



ANNUAL REPORT

— 2020 —



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



A MESSAGE FROM ELCA PRESIDING BISHOP ELIZABETH EATON

Dear friends in Christ,

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

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

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

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

Building up the body of Christ together,

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

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

ANNUAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING **OPENING LITURGY**

LITANY

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Build Us Up, Lord



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



us a strong foun - da - tion. Lead us to do your
lives re - flect your glo - ry. Cast a - way all our



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



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



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



world: ev - 'ry sis - ter, ev - 'ry broth - er.
sure. Grant us faith that's stead - fast and true.



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



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



word to spread the news of your Son!

Text: Mark Glaeser, b. 1956, and Donna Hanna, b. 1952
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In the early verses of Ephesians 4, the apostle Paul writes to the Christians in Ephesus, a city on the Aegean Sea at the mouth of a river and at the intersection of three trading routes. The letter was written about ten years after the church had started. During the early years of this congregation, Jews and Gentiles from several ethnicities and nationalities had come together to form “one body.” Paul was aware that they had done well and commended them for their faith and love.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

**Annual Report of the Congregation
for the Year 2020**

**Submitted at the Annual Congregation Meeting
February 14, 2021**

TABLE OF CONTENTS

AGENDA.....	7
MISSION AND VISION AT SAINT PETER.....	8
DISCIPLESHIP AT SAINT PETER.....	10
2020 PHOTO HIGHLIGHTS.....	11
MINISTRY REPORTS.....	12
PRAYER & BIBLE STUDY.....	13
WORSHIP.....	14
GENEROSITY.....	16
COMMUNITY SERVICE.....	17
SMALL GROUPS	18
ADMINISTRATIVE.....	19
PARTNERS.....	20
CONGREGATIONAL OFFICER REPORTS.....	24
STAFF REPORTS.....	32
STAFF ROSTER.....	41
CONGREGATION COUNCIL ROSTER.....	42

AGENDA

OPENING DEVOTIONS..... PASTOR DAVE
ESTABLISHMENT OF QUORUM.....BROOKE TIEPERMAN
INTRODUCTION OF StPLC 2021 SPENDING PLAN.....CONGREGATION PRESIDENT, BRUCE STOKES
ADOPTION OF StPLC 2021 SPENDING PLAN..... CONGREGATION PRESIDENT, BRUCE STOKES
STATE OF THE CONGREGATION PASTOR DAVE
ADJOURNMENT.....CONGREGATION PRESIDENT, BRUCE STOKES
CLOSING PRAYER..... PASTOR DAVE

MISSION AND VISION AT SAINT PETER

Our Mission: Welcomed and Sent

The People of Saint Peter Lutheran Church

Welcomed... into God's Love
just as we are

Sent... into God's World
to be a reflection of Christ

Therefore, since we are justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ...God proves love for us in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.

(Romans 5:1, 8)

We Are Welcomed...

- just as we are – with no need to prove ourselves or earn God's love (and with no fear of being judged by others)
- into an experience of God's life-changing love
- into a living and growing relationship with Jesus Christ
- into a world-wide community of brothers and sisters in faith
- into an understanding of ourselves as both sinners and saints
- into the journey of discovering God, and discerning God's call
- into the peace that comes from knowing God in Christ
- into this particular family of faith we call "Saint Peter Lutheran Church"

Jesus said, "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age."

(Saint Matthew 28:19-20)

We Are Sent...

- to be a reflection of the love we have first received from God
- to live as Christ has shown us how to live (the "cross-shaped" life)
- to offer ourselves in service to those who are in need
- to reach out with compassion to those who are in pain
- to live generously, with what God has entrusted to us
- to invite others to join us in lives of discipleship

Our Vision

We Are an Inviting People...

Inviting all people to share our faith

We Are a Growing People...

Growing in faith and understanding

We Are a Serving People...

Serving with Christ-like love and compassion

Our Values

We are Biblically Grounded.

- Saint Peter understands itself as the body of Christ, continuing our Lord's mission and presence in this community (1st Corinthians 12:4 - 13:13).
- Saint Peter reaches out to the world, seeking to share with others the faith that has touched our hearts and shaped our lives (Saint Matthew 28:16-20).
- Saint Peter takes its theological heritage seriously, and seeks both to understand it, and apply it to daily living (Saint Matthew 13:44-52).
- Saint Peter is committed to touching the hurts and the needs of the world, both within and outside of our community of faith (Saint Matthew 25:31-46).

We Are Mission Driven.

- Saint Peter is clear about its vision for ministry, and focused on the mission it believes God has entrusted to it. Clarity of vision and mission enables congregational leaders to spend more time and energy on pursuing that mission, and less on peripheral matters.

We Are Prayer Centered.

- Saint Peter believes in the power of prayer, and understands how important it is to surround any significant venture with prayer, entrusting the outcome to God.

We Are Gifts Based.

- Saint Peter's ministry is shaped by the gifts that God has given to its participants. People are not recruited to "fill empty positions" in the church's structure. They are encouraged to know their gifts and passions, and find ways to serve that make use of them.

We Nurture a Permission Giving Environment.

- Every participant at Saint Peter is responsible to study and understand the congregation's mission. Based on that understanding, and working from their individual gifts and passions, they have permission to initiate and participate in ministries that promote Saint Peter's mission. Congregational leaders help individuals shape their ministries to best fit the congregation's mission, provide the training and support necessary to ensure their success, and find resources to allow their ministries to thrive.

DISCIPLESHIP AT SAINT PETER

We have chosen to focus on Five Habits of Discipleship in our efforts to be faithful to God's claim on our lives. What follows is a description of these habits. Our hope is that these descriptions might provide a better understanding of what it is we are trying to accomplish, and a picture of how it might look in the lives of those who practice these habits.

Daily Prayer and Bible Study

- A disciple of Jesus Christ is one who has a daily discipline of studying God's Word, and spending time with God in prayer. Studying the Bible can be a transforming experience, as we come to know God's word and God's will; likewise, with the discipline of prayer. As we spend intentional time each day in prayer, lifting up our fears and joys, our triumphs and defeats, we find that our spirit is strengthened and our relationship with God is deepened. We become more able to hear the still small voice of God that speaks to us.

Weekly Worship

- A disciple of Jesus Christ is one who makes regular worship with God's people a central component in the rhythm of life. In worship we hear the words of absolution as if coming from God's own voice, Christ meets us in word and meal, the promises of our baptism are reaffirmed, and we join together with our brothers and sisters in faith and offer ourselves to God – that we might become instruments of love and grace and renewal for others. Worship is the lifeblood of a Christian, and so we commit ourselves to worshipping every week, and to preparing ourselves ahead of time.

Generous Financial Support of Ministry

- A disciple of Jesus Christ makes use of wealth to accomplish great things for the sake of the Gospel. The call to generosity, ultimately, is a call to obey the first commandment. We are to fear, love, and trust in God above all things (according to Martin Luther's Small Catechism). And so, disciples of Jesus develop habits of generosity to guard against the possibility of trusting too much in our wealth. Generosity is not a burden that is imposed upon the Christian. It is the opportunity to say "thank you" to God, who has already provided so much, in that there is great joy, and a deep sense of meaning.

Community Service

- A disciple of Jesus Christ is one who understands that servanthood is a central component of the faithful life. One cannot be a disciple of Jesus without seeking to love and serve others as he did. At Saint Peter, we promote a minimum goal of one act of community service each month. Our lives become more Christ-like as we discover a purpose outside of ourselves.

Faith Nurture in a Small Group or Faith Partnership

- A disciple of Jesus Christ is one who gathers with others to support and strengthen another for faithfulness. Making the commitment to grow with others often provides the discipline that we need to grow ourselves. At Saint Peter, active members belong to a small group or a ministry team, teach a Sunday school class, or meet with a faith partner for support and encouragement.

We have many ministry teams at Saint Peter. Some of them fit within one of the five habits, and others of them cross over to address numerous habits. In the following section, these Ministry Teams are listed in order of the Discipleship Habit to which they most closely relate.

†



zoom



87 Zoom worship services in all. Plus Rainbow Trail Day Camp, Sunday School and Catechism on Zoom, too.



February 5th Holden Evening Prayer



Parking lot pumpkin decorating and Advent wreath assembling led by Family Ministries.



"God's work. Our hands." month
A dedicated day of service to our community.



300+ families received Christmas gifts through the Covenant Cupboard Toy Drive.

Prayer Flags on the Labyrinth from Four Squares participants.



February 23rd presentation by Hans Meyer on immigration law.



YAY Burritos!
(Joke known only to Sunday Morning Worship Service folks ...)

Our much-improved kitchen thanks to financial donations and volunteer labor!

