



ST. STEPHEN LUTHERAN CHURCH

A CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY BRINGING GOD'S LOVE TO THE WORLD



2021 Annual Report

St. Stephen Lutheran Church 2022 Annual Meeting

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St. Stephen Lutheran Church

2022 Annual Congregational Meeting Agenda

January 30, 2022

Call to Order, 1:00 pm	Ken Smith
Opening Devotions	Pastor James Woodruff
Approval of the 2021 Congregational Meeting Minutes *	Ken Smith
Lead Pastor's Report	Pastor James Woodruff
Visitation Pastor's Report	Pastor Juli Thompson
Church Council President's Report	Ken Smith
Select Ministry Team Reports	
Gift Committee	Pastor Jim Woodruff
Endowment Committee	Viki Bosin
Tanzania Mission Trip 2022	Ken Smith
Acceptance of Ministry Team & Special Annual Reports *	Ken Smith
Election of 2022 Council members	Betsy Clark
Introduction of Continuing Council Members	
Introduction of Council Nominees	
Congregational vote *	
Expression of appreciation for outgoing Council Members	
Election of Church Council Officers *	Betsy Clark
Election of 2022 Nominating Committee *	Betsy Clark
Installation of 2022 Church Council	Pastor James Woodruff
Treasurer's 2020 Report *	Patsy Olson
2022 Budget	Ken Smith
Review of 2022 budget	
Congregational vote *	
Blessing	Pastor James Woodruff
Adjourn	Mira Stearns

* requires Congregational vote

St Stephen Lutheran Church
2021 Virtual Congregational ANNUAL Meeting Minutes
January 31, 2021

Betsy Clark called the virtual meeting to order at 12:02 pm via ZOOM. There was a quorum with 58 people in attendance.

Opening Devotions – Pastor Jim Woodruff. Psalm 62:5, 6 & 8 – For God alone my soul waits in silence, for my hope is from him. He alone is my rock and my salvation, my fortress; I shall not be shaken. Trust in him at all times, O people; pour out your heart before him; God is a refuge for us.

Approval of the 2020 Congregational Meeting Minutes – Betsy Clark

A motion was made to approve the 2020 Annual Congregational meeting minutes by Randy Amborn; 2nd by Judy Gelderman. Voted on and approved.

Lead Pastor's Report - Pastor Jim Woodruff

Report posted in the 2021 Annual Report. With the sudden onset of the COVID-19 global pandemic, all life normalcy was interrupted with the need to delay, revise, restructure, amend, modify and adapt. The development of new and innovative ways to worship together and new ways to stay in touch were found. A new committee, the COVID-19 Response Team was created. This team worked tirelessly to develop a plan for safe-health and continued business operations. They did this following the guidance from the CDC, MDH, St. Paul Area Synod and Governor Walz's Office. Church staff, Ministry Teams, Church Council all had to redefine and restructure everything that they knew as normal. Continued worship has been made possible through an online format on Sundays and Wednesdays. We expect to continue this after we resume in-person worship. All large group events were put on hold. Following our Preparedness Plan we have maintained several small group meetings of 10 participants or less. Despite the pandemic, continued support was able to be given to support our international missions. With congregant giving having remained consistent and unwavering AND with the forgiveness of the Paycheck Protection Program loan, we are going into 2021 with a positive carry-over balance of over \$20,000.

Visitation Pastor's Report – Pastor Juli Thompson

Report posted in the 2021 Annual Report. Due to the global pandemic, phone calls replaced in-person visits to minimize the dangers of infection. The role of the COVID Response Team chairperson was taken on requiring many hours by all. Participation in the Sunday on-line services were made possible thanks to the technical skills of many dedicated staff.

Church Council President's Report – Betsy Clark

Report posted in the 2021 Annual Report. In July, Ted Field resigned as Council President, and Jessica Rotschafer resigned as Vice President. These positions were filled by Betsy Clark as President and Ken Smith as Vice President thru the remainder of 2020. Appreciation to Ted for the creation of the Cash Reserve Fund and Jessica for her leadership as Vice President. They both currently serve on the COVID Response Team. The authorization of two Continuing Resolutions in our Constitution, Bylaws and Continuing Resolutions document were necessary to allow Congregations and Council to meet remotely. The 2020 Phase 1 Furnace Replacement Project was put on hold, now with a current plan to begin in the Spring (retroactive to April

2020). Council approved the purchase of needed specialized audiovisual equipment that will further be addressed in 2021. Because of the congregant's generous and consistent support and the PPP loan, we start the new year with a positive budget balance. Welcome council President, Ken Smith, along with new council members Kristin Duffy, Marta Hohnstadt, Chris Sheldon and Abby Ternus. Thank you to outgoing council members Ted Field, Jessica Rotschafer, Jodi Millard and Randy Amborn for their service and thank you to the COVID Response Team for their diligent persistence and dedication.

Acceptance of Ministry Team & Special Annual Reports – Betsy Clark

A motion was made to approve and accept the Ministry Team and Special Annual Reports by Betsy Clark; 2nd by Karen Smith. Voted on and approved.

Election of 2021 Council Members – Betsy Clark

Introduction of Continuing Council Members

Introduction of continuing council members Paul Colaizy and Ted Schaff, terms end in December, 2021 were made.

Introduction of Council Nominees

Introduction of nominees Kristin Duffy, Marta Hohnstadt (3-year term), Chris Sheldon, Abby Ternus, Betsy Clark (2-year term), Ken Smith, Mira Stearns (one-year) were made.

Congregational Vote

A motion to approve the continuation of council members and the election of new members was made by Karen Smith; 2nd by Phyllis Ballata. Voted on and approved.

Expression of appreciation for outgoing council members

Thank you to outgoing council members Jodi Millard and Randy Amborn for their consistent dedication to our church family.

Election of Church Council Officers – Betsy Clark

A motion to elect Teri Cinis, Patsy Olson, Brad Wilm was made by Cindy Scott; 2nd by Jodi Millard. Voted on and approved.

The position of Vice President is currently vacant.

Nominees for the 2021 Nominating Committee

A motion was made to accept Randy Amborn, Jodi Millard and Patsy Olson to the 2021 Nominating Committee by Robin Schreoder; 2nd by Allie Schenian. Voted on and approved.

Installation of 2021 Church Council – Pastor Jim Woodruff

The 2021 church council members were presented to the congregation and installation progressed.

Treasurer's 2020 Report – Patsy Olson

Report posted in the 2021 Annual Report.

Current Fund: \$20,614.74 Capital Fund \$117,953.01 Benevolence Fund: \$132.37

Special Designated Fund \$76,306.31

Cash Reserve Fund: \$17,641.21

We were able to receive a PPP Loan (Paycheck Protection Program) for \$47,900. in April 2020. This loan was forgiven in January 2021. To qualify for this loan again in 2021, we must have a 25% decrease of income in any given quarter compared to the previous year. Thus, it would be necessary for the perimeters to change. The 2021 budget is \$11,965.70 lower than the 2020 budget.

A motion was made to accept the 2020 Treasurer's Report by Randy Amborn; 2nd by Jessica Rotschafer. Voted on and accepted.

