HOLY NATIVITY
LUTHERAN CHURCH

Helping All Know God's Love

3900 WINNETKA AVE NORTH
NEW HOPE, MINNESOTA 55427

2022

ANNUAL CONGREGATIONAL

REPORT

Sunday, January 22, 2023 - 11:30am

A CONGREGATION OF THE
NORTHWEST HENNEPIN CONFERENCE OF THE
MINNEAPOLIS AREA SYNOD OF THE
EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA

Annual Report to the Congregation 2023
Pastor Jason R. Wahlstrom

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Theologian and justice advocate Jim Wallis once said, "A budget is a moral document." His argument was that how we budget our money says a lot about what we value and what we believe is important. While Wallis was speaking at the time about budget decisions being made at the national level, I believe his statement is accurate even when it comes to personal household budgets and congregational budgets. We meet this month, as we do each year, to adopt a budget. Budget discussions tend to be one of the largest sources of conflicts in congregations. We human beings seem to have deep issues with talking about and dealing with money. We have been taught in our culture to view money and budgets through a lens of scarcity, rather than abundance. God teaches us the exact opposite – that through God there is more than enough. (This reminds me of one of the best (worst) church treasurer jokes: "The good news is this congregation has more than enough money. The bad news is it's still in your wallets.") God's abundance is difficult for us to imagine or believe. But then again, so is the idea of God's unending grace and acceptance for us. God is in the business of making things that seem impossible possible.

As you know, Holy Nativity is in the midst of a time of transition. For the time being, at least, we have moved from two pastors to one. We will be spending the coming days and weeks (and maybe months, let's be honest) discussing our future and discerning who we are called to be, especially as it connects to our staffing. Please know that our leadership has been working with synod staff discussing how to best go about deciding what our ideal staffing should be. We also want to hear from you. Where do you feel God is calling us? The council and I will be organizing ways for you to share your views with us. We want to have meaningful conversations with as many of you as possible as we think about our future together. I began this letter thinking about budget discussions because I hope we will not let budget concerns hinder who God is calling us to be. Obviously, our budget is important. However, it has been my experience in my 21+ years of ordained ministry that when it comes to church budgets, giving always follows mission. If we have a compelling mission, giving will follow.

Even in this time of transition, as we begin 2023, I am deeply grateful for you, the people of Holy Nativity and everything you do to support the mission of this congregation. I am also blessed to work with a gifted and committed staff who work hard each day serving this community of faith. Thank you to each and every one of you who make this congregation what it is!

In God's amázing grace,
Pastor Jason

COLUMBARIUM AND MEMORIAL GARDEN

Operating Committee (as per by- laws)
Pastor Jason Wahlstrom
Lori Cowman (Church Council Treasurer)
Joe Gartner (Church Council Property)
Karen Gaasland (Congregational Member)

The Columbarium and Memorial Garden dedicated in June 2009, is one of the ministries Holy Nativity Lutheran Church offers its members and their families. Holy Nativity members, past members and members of their immediate family (i.e parents, grandparents and children) are eligible for inurnment. Extended family and friends may be eligible, but are subject to available space and the management of the committee.

There have been 5 niches purchased and one refund this year. There are 20 plaques installed in the Memorial Wall and no additional additions were made this year.
After 12 years the prices remain the same in the first column until they are all sold. Niches in the second column have increased slightly to: single- $1250.00 to $1350.00, double- $2400.00 to $2600.00, and memorial plaque- $250.00 to $300.00.

In September,2020 we took $25,000.00 from our account and invested it for 48 months at 2.25% with a Mission Investment Fund. Our current balance is approximately $ 26,000.00. The fourth quarter report has not arrived. In addition, $7,821.28 remains in our HN account at Wells Fargo.

After much research for a fix to the discoloration of the columns I found a paint that would work. Verne Erickson volunteered to do the work. A big **THANK YOU** to Verne for his skills. I then touched up the lettering on plaques where needed. Left over supplies are stored with the directions in the usher's closet just outside the office door.