MINISTRY REPORTS

Ministry Reports: Prayer & Study

Contemplation Ministries

Leadership members: Bethany Laurie and Jeanne Maloney

Contemplation Ministries got its name and expanded this year thanks to the co-leadership of **Bethany Laurie**. The Saturday morning contemplation gatherings became a weekly event and tied into the Church Chicks Virtual Coffee Hour for a time. Meeting on Zoom took adjusting but the group was grateful to have this time together. For 2021, we look forward to seeing where the Meditation 101 series takes us along with some of the other opportunities (more book studies, a retreat, etc). we are considering.

Respectfully submitted,
Bethany Laurie and Jeanne Maloney

†

Middle School Youth Ministries/Catechism

Leader: Pastor Dave Risendal

Team Members: Dawn Brodin and Kate Waggoner

Given the complexities of online learning for middle school students, the academic aspects of Catechism have been paused for the 2020-21 school year. The team has focused, instead, on coordinating monthly times of worship and service for Catechists and their families, along with occasional online game nights. There currently are nine young people involved in Catechism: 2, 6th graders; 3, 7th graders; 4, 8th graders.

Respectfully submitted,
Pastor Dave, for the Catechism Team

†

One Little Word

Leader: Pastor Dave Risendal

One Little Word is a personal ministry of Pastor Dave, intending to help people prepare themselves for worship by reflecting on the appointed Bible lessons for each week ahead of time. Each Sunday, pastor's sermon (and this year a video of Sunday Online Worship) is posted to the web site www.OneLittleWord.org, as well as an announcement of the Bible lessons for the coming Sunday and any mid-week festivals. On Tuesday evening a weekly devotional message is posted, and emailed to 550 subscribers. Occasionally pastor publishes opinion pieces and informational essays as well.

In 2020 the site received 9,100 visits, including 22,000 page visits. Viewers were located in 94 countries and territories, with the majority of them coming from the United States, Canada, the United Kingdom, Australia and South Africa. The site is viewed by some 650-700 RSS subscribers.

Respectfully submitted,
Pastor Dave Risendal

†

Prayer Team

Leader: Karen Clair

Prior to COVID-19, I began rallying many of you to write notes to folks on the prayer list. Remember me in the Narthex on the high top tables with pen in hand? Then, thanks to COVID-19, the Saint Peter prayer list saw a lot of activity not to mention some of us found ourselves with lots of time on our hands. Given that combination, the Saint Peter Prayer Team organically formed and have so far sent close to 500(!) notes to Saint Peter members and friends who were in need of extra prayers. Thank you to everyone who pitched in—including **Bethany Laurie, Jan McGaw, Jo Kurowski** and **Randi Augustine**. If you'd like to contribute, reach out! We hope to grow the group's reach in 2021.

Respectfully submitted,
Karen Clair

†

Sunday School

Leader: David Strezo

The Sunday School program here at Saint Peter went through a dramatic transformation back in March, switching from our normal in-person class in-between services to going full online/remote back in April. Ever since the Strezo family has been able to continue to provide a weekly lesson for kids of all ages in the form of a short skit to act out the week's lesson (with the exception of summer break and one week that the **Hass family** put their incredible acting skills on display!), and in the fall we added a second weekly video to walk through the craft or snack associated with the week's lesson. All of this is based on the "FaithWeaver Friends" collection from Group Publishing.

In 2021, we hope to recruit more families to participate in making the video skits. If you have interest or simply have some good ideas to share, please reach out.

Respectfully submitted,
Dave Strezo, Sunday School Coordinator

†

Ministry Reports: Worship

Music Ministries

See Steve Howie's staff report.

†

Altar Guild

Leader: Jan McGaw

Participants: Pam Haigh, Shelly Hunter, Alan & Janet Okerman, Gerry Rasel, Tabitha Strezo, Brooke Tieperman and Valerie Watkins

We brought the body and blood of Christ to our congregation during in-person worship services for the first few months of 2020. We are happy to say that we do online communion the first and third Sundays of each month. We would love to have new members join our team when we once again start meeting in-person. Let us know if you would be interested. Also, we are looking to get a new earthenware communion set. If anyone knows of someone who might be able to make this for us, please let us know.

Respectfully submitted,
Janet McGaw

†

D.E.S.I.G.N. Team (Decorate Everything Simply in God's Name)

Leader: Valerie Watkins

Participants: Verna Leighton, Pat Johnson, Jan McGaw, Karen Clair, Pam Pritchard, Linda O'Bryan, Deb Paul, Brooke Tieperman, Lynn Sherpe, Dolly Bunke

Our team met in March to discuss Lenten and Easter plans. With limited access to Worship Center, we continued to provide appropriate liturgical colors for the year. Our hope for 2021 will be to access the church building and use visual imagery to reflect the seasons of worship in the liturgical calendar.

Respectfully submitted,
Valerie Watkins

†

Technology Team

Members: Chuck Baker, Will Beals, Rick Brydum, Steve Howie

For many years now the StPLC Tech Team has worked behind-the-scenes to make sure the audio/visual elements of our worship services are in proper working order. In 2020, this work intensified a bit thanks to COVID-19 and the requirement that we move our worship 100% digital. Everyone on the team pitched in to get our Zoom services up and running in March and then to stay on top of the perpetual software updates throughout the year. We also had a chance to work with many Saint Peter ministry leaders as they produced slideshow presentations, videos and other media for use in worship and ministry meetings. Of particular note, Saint Peter helped facilitate the logistics of the Metro South ELCA Community Thanksgiving Worship Service, which was very well attended. It was also rewarding to see the worship band music on display.

In 2021, we will continue to support Pastor Dave and Steve Howie to produce worship services as well as look into technologies we can implement once are back to meeting in-person.

Respectfully submitted,
Will, Rick, Chuck, Steve

†

Ministry Reports: Generosity

Scholarship Committee Report

Leaders: Ken Gerhart, Lori Williams and Pastor David Risendal

Despite the impact of the COVID-19 virus on face-to-face meetings this past year, the Scholarship Committee did invite applications in the Spring, and following our normal essay review, interview and reference checking processes—all completed via telephone and Zoom—we were able to award the 2020 scholarship to a very qualified and deserving candidate. **Taylor Budaj** deeply moved and impressed the committee with her faith, poise and the self-confidence that her involvement in our congregational life at Saint Peter has given her. We were thrilled to award her—and hear her accept—the \$500 scholarship at the scholarship ceremony during a June Zoom worship service. Taylor is attending Colorado State University in Fort Collins where she is majoring in Communications.

Inspired by this year's recipient, the Scholarship Committee is excited and looking forward to its eighth year and the 2021 application process.

Respectfully submitted,
Ken Gerhart and Lori Williams

†

Stephen Ministries

Leaders: Sharon Stokes, Bruce Stokes, and Lynn Sherpe,
Active Ministers: Carol Mayor, Janet McGaw, Valerie Watkins, Dick Watkins, Jim Bunke, Mary Pratt

Stephen Ministers are lay congregation members trained to provide one-on-one care to those experiencing a difficult time in life, such as grief, divorce, job loss, chronic or terminal illness, and/or stress associated with living through a global pandemic. In 2020, each member committed to making Care Calls starting in April. Many of us also wrote notes to and called those on the Prayer List as well as distributed 55 *Journeying Through Grief* books and 33 prayer shawls to those who are struggling. The team also did a first-of-its-kind technology fundraiser to purchase and distribute iPads to congregation members in need of technology to access online worship. In all, we raised \$2050 by selling customized StPLC face masks and purchased five iPads (distributed four).

In 2021, we will continue our work as lay ministers. We are also hoping to offer trainings and skill-based classes to those interested in Stephen Ministry work themselves. We are also looking to coordinate with the Faith in Action team to provide a prayer opportunity for those dealing with grief and loss.

Respectfully submitted,
Lynn Sherpe, Bruce Stokes and Sharon Stokes

†

Saint Peter Stitchers

Leaders: Susan Greene

Participants: Darlene Beals, Jane Dumler, Carmen Faaiu, Stephanie Guthals, Jenny Kramer, Diane Marlowe, Beth Pasterkamp, Janet Pasterkamp, Kristen Raleigh, Vicky Simpson, Stephanie Skramstad, Christina Von Stroh and Patrice Von Stroh

The Saint Peter Stitchers met monthly in 2020. Starting in April, the meetings occurred via Zoom. The Stitchers ministry of providing prayer shawls and blankets increased as grief and loneliness have been much more intensified with the COVID pandemic. Thirty-three prayer shawls and blankets were distributed by the church office plus additional items were given by Stitchers members to family and friends.

