering daycare services and supporting our partners through community service ministries are great. This opportunity for the congregation to be more fully engaged in community service could be pivotal and life-changing in many ways. We ask for your continued prayers as the congregation further discerns its role in the community.

How and when a portion of our land gets sold for development is still being worked out, but any sale of land will have to be approved by majority vote at an official congregational meeting.

Development Team

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Cody Salo: Salo3730@gmail.com

Craig Erickson: cerickson@greatwesteng.com

Herb Kulow: herbkulow@gmail.com

Jan Martin: jomvallymt@gmail.com

Nelson Bock: nbock6552@gmail.com

Consultant Team

Gretchen Krumm: gretchen@mosaicarch.com

Jeff Downhour: jeff@mosaicarch.com

Tim Meldrum: timm@sma.design

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Biographies of Council Members & Nominees

Lynn Voss

Lynn graduated from Montana State University in Bozeman and moved to Helena in 1997. Shannon and Lynn were married by ORLC in 1999 with Pastor Doug Peterson officiating. They have been members of ORLC for over 22 years.

Lynn has taught Sunday School and Confirmation classes; led Crown Financial Ministries classes and been involved on Stewardship, Call, and Mutual Ministry Committees in the past.

Lynn and Shannon have two boys: Eli, a 2021 graduate of Capital High School, and Bridger, a Sophomore at Capital High School. Shannon is a Human Resources Professional with the State of Montana. Lynn is a Financial Advisor with Thrivent.

Kevin Mathews

Kevin is married to Lisa Williams-Mathews, current Alter Guild chair and former Director of Children's Ministries. He and Lisa have two married adult children, one pair in Missoula and one in Butte. They also are both Lay Pastoral Associates and have been members of ORLC since 2006. Both are Helena natives and have lived in Helena their whole lives but for a 14-year stint in Seattle after college. Kevin likes to make music when he can: he currently sits in with the Rejoice Band, sings with the Helena Symphony Chorale, performs periodically at Benny's Bistro, and has performed in several musicals, operas, and concerts. He is a new member of the Friendship Center Board of Directors. He's an MSU Bozeman graduate in Chemical Engineering and works as an environmental engineer and consultant.

Beth Johnson

Beth became a member of Our Redeemer's shortly after moving to Helena over 10 years ago. Beth has been an environmental consultant for over 25 years and is currently employed by an engineering firm headquartered in Minnesota. She is married to Fred Goughnour and has three grown children. She enjoys camping, hiking and boating.

Beth has been a WOW guide and served as a member at-large on the ORLC Congregational Council before transitioning to Council Treasurer for the past two years. She has also recently served as a member of the Transition Team and as a Council liaison to the Hunger Team.

Ingrid Childress

Ingrid Childress is a long time member of ORLC. She and her husband, Don, are both retired and enjoy outdoor activities such as gardening, hiking with their dog, camping and fishing. Ingrid is a member of the Grace Notes Handbell Choir; she enjoys making a "joyful" noise with the rest of the choir.

Clint Mingay

Clint is a Townsend native and works for the Veterans Benefits Administration as a Veterans Service Representative. My wife, Amy and I have two children, Brinley (9) and Sawyer (7). Our Redeemer's Lutheran Church has been our church home for more than 12 years. We enjoy the great outdoors with camping, rafting, and fishing whenever possible. We also love playing and watching sports with Sawyer playing hockey and Brinley playing basketball and softball. I have served on the ORLC council for two years and am looking forward to continuing service as your council member.

Cody Salo

Cody has been a member of ORLC since 2011 and has been serving on the church council for the past two years. More recently, I have been involved on the Property Development Committee to help our church and partners create affordable housing. I believe in our mission of assisting our community and its need for housing. My wife, Jessica, is also involved in the Call Committee. We have two children, Kendall and Kacey, that had the opportunity to attend preschool here and now participate in Sunday School. We are excited and blessed to be a part of a great church community and are excited to help ORLC with all the opportunities and challenges that lie ahead.