The Memorial Garden is maintained by the Columbarium Gardeners. Thank You to Nancy Dickinson for helping me care for the flowers and shrubs this past summer. Thank You also to Kyle, Tyler and Evan Toavs for helping with spring clean- up. The gardeners also maintain the pots by the entrance. Thank You to : Deb Campion, Alice Evans, Nancy Dickinson, Ann Moser, Ann Wahlstrom and myself.
In addition, a big Thank You to Rod Moser for trimming bushes above the wall and LuVerne Erickson for maintaining the fountain and lighted wreath placed in the Columbarium for the Christmas Season.

For information and inquiries please contact the Holy Nativity office or any committee member for Inurnment Documents and Columbarium and Memorial Garden guidelines.

Report submitted by Karen Gaasland
January, 2023

2022 Ministry Team Report

Ministry Team: Education

Council Liaison: April Umaña

Ministry Team Members: Kristen Chamberlain

Purpose of Team: The purpose of the education team is to help plan and support educational opportunities to help youth of all ages know god's love.

2021 Highlights/Accomplishments:

Sunday Programs:

- **Sunday school Program:** (Kristin Chamberlain)
  - Sunday school meets every Sunday from 10:45 – 11:30am There are about 25 kids ages 3 – 6th grade who attend.
  - The Sunday school held a Christmas program during the 9:30 am church Service on December 11.
- **Youth and Senior High Forums:** (Wendy Grimes)
  - High School forums meet in person the 1st and 3rd Sundays of the month from 6:30 – 8:30 pm
- **Adult Education Sunday Forums:** (Pastor Jason) These forums were held 10:45 – 11:30am every Sunday (except summer months) in the Sanctuary following service.

Other Programs:

- **Tuesday Bible Study Group:** (Pastor Jason) This group meets in person every Tuesdays at 10:00 am.
- **Confirmation Program:** (Pastor Ashley) On Sunday May 1st there were 11 kids confirmed. Confirmation students continue to meet on Wednesday nights.
- **Adult Confirmation:** This class met until April 22 on Wednesdays at 7pm.
- **Wildfire Youth Events**: The Wildfire youth events are now regular again. They are typically held the first Wednesday of the month. In June of 2022 there was a large and successful pig roast event that was held at House of Hope.
- **Adult Book Discussions**:
  - "No Cure for Being Human," by Kate Bowler, led by Pastor Ashley on August 17.
- **Youth Mission Trip to New York City:** There were 25 students and 6 adults who traveled to New York City in July. The focus of the trip was immigration.
- **The Tough Stuff Retreat** for 8th and 9th graders was led by Pastor Ashley on November 5.
- **Women's Retreat**: This was the 7th annual women's retreat. It was attended by 20+ women. The theme this year was holy women and women wisdom.

Respectfully Submitted – April Umaña

2022 Ministry Team Report

Ministry Team - Finance Ministry Team/Treasurer's Report

Council Liaison – Lori Cowman

Ministry Team Members -
Lori Cowman, Milton Ferris, Jerry Gaasland, Kara Holt, Andrew Kubly, and Rodney Moser

Purpose/Statement of Mission -
To assure all financial affairs of congregation are met timely, accurately, and prudently.

2022 Highlights/Accomplishments-
To meet our mission goals this year we:

- Reviewed monthly financial reports.
- Submitted summary finance reports for the monthly Tidings newsletter.
- Included a year to date financial status report with pledge statements during the year.
- Prepared a recommended budget for 2023.
- Our dedicated offering counters continue to provide accurate and dounted and adapted to counting twice per month during the pandemic. Thanks to all the counters as they are an important part of keeping our finances accurate and timely. Our 2022 counters were Sharon Beaver, Lori Cowman, Ted Davis, Milton Ferris, Jerry Gaasland, Scott Hennessy, Eric Knutson, Andrew Kubly, Lynn Kvalness Rodney Moser, Nancy Nagle, Elizabeth Rokala, Sandee Stenzel, Nancy Van Heel, and Don Van Heel.
- As of this writing, the 2022 financials are still being finalized, but preliminary results show that the 2022 operating deficit is $18K which is $12K less than the budgeted deficit. The favorability was due to a combination of higher than planned contributions (8K), and lower than planned personnel expenses (17K) which were offset by lower than planned facilities income (14K).
- Thanks to all Holy Nativity members for both your financial generosity, and a special thanks to the Finance Ministry Team members, for their work and assistance during 2022.