Respectfully submitted,
Susan Greene

†

Ministry Reports: Community Service

Faith in Action

Leadership members: Karne Beighle, Brittany Hass, Del Hooker, Shelly Hunter, Sara Lancaster, Bethany Laurie, Jeanne Maloney, Sharon Stokes, Allison Summerton and Janet Weinz

This new Saint Peter ministry got its start after a series of book studies in 2019/2020 inspired a group of members to take action on social issues. The group met for the first time online in November 2020 and will continue to meet monthly to plan events, additional studies and ways for the Saint Peter community to *live* their faith. A special thank you to **Jeanne Maloney** for galvanizing this group to come together.

Respectfully submitted,
Jeanne Maloney

†

God's work. Our hands.

Leaders: Jenn Stenbak, Jody Hinsey and Jeanne Maloney

"God's work. Our hands." looked a different in 2020, but it lost zero momentum. The month of September was dedicated to service, concluding with a celebration during worship. From making masks, writing letters, decorating bags, to preparing meals and donating blood, several opportunities were made available so that everyone could participate in their own way to support a diverse group of organizations such as Habitat for Humanity, ELCA, The Delores Project, Covenant Cupboard, Youth for Christ, Joshua Station, Vitalant Blood Drive, Urban Peak, Christ in the City and Project Angel Heart.

Respectfully submitted,
Jenn, Jody and Jeanne

†

Ministry Reports: Small Groups

Chick Lit

Leaders: Lori Williams and Heather Dahms

The Chick Lit book club thrived through 2020, adapting to needed change during the pandemic by meeting via Zoom. This ministry is enjoyed by several dedicated readers whose love for literature spans generations and genres. Each year Chick Lit reads 11 books, both fiction and non-fiction, then gathers to share thoughts and personal experiences inspired by this literature. As has become tradition, an additional meeting was held in December to select 2021's books from a list of suggested titles compiled from member suggestions. We continue to learn about, support and encourage one another through life's joys and sorrows, while friendships rooted in words blossom and thrive. All members and friends of Saint Peter are invited to attend Chick Lit gatherings (via Zoom until we can meet again in-person), held on the third Thursday of each month at 7:00 p.m. at Saint Peter.

Respectfully submitted,
Lori Williams and Heather Dahms

†

Church Chicks

Leaders: Annie Heath and Jo Kurowski

Church Chicks Secret Prayer Sister ministry continues as a powerful connection between Christ and those who participate by praying for their secret prayer sister. Even with the pandemic, we stayed consistent with our (mostly) monthly Dress for Success clothing drives, Delores Project meals and social coffee hours (virtual). In 2021, we will continue to meet online and celebrate the community we've created.

Respectfully submitted,
Annie Heath and Jo Kurowski

†

Men's Group

Leader: Steve Haigh

The Men's Group meets on the first and third Tuesdays of the month at a nearby tavern, on a member's patio or on Zoom, depending on the circumstances. Ninety-minute gatherings usually start at 5:30 p.m. and are dedicated to fellowship. After skipping our annual All Daughters Mother's Day event in 2020, we're hopeful that if the weather cooperates we could hold the event in May 2021. Special thanks to **Ron Pequette, Shawn O'Keefe, Dick Watkins** and **Alan Greene** for welcoming the group into their homes.

Respectfully submitted,
Steve Haigh

†

Mothers of Preschoolers (MOPS)

Leaders: Stephanie Swift and Mary Shull

MOPS was able to meet in person in Spring of 2020 and finish the academic "year" with about 10 active members. We transitioned leadership to Sara Orino and Mary Shull in the fall. Meetings have all been virtual except the Stocking Stuffing event in November for Covenant Cupboard. We are low on attendance due to lack of childcare options and Zoom fatigue (I am guessing), so we usually have between 3-10 members join us in meetings. Upcoming events include crafts on Zoom with Mary Shull and Stephanie Swift in February and we will hopefully include some interactive activities for Spring Meetings to finish the 2021 year.

Respectfully submitted,
Sara Orino and Mary Shull

†

Ministry Reports: Administrative

Evangelism Team

Leader: Joel Waggoner

Participants: Sara Lancaster, Jennifer Stenbak, Brooke Tieperman and Dick Watkins

Aside from a few early email exchanges, Evangelism was not able to meet officially this year. The major highlight was spreading the word about online services and congregational opportunities, including Rainbow Trail virtual Day Camp, with Facebook advertised posts. We also sent about 75 Christmas cards to recent guests and members who have moved away. I have stepped down from the leadership role. If you are interested in serving, contact Pastor Dave.

Respectfully submitted,
Joel Waggoner

†

Nominating Committee Report

The Congregation Council has not yet appointed a Nominating Committee this year. Council members have committed to remain in office through this pandemic, in order to provide consistent leadership until we have made significant progress in transitioning back to in-person worship. At that time, a Nominating Committee will be formed and nominees will be sought to replace Council members who will not be continuing their service into the coming year

Respectfully submitted,
Pastor Dave, for the Nominating Committee

†

Property Team

Leadership members: Dave Prichard, Steve Haigh, Jerry Paul

With the church building closed most of the year, the Property Team concentrated on landscaping and irrigation needs. We appreciate the members' attendance and assistance at a number of work days to plant bushes and flowers, trim bushes and trees and spread yards and yards of mulch. We accomplished far more than expected in year two of a five-year plan. Next year, we hope to do additional plantings of shrubs and flowers around the church property, continue the maintenance on the lawn and sprinklers, and make the property at Saint Peter more welcoming. Special thanks to **Jerry and Deb Paul** for their relentless drive in trimming bushes, removing the overgrown junipers around the parking lot and spreading mulch. We're especially grateful to **Dave Prichard** for his leadership, planning and expertise. Major kudos also to **Lynn Sherpe and Valerie Watkins** for the kitchen remodeling project.

Respectfully,
Dave, Steve, Jerry

†

Stewardship Team

Participants: Jim Bunke, Cathy Dundon, Shawn O'Keefe, Jennifer Stenbak, Brooke Tieperman, Pastor Dave Risendal

The Fall Stewardship Appeal, under the theme "40 for 40," encouraged Saint Peter to offer their support for ministries that would help our congregation experience a strong start to our second 40 years together. The goal was to raise an additional \$40,000 for enhancements to our worship life (and support a congregation that is trying to establish an online worship presence), and strengthen our ministries with young people (and support the scholarship fund at Rainbow Trail Lutheran Camp). While these goals weren't fully met, we were honored to receive Statements of Intent from 83 households for a total of \$490,864, including 13 households doing so for the first time (together committing \$28,610).

Respectfully submitted,
Pastor Dave Risendal

†

Ministry Reports: Partners

Christ In The City

Saint Peter contact: Mary Pratt
<https://christinthecity.org/>

Aims to know, serve and love the poor with a vision to create a culture of encounter. Saint Peter members are invited to donate items to our homeless friends in Denver. Regular community meals are served when possible, and volunteers are welcome.

†

Covenant Cupboard Food Pantry

Saint Peter contact: Dick Watkins
<http://covcupboard.org/>

Hosted by Presbyterian Church of the Covenant and supported also by Good Shepherd Episcopal Church and Saint Peter Lutheran Church

CCFP switched to a drive through distribution in March due to the pandemic and split into two skeleton crews of regulars to work alternate weeks. There is now a Sign Up Genius to recruit people to fill in the gaps. Link to help is: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/20f0544a9ad28ab9-covenant>

Overall, our client base has at least doubled. We are currently planning for 150 families per week and serving slightly under that.

We were still able to have a young man earn his Eagle Scout badge by coordinating the distribution of backpacks to children of clients in August. We distributed 228 turkeys plus dinner fixings in November.

†

Covenant Cupboard Toy Drive

Saint Peter contact: Steve Werner

The 2020 Toy Drive, done in partnership with Covenant Cupboard and several area churches, businesses and organizations, was very successful, especially considering that it was done very differently this year because of the need for safety procedures around the pandemic. Instead of having beneficiary families into Saint Peter's Fellowship Hall to "shop", we solicited wish lists of toys that children wanted and we filled gift bags with toys, stockings (thanks to **Linda O' Bryan, Vicky Magnum, Vicky Simpson, Shelly Hunter**, and many other volunteers, including the StPLC MOPS members), handmade blankets and woolen caps and scarves, and "bonus" toys and gift cards. StPLC members were extremely generous with donating toys, gift cards, wrapping paper, other items, and their time to volunteer. In total 387 families and 152 children were served. All the families were very appreciative and the 2020 Toy Drive was deemed a success. Thank you StPLC members and staff for all that you did.

†

The Delores Project

Saint Peter contact: Annie Heath and Jo Kurowski
<https://www.thedeloresproject.org/>

A Denver facility that provides safe, reliable shelter and housing for women. Saint Peter's own Church Chicks regularly provide meals.

†

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

Saint Peter contact: Pastor Dave Risendal
<https://elca.org/>

Find an infographic detailing how ELCA funds are donated here: <https://bit.ly/3cCjZ4J>.