Tom Johnson

Tom was born and raised in the Helena/East Helena area. He is retired from the V.A. Ft Harrison Fire Department with 34 years service and from the Montana Army National Guard with a total of 41 years, 7 months combined active and reserve time. He also worked part time as an EMT-I for Eagle Ambulance for about 18 years. Currently, Tom owns a small farm/livestock - money losing operation for the last 38 plus years. He is very active with the VFW Post 10010 out of East Helena and current Chaplain for the District 4, Montana VFW along with holding a board position with VFW Cooties, Pup tent 10. He is also a member with the Sons of Norway, Helena Trail Riders and active with Concerned Veterans of America.

Tom has two wonderful sons and two wonderful daughters, along with being additionally blessed with nine grandchildren with another one due this May. He has an ex-wife (Elois), that he maintains good relationships with and considers her as part of his family. Hobbies include hunting, fishing, shooting, horses, rock hounding and mentoring anyone I can corner on politics, values and ethics.

Julie Penner

Julie has been a member of ORLC for almost 40 years - since my family moved to Helena when I was a child, and I have many fond memories through involvement in the church. I have been married to Brett for almost 20 years and together we have two amazing teenagers! Since 2002, I've been teaching in various places and am currently teaching third grade in East Helena, where I have taught for the last 11 years. It's a privilege to be asked to serve on the church council, and I'm excited to see where the Lord takes us.

Jan Martin

Jan and Jeff Martin joined Our Redeemer's Lutheran Church in 2002. Jan is a Lay Pastoral Associate and on occasion helps with worship on Sundays. She has enjoyed her year serving as Council President and is now looking forward to being Past President. She is a member of WELCA, and as Council President attended meeting of the various committees of the church.

Jan and her husband Jeff have lived in Helena since 1981 and they have 2 sons, and 5 grandchildren. She is a member of Soroptimist International of Helena. Jeff and Jan enjoy camping, hiking, and sailing in the summer and traveling to visit family.

Carolyn Meyer

Carolyn Meyer is an Emergency Medicine Physician who works for Benefis in Great Falls. When she is not saving lives and stomping out disease with her team, she enjoys spending time outside with her family. She has a daughter, Lupine, who is seven and a husband, Eric, with whom she has shared many wild adventures.

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Personnel Committee New Member

Lori Chase

Lori has been a member of ORLC for 14 years. she is a retired PE and Health teacher, currently working as a guest teacher in the Helena School District. She is married to Richard Chase, they are blessed with three grown, married children and seven grandsons. She has enjoyed serving in a variety of areas of our church, VBS, Sunday School, 3 years Church council, transition team, and is currently serving as a worship assistant, Eucharistic ministry team and on alter guild. It will be my pleasure to serve on the Personnel Committee.

2021 Congregational President's Report

A year ago, a vaccine was becoming available and we were all looking forward an end of the Covid pandemic and all that would mean. Despite the vaccine, our lives did not exactly return to normal. As we look back at 2021, there are many blessings we can give thanks for. We can worship both in person and from our homes. We have a wonderful church staff who have worked hard to make sure the ministries of Our Redeemer's continue. We have a committed and engaged church council, who have had lively discussions of the issues such as Preschool support and mask wearing. We have vital committees that are active and busy. We also look back with sadness for members we have lost this year, and the retirement of Pastor Arne and departure of Pastor Kendra.

I am grateful for all the work that has been done by the staff, the church council and the committees this year. The Transition Team did a fabulous job of starting work on the ministry site profile. Their work saved the call committee months of work. A record number of people were nominated and were willing to serve on the call committee. Unfortunately, the church constitution only allows 6 members. A good number of people responded to the Holy Cow Survey this summer, and those results have helped the council and staff make some important changes. The most obvious is the report of attendance and giving that is now on the bulletin every Sunday.

I'm also grateful for our interim pastor, Pastor Trina Johnsten, our seminary student Baird Linke, our lay pastoral associates, our Deacon Carol Will and everyone who helps make worship happen on Sunday and Wednesday nights.

As my year as council president comes to an end, I'm looking forward to 2022. I think there's an excitement in our congregation as we look to the future, a new lead pastor, a new associate pastor, the work that's being done by the property development committee, the hope for an end of the pandemic.

I give thanks to God for all the blessings I have received this year.