Introduction to 2021 Budget – Ken Smith

Reports posted in the 2021 Annual Report. **The 2021 proposed budget is \$430,668.57.**

2021 Budget Review – Ted Field

This proposed budget is less than last year and previous years. We ended 2020 with a surplus balance of \$20,614.74. It must be noted that this is not our 'normal trend'. Less operational expenses and the PPP loan are what turned our expenses around in 2020. Should there be an opportunity to again apply and qualify for a PPP loan in 2021, we will. In the future, we cannot plan our budgets with this assumption. The 2021 proposed budget includes staff salary increases that has church council approval. The proposed staff salary increases are approaching Synod guidelines.

Congregational vote

A motion was made to pass the 2021 budget by Ted Field; 2nd by Marta Hohnstadt. Voted on and passed.

Blessing – Pastor Jim Woodruff

Adjourn – Ken Smith

Ken Smith adjourned the meeting at 1:13 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Teri Cinis

St. Stephen Lutheran Church

2021 Annual Report

**Pastors' and
President's
Reports**

Lead Pastor
2021 Annual Report

GOD IS WITH US (Reprint from 2020 Annual Report)

*“For God alone my soul waits in silence,
for my hope is from him.
He alone is my rock and my salvation,
my fortress; I shall not be shaken.
Trust in him at all times, O people;
pour out your heart before him;
God is a refuge for us.” Psalm 62:5, 6 & 8*

These words, attributed to King David nearly three thousand years ago, are words that ring true today as strongly as they have for the past three millennium. No matter what has happened this year; no matter how difficult this year has been; no matter what disappointments, what frustrations, what loneliness has encroached upon our lives; no matter what losses we may have suffered; no matter what relationships have been strained; no matter how unfamiliar, uncertain, unique or challenging this year has been, David’s words keep us grounded in truth and give us confidence that we are not in this by ourselves. God is with us every step of the way. In God we have hope! God is a solid foundation and protection for our lives! Our call is to trust in Him at all times. Before Him we can pour out our heart! And no matter what circumstances we face God will always be for us a refuge! One of the great lessons I hope we’ve learned *these past two years* is the reminder that through it all God is with us; we are never alone.

DO NOT FEAR, FOR I AM WITH YOU

*“But now thus says the LORD, he who created you, O Jacob, he who formed you, O Israel:
Do not fear, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by name, you are mine. When you pass
through the waters, I will be with you; and through the rivers, they shall not overwhelm you; when
you walk through fire you shall not be burned, and the flame shall not consume you.
For I am the LORD your God, the Holy One of Israel, your Savior....
Because you are precious in my sight, and honored, and I love you,....
Do not fear, for I am with you;... Isaiah 43:1-5*

As I’ve reflected back on my introductory statement for the 2020 Annual Report, it has occurred to me that there is a second part to the thought that “God Is With Us”, (we are never alone, we do not go through the experiences of life apart from the presence of God). That second part is that **because God is with us we need not fear**. To repeat from last year: “No matter what has happened these past two years; no matter how difficult it has been; no matter what disappointments, what frustrations, what loneliness has encroached upon our lives; no matter what losses we may have suffered; no matter what relationships may have been strained; no matter how unfamiliar, uncertain, unique or challenging this year has been”, no matter how unstable these two years have felt, we recall that God has been with us all the way, God will continue to be with us, and because we go through life with God, the fears that we so easily let creep into our lives really can have an entirely different context when we remember with Whom we walk. Living without fear doesn’t give us a license to be cavalier about life. We do have a responsibility to make good choices and to do our best to not put ourselves or others in risky situations. But we can’t hide from life and, knowing that God is with us we move forward in confidence seeking, even in the midst of the uncertain and chaotic time in which we live, to bring hope, optimism, light and life to all those who are within our circle of influence. May fear not guide our decisions or direct our actions; may our trust in a loving God keep us moving forward.

WHAT WE'VE BEEN DOING

We began 2021 continuing to offer on-line pre-recorded worship services on Sundays and Wednesday nights. Paige Carter, Justin Woodruff, Cindy Bittner, along with Randy Amborn and Brent and Betsy Clark have become adept at creating musical numbers to fill those pre-recorded services. Melissa Whitman has become skilled as editor for those services. In Lent we resumed in-person worship, first in the Fellowship Hall, then before Easter on Sundays in the Sanctuary and continuing on Wednesdays in the Fellowship Hall. Summer saw the reintroduction of Barbeques before our GAP outdoor worship as well as several outdoor Sunday morning worship services. In April and May we had raised money for live-streaming capabilities in the Sanctuary which came on line in July. Children's Ministry and Confirmation also resumed during Lent. Both used a hybrid model for instruction (in-person or on-line). Slowly through the year small group learning and some community outreach programs resumed in-person operations. In July the Senior High Youth Group did a mission trip to San Francisco. In October we partnered with Redeemer Lutheran Church in teaching our Confirmation classes and began to build a Collaborative youth ministry with five congregations in White Bear Lake. Some larger group events also re-booted in-person after summer; Rally Day Picnic, the Holly Boutique, Living Nativity. Other large events remained on hold both due to Covid concerns as well as staffing limitations; Night to Unite, the Music Festival and Auction, Trunks 'n Treats. We continued providing meals on Wednesday night as we moved into the Fall. Through all of the upheaval of the past two years we've learned some positive new ways to function. ZOOM meetings are a wonderful alternative for some Ministry Teams and we've discovered new use for some space; GAP works wonderfully in the Fellowship Hall when we're indoors and the Holly Boutique was thrilled with using the Fellowship Hall for its event; all good options as we move into the future. Our first furnace project (1 of 3) was finally able to be completed, after supply shortage issues and Covid restrictions were eased. Mid-fall a delivery truck struck our west entrance canopy and knocked it about two feet off its axis. That led to several months of not being able to use the west entrance and eventually a significant repair job. The reconstruction/repair work is done, but we're waiting until spring to complete the aesthetic work. We have continued to support our international missions; both our student, capital, and shared commitments to Lukani Lutheran Church, our Companion Congregation in Lukani, Tanzania, as well as our support of Rancho San Juan del Bosco, the orphanage in Tecate', Mexico.

WHAT WE ANTICIPATE DOING IN 2022

All future activities are subject to revision depending on the trends of the global pandemic. With that in mind, worship should continue as it has for the past 9 months. We'll continue to offer live-streamed Sunday morning services, and work toward the ability to resume live-streaming on the Wednesday evening GAP worship services. Children's Ministry will continue on Sunday and Wednesday with some added summer activities, notably Wapogasset Lutheran Bible Camp and Vacation Bible School. Youth Ministry will get a boost in February as we partner with Redeemer Lutheran Church to carry out opportunities for fellowship, service, growth and worship among our young people. I'm hopeful Night to Unite and the Music Festival and Auction will resume. The Tanzania Mission Team is anticipating carrying out our every three year Mission Trip to Iringa/Lukani, sometime between August and October. We will also seek to grow our levels of participation in all events as the pandemic subsides. (Currently in-person participation is a little under 50% of pre-pandemic numbers.) We will make a concerted effort to solidify our future financial stability as we promote our Cash Reserve Fund and introduce opportunities to grow the St. Stephen Endowment Fund through the ELCA Foundation. Springtime weather will allow us to complete the west entrance rebuild/remodel as we add additional shrubbery, decorative covers on the supporting posts, add a 'peace pole' in memory of Lorna and Wendell Peck along with several secured benches. We are also moving ahead to replace our original furnaces this summer, part 2 of a 3 part replacement of our whole Hvac system.