†

Joshua Station

Saint Peter contact: Jeanne Maloney

<https://mile-high-ministries.networkforgood.com/projects/17062-give-to-mile-high-ministries2>

A faith-based community helping families make the transition from homelessness to a healthy, stable living environment. Monthly community meals are served when possible.

†

Holy Hammers/Habitat for Humanity

Saint Peter contact: Adam and Brittany Hass

<https://www.habitatmetrodenver.org/our-supporters/faith-sponsors/holy-hammers/>

Holy Hammers is a faith coalition comprising 10 Lutheran churches in the Denver metro area that has worked alongside Habitat for Humanity of Metro Denver since 1996 to build homes, raise funds, and create awareness about the need for safe, decent, affordable housing in our community. To date, Holy Hammers has helped Habitat Metro Denver build at least 36 homes. In 2020, the Holy Hammers coalition sponsored a home at Swansea Homes and has provided volunteers to support this build. They are also volunteering at fundraising events to raise funds in support of Habitat Metro Denver.

†

Lutheran Family Services

Saint Peter contact: Open

<https://www.lfsrm.org/>

Inspired by the compassionate love of Christ, Lutheran Family Services Rocky Mountains walks with the vulnerable, through services that heal, strengthen and provide hope.

†

Operation Bootstrap Africa

Saint Peter contact: Terri Mohrhaus and Carol Mayer

<https://bootstrapafrica.org/>

Operation Bootstrap Africa (OBA) partners with Africans to strengthen their future through education, healthcare, agriculture, and other long-term development projects.

†

Rocky Mountain Synod, ELCA

Saint Peter contact: Open

<https://www.rmselfca.org/>

Find the 2020 RMS Annual Report here:

https://www.rmselfca.org/sites/rmselfca.org/files/media/annual_report_insert_2020.pdf

†

Rainbow Trail Lutheran Camp

Saint Peter contact: Eric and Kate Waggoner
<http://www.rainbowtrail.org/>

Rainbow Trail Lutheran Camp, just outside of Hillsdale, Colorado, is an outreach ministry of the Rocky Mountain Synod, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. It is a year round ministry that offers an extensive summer camping program that includes on-site programs for all ages as well as Compass Points outdoor adventure program for Junior High and Senior High youth, and Bridging Borders mission trips designed for Senior High youth. In addition, Rainbow Trail offers retreating opportunities for the other nine months of the year including sponsored confirmation retreats, men's Fly Fishing retreats, church worker training events, and family weekends amongst other retreat opportunities.

†

Selian Ministries

Saint Peter contact: Terri Mohrhaus
<http://almec.or.tz> and <http://selian5k.stplc.org/about-selian/>

The ministries of Selian Lutheran Hospital, the Arusha Lutheran Medical Centre (ALMC), The Plaster House and the ALMC School of Nursing touch the bodies, hearts and lives of thousands of people in Tanzania every year. Whether it is fistulae repair (for young women injured in childbirth), treating burns (for toddlers who fall into cooking fires), or correcting cleft palate, club foot, or skeletal fluorosis (which prevents children from running and walking like their peers), these ministries take a holistic approach to restoring physical health and renewing family life.

Saint Peter held its annual 5k run/walk virtually this year and raised a net total of \$12,665.

†

Village Resource Center

Saint Peter contact: Sharon Stokes (VRC Treasurer)
<https://www.hopechangeslives.org/partners/village-resource-center/>

This Greenwood Village area church partnership continued its mission to keep families in their homes in 2020! In all, there are six churches in the partnership. While needing to pivot to a virtual program, the VRC aided a record number of 78 families with direct financial assistance; total rent/mortgage aid amounted to almost \$30,000! Countless others were referred to other community partners when needed. With continued financial support in 2021, VRC will continue to aid families to the best of its ability including possibly adding additional staff.

†

Vitalant

Saint Peter contact: Gayle Romceovich and Karen Clair
<https://www.vitalant.org/>

Saint Peter partners with multiple other area churches to put on regular community blood drives. However, this year those were put on hold due to COVID-19. Vitalant is still hosting blood drives. Donors are also tested for COVID-19 antibodies.

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CONGREGATIONAL OFFICER REPORTS

Report From the Secretary of the Congregation

Minutes of Saint Peter Lutheran Church's Annual Congregation Meeting

Sunday, Feb. 9, 2020

Opening Devotions and Call to Order: The meeting was called to order at 12:09 p.m. by Saint Peter President Alan Okerman. Attendance was taken (61) and the quorum was verified. Open devotions were celebrated.

Motions and Congregational Votes:

- Motion to forgo written ballots (for Congregational votes) as specified from the Constitution for votes by acclamation (voice vote/show of hands).
 - Motion by Cathy Dundon; Second by Terri Mohrhaus; Passed unanimously.
- Motion to approve minutes from 2019 Annual Congregation meeting previously approved by Council.
 - Motion by Annie Heath; Second by Heather Miller; Passed unanimously.

Overview of Ministry Team Reports: President Alan Okerman and Pastor Dave Risendal acknowledged the hard work and many hours that went into compiling the [2019 Annual Report](#). An overview of Saint Peter's year, it demonstrates how our collective actions and commitments honor Christ. Ministry teams were recognized (20+ groups listed as part of the Ministry Teams Report section, pages 16-37) and members were advised to read the individual reports. Learn what's happening in ministry at Saint Peter and who's participating (although not exhaustive lists) – plus encouragement to get involved!

Saint Peter Ministries (some of them!)

- **Prayer & Bible Study:** One Little Word
- **Worship:** Music; Altar Guild; D.E.S.I.G.N. (Decorate Everything Simply in God's Name)
- **Community Service:** Community Service Team; Covenant Cupboard Food Pantry and Toy Drive; Village Resource Center (VRC); Evangelism Team; Saint Peter Stitchers; Boy Scout Troop 5280; Ministry Partners
- **Generosity:** Stewardship Team
- **Small Groups and Faith Partnerships:** Church Chicks; Chick Lit; Mothers of Preschoolers (MOPS); Men's Group; Stephen Ministry; Youth & Family Ministries; Faith Formation Ministries
- **Administrative:** Property Team; Scholarship Committee; Nominating Committee

Saint Peter's 2019 "Test Drive" Ministries Campaign provided the chance for members to experience new ministry opportunities – a big thanks to those who organized the effort! President Okerman recommended members "try" new ministries at any time and reminded members to thank people who work in church ministries. We often forget to thank each other which serves as encouragement.

Several people were recognized for their long-time service and dedication to key ministry areas: **Marshall** and **Deb Roth** who manage Host responsibilities; Dave and Tabitha Strezo who work with youth and Sunday school; **Sharon** and **Bruce Stokes** are both Stephen Ministers (Sharon has served on the Village Resource Center (VRC) Board since its inception); and **Dave Kleberger** and **Steve Haigh** have been faithful leaders and the backbone of the Property Team for years.

President Okerman touched on highlights related to Saint Peter membership's reach and impacts in 2019.

- Since mid-February, there have been more than 12K unique visitors (up 19.8% from '18) and 29,500 page views (up 27.9% from '18) to [One Little Word](#), an internet blog serving as a resource for worshippers who want to spend time with the appointed Bible passages in order to prepare themselves for worship each week.

- Four primary countries make up the majority of visitors (7,740 visitors from the U.S., 840 from Canada, 752 from the U.K., 377 from Australia), and the rest are from 86 other countries, including Barbados, Antigua, Samoa and Bangladesh.
- [Covenant Cupboard Food Pantry](#) provided nutritious food for 4,598 family visits, which included 16,686 individuals, an average increase of 3.2%.
 - On average 92 families are served every week (down from 97 in 2018) and registered 362 new client households (up from 352 in 2018).
- [Village Resource Center](#) (VRC) aided more than 68 families including rental assistance amounting to \$20,869 and referred countless others to resources in the Denver Metro Area.
 - VRC is a cooperative venture between six Christian congregations in Greenwood Village and Cherry Hills Village which coordinates financial relief to individuals/families to help keep them in their homes.

Congregational Officer Reports: President Okerman referenced the Congregational Officer Reports section (pages 39-51) of the [2019 Annual Report](#). He advised members to read the reports and thanked Council members, the executive team and staff for their efforts this year. *No additional comments or questions about the reports were offered.*

Staff Reports: Pastor Dave Risendal thanked **Alan Okerman** for his excellent leadership as congregation president in 2019. Additionally, he thanked the staff for all they do, plus more, "We have a wonderful staff at Saint Peter, they work hard to make ministry happen here." Members were advised to read the Staff Reports section (pages 53-62) of the 2019 Annual Report.