Jan Martin

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

Congregation Trend Report
ELCA Research, Analysis and Data
Source: Annual Congregational Reports

Congregation: Our Redeemer's Helena MT 59602
Montana Synod Conference: Great Divide
Year Organized: 1959

| From 2013 to 2020 | 2013 | 2014 | 2015 | 2016 | 2017 | 2018 | 2019 | 2020 | %Chg (13-20) |
|-------------------------------|-----------|-----------|-------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|-------------------------|
| Baptized Membership | 1,157 | 1,152 | 1,065 | 1,012 | 983 | 942 | 858 | 829 | -28.3% |
| Members Received By: | | | | | | | | | |
| a. Baptism: Children | 45 | 19 | 13 | 14 | 14 | 13 | 8 | 6 | |
| b. Baptism: Adults | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 4 | 1 | |
| c. Affirmation of Faith | 0 | 0 | 4 | 11 | 3 | 19 | 7 | 3 | |
| d. Transfer | 18 | 23 | 9 | 28 | 1 | 5 | 7 | 6 | |
| e. Other & Stat. Adjustment | 0 | 9 | 2 | 6 | 14 | 7 | 1 | 0 | |
| Total Members Received | 63 | 51 | 28 | 60 | 32 | 45 | 27 | 16 | |
| Members Removed By: | | | | | | | | | |
| a. Death | 6 | 14 | 12 | 3 | 9 | 5 | 5 | 15 | |
| b. Transfer | 13 | 1 | 6 | 1 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 5 | |
| c. Other & Stat. Adjustment | 0 | 41 | 128 | 115 | 49 | 81 | 106 | 25 | |
| Total Members Removed | 19 | 56 | 146 | 119 | 61 | 86 | 111 | 45 | |
| Membership Change | 44 | -5 | -118 | -59 | -29 | -41 | -84 | -29 | |
| Baptized Youth Confirmed | 0 | 30 | 16 | 26 | 27 | 12 | 12 | 11 | |
| Confirmed Membership | 828 | 888 | 816 | 700 | 694 | 653 | 594 | 580 | -30.0% |
| Average Worship Attendance | 429 | 389 | 373 | 350 | 311 | 281 | 267 | 381 281 | Online Onsite [5] |
| Percent Attending Worship [1] | 37.1 % | 33.8 % | 35.0 % | 34.6 % | 31.6 % | 29.8 % | 31.1 % | | |

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

Congregation Trend Report
ELCA Research, Analysis and Data
Source: Annual Congregational Reports

| From 2013 to 2020 | 2013 | 2014 | 2015 | 2016 [2] | 2017 | 2018 | 2019 | 2020 | %Chg (13-20) |
|--|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|--------------|
| African American/Black | 3 | 3 | 4 | 4 | 0 | 3 | 3 | 3 | |
| African National/African Caribbean | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | |
| Asian/Pacific Islander | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 4 | 4 | 4 | |
| Latino/Hispanic | 6 | 6 | 12 | 12 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | |
| American Indian/Alaska Native | 10 | 10 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | |
| Arab/Middle Eastern | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | |
| Multiracial | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 60 | 60 | |
| White | 530 | 540 | 424 | 424 | 531 | 488 | 371 | 208 | |
| Other (not available for 2019-2020) | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 60 | 0 | 0 | |
| Total Number of Active Participants | 550 | 559 | 440 | 440 | 531 | 555 | 438 | 275 | |

Racial/Ethnic Composition - Congregations filing in 2013 to 2020 show Active Participants. **This data is collected to measure the ELCA'S progress in becoming more diverse.**

