

Immanuel Ev. Lutheran Church



2020 Annual Report

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Immanuel Evangelical Lutheran Church Annual Meeting—January 24, 2021

WELCOME/INTRODUCTION

1. Call to order/Declaration of Quorum
2. Approval of previous congregational meeting minutes
3. Introduction of 2021 Church Council Members; President—Matt Johnson,
Vice President—Becky Eades, Treasurer—Brian Willoughby, Secretary—
JoAnne Barrix
4. Recognize new/departing council members
5. Pastor's Report
6. Committee summaries/Invitation to serve

OLD BUSINESS

NEW BUSINESS

1. Treasurer's Report and 2021 Church Budget Proposal
2. Nominating Committee
3. Auditing Committee
4. Congregation concerns/proposals

WORD OF THANKS

CLOSING PRAYER

ADJOURNMENT

IMMANUEL EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

Annual Meeting Minutes

January 26, 2020

OPENING

Council Vice-President Darlene Machtan opened the meeting at 10:17 AM.

ACTION: motion/second to approve the 2019 annual meeting minutes, as forwarded, was carried.

ACTION: motion/second to approve the special congregation meeting of November 10, 2019, as forwarded, was carried.

The 2020 council executive members were introduced, and recognized were the departing and new incoming member.

Pastor Tammy Barthels offered comments relating to her annual report, using words from Romans 12.2. She stressed that we are united as Body and Blood of Christ, and as such we are to root ourselves in Christ and continually discern the will of God.

Committee chairpersons were invited to highlight respective annual reports.

OLD BUSINESS There was no old business to bring forward

NEW BUSINESS

The annual treasurer's report was given by Brian Willoughby, as an introduction to the 2020 budget discussion. For 2019, the general fund balance decreased by about \$6000. This deficit was smaller than the 2018 shortfall. Each category of the 2020 budget was highlighted. An explanation was provided regarding the building fund (balance, expected uses) and synodical benevolence giving (2019 goal was \$20,000, actual giving was \$18,705). Also explained were the Thrivent seed cards and choice dollars (uses/options for each) as a way to extend ministries outside the operating budget.

The proposed 2020 budget was presented, resulting in a \$100 decrease in general fund from the 2019 budget.

ACTION: motion/second to approve the 2020 budget, as forwarded, was carried.

ACTION: motion/second to approve 2020 nominating committee as Brian Willoughby, Jackie Waldorf, Matt Johnson, Priscilla Johnson, Dianne Syms, and Cory Dellenbach (as outgoing council member) was Carried.

ACTION: motion/second to approve 2020 auditing committee as Dianne Syms, RaeAnne Cheslock, and Kathy Plautz, was carried.

ACTION: motion/second to approve disbursement of up to \$8000 from building fund for window replacement was carried.

Recommendation was brought forth from council recommending a single service at 9:00 AM to run from Memorial Day to Labor Day (inclusive) for the summer of 2020. This will be revisited in September at the conclusion to review the merits, from a practical and spiritual point of view. Civil and respectful discussion ensued.

ACTION: motion/second of the above recommendation was carried, by virtue of a show of hands, with about 5 dissents.

ACTION: motion/second to adjourn meeting, following a closing blessing, was carried.

After a final blessing, the meeting was adjourned at 11:07 AM.

Respectfully submitted,
Matthew Johnson, council member

Annual Report Letter 2020

*May the God of hope fill you
with all joy and peace in believing, so that
you may abound in hope
by the power of the Holy Spirit.*

~Romans 15:13

December 15, 2020

Dear Northern Great Lakes Synod,

Since the year 2020 was certainly not a year of clear vision, one can only hope that we will glean what can be learned from it in hindsight. I would guess that I am not alone in my relief to put 2020 in the rearview mirror, but the challenges and disruption that have marked this year will no doubt stretch into 2021.

Before we leave 2020 behind us, I wish to express my sincere gratitude and appreciation for how we have faced this year together. I am grateful for the many creative ways that pastors, leaders, and congregations have risen to the challenge of offering online worship, devotions, events, and activities. Many of you learned new skills in order to stay connected. You made phone calls, sent encouraging notes, and mailed worship resources. We learned how to use ZOOM, FM transmitters, and Facebook Live. We learned how to make masks, give offerings electronically, have Zoom Council meetings, and put protocols in place to keep each other safe. Together, we pivoted, adapted, shifted gears, and shifted gears again. It has been exhausting, and while I know we are not done with this pandemic yet (and have no idea how it will shape our future), I have to say... Well done!! Excellent!! Keep up the good work!

Continue with patient resilience, and soon enough the pandemic will join the year 2020 in hindsight, and we will regroup, reassess, and reapply ourselves to the work of Christ in a post-pandemic world.

To that end, we turn our faces toward the future with hope.

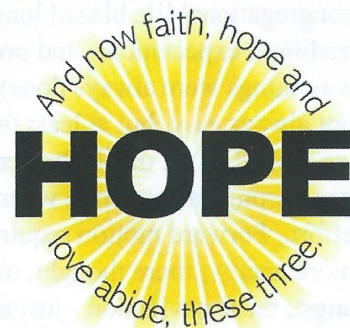
I think of my Uncle Paul who used to work for Lutheran Bible Translators in Africa. He told the story once of going into a village to learn the particular dialect in order to translate the Bible into that language. However, he could not find a local word for "hope" ... until that is, he heard the story of a boy whose father worked for weeks at a time away from home. And the boy would wait under the shade of a tree at the edge of the village to watch for his father to come down the road. The word, "hope" then was translated as "watching for you to come down the road."

With hope we watch for blessing to come down the road. We watch for Jesus to come to us. We watch for how we will be new and different as the church to become clear. We wait for an end to all that has made us weary this last year, and we watch for a return of so much that we have missed about congregational life. We hope, we watch, and we wait.

I hope the challenges of this year have given you a deeper conviction of the value of the life of faith. And I pray that you will be filled with the peace that only hope born of Christ can give.

May God bless us
with faith, hope,
and love in the
Year of our Lord
2021,
but mostly
with hope.