Saint Peter's dedicated staff includes: **Pastor Dave Risendal, Lynn Sherpe (administrator), Steve Howie (minister of music), Jeanne Maloney (leader of faith formation), Sara Lancaster (congregation communications), Arielle Wilson (pianist), Deb Paul (volunteer coordinator), Barb Hinchey (weekly editor) and Tabitha Strezo (nursery coordinator). The Tech Team and Janet Okerman** are also key to keeping us on schedule on a weekly basis.

Pastor Dave referenced his report (pages 53-55), the changing culture around us and the impact on the Christian church in the world. There is a dramatic shift in North American culture away from active involvement in faith communities. He explained that all old-line denominations, including ELCA, are dealing with declining attendance and financial resources. Church is going through change. ELCA had 5 million rostered members in 1989, today we're at 3 million. Ten years from now, we'll be smaller in number, but there's hope we'll be a more faithful, focused church.

A little over 12 months from now, on April 11, 2021, Saint Peter will celebrate its 40th Anniversary. Pastor is convinced we are poised to move into an era of deeper spiritual vitality than we've known in some time. Saint Peter exhibits five signs of a vibrant congregation (see page 54 of Pastor's report).

The Hartford Institute for Religion Research states that a congregation's vitality can be impacted by:

- Strong, respectful and loving relationships.
- Leaders who have vision, are willing to experiment, and who both model spiritual practices and lead by example.
- Spiritual practices that include worship, Bible studies, small groups, personal prayer, working together for justice and sharing faith.

Pastor Dave mentioned an upcoming comprehensive ministry review Saint Peter will be conducting with Rocky Mountain Synod (RMS) staff, March 6-8, 2019. This experience will give our congregation an honest assessment of our ministries and what's needed for our strengthened future. It's an interesting time to be church – not an easy time, but a hopeful time! *No additional comments or questions about the reports were offered.*

Nominations for Leadership Team & Presentation of Nominating Ballot: Presented by Pastor Dave Risendal on behalf of the Nominating Committee. Introduction to members for Saint Peter's Congregation

Council, including three new people who are considered for two-year terms: **Shawn O’Keefe, Jim Bunke** and **Allison Summerton** who provided introductory remarks (outlined below).

Members of Council, Saint Peter’s elected body, serve two-year terms, with the option to be re-elected to serve another two-year term. Currently there are four officers and four at-large members. On behalf of the congregation, Pastor Dave Risendal offered words of gratitude to **Alan Okerman, Annie Heath** and **Joel Waggoner** whose faithful service to the Congregation Council ended today.

Pastor Dave also offered a big thanks to everyone who was eligible and stepped up to continue serving on Council. It is anticipated that Bruce Stokes will serve as President (hopeful to elect him for second two-year term), Shawn O’Keefe as Treasurer, **Gerry Mueller** will continue to serve as Vice President and **Brooke Tieperman** as Secretary. It was noted that **Cathy Bunch** would remain on Council as an elected leader but step down as Treasurer by choice.

Motion and Congregational Vote:

- On behalf of the Nominating Committee, motion to approve by acclamation the slate of nominations, including Shawn O’Keefe (to serve as Council Treasurer), Jim Bunke and Allison Summerton (as at-large members) as new members to the Congregation Council.
 - Motion by Pastor Dave Risendal; Second by President Alan Okerman; Passed unanimously, and all were elected.

Shawn O’Keefe (first two-year term) has worked in the financial services industry for 39 years. Shawn founded Summit Wealth Strategies, LLC, an independent financial firm with offices located in Cherry Creek. He grew up in Southern Minnesota, moved to the East coast after college, then to Colorado 19 years ago. He has been married for 30 years to his wife, Dana, and they share two great kids, Matthew (28) and Spencer (26) as well as three dogs Sammy, Zelda and Lucy.

Jim Bunke (first two-year term) is lifelong Lutheran and Regional Vice President of Sales for Gulf Stream Aerospace. He grew up knowing Dolly as a Kansas Baptist and married her in ‘81. They have two daughters, including Sara Orfino and her husband, Paul, who also joined Saint Peter the same year and attend with their children, Bennett and Adeline. He lifted up the new member class of 2017, has coined it “the best new member class ever,” and loves Saint Peter’s passing of the peace – it drew him into the community like all of us!

Allison Summerton (first two-year term) actively serves as Assisting Minister, began worshipping at Saint Peter 15 years ago, and has served for seven years on the Community Service Team. Jed, her husband, has also served in the Worship Band since they joined Saint Peter. They began their faith journey years ago as Presbyterians in Delaware, moved to North Carolina and experienced the Episcopal faith, then landed here at Saint Peter as Lutherans. The Summertons are blessed with three daughters, Sara, Katherine and Jessica. Allison has worked in health policy for 30 years, currently serving as the Colorado State Director for Enroll America where she helps others navigate the health system in obtaining insurance and overcoming barriers.

Presentation of 2020 Church Budget: Presented by Treasurer **Cathy Bunch** and Council member **Bruce Stokes** who covered the financials and thanked the congregation. Outlined amazing acts of generosity aside from actual pledges for a strong year and highlighted (below) aspects of the financial reports for the congregation.

Referenced “Treasurer’s Report 2019 and Proposed Budget 2020” (page 44 of [2019 Annual Report](#)).

- Finished 2019 extremely strong, with Pledged Giving up ~\$43,000 higher than 2019 budget.
- Ended year with \$22,537 surplus transferred into much needed Property reserve to prepare for priorities and future needs, including for the parking lot and aging furnaces.
- For 2020’s proposed budget, Pledged Giving amounts to \$551,000 and includes pledges that came through Saint Peter’s 2020 Stewardship Campaign (~10% higher than last year).
 - Non-Pledged Giving is based on giving patterns for those who do not pledge.

- Faith Giving Needed is what we currently and often require for a balanced budget. Common practice at Saint Peter, the proposed amount (\$10,120) aligns with historical totals.
- Property expenses (totaling \$115,700 for 2020) include mortgage and upkeep of the property (~\$10K extra for outside maintenance). Strides were made by the Property team, particularly on outside maintenance under the direction of **Dave Prichard** given his expertise in landscaping.
- Salaries include an increase (3%) for 2020 which was not provided to staff in 2019.
- Youth and Family Ministries budget includes an extra \$10K (undesignated) – a ministry determined a priority for our faith community and an initiative of the Vision 2020 Stewardship Campaign.

Referenced “Financial Secretary Report” (page 57)

- Congregation gave \$133,138 in 2019 to designated funds which was outside of the budget.
- Noted Benevolence (a part of Expenses) which includes special gifts outside Saint Peter. Most of total ~\$70K goes to Rocky Mountain Synod (RMS) ELCA based on 11% of our giving. It should be viewed as what we can contribute to the greater church for its work in the world. The rest (\$5K) goes to the Village Resource Center (funded by Saint Peter and five other area faith communities) for housing and rental assistance for those in the area in need.
- Habitat for Humanity had an anonymous \$10K gift from 2019, the hope is it will be matched with pledged and non-pledged giving in the future for Holy Hammers.

Bruce Stokes explained that the RMS ELCA Ministry Review scheduled for the first weekend of March is not included in the general budget, as someone felt touched and it has been funded through a special gift. He closed by thanking Administrator **Lynn Sherpe** and **Cathy Bunch** for their work on the financials this year and in preparation for today’s Annual Meeting. *No additional comments or questions about the reports were offered.*

Motion and Congregational Budget Vote:

- Motion to approve 2020 budget as presented in the 2019 Annual report.
 - Motion by Vice President Gerry Mueller; Second by Valerie Watkins; Motion carried unanimously, and the 2020 budget was adopted.

Closing Devotions: Presented by Pastor Dave Risendal – ending devotions and prayers were held.

Adjourn: The meeting adjourned the meeting at 12:53 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
 Brooke Tieperman
 Saint Peter Council Secretary

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Report from the President of the Congregation

To say that this past year has been challenging and different would be an understatement. Had I known what was coming in March when I took on the position of Council President last February, I may have run out the front door! None of us could have imagined on March 8, 2020, that we would be gathering for in-person worship for the last time in 2020.

From mid-March to present, the Church Council has sought input from CDPHE, the Rocky Mountain Synod of the ELCA and medical experts in making decisions regarding the impact of COVID-19 on the ministry of StPLC. I can assure you that we have not taken this responsibility lightly. A guiding principle has been loving our neighbor, which means doing our part to help keep them safe.

We are grateful for the continued financial generosity of the congregation during this challenging year. Pledged and unpledged giving in 2020 was just under what was received the prior year. Projected giving for 2021 is off by 3% versus actual giving in 2020, which will present some challenges in the year ahead. We were able to receive a PPP loan from the SBA during the year, which will help to ensure that we remain financially stable.