Respectfully Submitted by- Lori Cowman, Treasurer

2022 Ministry Team Report

Ministry Team – Hospitality Committee

Council Liaison – Emily Spanjers

Ministry Team Members
Deb Gartner
Tina Haugstad
Alice Loddigs
Sandee Stenzel
Pr Jason Wahlstrom

Purpose/Statement of Mission
To encourage and lead the membership of the congregation in continuous and concerted efforts to reach out to others with the Gospel and invite them to become part of Christ's church. It shall have primary responsibility for identifying and encouraging opportunities, which might enhance the spiritual growth of the membership. This ministry shall also work to welcome guests to the congregation and will seek meaningful ways to involve new members in the life of the church. This Ministry shall coordinate publicity, marketing and the publication of printed and visual congregational materials.

2022 Offerings/Highlights/Accomplishments
The Hospitality Team spent much of 2022 working through uncertainties due to the pandemic while considering and implementing ways to make Holy Nativity welcoming to everyone. These included:

- Brainstorming ideas about increasing a sense of church community through small groups
- Coordinated Easter cards for homebound members
- Planning the Oktoberfest celebration at Under Pressure Brewing, open to the whole church as well as community members
- Organizing and serving the refreshments at Pastor Ashley's farewell celebration, and assisting with planning of this event

.

As always, Hospitality will continue to work in 2023 supporting all other ministry teams in the efforts to bring community growth and programs for our entire congregation here at Holy Nativity.

Respectfully Submitted by – Emily Spanjers

Annual Report -2021 – Outreach Ministry Team

Outreach has had a busy year. The Outreach Ministry has and continues to meet monthly on the first Wednesday of each month at 7 PM at church. The committee includes Nancy Hanson, Cindy Ernst, Denise Prozek and Connie Toavs. New members are always welcome.

The Outreach Ministry team continued its support of community organizations through its budget that provided quarterly donations to PRISM, Meals on Wheels/CEAP, Habitat for Humanity, Lutheran Social Service and Treehouse. The Ministry team also reviews and recommends any changes to the list of monthly efforts designated for Mission offerings. This year Nancy Hanson has written detailed information on the work of each of the designated missions for both the Tidings and the Holy Post to help us all understand the needs.

The Outreach Team, in the spring of 2022, carried out a fundraiser for the Meadow Lake Elementary Book Fair as a part of Holy Nativity's partnership with Meadow Lake. The fundraiser expenses were covered by two $250 Thrivent grants. $2715 was raised, including a $500 donation from the New Hope Crime Prevention fund. These funds made it possible for students at Meadow Lake with need to purchase books at both spring and fall book fairs.

The Committee assisted Nancy Van Heel and Every Meal in a Wildfire fundraiser Pig Roast that successfully raised funds so Every Meal can continue to provide a weekend meal for families at elementary schools in our district with food needs.

In August the Committee constructed journals and mailed them to all women in the congregation in honor of Women's Equality Day, August 26.

In September, the Committee joined with other ministry teams to provide a table game and Committee information for Home Coming Sunday.

In 2022, Pat Harwell, Holy Nativity's PRISM representative for many years, resigned. The Committee, along with Pastor Jason, recruited Scott Hennessy to replace Pat. He is doing a great job keeping the congregation updated on the needs at PRISM, the Sharing Tree holiday project, school supplies drive, and assuring that congregation donations get delivered to PRISM.

In October the Committee sponsored an Adult Forum by staff from CEAP (Community Emergency Assistance Program)/Meals on Wheels. The Forum was very helpful in learning how Meals on Wheels works, how our quarterly donation is used and how congregation members can volunteer.

The Committee is beginning work on an upcoming Birthday Party/Fundraiser for Avenues for Youth Homeless Shelter.