FINANCES, REFLECTING A FAITHFUL AND GENEROUS PEOPLE

Once again the generous characteristics of the people of St. Stephen have shown through. In spite of the uncertainty of the pandemic we finished the 2021 fiscal year with a positive balance of \$9,139.36 in our Current (operational) Fund. Two contributing factors in this positive cash flow were the residual blessings of the PPP forgivable loan we received in 2020 (≈\$20,600.00) and the five months we did not pay a salary for a CYF Ministry Director (≈\$23,500.00). Had those not influenced our Current Fund we could have finished with a \$10,000-30,000 deficit. This coming year will remain a financial challenge for us and has caused us to think 'out of the box' as we look to continued ministry in 2022. One of the ways we intend to address this challenge is to hire Paul Schultz (currently Interim Children's Ministry Director) as part-time Children's Ministry Director who will donate some of his time as a gift to the congregation. We are also implementing a plan to partner with Redeemer Lutheran Church, which is in a similar situation to us. We will split the cost of the Youth Director portion of their budget, ¼ of a full time salary package and will carry out a joint youth ministry in both congregations, sharing time and space and creating a larger youth group as a result. We believe this will make a more vibrant and engaging youth ministry. These changes will benefit both churches and affect our budget by dropping costs of our Children, Youth and Family Ministry to about what we paid in 2021 for 7 months of a CYF Director's package. Our other Funds are all healthy. The Benevolence Fund ends the year near zero, as we donate all the money in that fund to organizations and ministries outside our walls. The Capital Fund is just under \$100,000 and can fully provide the income needed to do our second furnace project. That Fund is stable and continues to grow about \$30,000 each year. Our Designated Fund is also healthy with assets of \$86,000. This Fund enables us to carry out a variety of projects in and around the Church as well as in our wider community. Our newest Fund, the Cash Reserve Fund, is continuing to grow and is designed to provide a cash cushion for our operations, especially during summer months when the Current Fund makes its annual dip. This Fund is not meant to make up any year-end deficit, but rather to provide cash flow so we don't have to borrow money either from the bank or from our own capital or designated funds, and allow, especially, the Capital Fund to be used as it is intended. The goal is to grow that Fund to \$90,000. After two years since its inception we're currently at about \$30,000. If the growth for this Fund continues at the same pace it'll take us another four years to reach that goal. That's ok; we need to be committed to see it happen. Finally, this year we will be reintroducing the St. Stephen Endowment Fund, with the intent of providing opportunity for legacy gifts, estate gifts, and bequests to strengthen the long-term financial viability of the congregation and provide extra monies to carry out new and creative ministry above and beyond regular giving. St. Stephen is in a good financial position as we move into the future. May our vision for the future be strengthened by our faithful and generous ongoing support.

GODS' PEOPLE IN THIS PLACE

"The church, it is the people living out their lives...." Jay Beech 'The Church Song'

God's Spirit has brought this amazing group of people together to proclaim the Good News, care for those around us and to serve in this place. We are a people with diverse gifts, interests and passions. In this place God has provided opportunity for each of us to use our gifts, demonstrate our care and serve as Jesus served. Each member of this congregation deserves specific mention for we all contribute to the life of this place. Because I can't name everyone, I'd like to highlight a few. First, the **Church Council**, which has been especially important during these two years of Covid. The Council has consisted of Betsy Clark, Paul Colaizy, Kristin Duffy, Marta Hohnstadt, Ted Schaff, Chris Sheldon, Ken Smith, Mira Stearns, and Abby Ternus. Special thanks to those who are completing their terms on Council and to those who are continuing on. Also thanks to Ken Smith for his leadership as President of the Council during these tumultuous times, and to Mira Stearns who will be assuming that role this coming year. Thanks to our **Church Officers**: Teri Cinis, Council Secretary (now retired), Brad Wilm, Financial Recording Secretary, and Patsy Olson, Treasurer. Each has provided faithful service 'above and beyond'. I also want to acknowledge our

Ministry Teams and Ad Hoc Committees, who have taken on extra responsibilities these past two years: Finance and Stewardship, Property, Staff Relations, Women in Ministry, Worship and Music (who led our efforts to raise funds for our Live-streaming system), the Interim CYF Team, the Endowment Committee, the Gift Committee, the Hospitality Committee, the Wednesday Evening Dinner Crew, special Event Coordinators, and all Worship Leaders - lectors, ushers, and volunteer musicians. The service of each of you has brought vitality and vision to this congregation. Finally I want to acknowledge the consistent and immeasurable efforts made by all our **Staff**. For eight years we've had an incredibly stable staff. This year, during the second year of pandemic, we've experienced significant change. Paul Swanson has continued on as half-time custodian, but Bob Blumberg, after eight years has retired. In mid-December Greg McGuiggan took on responsibilities as our other half-time custodian. All three have been and are conscientious and enjoyable to work with. Tami Heart has been here nine years and continues to be a delight in the office and faithfully carries out her responsibilities. Patsy Olson, while not paid staff, spends significant time in the office managing our finances and brings her laugh and a positive voice to our planning. Melissa Whitman, also after eight years of faithful ministry as Children, Youth and Families Director and jack-of-all-trades, went to our neighboring church to bring her creative, relational style of ministry there. She will be returning on a part-time basis as we develop a partnered youth ministry with Redeemer Lutheran Church. Paul Schultz has taken on the responsibility for Children's Ministry and is doing a wonderful job. Andrew Bjork, our Social Media Administrator, continues to make a significant impact in the social media awareness of St. Stephen. Zach VanDyke has been hired as our Digital Media Coordinator, primarily responsible to manage our live-streaming and on-line video spots. Pastor Juli Thompson is a flexible and effective pastoral partner. She is beginning her fifth year at St. Stephen. Our whole music staff have gone above and beyond their responsibilities as we've navigated this pandemic. All have taken extra time to learn new recording skills and/or spent additional time making recordings for our pre-recorded worship through June. Cindy Bittner for thirty years has offered skilled music leadership every Sunday and for special services. Paige Carter had completely different responsibilities these past two years as Contemporary Worship was put on hold and pre-recorded worship became the norm. She resigned in June and has since moved to the state of Wyoming. Justin is faithfully and enthusiastically leading worship every Wednesday; now for fifteen years. Kari Ballata joyfully directs and manages the Senior Choir in spite of the ups and downs caused by the pandemic. We wish Bob, Melissa and Paige all the best as they move on to new ventures. I continue to be pleased and thankful to serve as Lead Pastor at St. Stephen. You're a wonderful congregation!

Statistical Report for 2021

Baptisms:	2021 - 10	2020 - 3	2019 - 9	2018 --19	2017 -- 7	2016 - 16
Weddings:	2021 - 0	2020 - 4	2019 - 5	2018 -- 3	2017 -- 9	2016 -- 5
Member Deaths in 2021:	Mary Taylor, Nancy Allen, John Lovold, Margery King, Lowell Benson, Floyd Redepenning, Nicole Frankot, Julie Skudlarski, Kim Wagner, Laura Glinnon, and Gladie Petersen					
*Funerals or Death:	2021 - 20	2020 - 12	2019 - 10	2018 -11	2017 -- 17	2016 - 23
Baptized:	2021 - 948	2020 - 950	2019 - 945	2018 --947	2017 -- 935	2016 - 929
Confirmed:	2021 - 671	2020 - 681	2019 - 678	2018 --680	2017 -- 676	2016 - 666
**Worship:	2021 - 113	2020 - 244	2019 - 221	2018 --231	2017 -- 220	2016 - 244
**On-line Views:	2021 - 119	2020 - 263				

*Not all deaths were able to have a funeral, 11 member deaths in 2021, 3 2020 member deaths with services in 2021, 6 non-member services. ** Weekly average numbers

**RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED,
James A. Woodruff, Lead Pastor**

Visitation Pastor 2021 Annual Report

This year has not been what we expected! We continue to grapple with the pandemic and the changes that it has made for every aspect of our lives. We have been hoping to end the need for mitigation and been disappointed to have restrictions reappear.