We are blessed with a faithful and dedicated staff at Saint Peter. During the past year they have had to adapt how and where they work. They have done this in a seamless way while being flexible in doing so. This has allowed Saint Peter to continue worship, provide opportunities to strengthen our faith, handle the necessary administrative duties, continue to provide music, communicate with our members and guests and provide service to the community. Thank you **Pastor Dave, Lynn, Steve, Jeanne, Sara, Barb, Mary, Arielle, Deb and Tabitha!**

Since March we could not have engaged in effective live worship without our outstanding and dedicated Tech Team. We are so thankful for your significant efforts and commitment. Thanks to **Will Beals, Rick Brydum, Chuck Baker** and **Steve Howie!**

Even though the building was closed for most of 2020, there was lots going on outside. Several property work days were held during the year and the property looks better than it has in many years. A huge thank you to Dave Prichard for his vision and leadership, Steve Haigh for his longstanding commitment to our property and Jerry Paul for countless hours of manual labor this year!

This has been a challenging year to serve as elected church leadership, and I am proud to serve with a dedicated group of women and men who have faithfully served this past year. There have been more meetings than usual and tough issues to deal with. Thank you to Gerry, Shawn, Brooke, Allison, Cathy, DJ, and Jim for your commitment and continued willingness to serve.

Like most of you, I long for the day where we can again gather together in fellowship and worship. I pray that day will come sooner rather than later. Please know that it is my privilege to serve as your Council President, one that I do not take lightly. God's richest blessings to all of you.

Respectfully submitted,
Bruce Stokes, Council President

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Report from the Treasurer of the Congregation

Balance Sheet	<u>12/31/2020</u>	<u>12/31/2019</u>
ASSETS		
1st National Bank-Checking	35,189	110,972
1st Natl Special Business MM	131,151	36,622
Mission Plus Investment	6,211	6,158
U.S. Bank	329	329
Mint Financial Strategies	24,009	22,089
Building & Related Costs	1,143,341	1,143,341
Land	98,750	98,750
Office Equipment	12,530	12,530
Furniture/Equip/Furnishings	306,021	306,021
Playground	16,087	16,087
Vehicles	22,648	22,648
TOTAL ASSETS	<u>1,796,266</u>	<u>1,783,591</u>
Liabilities and Fund Balances		
Accounts Payable	6,273	26,762
Thrivent Mortgage	518,399	548,603
Continuing Education	6,662	6,301
Total Long-Term Liabilities	525,062	554,904
Total Liabilities	531,334	581,666
General Fund	1,074,315	1,046,683
Administrative Discretionary Fund	52,074	62,873
Building Maintenance Fund	29,832	42,127
Catechism Fund	389	549
Church Chicks	-	770
DESIGN Fund	18	18
Facility Use Fund	930	930
Habitat for Humanity	15,463	11,500
Interior Refresh Campaign Fund	364	997
Memorials Funds	3,401	15,650
MOPS Fund	1,549	1,902
Music Sound System Fund	2,608	110
Music/Choir Fund	801	801
Operation Bootstrap Africa	1,385	1,385
Pass-thru Funds	-	451
Pastor Discretionary Fund	1,656	1,539
Rainbow Trail Fund	318	593
Sabbatical Fund	6,190	4,690
Saint Peter Stitches Fund	815	815
SBA PPP Loan	64,229	-
Scholarship Fund	3,895	4,395
Seminary Scholarship Fund	1,669	1,669
Stephen Ministry Fund	1,657	100
Youth Fund	179	179
Youth Mission Fund	1,198	1,198
Designated Funds	190,617	155,241
TOTAL FUNDS	1,264,932	1,201,924
TOTAL LIABILITIES & FUNDS	<u>1,796,266</u>	<u>1,783,591</u>

Treasurer's Report 2020 and Proposed Budget 2021

	2020 Actual	2020 Budget	2021 Proposed Budget
Pledged/Non-Pledged Giving	596,269	641,120	580,000
SBA PPP	6,673	-	17,800
⁽¹⁾ Miscellaneous	1,402	7,500	2,500
Seasonal/Holiday	3,982	11,500	3,000
Facility Use	1,905	3,200	500
Interest Income	211	100	200
Total Receipts	610,442	663,420	604,000
Altar Guild	448	2,500	1,500
⁽²⁾ Benevolence	70,590	74,410	63,000
Community Service	-	100	-
DESIGN	397	540	540
Evangelism	2,081	7,500	3,000
Faith Formation	1,768	6,850	2,500
Group Ministries	29	600	200
⁽³⁾ Member Services	19,764	27,200	22,887
MOPS (Mothers of Preschoolers)	673	2,425	800
Music	10,245	12,000	6,900
⁽⁴⁾ Property	110,248	115,700	115,500
Stephen Ministry	1,007	1,000	1,000
Stewardship	288	1,000	650
Youth and Family	9,849	18,800	7,000
Worship	5,414	9,600	5,100
Salaries - Pastor/Office Staff	271,473	271,680	260,588
Benefits - Pastor/Office Staff	105,337	106,015	109,835
CE - Pastor/Office Staff	5,323	5,500	3,000
Total Disbursements	614,934	663,420	604,000

⁽¹⁾ 2020 Miscellaneous includes donations for RTLC Day Camp, loose currency, Thrivent Choice, and AmazonSmiles.

⁽²⁾ 2020 Benevolence includes \$65,590 to RMS and \$5,000 to Village Resource Center.

⁽³⁾ 2020 Member Services expenses include general office supplies, printer/copier lease, postage, devotionals, Living Lutheran subscription for members, conferences/conventions, office software/hardware, service charges for online donation accounts.

⁽⁴⁾ 2020 Property expenses include \$46,900 for total mortgage payment; and \$63,348 for property maintenance, landscaping, supplies, insurance, fire/security, utilities.

Respectfully Submitted,
Shawn O'Keefe, Treasurer

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STAFF REPORTS

Report from the Pastor

The Fall 2018 theme for our annual stewardship campaign was “Loving God; Loving Neighbor.” It was based on these very familiar words of Jesus from Mark 12:

*You shall love the Lord your God
with all your heart, and with all your soul,
and with all your mind,
and with all your strength...
[and] you shall love your neighbor as yourself.*

We have returned to this theme numerous times since then, especially during this past year. These centering words from our Lord have served both as a call to mission, and a description of a faithful life in Christ.

2020 has been a year when many Saint Peter supporters have demonstrated their heartfelt love for God through their strong and consistent support of and participation in Saint Peter’s ministry. Although declaring our buildings closed on Friday, March 14 was nobody’s first choice, the majority of our Saint Peter family members have demonstrated faith, commitment, creativity and flexibility as they continue to give their hearts to this community of faith. Since then we may not have held hands, or shared embraces, or gathered to sit down at a common meal. But we have fed hungry neighbors, assisted those who are seeking employment, comforted sheltered women, ministered to people living on the streets, offered strong financial support to our congregation, and worked together to maintain our church property. We have also continued to strengthen our faith through Bible studies and issue studies and contemplative prayer.

And we have worshipped. My how we have worshipped! Led by our amazing Tech Team, and a cadre of dedicated and faithful worship leaders, we gathered online 87 times in 2020 to hear God’s word, lift up our world in prayer, and receive Christ in the meal. Our average weekly worship attendance ran ahead of last year’s pace for the entire year — a pattern we have rarely seen in the previous decade. And we have sustained a mid-week time of Evening Prayer throughout the entire year — a first in Saint Peter’s history.

2020 has been a year when many Saint Peter supporters have shown their commitment to love their neighbor as themselves. This has, in fact, been a predominant theme in our life together. As we began to realize the magnitude of the COVID-19 outbreak, we also began to realize that there is much we can do to affect its spread, and the damage it causes. Public Health officials have helped us to see that the more of us who choose to wear masks, keep distance, wash hands, and abstain from gathering with people who are not members of our own households, the safer we all are, and the sooner this pandemic will come to an end. With this in mind, we at Saint Peter have begun to gather in small groups, meeting outdoors when the weather allows it, but have continued to enjoy one another’s company, and live out our call to be church, primarily online. This may not be our preferred way to be church together, but we have found meaning in the act of setting our own desires aside for a time, and gathering this way in order to demonstrate love to our neighbor.

I am so deeply grateful for those of you who have partnered with us in this ministry. To staff members who have stepped up and given more than they were asked to give; to Congregation Council members who have wrestled with hard decisions about our most faithful course into the future; to ministry leaders who have discovered how to lead vibrant, life-changing ministries in an unfamiliar context; and especially to the people of Saint Peter who keep showing up over and over again, giving themselves fully to our life together; to each and every one of you: thank you, from the bottom of my heart!

I, perhaps more than most of you realize, am filled with a deep, deep longing to be together with you again face-to-face. And I fully expect that this will begin to happen for us in the near future. But in the meantime, I am so grateful to those of you who have given your hearts and souls to this ministry, and who continue to

make Saint Peter what Saint Peter has always been: a community of profoundly faithful people, with a heartfelt love for God, and a deep commitment to love our neighbor.