Yours in Christ,
Bishop Katherine Finegan





*I wait for the LORD;
my soul waits for him;
In his word is my hope.
My soul waits for the LORD,
more than watchmen for the morning,
more than watchmen for the morning.*
~Psalm 130

Dear people of the Northern Great Lakes Synod,

The very first summer I was in my first call, I led a group of teenage girls on a camping trip in the McCormick Wilderness. It was before the more recent trail improvements, so there were parts of the path that disappeared into swamp and we had to navigate the watery way by guessing which tufts of grass would keep us dry. Boots and socks were soaked before the trail reemerged from the reeds and rushes. Hopping from tuft to tuft, lifting packs over downed trees, crisscrossing over roots and around rocks - It was not an easy trail, but we did finally reach our lakeside destination some hours later having covered only a few miles.

The following day, we got it in our heads to “walk around the lake.” However, there wasn’t even a remnant of a trail to mark our path forward. Keeping the lake to our left, we bushwhacked our way through dense forest hoping for something worth seeing of lake, sky, and woods. But our progress was even slower than the previous day as it took substantially more effort, and we finally made it back to camp full of scrapes and bruises.

Before the pandemic, your pastoral leader walked with you along a well-traveled and wide path of congregational life blazed long ago by church tradition, expectations, and previous experience (the way things were always done). The way forward was not always easy, but at least there was a trail. Now we are, all of us, off the beaten path, whacking our way through a pandemic where every step takes effort. Forward motion requires a whole lot more - more energy, more thought, more decisions, more angst, more navigation - just a lot more. And unlike my ill-conceived hike around the lake, much of the effort is hidden. What you see on a Sunday morning, or as a weekly devotion on Facebook, represents hours of preparation and behind the scenes work. Your pastor, along with the Church, is blazing

a new trail, although the word “blazing” makes it sound easy. Think instead of your pastor, obscured by the underbrush, holding a knobby stick, trying to whack a way forward through dense foliage on uneven ground with no compass. What had been for the Church a pleasant journey on a well beaten path now requires huge effort that takes much longer to go a much shorter distance. Unfamiliar terrain and difficulty getting one’s bearings results in sweaty frustration, with scrapes and bruises along the way.

In this Advent season, as we wait for so much, please remember we are all feeling the weight of loss and the disorientation of an unfamiliar landscape, including your pastor. And your pastor is working harder than ever before even though that effort is relatively invisible, putting in more time for less return and a diminished sense of accomplishment with fewer voices offering encouragement and support. It is not an easy journey for anyone, but for leaders especially. Your council feels it. Your council president feels it. And so does your pastor.

As Covid cases increase and we wait for a vaccine - as Christmas draws closer and we brace ourselves for all that will be different - as emotions rise and we try to make sense of all that we feel - I encourage you to patiently and prayerfully embrace this time of Advent waiting. We wait, with anticipation, the completion of what is becoming.

Consider that the Church and our efforts in ministry are now “off road.” We choose more carefully where to put our energy since everything takes more work and more time. Online productions of worship and devotions, technology troubleshooting and zoom meetings, efforts to minister and stay connected consume more of your pastor’s attention and energy than you might imagine. We are blessed to wait and watch together, finding a space of quiet for ourselves and offering respite to those who feel exhausted by the effort it takes to forge a path forward.

We wait for the LORD more than watchmen for the morning...but in the meantime, we place our hope in the one who is already with us. Christ has come, is coming, will be here soon. We can wait.

Yours in Christ,
Bishop Katherine Finegan

Pastor's Report

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

Please refer to Year End Report for transitions within the church, i.e. Baptisms, Weddings, New Members, Funerals and Transfers.

Matthew 11:28

"Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest."

This year has been like no other. This year we have learned to cope through the chaos! This year has brought fear and anxiety from COVID -19 pandemic, to public outrage and racial protests to division in our nation with the presidential election. We have been stressed and stretched to our limits.

Our wardrobes now include facemasks and instead of worshipping in the church building we have moved to virtual worship on Zoom, to keep from spreading the coronavirus.

But through all the trials and turmoil we have found solace in God.

What I have witnessed is a God leading us *to new ventures of which we cannot see the endings, by paths as yet untrod, through perils unknown*. I have witnessed us find a new way to gather, pray, and support one another. Our faith has strengthened. We have embraced and welcomed new visitors from not only Rhinelander, but Wisconsin and surrounding states.

People have come forward, sharing their stories, and testifying to where God is at work in their lives. People have stepped up and used the spiritual gifts God has given them, to provide technical support, music, hospitality, prison ministry, food ministry, shelter and much more.

Despite all the negatives this year has brought, we have stayed focused on the positive, and rooted in Christ.

Many have developed a closer relationship with family, friends, and members of Immanuel.

Some have let go of the "must do list" and embraced the simpler ways of living. People have noticed God's creation springing forth and giving us new life.

Some have educated themselves on anti-racism and attended book studies on white privilege and systemic racism. While others ask: "What is God calling me to?"

While we will most likely feel the effects of the pandemic for the next few years, we have come out this year more resilient than we were coming in. Our finances are stable, we continue to increase our building fund for future repairs. Our special appeal enabled us to purchase equipment to Live-Stream, so once we gather in person again, those needing to stay at home can join us virtually.

Thank you, thank you, thank you, for the effort you have made in keeping us connected and grounded in Christ's love. May God continue to keep you safe and well during this uncertain time.

The Lord bless you and keep you.

The Lord's face shine on you with grace and mercy.

The Lord look upon you with favor and + give you peace.

Please read the enclosed committees reports to appreciate all the Ministries that continue to thrive at Immanuel and that we have the privilege to be involved with. I am blessed to be part of this congregation and to serve the people of God. As we continue to build relationships with one another in this congregation and the community may we remember the blessed gift of God's Son Jesus Christ as we bear God's creative and redeeming word to all the world.

In Christ +

Pastor Tammy K. Barthels

Pastor's Activity Report

- 15 home visits were done in January and February prior to Covid-19 restrictions
- 479 contact calls/office visits for spiritual support were given March-December
- 128 cards sent to individuals thanking them for the use of their spiritual gifts and thinking of them.