I continue to do most of my visitation by phone. I am regularly calling the people on my list of sick and shut ins, and I try to touch base regularly with everyone on the prayer list. In addition, I am working my way through the directory, as time allows. If you haven't heard from me, it's because I just haven't gotten to you yet!

I was able to resume visits this year for some people. As of November, the hospitals are no longer allowing clergy visits and many care centers are similarly restricted. I have been able to continue to call on those who are in hospice. I can call on people in their homes, at their discretion, and I try to schedule those to minimize the possibility of carrying infection from household to household. I was able to resume my monthly worship services at Willowood, and those will continue in the new year.

As I have gone about my visitation duties, I am concerned about the way that the pandemic is affecting us. It is isolating us from one another, obviously. St Stephen is addressing this by having worship opportunities (on-line and in person), having opportunities to gather safely, and making every effort to connect with members via phone and mail.

It is also setting us against one another. No one can be unaware of the degree to which we are encouraged to blame one another, and how we have come to live almost in different worlds, based on our media, our politics, our entertainment, or other differences. St Stephen is addressing this by calling all members to remember that the true source of our identity is in Jesus Christ. Through worship, sacraments, and prayer, we can differ in profound ways without rejecting our shared unity in Christ.

I also see profound grief, often unexpressed. Almost a million of our fellow citizens have died. Our understanding of what it means for children to be in school has profoundly changed. We are missing friends, families, celebrations, and gatherings. The way we work, shop, eat, and simply exist has been changed. All of these changes are unsettling. We grieve for what we knew, for what we have lost, for a sense of surety about what the future will be like. St Stephen is addressing this by offering opportunities to acknowledge and talk about these feelings. We have started an online "Psalms for Daily Prayer" section of our website that allows anyone to join in these prayers, often written from depths of grief, fear, and anger. We are also planning for grief support groups (in addition to the long-standing one that many are familiar with).

Through all of this, St Stephen has modeled trusting in God's grace and love in difficult circumstances. We are called to be his hands and feet in this world, we are blessed to be a blessing to all those around us. Rather than turn inward, St Stephen has opened itself to the community around us, and we constantly seek new ways to show God's love.

I am blessed to be part of such a community.

Rev. Julia Thompson

Church Council President 2021 Annual Report

Covid 19 has continued to have an outsized impact on day to day functioning of St. Stephen during 2021. We strive to adapt as needed yet maintain a vibrant and mutually supportive worship community. And as we approach two full years of the pandemic our church family has adapted in many ways. We moved back into in person worship midyear while simultaneously broadcasting services live to reach congregants unable to attend or uncomfortable with attending worship in person. A special appeal was successfully completed which allowed us to install the live streaming system without dipping into our capital funds. Our mask mandate was lifted although we still encourage everyone to wear masks in accordance with Minnesota department of health recommendations. Council and many committees meet regularly using Zoom. Flexibility, safety and an ongoing respectful dialogue are my personal priorities as our church and, frankly, our world learn to live with the continually evolving Covid virus. Thanks to all of you for your faith, presence, support and perseverance during 2021!

Financial Stability into the Future

First – a big thank you to Patsy Olson. *She has continued to serve admirably as St. Stephen treasurer. As I write the following any accurate numbers are thanks to Patsy (and any inaccuracies are solely my responsibility).*

Cash reserve fund: Our cash reserve fund continued to grow during 2021 and now totals ~\$28,000. This fund, with a goal of \$90,000, is intended to permanently free up our need to draw funds from our Capital Fund to pay our bills as month-to-month shortfalls happen.

Capital fund: Our capital fund is healthy with a year-end balance of ~\$99,000. The canopy and front entrance were repaired and replaced, respectively, just before winter. While capital funds were used temporarily, these should be completely recovered from insurance proceeds and further replenish the fund. Capital funds were also used to replace furnace #1 in June, the first of three furnaces the congregation voted to replace. Replacement of another furnace (likely #3) is considered in 2022, pending receipt of a revised quote for council review.

Budget: St. Stephen entered 2021 with a carry over balance in our current fund of over \$20,000, primarily due to forgiveness of our Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) loan. We knew that 2021 would be financially challenging since we were no longer eligible for PPP funds. **However, at year end we ended with current fund surplus of ~\$9,100.** Thank you all for your consistent and unwavering financial support of St. Stephen's ministry!!

Staffing updates: We bid farewell to long time staff including Melissa Whitman (Children, Youth and Family Ministries director), Bob Blumberg (half time Custodian) and Paige Carter (Contemporary Worship). **Thanks to them for their many contributions to life at St. Stephen.** We welcomed Zach Van Dyke (Digital Ministry Director), Greg McGuiggan (half time Custodian) and Paul Schultz (Children's Ministry).

Shared ministries with Redeemer Lutheran church: We started to successfully work in cooperation with Redeemer on shared Youth Ministries during 2021. Both churches have their individual and unique identities, histories, and cultures. However, I believe shared ministry in some areas may be beneficial to both congregations and are worth exploring. Additional opportunities for collaboration will be carefully considered in the coming year.

Our **Annual Meeting** will be held in person in the sanctuary on January 30, 2022 starting at 1 pm. We need the in person participation of at least 35-40 people to meet a quorum so please mark your calendars and consider attending. To encourage in person participation, church council will likely require masks at this meeting (not yet approved at the time this report was written). Holding the annual meeting in the sanctuary allows us to simultaneously broadcast live to those unable to attend in person. We encourage those attending online to listen to the discussion and submit questions. However, voting on motions will be limited to those physically present since the live broadcast system does not allow us to record votes.

I'd like to personally thank outgoing church council members for their service: Abby Ternus, Kristin Duffy, Marta Hohnstadt, Paul Colaizy, and Ted Schaff. It's been a pleasure working with you and your leadership this past year is greatly appreciated.

Blessings to All,
Ken Smith, Council President 2021

St. Stephen Lutheran Church

2021 Annual Report

Ministry

Team

Reports

Adult Learning
2021 Annual Report

Due to Covid-19 safety concerns, no Adult Forums were held in 2021.

Respectfully Submitted,

Cheryl Skrypez

Children and Families Ministry 2021 Annual Report

2021 saw the slow but sure return of some sense of normalcy in our programming. Late winter through early spring saw the return of in-person Wednesday School, pre-confirmation and Confirmation classes. Vacation Bible School was held in August. Sunday School began in person classes in the fall. This was accomplished with a heightened sense for safety as we follow all the health, safety and cleaning protocols set in place to keep our children, youth, staff, families and congregation safe and protected.