Thank you for your partnership in ministry, your support for me and the other leaders in this congregation, your patience and perseverance, and your commitment to the future of our congregation.

With much love and gratitude,
Pastor David J. Risendal

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Report from the Administrator

I am so fortunate to work alongside staff and membership who possess different talents, gifts and personalities. Together we can do many things! Looking back at 2020, here are some general administrative duties performed:

- Assist in special projects for all ministry teams.
- Assist **Sara Lancaster** in some of the congregational publications: This includes annual congregational reports, stewardship materials, promotional materials and church directories.
- Congregational fiduciary/government reporting responsibilities: This includes coordinating invoices for payment, handling all payroll functions, state and federal reporting and ensuring that all written policies and procedures are followed.
- Maintenance of congregational records: All member and visitor records in the church's database are maintained; this includes home addresses, telephone numbers, email addresses, worship attendance, donation records, and membership changes.
- Provided membership an alternative way to submit their offering during the time we are not able to gather for in-person worship. We have a link on our website that is directed to a Vanco hosted web page to make secure online donations. Prior to March 2020, 28% of membership was using Vanco's GivePlus to automatically process their donations to Saint Peter. By the end of 2020, the participation in Vanco's GivePlus program has increased to 60%.
- Maintenance and scheduling of congregation's physical facilities: This includes maintaining the church calendar, review/negotiate contracts as needed, insurance review, fire and security system monitoring review, supervising the contract cleaning service and working with outside vendors.
- Worked with our wonderful Stephen Ministry Team in a fundraising campaign that enabled us to provide iPads to 4 senior friends so they can stay connected to online worship.
- Worked with **Mike DiLisa, Valerie Watkins, Karen Beighle** (along with many other volunteers and contractors) on our kitchen remodel from September – December 2020.
- Participating in the Excellence in Leadership program offered through the Rocky Mountain Synod, ELCA. I am joined on this 2-year journey by **Pastor Dave, Steve Howie, Jeanne Maloney, Sara Lancaster, Bruce Stokes, Allison Summerton, Brooke Tieperman, Karne Beighle and Annie Heath.**

I also served as Financial Secretary in 2020. The following table summarizes the gross receipts that were received this year. (Report on next page.)

Financial Secretary Report

	2020 Pledges (Budget)	2020 Actual Giving
Pledges/Giving in 2020	\$551,000	\$514,061

Other General Funds Receipts in 2020		Designated Giving in 2020	
Prepaid Pledges received in 2019	17,100	Building Maintenance Fund	2,203
2020 Mission Support	65,108	*Covenant Cupboard Fund	2,736
SBA PPP	6673	*Christ in the City Fund	125
Loose Offering	323	*Delores Project Fund	20
Advent/Christmas	1530	*ELCA World Hunger Fund	1,065
Lent/Easter	2452	Habitat for Humanity Fund	3,963
Facility Use Revenue	1905	*Joshua Station Fund	455
⁽¹⁾ MISC AmazonSmiles	166	*LFS Fund	380
⁽²⁾ MISC Thrivent Choice	828	⁽³⁾ Memorial Fund	210
MISC Day Camp	40	Ministry Support Fund	1,250
MISC Initial Offering	45	MOPS Fund	300
Interest Earned	211	Pastor Discretionary Fund	500
		*RTLCL Fund	25
		*Selian Hospital Fund	12,665
		Stephen Ministry Tech Fund	2,050
		AV/Sound System Fund	2,500
		*Village Resource Center Fund	1,125
	\$96,381		\$31,572

¹Amazon donates 0.5% of the price of your eligible AmazonSmile purchases to StPLC.

²Thrivent Financial for Lutherans provided more than \$100 million to help congregations, communities, and individuals in need. The Thrivent Choice® program offers two ways members can recommend where Thrivent Financial distributes some of its charitable outreach funds. Eligible members are designated Choice Dollars, based on insurance premiums, contract values and Thrivent Financial volunteer leadership

³Memorials received in loving memory of Alma Sherpe, Jeff MacQueen and Walter Herren.

*All funds sent to respected organizations.

2021 Goals

- Continue to populate our membership software (Servant Keeper) with important historic data. Invite families to view and update their data. Create a secure online congregational directory. Train ministry teams to use Servant Keeper so they access/update information.
- Reduce data entry redundancies between our financial and membership software applications.
- In coordination with our Stephen Ministry Team, provide a variety of training opportunities.

May God guide and empower us to work together to strengthen our ministries and be a witness to the world around us.

Respectfully submitted,
Lynn Sherpe

†

Report from the Minister of Music

2020 in music ministry has been one of challenges, much as the rest of the church has experienced. Given that almost all music was created in groups before March, the transition to recorded music has been challenging for many; rewarding for some, and impossible for others.

The worship band has continued on throughout the year, in some ways flourishing as we have been able to adapt as a recording group and also have been able to keep full participation. We even grew to add Andy Nakatani back each month as we have discovered the borderless nature of recording.

The Jubilate Choir has struggled to continue as we maintain a greatly reduced, though motivated, force of singers in the community. We are working to build the community back up, realizing that virtual choir may not be preferred by many, but periodic gathering via Zoom to check in is vital. Several singers and I have been part of a multi-church effort called the Denver Lutheran Virtual Choir. I am currently mixing the audio for the songs that we produce. It has been a time consuming, rewarding experience for me and a lifeline for several of our singers to remain part of a viable music community during this time.

The Alleluia Ringers haven't met lately – I plan to get them together via Zoom soon.

In spite of the challenges, I feel worship has potentially been a bright spot at Saint Peter this year. We have worked hard to find the right balance of interactive worship, participation, and pre-recorded elements that can bring more attention to detail. Thanks to musicians Arielle and Dylan, who have worked hard to give us a solid recording foundation to build upon each month. My thanks are continually with the Tech Team members Chuck, Rick, and Will, who have volunteered countless hours to research ways to enhance our worship, put together slideshows, run services, etc.

2021 Goals

My goals for the coming year include:

- Continue engaging the congregation through meaningful online worship and music and hopefully discover more interactive worship features, too.
- Continue to offer opportunities for the band and choir to engage both musically and socially safely online
- Make preparations for eventual outdoor and indoor in-person worship

The music program is definitely challenged during this time, but perseveres through God's grace. Like so many, I feel tired and worn down at times, but grateful for the incredible people at Saint Peter and the faith that inspires me to know that we have greater things in store ahead of us and more chances to worship God and make a difference in the world. Thanks to the Saint Peter Lutheran Church community that gives us this opportunity.

Respectfully submitted,
Steve Howie

†

Report from Congregation Communications

In September 2018 I joined Saint Peter as a part-time staff member in the role of Congregation Communications. My primary duties include producing the weekly newsletter, *Our Life Together*, with Barb Hinchey, publishing the bi-weekly "What's Happening" blog post/email as well as managing other communication tools like the StPLC website and Facebook page among other things.

Summary of 2020 Activities

- Weekly newsletter production.
- Coordinated with **Pastor Dave** to send two weekly "worship reminders" by email each week along with periodic emails for Faith Formation Ministries, Family Ministries, Stewardship and others. A big thank you to **Brittany Hass** for helping develop Saint Peter's beautiful email header images. We now have a simple design that we can replicate in different colors for our different ministry groups.
- Worked with Lynn Sherpe to produce the 2019 annual report.
- Updated the website and other materials for special events like the Selian 5K, online Sunday School, various ministries pages and articles, Faith Forum Advent journal and more.
- Attended sessions of the Rocky Mountain Synod's Excellence in Leadership Program along with other StPLC leadership. Our Saint Peter group worked together to produce the summer four square gatherings and late in the year began working on making Saint Peter's 40th Anniversary celebration a success.
- March through May was a frenzy for the Saint Peter staff as we worked to pivot away from our typical way of doing things to a COVID way of doing things. During that time I spent a lot of time ensuring all of our communications were up-to-date and going out regularly. However, I have since found my groove and hope Saint Peter members feel they are getting the info they need when they need it.

2021 Goals

In 2021 I will continue to explore ways to improve Congregation Communications and support Saint Peter in faith and growth. Some of those plans include:

- Create a message center in the Narthex for a more aesthetically pleasing place to post flyers, sign-up sheets and other information when we are back meeting in person.
- Continue to enhance the website. I'm open to suggestions! This includes videos and quality articles for the blog (this will help others find us through Google searches).
- Explore the possibility of a churchwide text messaging system.
- Improve the way we collect and share prayer requests.
- Support all Saint Peter ministry leaders as they navigate church life during a pandemic with effective communications—especially the Family Ministries team and Stephen Ministers, which are both working hard to ramp up activity.

I so enjoy being a part of the Saint Peter staff. The work is rewarding and the people have become great friends. I look forward to what 2021 will bring!