I participated in 2 Book Studies –

- The first study was with area Pastors and laity. Inspired – Slaying Giants, Walking on Water, and Loving the Bible again by Rachel Held Evans. *Rachel gives many the language and permission they desperately need to leave behind their guilt and fear, and to read the Bible anew with the joyful anticipation the sacred book deserves.*
- The second study was held with members of the congregation, (15 attended) through virtual and padlet communication tool– Waking Up White and Finding Myself in the Story of Racism by Debby Irving. *A brave....a jolting and continuing journey from white oblivion to white awareness described in an honest way that may inspire others to do such transformational work themselves...empathetic.*

President's Report

Thank you for 2020! Yes, thank you!

2020 wasn't the year any of us expected when we started in January. It was far from normal.

When in-person church services canceled in March, most of us were hoping it would only last a couple weeks. However, we never saw an in-person service again the rest of the year.

We didn't stop having church though. We found new ways to meet and have conversation and that, to me, is the most exciting thing about 2020. Whether you join us on Zoom Sunday mornings or listen to our sermons on the website or app, or watch our pre-recorded version of worship on YouTube, we all remained connected.

As I mentioned in a newsletter article, we could have easily given up, closed up the building and not done anything the rest of the year. We didn't do that though. We continued to serve one another and the community to the best of our ability. We continued with the Food Pantry ministry, we helped with Christmas gifts for area nursing homes, we continued to provide food to Frederick Place residents.

At the church, members and friends, continued to give. And give in a big way this year! We had a special appeal to get equipment needed for video and live streaming. That is a ministry that won't go away now. Even when we do return to in-person worship — and we will — we are going to continue with live streaming so we can continue to connect with our members who go to warmer places in the winter, our friends who join us from the west coast, east coast or anywhere else in the world. Our church is growing because of online worship!

I enjoyed my final year on church council and serving as president of church council in 2020. We took giant steps this year and, because of a fairly empty building, were able to accomplish some projects that needed to get done: replacing of windows and doors, painting, cleaning out of some rooms, and so on.

We opened our doors to the Northern Wisconsin Facemask group so they would continue to have a place to make needed facemasks. They're still here, working in our Fellowship Hall.

I can't say enough to each and every one of you: our members, friends, family and guests. Without you, 2020 would have been harder to get through. We made it through, we made it through strong and we're excited to see where this leads us in the future.

Thank you!

Cory Dellenbach

2020 YEAR END REPORT	
BAPTISMS	CHURCH TRIUMPHANT
	Pauline Zwickey
	Harold Schumacher
WEDDINGS	Robert Duchrow
	Gary Grant
	Amy Adams
ACCESSIONS	TRANSFERS
Kim Schey-Schuglik	Kunzman Family
Cale & Owen (son) Boyd	Lori Duchrow

2020 WORSHIP ATTENDANCE		
	2019	2020
Average Weekly	88	70
Sunday 8:00am	27	26
Sunday 10:30am	61	49
Sunday Unity 9am Average	88	60
Snow Days/Cancelled	1	2
*Virtual 9am –Zoom	-	32
App/ Website Worship	-	21
Ash Wednesday	77	68
Mid Week Lenten Average	49	48
Holy Thursday	12	18
Tenebrae	63	27
Easter 8:00am	63	-
Easter 10:30am	95	-
Easter Total	158	78
Christmas Eve 4:30pm	181	66
Christmas 6:30pm	37	-
Christmas Eve Total	218	111

* Zoom attendance number is the number of "connections" and an average. Per the synod, we're supposed to multiply that by two to get a more accurate number.

WELCA ANNUAL REPORT 2020

It has been quite the year to say the least. Whoever would have dreamed we would have such a challenging and scary year. God be with us as we continue to live through this pandemic and may he keep all safe and well.

With the grace of God WELCA was able to do some of the ministries again in 2020. Following are the things we were able to do:

55 quilts were shipped to Lutheran World Relief

3 quilts were taken to Tri-County Abuse Center

26 personal care kits were shipped to Lutheran World Relief

50 school kits were also shipped to Lutheran World Relief

96 girl baby items were given to the WIC program

78 boy baby items were given to the WIC program

2 receiving blankets were also given to the WIC program (donated by a member)

11 tee shirts, 16 onsies, 40 cloth diapers and 6 receiving blankets were donated to the baby care kits that the youth put together.

A gift was given for the giving tree and also a donation given to the backpack program.

\$225.00 was given to our Synod and \$25.00 to the local Synod.

We continue to purchase the coffee to help the LWR farmers so please know it still is available.

Unfortunately we were not able to make our lefse and have our bake sale this year.

I have to say with this being such a trying year this ministry still was able to do many good things. Currently we still are struggling to get through this pandemic but hope in the near future we will be meeting again and enjoying the company of each other and the fun of doing these ministries.

Send us health God,
Watch over us,
Grace us with Your love,
Bless us with Your healing light.
Hear us God,
Heal us God,
Amen.

Dianne Syms, Treasurer WELCA
Jolene Schlieve, President

Outreach Committee Report

Due to the COVID-19 Pandemic in 2020, we unfortunately didn't do as many activities as we normally would have. Some that we missed this year included the car hop, Easter breakfast, Pentacost brunch, Lent soup suppers, summer cookouts and more.

We didn't stop helping those in the community though and we had some great moments in 2020.

Instead of hosting two blood drives as we normally do, we took on a third one this year because the need is so great. It might be something we continue to do from now on as well.

We continued to have volunteers step up to help provide meals for NATH's Frederick Place each month and we continued to provide volunteers for the Food Pantry each month.

Both of those ministries will be continuing this year and if you want to sign-up to help either of those, please see our newsletter or contact Cory or Jackie for information.

During the holiday season we, again, put up a 'virtual giving tree' and had more than enough people sign up to buy gifts or donated money to get gifts for residents of the Friendly Village and Heritage House. The backpack program we do during Christmas was also strongly supported this year.

We also delivered 15 Christmas Care Baskets to our elderly members this year.

We hope to bring back some of the things we missed in 2020, but it will be a wait-and-see process as the events come up. No matter what though, we will continue to help others in our community!

Thank you for your support, help and more throughout 2020. If you are interested in joining the Outreach & Social Ministry Committee, please reach out to Cory or Jackie.