2022 Parish Life and Fellowship Report

Members: Deb Campion, Ted Davis, Brian Eklund, Marisa Lerum, Jane Rupprecht and Linda Lien

Purpose/Mission: To create and enhance programs that bring people together outside of Sunday services. Monthly meetings are held on the third Wednesday of each month to align with the monthly dinner and worship nights.

Activities:

*Monthly informal Bingo Nights at OutTakes Bar & Grill in New Hope were held. Several Bingo events were also held in the Fellowship Hall.

*Lenten soup suppers were held in conjunction with Lenten services. Soup suppers are also planned for the 2023 Lenten services.

*On September 11, 2022, the church year was kicked off with the annual Homecoming Day celebration to welcome back members and families from the summer with grilled hotdogs and hamburgers.

*Trunk or Treat made a huge comeback with 150 people in attendance. Volunteers handed out treats and information about Holy Nativity.

*Sunday, November 20 was the annual Pi (Pie) event in the Fellowship Hall following the service. Members contributed homemade pies which were served instead of the usual donuts.

*Our in-person Holiday Craft event was held on December 4. Along with treats and holiday music, participants had a selection of 5 crafts including centerpieces and decorations.

The Time and Talent surveys conducted during the fall provided new ideas and new activities for us to explore for members and families, but we are always interested in hearing from everyone. We would also like to welcome more people who are interested in working with us on this committee to create an even more welcoming climate at Holy Nativity.

2022 Ministry Team Report

Ministry Team: Personnel

Council Liaison: Becky Nichols

Ministry Team Members: Becky Nichols, Pastor Jason

Purpose/State of Mission: The purpose of the Personnel Ministry Team at Holy Nativity is to ensure that all staffing needs are met, and adequate compensation and benefits are provided to staff. In addition, staff performance is reviewed and measured. The performance and efficiency of staff contributes to a high level of worship experiences and church programs filtering out to community programs and congregational involvement.

Here are the 2022 offerings/highlights/accomplishments:

- We were able to resume a regular, in person service at 9:30 am without strict safety precautions.
- Nancy Hanson stepped into the position of Funeral Coordinator in April.
- In November, Pastor Ashley resided over her last service at Holy Nativity as she accepted a lead pastor calling elsewhere.
- Pastor Jason, and Wendy were able to step in to cover some of the of her roles with leading the youth program.
- We continue to evaluate pastoral needs for the future and are working with guidance from the synod to do so. More to come in 2023.

Thank you to all our staff for your continued work and support to keep the church going through our transitions in 2022!

Respectfully Submitted by Becky Nichols

2022 Property Team Report

Ministry Team - Property
Council Liaison – Joe Gartner
Ministry Team Members – Joe Gartner, LuVerne Erickson, Mark Chamberlain, Kirby Miller and Tom Wiblishauser

Purpose/Statement of Mission - (B1.01.04) This ministry shall coordinate the purchase, maintenance, replacement, and security of all congregational property and equipment. This ministry shall also solicit input from the congregation, from the Ministries, and the staff, as to needed facility/programmatic corrections and additions. This team will also ensure that a maintenance log is maintained on church property and equipment. Information received shall be distilled by this ministry, and preliminary directions shall be presented to the Congregation Council.

2022 Major Activities and Accomplishments:

First, I want to thank the committee members (listed above) and other congregation volunteers for the work completed this year.

The following projects were completed:

- Spring and Fall cleanups – Boy Scouts and Holy Ghost helped
- Sprinkler system repair, zone 1
- Volunteers painted East side of Church – lower level
- Used 5 Star Painting to paint upper levels of Street Side and Parking lot surfaces.
- Furnace repairs on 2 units
- Misc repairs and upkeep performed by Tom
- Acquired bids on Painting the Church, Water drainage issues, and Sealing of Parking lot cracks
- Ongoing discussion with Padagis for future parking lot usage.
- Handi-cap door fixed. Added another relay for security lock
- Switch out many interior light bulbs with new LED bullb's
- By Daycare - outdoor lights replaced with LED lights
- Lawn Mowers – changed oit and sharpened blades.
- Crack sealing of Parking lot
- Painting of Columbarium columns

Future work:

- Bathroom upgrades.
- Water Drainage project.
- Paint remainder of church not painted in the fall
- Chip Seal, Seal Coat and Striping of parking lot. Not needed until 2025.