Respectfully submitted,
Sara Lancaster

†

Report from the Faith Formation Ministries Leader

Faith Formation Ministries (FFM) cultivates an environment and culture where the members of Saint Peter seek to grow in their relationship with God, with one another and with the world. It is through trusted relationships, individual effort and the work of the Spirit that faith is formed. With his life and his teaching, Jesus shows us that at the core of a faithful life is the commitment to love both God and neighbor. Growing deeper into God's promise and nurturing our faith begins by living into these faith commitments.

Summary of Ministries and Actions 2020

Faith Formation Ministries offered a variety of opportunities for Saint Peter members to participate in learning, contemplation, action and fellowship as ways to grow individually and as a community of faith. Although the pandemic made gathering together more difficult, the ministries did continue successfully using Zoom.

Faith Forum on Sunday mornings between services for all adults, high school youth and middle school youth continues to be a lively discussion on various topics of faith. The year began with a study of Brian McLaren's book *The Great Spiritual Migration*. The next topic was the book *Love Wins* by Rob Bell. The group took some time off for the summer and picked up with a series on *The Spiritual Life* with an emphasis on prayer. The year concluded with a series on *Strong Spirituality in Difficult Times*.

The Table Talks we began last fall took a little different form this year as we moved to a Zoom platform. We didn't get to share a meal together but we did spend our Wednesday evenings engaging in some important dialogue. The book, *The Last Week*, by Marcus Borg and John Crossan, provided an opportunity to explore the last week of Jesus' life through the gospel of Mark and discover that Jesus was fighting hard against the domination systems of his time. Next, Lenny Duncan's book, *Dear Church*, continued our conversation on race relations and the role the church plays in addressing racial equality.

Contemplation remained an important part of Faith Formation Ministries this year with several special contemplative services. The Saturday morning women's contemplation group used Richard Rohr's *Universal Christ* and Henri Nouwen's *Making All Things New* to lead them through contemplative study.

The pandemic created some challenges for how we served but Service Opportunities continued to be a focus throughout the year to put faith into action in our own communities including: Lunch in the Park through Christ in the City, Joshua Station Community Meals and The Delores Project, in addition to Covenant Cupboard Food Pantry and Habitat for Humanity.

2021 Goals

In October 2020, I stepped down from my staff position in Faith Formation Ministries. However, I am still very much dedicated to Saint Peter Lutheran Church and am now volunteering my time in various areas—including Excellence in Leadership training through the Rocky Mountain Synod, Contemplation Ministries and Faith In Action. In this new role, I hope to continue expanding my own faith and that of others, developing deeper friendships (and new friendships) and supporting Pastor Dave and the staff in ways my time and talent allow.

Respectfully submitted,
Jeanne Maloney

†

Report from the Family Ministries Leader

Family Ministries at Saint Peter Lutheran Church aims to build relationships with families, focusing on our households with children infant through elementary age but embracing families of all sizes and ages. It's our goal to support faith building, community-building across generations and empower others to employ what we learn "at church" in the home and in the outside community.

Summary of Ministries and Actions 2020

I began working at Saint Peter as a part-time staff member in October 2020. In that time I've worked closely with other Saint Peter staff, the Family Ministries team (**Dave and Tabitha Strezo, Robyn Glaser, Brooke and Tyson Tiperman**) and a group of Saint Peter members (**Mary Shull, Kate Waggoner, Jeanne Maloney, David Strezo, Sara Orfino and Dawn Brodin**) - my reflection group - to accomplish quite a bit in just three short months. Here are some of the highlights:

- Created monthly videos that focus on the acronym StPLC to incorporate faith values. We are also tying into current events with children's books in those videos.
- Held an online and in-person (parking lot style) Halloween pumpkin and Advent wreath decorating event. Celebrated a Kids' Christmas on Zoom - this was a huge endeavor, and I loved it.
- Created opportunities for families to help lead worship during Advent on Sundays and Wednesdays, by children and youth reading the psalm and lighting their Advent wreath.
- Worked with other Stephen Ministers to support those grieving and/or experiencing loss.
- Written lots of newsletter articles and emails to get the word out about all that we are doing.

All of these activities included prayer and teaching. Pumpkins were blessed. Advent devotionals were provided for all families.

2021 Goals

After a couple of the events held so far, I've conducted online surveys to get feedback from participants. It's been a joy to see what has resonated and what ideas are brewing for the future. Some of those ideas/plans include:

- Build on partnership with Sunday School.
- Continue working with a highly experienced and sought after clinician, Linda Staats of Homegrown Faith, to learn what I can, and develop a strong foundation for Family Ministries work.
- Continue to use the Milestones Ministry as a springboard for activities.
- Tie into community service opportunities, which will no doubt include the volunteering I do at Christ in the City as well as the new activities of the Faith in Action team.
- Generate more videos and other faith building activities!

Respectfully submitted,
Mary Pratt a/k/a Miss Mary

†

Report from Nursery Coordinator

The mission of the Saint Peter Nursery is to provide a safe and fun environment for our youngest StPLC members. The ministry allows children 5 and younger to play, craft and learn while providing their parents the focused time needed to grow closer to God.

The Saint Peter Nursery Ministry consist of StPLC member and non-member attendants under the direction of Tabitha Strezo. The Nursery is staffed every Sunday morning for both services and Education Hour. Attendants also provide childcare during our MOPS ministry meetings to ensure that moms can enjoy a few carefree hours without the stress of finding outside childcare. In addition, the Nursery supports all church ministries with childcare as needed.

2020 was certainly a novel experience with limited nursery needs as Saint Peter remained closed while adhering to government restrictions. Once we receive notice that we can return safely to our ministry we will still have some familiar faces but we will also be looking to add new attendants to join our team as well. If you know anyone interested, please have them contact me at tstrezo@stplc.org.

Respectfully submitted,
Tabitha Strezo

†

Report from the Coordinator of Volunteers and Ministries

This year has been quite an adjustment for us all. I have been making my contacts with members to volunteer mostly by email, text or on the phone. As we share our highs and lows with each other, we still remind ourselves of how blessed we are to be a part of a very caring congregation.

Ministry Programs

It is my responsibility to connect with ministry leaders to recruit and supervise new and existing members. Working with members on Ministry Teams, I can help them implement a plan to involve our youth and adults that currently are not engaged. I can help organize and gather volunteers when needed for various events, such as property clean-up and visits with our elderly members when it is allowed. I call our members to check-in with them and contact volunteers for all the weekly services on Zoom. I communicate with council and staff on decisions and ideas that are being accomplished and covered with these efforts.

Summary of Ministries and Actions in 2020

If you are involved in a ministry, I want to thank you for sharing your time and talent. Here are a few events that occurred last year at Saint Peter:

- Finished New Member classes in February
- Property clean up
- Visits with our elderly members at their homes—keeping our 6 foot distance
- Helping with the Prayer Team Ministry
- Drivers to deliver Advent Wreath kits to members

Respectfully submitted,
Deb Paul

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CONGREGATION COUNCIL ROSTER

2020 Executive Team / Congregation Officers

**Council members have committed to remaining in office through this pandemic, in order to provide consistent leadership until we have made significant progress in transitioning back to in-person worship. At that time, a Nominating Committee will be formed and nominees will be sought to replace Council members who will not be continuing their service into the coming year.

President

Bruce Stokes

- term expires January 2022; ineligible to be re-elected
- first elected in 2018; currently serving second term

Vice President

Gerry Mueller

- term expires January 2021; ineligible to be re-elected
- first elected in 2017; currently serving second term

Treasurer

Shawn O'Keefe

- term expires January 2022; eligible to be re-elected
- first elected in 2020; currently serving first term

Secretary

Brooke Tieperman

- term expires January 2021; ineligible to be re-elected
- first elected in 2017; currently serving second term

Pastor

Dave Risendal

- term: ex-officio; voice and vote

Financial Secretary

Lynn Sherpe (not an officer of the corporation)

- serving "until her successor is elected" (constitutional language)
- first elected in 2011

2020 Congregation Council Members

At Large

D.J. Bruen

- term expires January 2021; ineligible to be re-elected
- first elected in 2017; currently serving second term

At Large

Cathy Bunch

- term expires January 2021; eligible to be re-elected
- first appointed in 2017 (partial term); currently serving first term

At Large

Jim Bunke

- term expires January 2022; eligible to be re-elected
- first elected in 2020; currently serving first term

At Large

Allison Summerton

- term expires January 2022; eligible to be re-elected
- first elected in 2020; currently serving first term

Minister of Music

Steve Howie

- ex-officio; voice / no vote

Faith Formation Ministries

Jeanne Maloney

- ex-officio; voice / no vote

Coordinator of Volunteers & Ministries

Deb Paul

- ex-officio; voice / no vote