Respectfully submitted,
Cory Dellenbach and Jackie Waldorf

Mutual Ministry Committee 2020

The purpose of mutual ministry involves discussion of current congregational concerns, seeking potential for ministry improvements, and monitoring the spiritual health of our congregation and pastor. Like many aspects of church life, 2020 was an unusual and disruptive year. Our meetings are very Spirit-centered (as opposed to administrative), and as such we had little appetite to meet remotely. Hoping to ride out the pandemic (little did we know!), we took a hiatus before resuming some sporadic virtual meetings as the year progressed.

We had started to read and discuss the book [The Agile Church: Spirit-Led Innovation in an Uncertain Age](#) by Rev. Dr. Dwight Zscheile, just as the pandemic forced us into lock-down mode. Our most involved meeting was centered around an article from Christian Century magazine about clergy burnout, particularly during these unprecedented times. Just as Pastor Tammy is intentional about responding to all of our spiritual needs, it is important that we all return that same spiritual support.

We plan on 2021 being a return to a more normal meeting schedule.

If you have any concerns or questions for this group to discuss, current members are JoAnne Barrix, Gene Frane, Matthew Johnson, Pam Snyder, Pastor Tammy, and Brian Willoughby.

Respectfully submitted,
Matthew Johnson

Faith Explorers 2020

Although in-person Faith Explorers needed to be canceled due to Covid-19, weekly Children's sermons engaged the children and weekly Children's bulletins/lessons were posted on-line for parents to do with their children.

The 2020 Christmas Program "The Nativity Story" was done virtually and was posted on our website so all could view. Thank you to Deb Rinka, Sarah Willoughby and Becky Eades for narrating and Cory Dellenbach who spent countless hours editing, splicing and putting together to "air". Thank you to the children who participated in acting out the story and to Mariah McCue, Johanna Dellenbach and Brittany Landphier for offering their musical talents.

Youth Committee Report

It's been quite an interesting year for the youth as well as everyone else! Many things were cancelled due to Covid-19 including our annual Lock-In, Car Hop, Bike Ride, and all summer camps. We did, however, continue to have virtual youth group as well as fundraisers to keep our youth fund in good shape for Youth Gathering 2022.

Looking back at 2020, we learned how to hold both confirmation and youth group through Zoom. With confirmation, we raked leaves for members of the congregation and put together Operation Christmas Child Shoeboxes. We had three youth confirmed this year — Isaiah Willoughby, Lizzy Snyder and Gavin Denis. We currently have six youth in confirmation this year.

Confirmation Students:

6th graders: Josh Willoughby

7th graders: Callie Kress, Gage Bierman

8th graders: Johanna Dellenbach, Payton McCue, Emma Bierman

9th graders: Gavin Denis, Lizzy Snyder and Isaiah Willoughby (Affirmation of Baptism- October 25, 2020)

Faith Explorers are taking some time off at the start of the 2020 school year due to COVID 19, but we continue to provide the children's bulletins on our website at www.immanuelrhinelander.org/youth. Anyone can view and download these each week.

With EDGE Youth Group, we've learned how to play Kahoot games and Brittany has also led a cooking class to teach the students how to make homemade pizza for dinner!

We have found ways to continue fundraising through Virtual Silent Auctions and our New Immanuel Cookbook! Thanks to Mary Peterson we also raised money as she sold her famous Cardamom Bread to support the youth!

Brittany continues youth leadership training through Group U to earn her Youth Ministry Certificate. We're looking forward to seeing what that brings to the youth side of things — from youth group to confirmation and everything in between — in 2021!

As for what else to look forward to in 2021, we are planning more fundraisers as we really start planning for the Youth Gathering in 2022 in Minneapolis. With it being just about 4 hours away in 2022, we would love to see as many eligible youth go as we can (open to youth entering 9th grade through graduating seniors). Let Brittany know if you are interested in going in 2022. It's a week of fun and meeting other youth from across the nation!

As always, we are looking for parents and other volunteers to help with the youth throughout the year! It can be as simple as picking up materials needed, supervising a fun night, coming up with ideas for youth group nights! If this is something that you think you might want to do, please let Brittany, one of the Faith Explorer teachers, or Pastor know!

Thank you for your continued support of the youth!

Submitted by

Cory Dellenbach, youth committee member

Brittany Landphier, youth representative

Worship and Music Committee Report - 2020

The Worship and Music Committee met in January to choose the hymns for worship for the months of February through April. We planned to use a new liturgy for the evening Lenten worship services. Plans were made for the choir to sing special music every Sunday in Lent. But all of these plans were abruptly changed when Covid-19 caused in-person worship to stop.

We missed a couple of Sundays, but thanks to Cory Dellenbach, we started having worship by Zoom. It started out fairly brief with a short liturgy, readings, sermon and prayers. But as time went on and we learned more, music was added and even communion liturgy. Pastor Tammy provided communion in a safe manner after some of the services. The website had the readings, sermon and bulletin so it made it easy to follow the service and/or watch the recorded service for those that did not join the 9:00 AM Zoom worship.

Thanks to the generosity of this congregation, and the knowledge of Charlie Strong, we updated our sound system and added cameras and speakers for computer recording and live-streaming of our worship services. With the new technology, we were able to make great recordings of songs and hymns. Several of our choir members shared their voices and band members recorded their parts individually. A big thanks to Brittany Landphier for coordinating recordings and planning the music.

We planned special worship services for the stewardship emphasis in November. Our theme was “Here I am Lord” and each week featured some of our members sharing their stories of how they are called to serve our congregation and community. So that Advent could be special, we moved the worship service to the sanctuary, and we could see the Christmas tree and the Advent wreath. The Children's Christmas program provided a wonderful, musical story of Christmas. And Christmas Eve worship had our favorite carols and Silent Night with a virtual candle lighting.

The year 2020 brought many unexpected changes to the worship and music of Immanuel Lutheran Church. Plans changed quickly. However, we are so thankful for all that stepped up and made our services better than ever. All of the services became Unity Worship Services and we were able to connect with people no matter where they were living. God always provides.