Though our numbers are small, they are enthusiastic and energetic to learn about God's world and the life of the people in the Bible. Vacation Bible School 'Knight's Castle' saw approximately 30 students and 15 adult/youth volunteers "Be **strong** in the **Lord** and in the **strength** of his **power**." Wednesday School enjoys around 7 to 9 participants with 3 adult/youth volunteers. Sunday School welcomes 6 to 7 children with 2 adult/youth volunteers. In December we held an Advent Family Celebration on Sunday and Wednesday to help our families prepare for the Coming of Our Lord and Savior, Jesus' birth, with crafts, music, fellowship and refreshments.

Melissa Whitman resigned in July to pursue another opportunity with a sister congregation. She still remains active with our youth and Confirmation students in her new role as we cooperate in ministry. In September Paul Schultz came on board as an interim Children and Families Director.

As we move into 2022 the plan is to continue to offer in person Sunday/Wednesday faith education. All of our lesson plans/ activities/ craft supplies are available to any family not attending in person learning. We'll plan to have a Lenten Family Event in March to help our families and the congregation to prepare for the Coming of our Risen Lord at Easter. Vacation Bible School will return this summer in early August. We look forward to a safe, fun, welcoming, enthusiastic and energetic year of learning.

Submitted by,

Paul Schultz

Endowment Committee

2021 Annual Report

In 2008, an Endowment Fund was established to support three ministries:

- Children, Youth and Senior programs
- Worship, Music and Hospitality
- Mission

Since the establishment of the Fund, St Stephen has accumulated \$6,105.00 (this money is being held in a St. Stephen Special Designated account).

The minimum amount for opening an endowment fund account is \$25,000.

In 2019, the Church Council appointed an Endowment Committee to review the Endowment Fund Bylaws, make changes as needed, and promote endowment fund giving.

The Endowment Committee members include Ted Field, Viki Bosin, Jill Sandvik, Pastor Jim and Lee Branwall.

- Step 1) Find a fund management company: We have chosen not to continue with “InFaith” and have chosen “ELCA Foundation” to manage our fund.
- Step 2) Review By-Laws and change as needed: This is done and will be presented as a continuing resolution to the Church Council for approval. We also fine-tuned our Vision for our future: To provide long-term planning to preserve the vitality and stability of our Church, our ministries, and our community outreach programs.
- Step 3) Raise money to open account: The Endowment Committee is going to team up with the ELCA Foundation to provide gift giving education to the congregation.

In the next few months look for more information from the Endowment Committee as we work toward our goal!

Submitted by,

Jill Sandvik

Evangelism

2021 Annual Report

We did not get to have a normal year in 2021. Covid is still with us. That being said, we had a partial Relay for Life event in July, and Wednesday evening meals resumed being served again.

Rally Day, September 12, was a great success. Brenda Steady had a great band, and many people stayed for the picnic. That day people made bag lunches that were delivered to Union Gospel Mission.

In October, Trunks and Treats was a collaborative effort that took place at Redeemer Lutheran Church.

As per Pastor Jim's report from November 8th, we have five local churches that are participating in this collaborative youth ministry: St Stephen Lutheran, Redeemer Lutheran, South Shore Trinity Lutheran, United Church of Christ, and St Johns in the Wilderness. The idea being to gather all of the smaller churches to do youth events together so there is a larger group of kids participating.

A more typical Living Nativity took place December 18th and was enjoyed by spectators and participants. The shepherds were actually goat herders this year.

With the Lord's help, 2022 will be a good year.

Submitted by,

Paul Colaizy

Faith Formation Ministry

2021 Annual Report

Even during a pandemic, the mission of our faith formation ministry continues to be a strengthening of the spiritual lives of the Christian family that walks beside us on our lifelong journeys with Christ. *Lifelong* learning is our message. The pandemic has put spaces and distance between us and made it hard for us to gather together for not only worship but for fellowship, service, and learning.

In the past year, due to the pandemic we had to put on hold our adult education programs—God’s Word and God’s World. But that doesn’t mean we’ve had to put our faith formation on hold.

Even as we walked alone, there was spiritual growth on our journeys. The separation made us realize that faith formation is different from religious education, even though both involve systematic learning. Faith formation is personal. It doesn’t require a classroom or a conference room. Wherever we go, we’re surrounded by its lessons, and we can be assured that even when we are apart the goal of our faith formation ministry is still served. In the past year our journeys continued. We look forward to walking beside each other again in the coming year.

Submitted by,

Ted Field

Fellowship

2021 Annual Report

COVID continued to dictate what St. Stephen could and could not do with gathering events. The Fellowship Committee continued to be cautious in 2021. St. Stephen was able to finally meet for worship although distanced and masked. We continue to worship together but numbers remain down.

The Fellowship Committee loosely consists of Betsy Clark, Kathy Anderson, Carol Hansen, Karen Smith and Viki Bosin.

Kathy Anderson and Carol Hansen head up the Hospitality Committee. They have provided the following receptions this year:

- Confirmand and family following the Confirmation Sunday service
- Donna Rehtzigel retiring as Funeral Luncheon Coordinator
- Melissa Whitman last day as CYFMD

We did not hold many of our usual Fellowship events (Bunco, Progressive Dinner, Nordic Walking, Music Festival and Auction) this year.

We were able to hold our Rally Day Worship Service and Picnic on September 12. Our 9:30 worship service led by our Contemporary Band (leader Brenda Steady) was held outside. We had a very nice potluck picnic following the worship service. The weather was fair (no rain) and we had a nice turnout of about 85 people.

Wednesday night meals during the beginning of the year were done as take-out meals (arranged by Melissa Whitman). Once summer started, we held outdoor BBQ meals before the outdoor GAP worship service. Once GAP moved back inside, we have been providing sit-down meals in the Fellowship Hall before worship starts.

Holly Boutique was held November 13 although they did not sell food for sit-down eating (only wrapped bakery items). It was well attended and they did very well financially.

We pray that next year becomes the year of recovery! Please continue to pray for those around you. We must be there for each other in any way possible, through phone calls, prayers, acts of kindness and whatever else.

Submitted by,

Betsy Clark

Finance and Stewardship 2021 Annual Report

It has been an honor to serve as finance and stewardship chairperson for the past several years. I would like to step down as chairperson beginning calendar year 2022.

COVID again made 2021 a long and challenging year. Despite its impacts on our church finances we came through the year in relatively good financial health.

I want to thank Ted Field, Jessica Rotschafer, Mary Beth Skunes, Brad Wilm, and Patsy Olson for their tireless work this year.

And I want to thank the congregation for their continued and steadfast support of our ministries and staff in this COVID year. We may not have been together physically but kept in contact spiritually, giving thoughtful attention to our stewardship responsibilities.

The 2022 budget reflects a decrease in giving and a decrease in spending. We anticipate that we will not be back to regular worship until summer of 2022.

We ended the year with a surplus of \$9,139.16 in our current fund.

The budget for 2022 looks well within our reach. As always the finance team will pay close attention to our finances as we navigate 2022.

The next few years will be financially challenging for St Stephen. The good news: we are in a better cash position as we continue to build the cash reserve fund.

God Bless,

Jill Sandvik, Chair

Gift Committee 2021 Annual Report

In 2019 the Council appointed a Gift Committee to review SS gift policy.

The members include Denise Ashley, Anne Jackson, Brenda Steady, Jill Sandvik, Pastor Jim and Lee Branwall. Thank you for all your hard work.