Respectfully submitted byJoe Gartner.

2022 STEWARDSHIP MINISTRY TEAM ANNUAL REPORT

Stewardship Ministry Team Members

Pastor Jason Wahlstrom
Nancy Van Heel /Janet Kubly /Beth Benedict
Jeremy Schmitz

Purpose/ Mission Statement

The Holy Nativity Stewardship Ministry Team is responsible for conducting the annual stewardship emphasis and promoting stewardship within the congregation.

Stewardship Focus for 2022: Count me in!

2022 represented a year of returning to normal and reconnecting relationships. The theme of the 2022 campaign, Count me In! represents our continued mission, and our faith community's persistence in get involved and help when needed. Count me In! is about time, effort and talents which distinguishes our community and people who share their resources. The Stewardship Ministry Team thanks members for their generous continued financial support. Holy Nativity members respond by strongly supporting this mission.

Again this year a Stewardship Appeal letter with an enclosed Intent for Giving form was sent to each congregational member. Members were asked to complete the form and return it to the church office. Also, an Intent for Giving online form was offered. These are key to educating the church regarding commitments so that a thoughtful budget and plan can be created. As we approach the upcoming year our membership is respectfully requested to faithfully contribute their current offering and consider an increase if possible.

Additionally, our team would like to note our appreciation for Lisa Baker's creativity, providing pictures and formatting our bulletin inserts and brochure allowing it to be prepared in house. Many thanks to her for her creative and thoughtful abilities.

In this New Year, we will not stop the work of providing creative ministries and programs to strengthen our mission as we continue to share God's love.

We remain here in support.

Jeremy Schmitz

2022 WAM Ministry Team Report

Ministry Team – Worship, Arts & Music (WAM) Ministry

WAM Chair – Iver Hubert

Team Members – Lisa Baker, Greg Eklund, Cresta Hubert, Karen Leverson, Nora Leverson/*AGQ,* Jay Leverson, *WAM Reservist*

Council Liaison – Jon Peterson

Purpose/Statement of Mission – The **Worship, Arts & Music (WAM) Ministry Team** plans and coordinates areas such as music programming, worship materials and elements, visual art and thematic decorations and other artistic endeavors—all to enrich the worship experience at Holy Nativity.

2022 Offerings/Highlights/Accomplishments

Holy Nativity and Children's Choirs – All large group voice ensemble rehearsals resumed September of 2022. The Nativity Choir reformed, following strict Covid guidelines that included mandatory vaccination. The Nativity Choir and Ensemble has continued to perform through Christmas Eve, 2022. Children's Choir also resumed.

Bell Choir – Bell choir assembled in 2022, but was unable to perform during Advent due to illness.

Organ – Preliminary research and work began late in 2020 to determine the feasibility of continued repair and service to our current organ, or if purchasing a new (used) organ is a better option.

Online Services – Courtesy of Mark Chamberlain and the Stream Team formed in 2020, Church Services are available for viewing via Facebook and YouTube. Please contact the Church Office for details on how to access these services.

Shouts and Acclamations to Denise Prosek for being willing to help by playing for services when Lisa is ill or on vacation, AND for filling in as Choir Director when Iver was ill at Christmas Eve.

2022 Altar Guild (AG)

Guilders – Nora Leverson/*AG-Quartermaster*, Jan Birkholz, Kristen Daniels, Karen Leverson, Deb Peterson, Maxine Peterson, Ann Wahlström ***New Member:*** Ellyn Roth-Unzickier *Go Guilders Go!*

Purpose – Altar Guild (AG) is responsible for supporting the Worship Team members by assembling the Eucharist and elements for Communion and Baptisms, decorating the Sanctuary for the high holiday seasons and maintaining the Worship Area of the Sanctuary.