Blessings,

The Worship and Music Committee

Pastor Tammy, Brittany Landphier, Darlene Machtan, JoAnne Barrix, Matt Johnson, Charlie Strong, and Dave Kroll

PROPERTY COMMITTEE REPORT – 2020

This year with our building not used very much we still had plenty to do.

Projects completed! New entry door on Timber Drive, painting of 2nd floor rest room and choir room, new windows in community room, exterior door painted, installation of 9 windows upstairs, repairs to roof, and of course many light fixture repairs.

Cutting the grass crew included the following people: Paula Braun, John Plautz, Danny Jolin and Dale Schlieve. Thanks for your work!

Sidewalk snow removal was done by John Plautz, Quentin Milz, Glenn Johnson and Randy Barthels. Parking lot snow removal was done by Terry Strong and Brian Willoughby. Thanks to all for clearing snow for the year!

Boilers/Thermostats were maintained by John Plautz.

Future Projects– 7 windows on 1st floor (windows are paid for), additional painting and wall repairs, parking lot repairs & sealing, cladding wood window frames with aluminum, caulking outside, clean stone on Timber side and seal.

Property Committee: J.R. Barttelt, Paula Braun, Bill D'Aaprix, Gene Frane, Ken Lueck, Quentin Milz, John Plautz, Glenn Johnson, Terry Strong, Brian Willoughby and Anita Foss for painting.

COVID ADVISORY TEAM End of Year Report

The Covid Advisory Team of Immanuel was formed in May 2020 and has had monthly meetings via Zoom since then. The team consists of Pastor Tammy, President of the Council, and seven other church members with medical and science backgrounds. The team's job is to interact with Pastor on all matters of the covid pandemic, and to devise and offer monthly recommendations to Church Council on the best practices to mitigate spread of the corona virus and its impact on the health and well being of Church staff, the congregation, and the communities of northern Wisconsin.

The advisory team from its very inception has argued that we must always err on the side of caution in protecting the health and well being of all staff and the congregation. We have closely followed the course of the dangerous pandemic in Oneida County and the surrounding counties and the safety recommendations from the local and Wisconsin boards of health, the Wisconsin Council of Churches, and of course, our own Great Lakes Northern Synod and the national ELCA.

Since May, when the numbers of known active covid cases in Oneida County were in low single digits, there was a steady but gradual increase until September, when total active cases reached roughly 25 on any given day (i.e. counting all those people recovering in isolation at home and in the hospitals). However, since early September, the caseload has exploded to where in November there were as many 660 active cases (people isolating and recovering at home and in the hospitals). Since that peak in mid November, case numbers have been slowly declining. Currently, in late December, the active caseload is vacillating around 150 on any given day. We predict that it will rise again in January after the busy holiday festivities. We are cautiously optimistic that the novel vaccines will greatly help to flatten the covid case curve in the late spring and may eventually allow offering less strict recommendations to Council regarding worship, and other church gatherings and activities. Stopping the pandemic requires everyone's help and commitment.

The team has prepared a thorough list of revised Church worship and visitation practices, many of which are already implemented and others that are ready to implement when the pandemic eases up. This is necessarily an ongoing list of new practices that is updated regularly and implemented as necessary.

2020 Annual Report of the Stewardship Committee

We want to start with a huge thank you to our congregation, dedicated members of all the committees, and to our community! A goal of our stewardship is “To help God’s people grow in their relationship with Jesus through the use of time, talents, and finances that God has entrusted to them!” 2020 was a continued year of “growth” for the stewardship in our congregation, despite the COVID Pandemic. We are truly blessed by the generosity of our church family! We are thankful for the time and talent that continues to grow and appreciate everyone’s interest and participation.

Key points for 2020 Financial Stewardship (Please review the financial statements at the end of the annual report for more detail.):

- We continue to carry a balance in the General Fund. Our General Fund had a starting balance of \$15,403.82 and we finished the year with a balance of \$21,229.70. Virtual worship saved us some costs in areas such as building heat and electricity but did increase costs in office supplies and postage with more mailing required.
- Our building fund remains strong and we have been able to make additional improvements to the building. Some of the big projects this year were replacement of the Timber Street entrance doors, basement windows, and additional windows on the parking lot side of the building. We are carrying a balance of \$21,047.39 into 2021. We continue to prioritize and complete necessary building repairs as funding allows. We ask that the giving toward the building fund remains the same to allow us to address routine maintenance and repairs and focus on saving funds toward a roof replacement that will be necessary in 3-5 years along with other necessary improvements.
- Virtual worship opened our eyes to technology and opportunities. We are blessed to have the knowledge and resources to continue with weekly worship despite the pandemic. We have gained new faces and intend to keep the worship available online for those that cannot join us in person when we return to the sanctuary. We determined the necessary improvements to support virtual worship and through the generosity of our church family raised just under \$15,000 through a special appeal. We thank you all for supporting this cause.
- The Endowment Mutual Fund and Memorial Fund both had growth in 2020. Refer to the attached summaries for these funds. Giving to the Endowment Fund supports ministries through the church and community! Giving to the Memorial Fund is for designated gifts. We look forward to the continued long-term growth of these funds.
- Electronic giving remains in place with provisions for 3 different ways to give electronically. If anyone has questions how to donate you can talk with Cory Dellenbach.
- Lastly, we are very happy to announce our benevolence giving was \$20,453.64 this year. We exceeded our goal of 18,500.00 and benevolence continues to be over 10% of our total budget! “Inspired by God’s Grace to Love and Serve All!” Thanks to everyone who has contributed to our giving to Northern Great Lakes Synod, the ELCA, and other causes/charities.

Other highlights for 2020 thanks to volunteers and committees:

- This year’s stewardship theme was: “Here I am Lord!” Emphasis was reflected through worship services in November that included short skits and individuals that shared their personal stories about service to our church and community. We thank everyone for your stewardship and appreciate Council sending out the thank you notes to our members.
- Completed routine repairs and maintenance to the church through the Tuesday morning work group and other volunteers.
- Continued grounds and building maintenance thanks to the Tuesday work group, our volunteers for lawn mowing, and Paula Braun and Karen Bergsbaken for maintaining the perennial gardens and property aesthetics. A special thanks to all of them!
- Continued snow removal at almost no cost to the church thanks to the volunteers!