| | | | | | | | | | |
|--|------------------|------------------|------------------|----------------|------------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|---------------|
| Regular Giving Per Confirmed Member | 785.98 | 688.03 | 336.80 | 1,130.42 | 1,235.44 | 1,099.62 | 1,324.99 | 1,186.53 | 51.0% |
| Regular Giving by Members | 650,791 | 610,973 | 611,637 | 791,295 | 857,396 | 718,052 | 787,042 | 688,185 | 5.7% |
| Regular Giving by Members in 2013 dollars | 650,791 | 603,549 | 600,763 | 772,447 | 839,514 | 709,117 | 786,099 | 677,214 | 4.1% |
| Designated Giving by Members | 308,139 | 199,584 | 241,142 | 106,768 | 129,581 | 26,507 | 21,528 | 20,023 | -93.5% |
| Grants & Partnership Support | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 10,000 | 0.0% |
| Total Receipts [3] | 1,556,386 | 1,135,800 | 1,013,281 | 922,072 | 1,008,158 | 805,498 | 869,915 | 852,327 | -45.2% |
| Current Operating Expenses | 520,225 | 788,706 | 712,017 | 546,801 | 558,481 | 567,049 | 545,022 | 538,973 | 3.6% |
| Payments on Debts | 782,512 | 80,004 | 84,096 | 180,012 | 131,196 | 131,196 | 131,196 | 120,272 | -84.6% |
| Total Disbursements [3] | 1,699,244 | 1,085,396 | 1,003,537 | 826,812 | 861,358 | 750,463 | 718,515 | 732,392 | -56.9% |
| Mission Support | 76,300 | 83,328 | 71,623 | 55,237 | 41,020 | 20,019 | 23,136 | 46,012 | -39.7% |
| Mission Support as % of Current Operating Expenses, Debt, Expenses & Mission Support [4] | 5.5% | 8.8% | 8.3% | 7.1% | 5.6% | 2.8% | 3.3% | 6.5% | |
| Mission Support as % of Regular Giving [4] | 11.7% | 13.6% | 11.7% | 7.0% | 4.8% | 2.8% | 2.9% | 6.7% | |
| All other benevolence (non-mission support) | 67,392 | 63,262 | 33,874 | 44,762 | 30,597 | 28,316 | 19,161 | 27,135 | -59.7% |
| Mission Support as % of total benevolence. | 53.1% | 56.8% | 67.9% | 55.2% | 57.3% | 41.4% | 54.7% | 62.9% | |

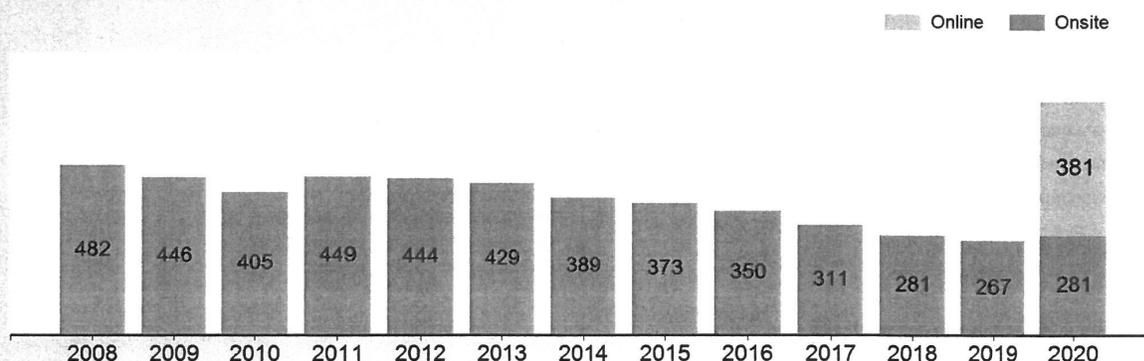
Embraced by God's Love We Reach Out to Serve Because Our Redeemer Lives



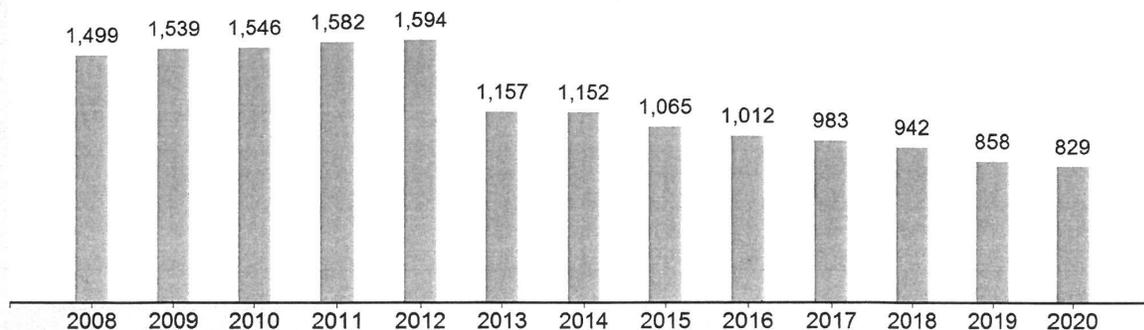
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
God's work. Our hands.