Overview of guidelines:

- When St Stephen receives a gift, that is not part of current fund or pledged giving, the gift can be either restricted (given for a particular purpose) or unrestricted.
- When a gift is restricted it is the Gift Committees job to inform the family and track these gifts.
- The family, working with the gift committee has up to two years to decide the exact use of the gift. If the gift is not restricted by the end of two years, it becomes an unrestricted gift and may be used at the discretion of the Gift Committee.
- If the gift is not large enough for the proposed purpose, at the discretion of the gift committee, the gift may be combined with other restricted (for the same purpose) or unrestricted gifts to fulfill the family's wishes. The gift committee will make every effort to fulfill the family's wishes.
- The gift committee will oversee the completion of the project.
- Unrestricted Gifts may be used for any purpose, as determined by the gift committee, with input from the pastor and finance team.
-

The revised Policy as written in our Constitution is as follows:

C13.09.A22. Gift Committee Responsibilities

1. **Memorial Gifts:** A memorial fund is set up to honor a person. This gift is considered unrestricted or restricted based on the definitions below. When Memorial Gifts are received:
 - a. The family name and the family contact information will be recorded with the proposed use of the fund. These gifts are considered restricted for a period of **two** years from the time this fund is established. (The date the fund was established should be noted in the name of the fund in the accounting system)
 - b. The purpose of the fund must be agreed upon by the gift committee and the family. The use or purpose for the fund must be in writing.
 - c. The gift committee will provide to the giver written instructions on how the gift will be used and how left-over funds will be distributed.
 - d. If the fund does not reach the dollar amount necessary for the stated purpose or use, the gift committee will contact the family in a timely manner to suggest an alternative gift **or seek to join it with other memorial gifts.**
 - e. Upon the **2**-year anniversary of the gift, if the fund is unused, the funds are considered unrestricted unless otherwise directed by the family. The funds may be used for any purpose the gift committee, with input from the pastor and finance team, deems appropriate.

2. **Unrestricted Gifts:** All gifts given without written instructions will be considered unrestricted and may be used for any purpose by the gift committee, with input from the pastor and finance team, as deemed appropriate.
3. **Restricted Gifts:**
 - a. All gifts given with written instruction are considered restricted funds and cannot be used for any other purpose without express permission from the giver.
 - b. All restricted gifts must be approved by the gift committee.
 - c. The gift committee will provide to the giver written instructions on how the gift will be used and how left-over funds will be distributed.
 - d. If instructions are vague and broad, i.e. "use as you see fit or whatever you need," this gift will be considered an unrestricted gift (see above).
 - e. For a gift to be approved it must be deemed appropriate and large enough for the project or fund. If the gift is not usable at this time, the chair of the gift committee will notify the giver and discuss alternatives **or seek to join it with other memorial gifts**. Left-over funds after the project is completed can be used as the gift committee sees fit.
 - f. The gift committee will oversee the record keeping of the restricted gifts.
 - g. The committee will have responsibility for cleaning up and consolidating our current special designated funds as follows:
 - i. The committee will go through the special designated and memorial funds and determine on a line by line basis what each gift is for and who gave it
 - ii. The committee will record that information and determine which accounts are considered restricted.
 - iii. The committee is expected to contact the appropriate parties to determine the use of each account. They will determine if the special designated and memorial funds can be used for another purpose (this action would be deemed appropriate if too much time has passed or there is no documentation of the use of the fund or who gave it).
 - iv. The new use of the funds shall be recommended to the congregation council by the committee.
4. The gift committee will oversee thank you and gift acknowledgements as appropriate.
5. The gift committee will present recommendations for any changes regarding funds to the Congregation Council for approval.

Submitted by,
Jill Sandvik

Property

2021 Annual Report

My three years overseeing property for St. Stephen has gone by fast. I will not renew my term because of health issues, my cancer and stroke. I will be available to help whoever takes over the property duties if he or she wants help.

In 2020, we did get the furnaces and air conditioners replaced in room 1. Yale Mechanical did a good job for us. The canopy destruction is almost completed, we need to wait until next spring to finish it. I think you will like the end results. The contractor did a great job for us in a timely fashion. The cost was covered by the insurance of the trucking company.

We will be working on getting new quotes to replace the furnace for room 3. These were originally installed in 1962. They have served us well.

Thank you for the opportunity to help St. Stephen with the property concerns. I want to thank all those who helped me over the last 3 years.

Submitted by,

Theodore Schaff

Relay for Life 2021 Annual Report

Spirit of St Stephen and the White Bear Relay for Life 2021

The Leadership Team for the White Bear Lake Relay for Life began meeting by Zoom in April. I represented the Spirit of St Stephen Team. Because of worries about COVID, most teams opted to hold their own individual fund-raisers. After a discussion with church leaders, St Stephens decided to ask for team members, volunteers, and sponsors for the team, and set a goal of raising \$5000. We scheduled a Luminary Sunday and Wednesday for the end of July. Three team members registered online – Nan Duchene, John Strand, and Viki Bosin, and each raised money online. Judee Bramscher volunteered to help with luminary sales. We had 11 sponsors – Bob & Joyce Alexander, Everett & Bev Ammons, Curt & Darlene Blegen, Dave & Viki Bosin, Brent & Betsy Clark, Betty Rombach, Dan & Judy Ruth, Paul & Karen Schultz, Ken and Karen Smith, Diane & Paul Swanson and Neighbors Helping Neighbors.

We also decided to sell luminary bags at \$10 each and accept free-will donations. I made an appeal at the Wednesday, July 7 and Sunday, July 11 church services, and we sold luminaries for the next 3 weeks. We had over 80 luminary bags around the altar on Sunday, July 25th and around 40 on the stage, on Wednesday, July 28. Overall, we raised \$5030 for cancer research for the American Cancer Society. I would like to thank everyone who volunteered for and/or donated to this very important ministry. Without it, much of the local and national support for cancer research and cancer care would not happen.

Most of the White Bear teams held individual fund-raisers throughout the spring and summer. The White Bear Relay for Life held a mini event at the South Campus parking lot, on Friday, July 30, for anyone who wanted to participate in a live, but socially distanced manner. With all of these efforts, the White Bear Relay for Life exceeded their goal by raising a little over \$103,000. They have scheduled next year's Relay for July 29, 2022, and are currently in the planning phase. I have let them know that I will not be able to participate next year. St. Stephen will need someone to step up and organize this ministry going forward.

Respectfully submitted,

Viki Bosin

Senior Ministry

2021 Annual Report

OWLS –Older Wiser Lutherans. We try to do activities once a month. This past year has been hard but we did one lunch out at the VFW and our Christmas party at the Lake Elmo Inn.

Retiree Breakfast – the second Thursday of the month we meet at 9:00 am at Perkins on County Road D.

WW Lunch Bunch – We are a group of widows and widowers who go out to lunch the last Tuesday of every month.

Wednesday Gatherings - A gathering group of Seniors meets weekly at 10:30 am. We have good conversations and laughs.

If you are interested in any of our groups or have suggestions, please feel free to call me at 651-269-6122.

Submitted by,

Judee Bramscher

St. Stephen Social Media Report

2021 Annual Report

The St. Stephen online community continued to grow in 2021 and I enjoyed sharing content relating to Christianity, and St. Stephen happenings, through social media. This report highlights the statistics for the social media pages and demographics. As started in 2020, worship services were continued to be shared online on YouTube and Facebook due to the global pandemic to allow for virtual worship.