Assemble! AG was called back to service in June 2022, returning to serve with two-Guilder teams scheduled monthly. Eucharist returned to pre-Pandemic unleavened bread and wine, with grape juice and gluten-free wafer alternatives. All services resumed without the minimum attendance caps of 2021, masking encouraged, but not required.

Gold Stars! Marilyn Rausch, Coordinator, and Baptismal Shawls team; Deb Campion facilitator, Baptismal cards; Nancy Nagle, Coordinator, floral arrangements by request; Greg Eklund, supplier, Communion bread and gluten-free wafers. And to ALL Guilders who returned. In particular, Deb Peterson, Kristen Daniels, and Ann Walström who did a sterling job of taking care of AG duties when Karen Leverson and Nora Leverson were caught by Covid at Christmas. And to Kristen Daniels (and the Daniels Clan) who handled AG tasks on Christmas Day.

WAM would like to thank everyone who assisted with these
and all WAM and AG events, past, present and future!
Respectfully submitted, WAM

2022 Youth Ministry Team Report

Ministry Team

- Youth

Council Liaison

- Jane Rupprecht

Ministry Team Members

- Wendy Grimes (Staff)
- Chris Daniels
- Kelly Duclos

Purpose/Statement of Mission:

- The Youth Ministry Team seeks to foster Christian Community through building relationships with young people that strengthen their commitment to the church and growth in faith in Jesus Christ.

2022 Offerings/Highlights/Accomplishments:

- Fundraisers
- Butterbraids
- Silent Auction/Pancake Breakfast
- New York Trip – Stock Sales
- Camp Wapo
- Garage Sale
- Forums
- Summer lunch meet-ups
- Bonfires
- Tough Stuff Retreat

Respectfully submitted by Wendy Grimes

Minneapolis Area Synod
of the ELCA

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

Like rain after an endless drought, the gift of gathering in person this year has quenched a deep thirst. The pandemic revealed anew the depth of our thirst for community; Scripture also articulates this profound human need. Advances in technologies like livestreaming are indeed gifts to our church and world. Still, our hearts sing when we can rub shoulders around the communion table, embrace those who grieve, and raise our voices together in resounding song.

The mission of the synod is to support communities who share the thirst-quenching love of God – forming disciples, building beloved community, and working for just and healthy neighborhoods. I am deeply grateful for the many ways that we walk together in our journey of faith.

The synod staff walks closely in partnership with congregations, especially in times of transition, planning, or conflict. Last year, we accompanied congregations in 58 call processes. We offer skills trainings for lay members through the annual Tool Kit, and for church staff through peer groups and communicators gatherings. And, our Faith Practices & Neighborhood Practices program strengthens congregations in faith formation and engaging their neighborhoods.

Synod staff also work closely with our deacons and pastors. We experience great joy when we gather with congregations for ordinations, installations, and Ministry Site Profile reviews, as well as in preaching, presiding, and offering adult forums. We support our interim pastors who provide wise leadership in times of transition and our chaplains who provide critical care in a variety of settings. And, currently, we support 50 seminary students preparing to become pastors and deacons.

Our congregations worship in Spanish, Swahili, ASL, Oromo, Hmong, Lao, Norwegian, and Amharic. As we celebrate our diversity, we also recognize inequities affecting our congregations. Using a "racial equity lens," the synod council launched an in-depth process to evaluate and strengthen partnerships with our "strategic ministries," addressing historical realities of disconnection and resource inequities.

As a synod together, we will gather again April 28-29 for Synod Assembly. All are welcome at the opening worship Friday night; voting members will carry out the business of the synod on Saturday. We are blessed with the Rev. Dr. Otis Moss III as our keynote speaker.

Thanks to the incredible generosity of Lutherans in our synod and in the Lutheran Church of Christ in Nigeria, the ground-breaking for the first ever Lutheran University in Nigeria occurred this December. We celebrate God's provision and look forward to the blessings this university will bring.

During my sabbatical, I have been studying "the church in the U.S. – hopes and challenges." I would like to present some of my learnings as well as facilitate conversations in as many congregations as possible during the coming months. For more information about these visits or news about what's happening around the synod, please visit the synod website and sign up for our weekly enews.