- These combined efforts have saved us an estimated \$5,000+ in expenses.
- Development of the COVID Advisory Committee to navigate all the information and provide recommendations to Council and the congregation.

As we move into 2021, we want to continue to focus on the goal of building relationships that foster the use of everyone's time and talents. We want to continue to make use of opportunities through the Endowment Fund to build additional ministries. We also want to continue to support the Teen Ministry and the wonderful progress it has done to keep our youth involved and build young Disciples of Christ.

Our goals for 2021:

- Continue to nurture a deeper understanding of Stewardship. Stewardship is a focus on generosity, giving from all that God has given us, not just money. "Our time, our talents, and our treasures"
- Prioritize and complete the necessary building repairs/maintenance as identified in the property and safety committees assessments of the building. (Refer to the Property Committee report for more details.)
- Continue to maintain contingency funds in both our general and building funds.

We had a busy and productive past year with thanks to our dedicated committee members and a dedicated congregation; we have arrived at 2021 stronger in the stewardship of Time, Talents, and Treasures despite the unexpected challenges presented by COVID. With that said, we always welcome more help so do not hesitate talking to any of the Stewardship Committee members below if you are interested in finding out how you can help!

Blessing and Thanks from the 2020 Stewardship Committee

Pastor Tammy Barthels, Kevin Kirby, Sheree Vanden Huevel, Cory Dellenbach, Darlene Machtan, Mary Meek, Matt Johnson, JoAnne Barrix, and Brian Willoughby

SPECIAL APPEAL 2020 (Sound System)

Total Donated: \$14,955.00

Expenses:

Zoom	\$ 104.36
Northland Music	\$ 149.99
Soundworks Inv.	\$ 3,100.00
Computer & webcam	\$ 1,689.04
Soundworks Inv.	<u>\$ 7,909.00</u>
Total Costs:	\$12,952.39

\$2,002.61 left in general account to be used toward television monitors.

IMMANUEL EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH
General Fund 2020

General Fund Expenses

BENEVOLENCE

N Great Lakes Synod	\$20,453.64
World Hunger/NATH	\$1,195.00
Food Pantry/Backpacks/OCC	\$2,733.00
Lutheran Social Services	\$20.00
Answer the Call	\$0.00
Fortune Lake Camp	\$0.00
Pastor's Discretionary Fund	\$0.00
Checks repaid by Endow Fund/Misc	\$4,324.33

EDUCATION

Christ in Our Home	\$280.00
Christian Education	\$421.35
Continuing Education	\$1,180.00
The Lutheran Magazine	\$134.25

UTILITIES & BUILDING

Custodian Supplies	\$560.08
Water/Hydrant Fees	\$1,205.56
Gas & Electric	\$5,355.00
Telephone/Internet	\$2,159.38
Elevator/Boiler	\$1,687.56

WORSHIP

Altar/Worship Supplies/SPECIAL APP.	\$14,710.13
Music/Band/Choir	\$8.47
Outreach/ACES	\$2,176.77

OFFICE & ADMIN.

Administration	\$821.40
Car Mileage	\$537.43
Office Supplies/Printing	\$4,404.87
Postage	\$2,173.46
Property/Liability Insurance	\$5,612.00

PERSONNEL

Custodian	\$1,732.00
Organist	\$4,560.00
Housing Allowance	\$19,200.00
Pastor Salary	\$34,240.58
Pulpit Supply/Other	\$1,640.00
Secretaries	\$22,979.00
Social Security - Staff	\$6,316.92
Staff Pension/ Insurance	\$26,839.16

TOTAL \$189,661.34

General Fund Income

Offering 2020	\$141,038.30
Benevolence	\$20,453.64
Loose Offering	\$427.00
The Lutheran	\$0.00
Hunger Appeal/Bike Ride	\$195.00
Food Pantry/Backpack/OCC	\$3,035.00
Lutheran Social Services	\$1,020.00
Fortune Lake Camp	\$0.00
Alanon/AA	\$0.00
Initial Envelope	\$94.00
Ash Wednesday	\$276.00
Maundy Thursday	\$90.00
Good Friday	\$90.00
Lent	\$707.00
Easter	\$1,069.00
Thanksgiving	\$180.00
Christmas	\$1,940.00
Thrivent Choice	\$3,522.11
Hurricane Relief	\$0.00
Interest	\$9.97
Other/transfer to General	\$22,340.20
TOTAL	\$196,487.22

GENERAL FUND RECAP

Balance as of 1/1/2020	\$15,403.82
Offering 2020	\$196,487.22
Expenses 2020	\$189,661.34

Balance as of 12/31/2019 \$22,229.70

IMMANUEL EV. LUTHERAN CHURCH
MEMORIAL FUND 2020

January 1, 2020 Balances:

<u>BMO Bank Checking:</u>	\$12,314.02	<u>Thrivent Mutual Fund:</u>	\$10,002.04
<u>Income:</u>		<u>Income:</u>	
Grant Memorial	\$172.48	Capital Gains	\$0.00
Donation for Music	\$100.00		
Amy Adams Memorial	\$500.00		
Engstrand Memorial	<u>\$1,150.00</u>		
Subtotal	\$1,922.48		
<u>Expenses:</u>		<u>Expenses:</u>	
Piano Tuning	\$185.00	Loss	-\$419.80
Quilting	<u>\$214.56</u>		
	\$399.56		
Balance as of 12/31/20	\$13,836.94		\$9,582.24

TOTAL FUNDS: \$23,419.18

IMMANUEL EV LUTHERAN CHURCH
Endowment Fund- 2020

Principal Gifts

YEAR	CONTRIBUTOR	IN MEMORY OF	AMOUNT
1994	Kirby/Scheller	Peggy Scheller	\$895.00
1997	Kirby Family		\$3,000.00
2001	Sauer Family/Frien	Gil Sauer	\$425.00
2002	Noble family	Jeannette Noble	\$14,000.00
2006	Myrna Scheller	Robert Scheller	\$500.00
2006	Erikson Family	Ruth Erikson	\$500.00
2008	Estate	Carl Anderson	\$26,000.00
2013	Family & Friends	Connie Farvour	\$500.00
2018	Mavis Perry	Eugene Perry	\$3,000.00
2018	Joanne O'Brien	Charles O'Brien	\$300.00
Principal Gifts Total			\$49,120.00