Facebook

Page Name: St. Stephen Lutheran Church – White Bear Lake, MN

- Number of followers: 352 followers
- Number of Likes: 320 page likes
- Page reach increased 73% in 2021
- Number of posts in 2021: 325 posts

Instagram

Username: ststephenwbl

- Number of followers: 59 followers
- Total Number of posts: 181 posts
- Page reach increased 45% in 2021

YouTube

Channel Name: St. Stephen Lutheran Church White Bear Lake

- Number of subscribers: 132 subscribers
- Total Number of videos: 150 videos
- Total Number of views: 16,013 views

Top Performing Posts:

Promoting Living Nativity Event

Youth Visited Sam's Christmas Village

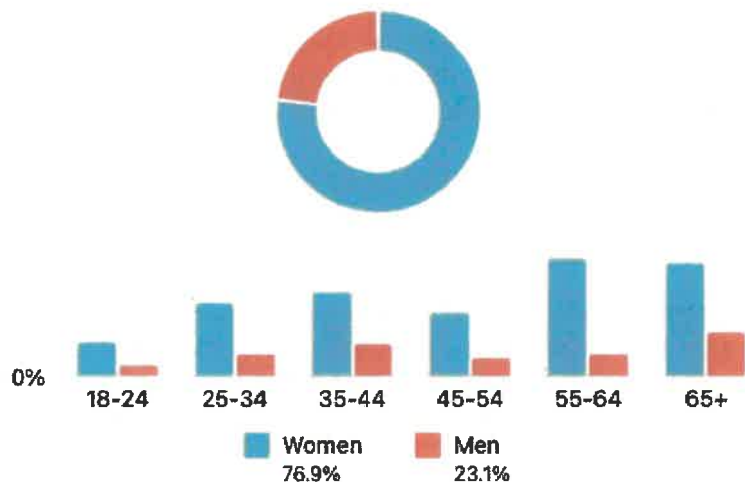
Bible Verse of the Day post

Promoting Grace and Praise Worship

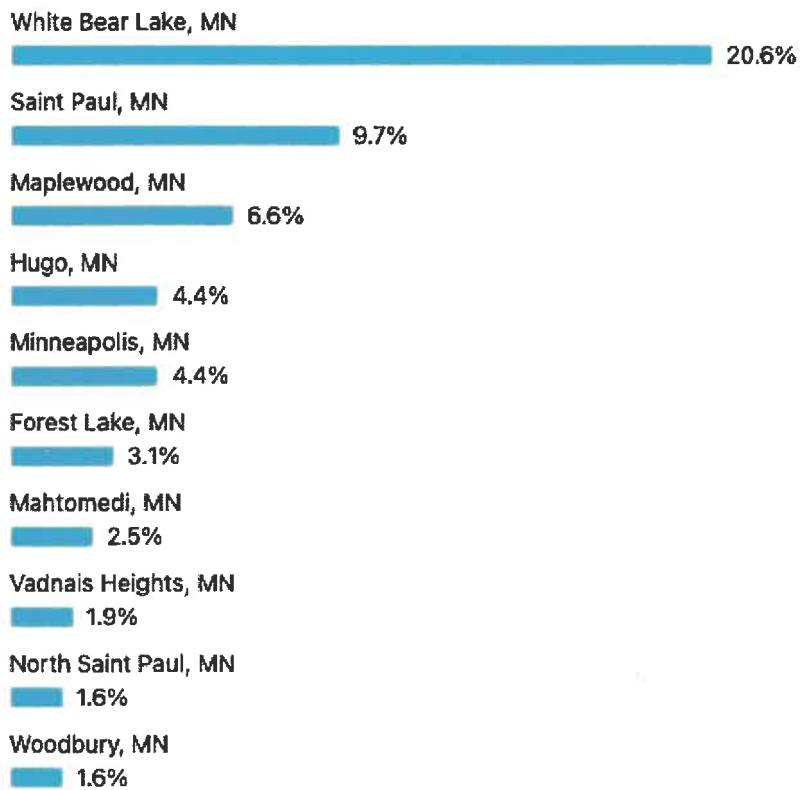
Celebrate Advent with Us post

Facebook and Instagram Audience:

Age & Gender



Top Cities



Staff Relations

2021 Annual Report

The staff at St Stephen had a wonderful first half of 2021. All of our team members were working well and doing a wonderful job. But change is always a constant. Melissa Whitman accepted a new position at Redeemer Lutheran Church and left St Stephen in late summer. She was exceptional in her role and really engaged with the children, youth and families. We began a search for a replacement CYF Director but with a very tight hiring market we have struggled to find a suitable candidate. We are working with Redeemer to collaborate on several activities as we continue to search for Melissa's replacement.

A very special thank you and much appreciation to Paul Schultz who has stepped in to run the Children's Ministry program. He continues to do an admirable job and based on the smile on his face, we think he is enjoying this labor of love.

Another change this year included the "retirement" of Bob Blumberg as one of our two part-time custodians. Bob and Paul have shared and cared for the building and grounds of St. Stephen for many years. We will miss Bob and wish him well. Our search for a part-time custodian led us to Greg McGuiggan. Greg joined the team in mid-December, welcome Greg.

A true constant around St. Stephen continues to be our church administrator, Tami Heart. *Thank you Tami for your continued work across all ministries within St. Stephen.* You are much appreciated.

Respectfully submitted,

Kate Spencer

Tanzania Mission Team 2021 Annual Report

In 2001, St. Stephen sent our first mission team to visit our sister congregation in Lukani, Tanzania. Since then, seven additional groups have traveled to Africa to continue building that relationship, most recently in 2019. God willing and the pandemic allowing, the next St. Stephen group will visit Lukani sometime in 2022. Please contact Pastor Jim, Betsy Clark, Karen or Ken Smith if you're interested in learning more about this mission trip.

While briefly in the Iringa area in October, Karen and Ken Smith were able to have a day visit to Lukani. It was wonderful to see so many friends and meet the new pastor Steven Maketa (on the left below, presenting a chicken to Pastor Lwila of Bega Kwa Bega). We were greeted with a purposefully smaller group in order to maintain social distance and be respectful of everyone's safety. Our visit and a meal were in the main church because this the much larger building made it easy to maintain some spacing. Nonetheless it was a wonderful meeting with village and Lukani congregation leaders.



As the Covid 19 pandemic continued through 2021 you might be surprised to learn that the impact in Lukani has continued to be relatively low. Dr. Ngure in the Lukani medical clinic reported to us in October that some covid infections were seen from the third (Delta) wave in May through July but that no deaths were recorded.

The water system which was dedicated in 2019 continues to serve the village with clean and safe drinking water. **Thank you** to the members of our congregation who supported this large capital program which was designed by the University of Minnesota students and installed by St Paul Partners. An extension of the system to the final part of Lukani village is under consideration. Safe water has been even more important during the pandemic.

As always, the St Stephen congregation continues to support secondary school scholarships for ~15 students with money from benevolence as well as individual contributions so **thank you for your ongoing support.**

Bwana asifiwe (praise God)

Submitted by,

Ken Smith

Women in Ministry

2021 Annual Report

Women in Ministry did not meet as a group during 2021 due to Covid 19. Activities were handled primarily over the phone by interested members.

This summer Donna Rehtzigel retired as funeral coordinator and we had a coffee and cake celebration after church service to thank her for her many years of service. At this time Kathy Anderson and Anita Schreader are acting as coordinators. There were 9 funeral lunches in 2021.

The quilters did not meet during the year.