In Christ,
Bishop Ann Svennungsen

Lake Wapogasset
LUTHERAN BIBLE CAMP, INC.
Camp Wapo
Ox Lake
Wilderness Canoe Base
715.268.8434
lakewapo.org

Congregational Report 2022

Thank you for being a Partner Congregation! We remain grateful and inspired by the work and support of so many people who've continued to rally around this ministry in order that others should experience fellowship in community and come to know Jesus in these beautiful outdoor spaces. We are grateful for a year filled with campers and retreat guests, for our donors, prayer warriors, and our partner congregations. Though Covid continued to provide challenges during the year, our staff was thoughtful, diligent and creative in finding solutions so that safe & healthy ministry opportunities could happen.

Summer 2022 We were back to business as usual at Wapo and Ox Lake welcoming over 3700 campers and families to camp. Wilderness Canoe Base sent 98 guided canoe trips into the BWCAW as well as hosted family groups and island camp on site. Our summer staff was outstanding! They were required to be flexible and resilient - and they excelled, often times responsible for unexpected tasks. We are constantly looking for young adults to work at camp so if you know someone who would be perfect, please send them our way! It's the perfect resume builder for any future career path.

Strategic Plan Initiative In December the Board approved the Strategic Plan Initiative. The Initiative focused on mission and core values and three main Strategic areas: Identity, Inclusivity, and Generosity/Engagement. Some of the first tasks to be completed in 2023 include: comprehensive site plans, the formation of a Diversity, Equity, Accessibility, Inclusion (DEAI) committee and the completion of a DEAI assessment, and a development audit to enhance fundraising capacity. We are confident this strategic initiative will help us provide meaningful and transformative outdoor ministry experiences for all.

Hello and Farewell In 2022 we welcomed Gay Gonnerman, to serve as the Director of Donor Engagement. With her vast experience in working with donors she is ready to work with individuals and families who want to support camp in all sorts of ways. Please reach out to her if you want to learn more about opportunities to support camp (gayg@campwapo.org). We said goodbye to Bill & Kristin Middlesworth, who have served WCB for the past 7 years. We are so grateful for their diligent care of facility and people. Gracious hospitality, attention to every detail, and good hard physical labor were at the center of their work. We wish them every success in their new roles and community in Colorado.

Retreats and Events in 2021 Retreats at Wapo and Wilderness continue to transition back to pre-pandemic schedule. Reach out to Ryan (ryanb@campwapo.org) to schedule your retreat at Wapo or Wilderness. Special events also looked a lot more normal in 2022. We hosted over 400 people for our Memorial Day Pancake Extravaganza, our 20th year of the Wapo Golf Tournament hosted 31 foursomes for a fun day on the course, and over 1000 guests and volunteers helped us welcome in Advent with 8 performances of the 33rd annual Christmas Dinner Theater.

Mission Support Fund This year Wilderness Canoe Base received a $40,000 gift match for the GiveMN Give to the Max day. On November 17th, friends of WCB met that match, raising just over $80,000 for Wilderness Canoe Base. We also had a tremendous response to our Mission Support Fund appeal to support operating and camper scholarships. Every gift has a life changing impact on thousands of lives each year.

A New Project for Camp Wapo We are currently working on plans for a complete kitchen remodel and additional dining and meeting space at Camp Wapo. Stay tuned to learn more about how you can help support this important project.

Our theme for 2023 is "All the Stars" Isaiah 40:26 says "Lift up your eyes and look to the heavens: Who created all these? God who brings out the starry host one by one and calls forth each of them by name. Because of God's great power and mighty strength, not one of them is missing." As a child of God, each of us has been beautifully and wonderfully made. Like all the stars in the sky, we are called by name and cannot be lost. No matter where we are in life, we belong to God.

We look ahead with eager anticipation and a sure sense of hope. See you at camp in 2023!