Congregation Trend Report
ELCA Research, Analysis and Data
Source: Annual Congregational Reports

Average Worship Attendance From 2008 to 2020 (change)



Baptized Membership From 2008 to 2020 (-44.7% change)



Population of Congregation's ZIP Code 59602

| 2000 | 2002 | 2008 | 2010 | 2012 | 2018 | 2020 | %Chg |
|--------|------|------|--------|------|------|--------|-------|
| 18,629 | - | - | 24,530 | - | - | 29,101 | 56.2% |

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Congregation Trend Report
ELCA Research, Analysis and Data
Source: Annual Congregational Reports

Assistance provided to people with disabilities:

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Wheelchair access throughout the building(s) | <input type="checkbox"/> Sign language interpreters |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Braille worship materials and signage | <input type="checkbox"/> Mental health ministries |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Large print worship materials | <input type="checkbox"/> Ministry with people with developmental/intellectual disabilities |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Assistive devices for the hard of hearing | <input type="checkbox"/> Specialized childhood learning (ADHD, autism, dyslexia, etc.) |

Community Context: **Small city 10,000 to 49,999 pop.**

ZIP Codes Served: **59601 59602 59634 59635 59604 59624**

- [1] Average worship attendance divided by baptized membership through 2019, only
- [2] Racial/Ethnicity numbers forwarded from 2015
- [3] These totals include other receipts and disbursements not displayed
- [4] The percent change in the right most column is the percent change between 2013 and 2020
- [5] Online and on-site attendance are reported separately for 2020

The ZIP Code population data are Copyright (c) protected by Esri Analytics

To make corrections or updates, contact the ELCA Office of the Secretary.
E-mail conginfo@elca.org or call 800/638-3522 extension 2810
Forms filed electronically will be checked for errors starting in early summer.
"Living Lutheran: Renewing Your Congregation" by Dave Daubert is resource for congregational renewal. Order ISBN #0806653345 from Augsburg Fortress at www.augsburgfortress.org.

Embraced by God's Love We Reach Out to Serve Because Our Redeemer Lives



January 5, 2022

Dear Followers of Christ in the MT/NWY Synod,

God's blessings of life, love and hope be with you and your ministries as we move into 2022 together.

A few weeks ago, I listened to a psychologist share her insights about the trauma we have been experiencing the past two years due to Covid-19 and other societal stressors. "Whiplash" was the word that stuck with me as she described the continuous effects of responding to the events gripping our lives. As she spoke, I envisioned the past 22 months as riding a never-ending rollercoaster, being whipped back and forth as the journey twisted and turned, went sideways and upside down. Just when we thought things were slowing down and getting better, just when we were starting to catch our breath, then another covid variant showed up or another crisis happened and we were whiplashed back into fear mode, our bodies and brains, emotions and spirits seeking safety from what we perceived as yet another threat. There never seemed to be any opportunity to stop and recover before the next event came along.

The psychologist described how the physical, mental, and emotional effects of this continuous whiplash accumulate in us as individuals and as communities and we start to feel like we're constantly in fight, flight, or freeze mode, always on edge, ready to react, unable to look forward to the future. But at the same time, as our bodies get overloaded, we start to feel sluggish and apathetic, without energy to do anything. And we forget basic things like why we walked into a room or why I almost fed myself my cat's food by mistake. (Yes, that really happened!) Many of us just don't feel like ourselves right now.

I think the most important thing I took away from this presentation was that this reaction to the long-term whiplash trauma so many of us are experiencing is normal. If you've been feeling this way, you are experiencing what most of us are experiencing and it is natural to be experiencing it. It's not good or healthy for us or for our communities as we try to live together, but it is a normal reaction to what our society is going through right now as our brains and bodies try to protect us.