Funds Used

YEAR	FOR	AMOUNT
2008	Ozello Family	\$1,000.00
2010	Fortune Lake Camp	\$500.00
2010	StoneWork	\$3,500.00
2015	AED	\$2,000.00
2017	Student Loan Payment	\$1,000.00
2018	NATH	\$230.00
	Alzheimers Association	\$240.00
	Food for Kidz	\$380.00
	Tri-County Council	\$370.00
	Oneida Cty Humane Society	\$320.00
	Ministry Hospice	\$480.00
	ELCA	\$320.00
	Youth Life	\$100.00
	Northwoods United Way	\$20.00
	Mbagala Support	\$400.00
	Immanuel Youth Fund	\$20.00
	Memory Cafe	\$120.00
	The Nature Conservancy	\$60.00
	ACES	\$40.00
2019	Trinity Lutheran Bible School	\$500.00
	NGLS Answer the Call Match	\$250.00
	ACES	\$1,500.00
	Youth Class- Brittney Landphier	\$400.00
	Student Loan Payment - Pastor	\$500.00
2020	ACES	\$1,500.00
	Youth Class- Brittney Landphier	\$582.00

Beginning Balance 1/1/2020	\$ 89,710.42
Capital gains/loss	\$ 7,510.72
Disbursements 2020	\$ (1,882.75)
Ending Balance 12/31/2020	\$ 95,338.39

MUTUAL FUND SYMBOL
 THMAX & TCAAX

1. Principal \$ may not be spent.
2. Funds are currently invested in Thrivent Mutual Funds.
3. Funds available for use are capital gains, interest, dividends, etc.
4. Total varies with market conditions.

**IMMANUEL EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH
YOUTH FUND 2020**

Balance 12/31/2019 \$8,969.69

INCOME

Donations	\$2,335.00
Fundraisers	\$3,580.80
Camp Donation	\$120.00
Interest	<u>\$1.43</u>
Subtotal	\$6,037.23

EXPENSES

Mileage	\$291.16
Hotel/Seminar	\$185.76
Reim. Treats	\$57.53
Reim. Food	\$57.77
Fundraiser Exp	\$571.06
Recharge 2021	\$58.00
Gift Cards	\$153.00
Camp reg.	<u>\$300.00</u>

Subtotal \$1,674.28

BALANCE 12/31/2020 \$13,332.85

**IMMANUEL EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH
BUILDING FUND 2020**

Beginning Balance \$19,161.64

INCOME

Offering	\$19,044.03
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EXPENSES

Building Maintenance	\$825.48
Property Improvement	\$10,955.80
Snow Removal	\$765.00
Outreach; In and out	\$500.00
Insurance	<u>\$5,612.00</u>
	\$18,658.28

BALANCE 12/31/2020 \$20,047.39

Respectfully submitted,
Brian Willoughby, Treasurer
Sheree Vanden Heuvel, Financial Secretary

2020 WELCA FINANCIAL REPORT

Balance January 1, 2020		\$3,637.51
RECEIPTS		
Coffee Sales	1,148.17	
Funeral Luncheons		
Altar Flowers		
Faith Circle Offerings	5.00	
Bake Sale	25.00	
Reimbursement for Easter Breakfast		
Special Donation		
Reimbursement from LWR gas		
TOTAL RECEIPTS		\$1,178.17
DISBURSEMENTS		
Coffee purchases	\$1,109.71	
Flowers	\$30.95	
Postage/cards	\$124.40	
WIC Oneida County	\$79.76	
Order of Checks	\$33.00	
Kitchen supplies	\$150.00	
Quilting supplies	\$89.28	
LWR kits	\$360.57	
Funeral Luncheons		
World Day of Prayer	\$123.88	
Bake sale supplies		
Baby Care Kits	\$89.48	
Warm for Winter	\$44.24	
Synod Offering SWO and Local and LSS	\$275.00	
Softball Registration		
Giving Tree	\$80.56	
Backpack Christmas program	\$50.00	
Christmas Goodie Bags (from 2016)		
TOTAL DISBURSEMENTS		\$2,640.83
BALANCE ON HAND		\$2,174.85
MISSION INVESTMENT FUND BALANCE		
Beginning balance January 1, 2020		\$2,686.50
Balance as of November 30, 2020		\$2,708.01

Respectfully submitted, Dianne Syms, Treasurer

Income/Expense Comparison by Category
1/1/2020 thru 12/31/2020

During pandemic all calls were taken by Dianne Syms and between ACES and Amanda Jahn (SA) clients were take care of.
There was also a state program called WRAP (Wisconsin Renters Assistance Program) Amanda helped 45 clients
this program amounted to over \$71000.