HOLY NATIVITY
LUTHERAN CHURCH
Helping All Know God's Love

Spring Congregational Meeting MINUTES

Sunday, May 22, 2022 ~ 10:45 am
FELLOWSHIP HALL

Mission: "Grounded in Christ's love, Holy Nativity Lutheran Church is a welcoming community dedicated to helping all know God's love through worship, service, and fellowship."

Meeting Called to Order: President Alan Sommervold at 10:52 a.m.

Opening Prayer: Pastor Jason Wahlstrom

Declare/Establish Quorum: 55 voting members present

Old Business: None

New Business:

- Review & Approval of the 1/23/22 Winter Congregational Meeting Minutes. Motion to approve made by Lori Cowman. Seconded by Janet Kubly. Carried.
- Financial Report & Budget Presentation: Treasurer Milton Ferris
    - The April 2022 YTD operating surplus/(deficit) is roughly ($8,500) which is $3,000 better than budget, but roughly ($600) behind last year.
    - April offerings came in just under the monthly budget and YTD offerings are $13,600 higher than last year.
    - Revenue from facilities are in line with budget. With Word of Life leaving in May, facilities revenue is projected to be $16,000 below budget in 2022 unless another renter or other source of revenue is found to replace the loss in revenue.
    - Expenses in April were close to budget coming in over budget by ($1,500).
    - Looking toward the remainder of the year the loss of revenue from Word of Life ($24,000) on an annual basis, in addition to the ($30,000) budgeted deficit will need to be figured out by year-end.
    - Currently we have roughly $53,000 in prior year reserves to help out this year.
- Election/Appointment of 2022-24 Council Members (2-3 openings)
    - Deb Peterson and Lori Cowman elected starting May 2022.
    - Marisa Lerum and Milton Ferris are stepping down after serving their 3-year terms.
    - Alan Sommervold and Connie Toavs agreed to serve a second consecutive term.
    - Jon Peterson gave brief summary of council commitment time (2-4 hrs/mo), what to expect in roles and explanation of the ministry teams in hopes of encouraging other candidates.
- Faith Practices/Neighboring Practices Update

- Committee members: Pastor Jason, Emily Spanjers, Connie Toavs, Lori Cowman and Kari Johnson. There is one more year of this program under its current plan.
- Connie Toavs explained the Synod program that is made up of 13 churches. HN is part of a 5-church group ("Wildfire") within this larger group. Their focus is to have a "Summer of Listening" initiative by getting to know families of the childcare center at HN. Planning 1-2 gatherings this summer with no agenda and no programming. Purpose is to build relationships and make connections within our own shared space.
- Lori Cowman noted that another focus is to deepen our faith. A few ways to do this is to start incorporating more psalms into our services and having meditation and centering prayer groups. More to come on how we can create different ways to explore faith together.
- In a similar note, Tom Wiblishauser shared that the City of New Hope has launched a 'Curbside Appeal' program that will offer a partial reimbursement to qualifying homeowners that spend between $4,000 - $20,000 in landscaping and other exterior improvement projects. The hope is that it will give homeowners a sense of community by improving its neighborhoods, increasing home values and fostering relationships with our neighbors that may have fallen by the wayside during the pandemic.

- Discussion of increasing membership/renewing relationships at Holy Nativity
  - A couple members expressed concern with past members that have left the church and the lack of volunteers in our services, including the youth. How can we get back to the pre-Covid 'normal'?
  - Council member, Jane Rupprecht, encouraged an introspective reflection about who we are and where are we going as a church? What is important to us? She values the connections she has felt with our church and the relationships that have developed, but we all need to be purposeful and deliberate about growing our community. We should determine the priorities and values of both our veteran members, as well as new members.
  - The Council is in the beginning stages of creating a group of members who can help collect stories from our members on their experiences at HN and what it will take to move us forward.
  - The Council is working on a new Time & Talent survey to encourage members to get involved again with various volunteer activities at church. As well as determining how to expand on the talent of our current staff/congregation members and programs.

Closing Prayer: Pastor Ashley Updegraff

Motion made by Janet Kubly to adjourn. Seconded by Sandy Stenzel. Carried.

Adjournment: 11:36 a.m.