So, knowing that most people are struggling to hang in there, how do we as followers of Christ approach the new year, especially as we are making decisions for the future of our congregations and the wider church? I offer three suggestions:

1. Space and patience. We need to give ourselves and others, including our ministry leaders, the space to rest and recover. And we need to be patient with ourselves and one another as we find our ways through this. Expecting an immediate recovery from this prolonged whiplash trauma is not realistic – our bodies and minds just don't heal that fast. So whether alone or in worship, whether in council meetings or bible studies, whether in seeking discernment or holding things together, take the space and time to breathe, pray, lament, rejoice, and be in relationship with and care for one another, being kind to each other in all that you do and say.
2. Forgiveness. This prolonged whiplash trauma has put a lot of us on edge, too ready to take out our anxiety or anger on others without realizing it. Managing our emotional

reactions is important during this time. But because people are more on edge, that self-management is harder to do. So let us seek to practice forgiveness, both of ourselves and others, in the way Christ calls us to while at the same time treating one another as we want to be treated. As Jesus responded to Peter's question of how often he should forgive someone who sins against him, 'Not seven times, but I tell you, seventy times seven times.' (Mt 18:22)

3. **Faith.** Faith is first and foremost trust in the God of Jesus Christ who loves us and not only wants our well-being but is actively seeking to bring that well-being to us in so many ways. Trusting in God does not mean we don't feel fear or anxiety about the uncertainty in our lives. It does not mean denying the real struggles we are going through. We're human; of course, we'll feel these things. Faith is trusting that God is indeed with us on this rollercoaster ride AND is guiding us through the twists and turns toward the new life Jesus promises, not just in the next life but even now. So, as you think about the next year, seek the faith to take a step forward into who God is calling you to be or what God is calling you to do. Maybe it will be a big step, maybe a small step. But I encourage you and your ministry to take a step forward into a new possibility that God may be leading you to explore.

In this spirit of faith and hope for gathering folks together, the synod will be stepping forward into an *in-person* Synod Assembly once again this spring. The theme is "Equipping for the Gospel" and we will be meeting at the Billings Hotel and Convention Center in Billings on June 3 & 4, 2022. We will be experimenting with a slightly different schedule that will allow some of you to return home Saturday evening; but given the size of the synod, some of you will still need to spend an extra night in Billings (at a hotel where there's a waterslide!) or on the road somewhere.

Finally, a note on the financial situation of the synod as we approach the new fiscal year. Like many of your ministries, the synod is hanging in there, finding ways to make it work as some months of mission support are better than others. Thank you for the ongoing generosity many of you have shown in your gifts to support the mission of the MT/NWY Synod as we work together to equip the followers of Christ in the ministry of the gospel! As you are exploring your own financial realities for the coming year, I invite you to consider increasing your support as you are able in the service of the Christ's ministry across the synod.

May God bless you with hope and resilience for 2022!

In Christ's Love,



Rev. Laurie Jungling
Bishop, Montana/N. Wyoming Synod



Flathead Lutheran Bible Camp Annual Report 2021

"Thank you for all you do for the kids. Our daughter has a great time at camp and as a family we had a terrific time during the family camp weekend." The Esposito family

2021 BY THE NUMBERS:

Sept. 2020 - May 2021 Campers: 815 guests (retreats/events/EE students)

2021 Summer Campers: 914 (all ages, all programs); 15 Day Camps in congregations;

52 summer volunteers; 36 incredible summer staff

YEAR IN REVIEW:

- October 2020:
 - FLBC association voted unanimously to act on a first right of refusal on a piece of land on Hughes Bay next to FLBC's Sailboat docks. The land was purchased for \$287,500; thanks to the generosity of our community and a gift from an anonymous donor, the loan is paid off!
- Spring 2021:
 - FLBC provides program for many wonderful retreats and teaches Environmental Education at camp to 2 local public schools.
- March 2021:
 - M.J. Murdock Charitable Trust chooses FLBC as a recipient of a \$100,000 grant to help move this ministry into the future beyond COVID. \$70,000 was designated for Technology updates, and \$30,000 was made available as a matching grant to inspire new gifts.
- June - August 2021:
 - After careful planning and preparation, FLBC has a summer full of faith-formation and community building with more than 1,000 campers/guests, centered on Micah 6:8 and the theme "From Now On."
- Fall 2021:
 - FLBC's year-round ministry continues with exciting experiences such as the first Backpacking with the Bishop Trip (August) and our first Grief Retreat (September)
 - With praise and thanks to God for wonderful donors and congregations, FLBC will finish the year in the black - allowing us to move forward in faith!
 - Thanks also to amazing generosity, PHASE 1 of the Holy Ground campaign has only \$20,000 to go to meet the \$235,000 goal.



Thank you for your generosity and care for camp!

PLEASE help us recruit summer staff ages 18-90! Go to <https://flbc.net/employment/> for applications for staff and volunteers!