Category	2020				OTHER VOUCHERS		Cost of
	10/1/2020	12/31/2020	7/1/2020	4/1/2020	1/1/2020	# vouchers	
INCOME					1st Qrt.		
ACES INCOME					Nativity	3	\$150.00
TOTAL ACES INCOME: Church Donation	\$0.00	\$750.00	\$2,250.00	\$3,000.00	Goodwill	0	\$0.00
ACES INCOME: Miscellaneous	\$5,989.00	\$600.00	\$3,631.00	\$863.47	Sal. Army	15	\$5,623.00
TOTAL ACES INCOME	\$5,989.00	\$1,350.00	\$5,881.00	\$3,863.47			
TOTAL INCOME	\$5,989.00	\$1,350.00	\$5,881.00	\$3,863.47		18	\$5,773.00
EXPENSES					2nd Quarter 2020		
ACES EXPENSES					Nativity	0	\$0.00
ACES EXPENSES: Cell phone	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	Goodwill	0	\$0.00
ACES EXPENSES: Office Supplies, P O Box, 501 C application	\$55.00	\$10.00	\$148.00	\$89.80	Sal. Army	5	\$2,137.95
ACES EXPENSES: Appreciation Dinner	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00			
ACES EXPENSES: Annual Meeting	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	SA. Kwik trip	0	\$0.00
TOTAL OTHER EXPENSES	\$55.00	\$10.00	\$148.00	\$89.80		5	\$2,137.95
ACES EXPENSES: Client Check Requests					3rd Quarter 2020		
ACES EXPENSES: Client Check Request: Rent Payment	\$7,081.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$200.00	Nativity	1	\$50.00
ACES EXPENSES: Client Check Requests: Utility Payment	\$197.56	\$0.00	\$597.40	\$208.77	Goodwill		
ACES EXPENSES: Client Check Requests: Mobile Home/dumpster	\$2.12	\$793.45	\$0.00	\$0.00	Sal. Army		
ACES EXPENSES: Client Check Requests: Vehicle service repair/Ins.	\$1,068.04	\$940.23	\$0.00	\$0.00		1	\$50.00
ACES EXPENSES: Client Check Requests: Diapers	\$34.43	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00			
ACES EXPENSES: Client Check Requests: DISH NETWORK	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$472.65			
ACES EXPENSES: Client Check Requests: Pharmacy	\$14.40	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00			
ACES EXPENSES: Client Check Requests: Water Heater	\$667.81	\$300.00	\$0.00	\$0.00			
ACES EXPENSES: Client Check Requests: Special loan	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$11.09	4th quarter 2020		
TOTAL ACES EXPENSES: CLIENT Check Requests	\$9,065.36	\$2,033.68	\$597.40	\$892.51	Nativity	6	\$275.00
					Goodwill	5	\$125.00
					Sal. Army		
ACES EXPENSES: VOUCHERS							
ACES EXPENSES: VOUCHERS: Taxi rides for NATH	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00		11	\$400.00
ACES EXPENSES: VOUCHERS: Gas Vouchers	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00			
ACES EXPENSES: VOUCHERS: McDonalds Gift Cards	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00			
ACES EXPENSES: VOUCHERS: Aldi's gift cards	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$400.00			
ACES EXPENSES: VOUCHERS: Bus transportation	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00			
TOTAL ACES EXPENSES: Vouchers	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$400.00	YTD 2020	10	\$475.00
TOTAL ACES EXPENSES	\$9,120.36	\$2,043.68	\$745.40	\$1,382.31	Nativity	5	\$125.00
INCOME MINUS EXPENSES	-\$3,131.36	-\$693.68	\$5,135.60	\$2,481.16	Goodwill	20	\$7,760.95
1st quarter			3rd quarter		Sal. Army	35	\$8,360.95
calls	85		calls	118			
clients helped	21		clients helped	118	YTD		
2nd quarter			4th quarter		calls	414	
calls	88		calls	123	clients help	272	
clients helped	10		clients helped	123			

IMMANUEL EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH
PROPOSED BUDGET 2021

				PROPOSED
	2020 Budget	12/31/2020	% YTD	2021
BENEVOLENCE				
Northern Great Lakes Synod	\$18,500.00	\$20,453.64	110.56%	\$19,000.00
ELCA World Hunger	As Given	\$1,195.00		As given
Food Pantry/H2O/Backpacks/OCC	As Given	\$2,733.00		As given
Lutheran Social Services	As Given	\$20.00		As given
Fortune Lake Camp	As Given	\$0.00		As given
Answer the Call/MISCELLANEOUS	As Given	\$500.00		As given
Subtotal	\$18,500.00	\$24,901.64		\$19,000.00
EDUCATION				
Christ in Our Home	\$250.00	\$280.00	89.29%	\$250.00
Christian Education	\$1,000.00	\$421.35	237.33%	\$1,000.00
Continuing Education	\$1,000.00	\$1,180.00	84.75%	\$1,000.00
Lutheran Magazine	\$150.00	\$134.25	111.73%	\$150.00
Subtotal	\$2,400.00	\$2,015.60	119.07%	\$2,400.00
UTILITIES & BUILDING				
Custodian Supplies	\$1,000.00	\$560.08	56.01%	\$1,000.00
Water/Hydrant Fee	\$1,500.00	\$1,205.56	80.37%	\$1,500.00
Gas & Electric	\$7,000.00	\$5,355.00	76.50%	\$7,000.00
Telephone & Internet	\$1,900.00	\$2,159.38	113.65%	\$1,900.00
Elevator/Boiler	\$1,400.00	\$1,687.56	120.54%	\$1,400.00
Subtotal	\$12,800.00	\$10,967.58	85.68%	\$12,800.00
WORSHIP				
Altar/Worship Supplies	\$1,500.00	\$14,710.13	980.68%	\$2,000.00
Music/Band/Choir Equipment	\$250.00	\$8.47	3.39%	\$250.00
Outreach/ACES	\$2,250.00	\$2,176.77	96.75%	\$2,250.00
Subtotal	\$4,000.00	\$16,895.37	422.38%	\$4,500.00
OFFICE & ADMINISTRATION				
Administration	\$3,000.00	\$821.40	27.38%	\$3,000.00
Car Mileage	\$2,000.00	\$537.43	26.87%	\$2,000.00
Office Supplies	\$3,500.00	\$4,404.87	125.85%	\$3,900.00
Postage	\$1,000.00	\$2,173.46	217.35%	\$1,500.00
Property/Liability Insurance	\$5,500.00	\$5,612.00	102.04%	\$5,800.00
Subtotal	\$15,000.00	\$13,549.16	90.33%	\$16,200.00
PERSONNEL				
Custodian	\$3,250.00	\$1,732.00	53.29%	\$3,250.00
Organist	\$5,000.00	\$4,560.00	91.20%	\$5,000.00
Housing Allowance	\$19,200.00	\$19,200.00	100.00%	\$25,200.00
Pastor Salary	\$34,240.00	\$34,240.58	100.00%	\$32,000.00
Pulpit Supply	\$2,000.00	\$1,640.00	82.00%	\$2,000.00
Secretaries	\$30,620.00	\$22,979.00	75.05%	\$30,620.00
Social Security-Staff	\$7,000.00	\$6,316.92	90.24%	\$7,000.00
Staff Pension/Insurance	\$30,000.00	\$26,839.16	89.46%	\$30,000.00
Subtotal	\$131,310.00	\$117,507.66	89.49%	\$135,070.00
TOTAL	\$184,010.00	\$185,837.01	100.99%	\$189,970.00



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