Our 2021 Holly Boutique was held and though it looked different, in order to keep it a safe experience for everyone, it was very successful. We made about \$3,400.00 with expenses of \$250.00. Our Boutique provided \$300.00 for LSS Homeless Teens, \$300.00 to Tubman Alliance (battered women shelter), \$300.00 to the White Bear Food Shelf, \$300.00 to Solid Ground and \$500.00 for 5 (\$100.00 each) Aldi Food gift cards for members of St. Stephen in need and \$500.00 for debt reduction.

This year, with thanks to the congregation as well as circle members, we put together Holiday Baskets of cookies and treats, providing 30 baskets during the Holiday season.

We sent 25 to 30 cards each month to members of Stephen who are on the prayer list.

Respectfully submitted by,

Anita L. Schreader, WIM Chairperson

Worship and Music 2021 Annual Report

We all hoped for a “normal” 2021 with the rollout of vaccines. “Normal” will look different while we adjust to changing viruses, health protocols and the St Stephen congregation preferences for worship in these times.

The Newest Normal: The biggest change that represents a new normal for St Stephen is in the advent of streaming Sunday morning worship services from the sanctuary with to the installation of cameras, computers, and upgraded sound system and internet access! The congregation responded quickly and generously to the audio-visual fund set up in April. We are so grateful to families who directed memorial gifts to the fund, as well as St Stephen members and the Cruisers. Your contributions allowed St Stephen to complete installation of the audiovisual system in June. Additionally, St Stephen created a new staff position--the Digital Ministry Director—to develop and retain technical skills, as well as to develop a team of volunteers. We look forward to expanding St Stephen’s outreach as we learn how this tool can be used. We welcome Zach Van Dyke as our Digital Ministry Director!

Successes

- The Congregation’s ability to adapt to changing circumstances has been beautiful and amazing. Thank you.
- Summer Wednesday worship services continued out of doors with faithful worshippers.
- From January to June, St Stephen continued providing online Sunday morning worship through prerecorded worship services.
- The AV system rollout was successful and running well. Thank you to the AV Team!
- The congregation hired a Digital Ministry Director to operate the AV system and develop team of volunteers.
- We returned to in-person worship in September with a single service at 9:30. We resumed Senior Choir Practice and Brass Act rehearsals!

Challenges

- There are steep learning curves with technology—we are always stretched to learn more, acquire more or upgrade digital equipment.
- Many skill sets are needed beyond music: technology, visual composition...
- We lost Paige Carlson and Melissa Stearns. Besides Paige being a wonderful musician with a heart for worship, Paige and Melissa became highly skilled digital editors and producers. St Stephen needs to develop this skill set/knowledge within our volunteers, as well as hiring knowledgeable staff.
- Congregational care needs reassessment/revigoration.

Acknowledgements

Thank you to the **AV team members:** Jill Sandvik, Randy Amborn, Paige Carlson, Jim Woodruff, Anne Jackson.

Thank you to **Cindy Bittner** and **Randy Schreiner** for their ongoing ministry from the organ bench. We are grateful for your willingness to share your love of music and of God, and look forward to Cindy resuming her plan for organ and music scholarship the spring of 2022 with her sabbatical at King’s College Cambridge, England.

Thank you to **St Stephen musicians** who make the service quality possible! We love you—your spirit, your time and effort!

Submitted by,

Anne Jackson and Brenda Steady, Co-Chairs

Youth Ministry 2021 Annual Report

In the Fall of 2013 Melissa Stearns was hired as a part-time Youth Ministry Director. For four years she worked alongside Andrea Fluegel and Laurel Bornholtz as Part-time Children's Ministry Directors. With the departure of Laurel in 2017 Melissa took on both ministries as Children, Youth and Families Ministry Director. She excelled in both areas of ministry, (no small feat!) As Youth Ministry Director for the past eight years Melissa has developed a strongly relational program that fostered faith through service, learning, and fellowship. One of her strongest gifts is the ability to maintain communication with youth and parents in order to carry out the youth ministry programs. The consistency of the program was significantly disrupted with the onset of Covid-19. Yet, throughout shut-downs, cancellations, isolation and social distancing she continued to maintain a vigorous communication with the kids and families for which she was responsible, often bringing in friends and continuing that communication beyond high school. During the pandemic she took on diverse responsibilities, since youth activities were severely limited; most notably the production and editing of our pre-recorded on-line worship services. As we navigated the pandemic, she lobbied for increased, and responsible in-person events and learning opportunities. So that when worship services began to reopen in the spring of 2021, we were ready to quickly move from on-line learning and events to hybrid and in-person gatherings. In May we were saddened to learn that she had accepted a job as Children, Youth and Families Ministry Director at Redeemer Lutheran Church, a neighboring congregation. Since then our search to replace her has stalled and we began to consider other and 'out of the box' alternatives to a full time CYF Director. Those considerations led us to concept that both her new congregation and St. Stephen could benefit from a partnered youth ministry. Children's Ministry would be carried out by a part-time Director with moderate salary. We would share Melissa, as Youth Director and pay to Redeemer one half of one half of her salary and benefits package. This will bring the benefit of lower cost to each church, more kids to build a reasonably sized youth group and planning for one program instead of two different programs with the same goals. Both Church leadership bodies have approved this concept and we'll begin this partnered ministry in February 2022. I and the leadership group who has been working on this are excited about the possibilities and look forward to having Melissa around here one day a week and at youth events on site. We've also been working on developing a Collaborative Youth Ministry with a diverse group of churches in White Bear Lake.

In 2021 Youth Ministry carried out confirmation classes monthly in-person. Pre-confirmation was carried out weekly with a hybrid model of learning, some in-person and some by ZOOM. In fall we began joint confirmation classes with Redeemer on a monthly basis. In the spring the youth ministry, grades 5-12 carried out a Heggies Pizza Fund Raiser, to support the 9-12 grade Mission trip, and other summer events for younger kids. The Fund Raiser raised \$1,500.00. June and July held several events for children as well as youth. Then in July the Senior High group went on a mission trip to San Francisco, where they handed out hygiene packages, served sandwiches for unhoused people in 'the Castro', listened to guest speakers about being unhoused and experiencing discrimination, meditated in a labyrinth at Grace Cathedral and visited Alcatraz. They experienced a lot about the unhoused, about those with mental illness and the efforts being made by God's people to address those issues. Youth Ministry in the fall struggled to get organized.

I'm looking forward to 2022, continuing collaboration with Melissa, the National Youth Gathering, and regularly scheduled youth events. Let's make this work, to the glory of God and the benefit of God's people.

Respectfully Submitted,

Pastor Jim Woodruff, with input from Melissa Whitman

St. Stephen Lutheran Church

2021 Annual Report

**Church
Council**

Church Council Nominating Committee 2021 Annual Report

NOMINATING COMMITTEE:

Members of the 2021 Nominating Committee were:

- Patsy Olson
- Randy Amborn
- Ken Smith
- Jodie Millard

Nominees for the 2022 Nominating Committee requiring election by the congregation are:

- Karen Smith
- Cindy Scott
- Betsy Clark

COUNCIL:

Thanks to the following Council members who have served:

- Paul Colaizy (three-year term)
- Ted Schaaf (three-year term)
- Ken Smith – President (one year term)
- Mira Stearns – Vice President (one year term)
- Kristin Duffy – resigned in her first year of a three-year term
- Marta Hohnstadt – resigned in her first year of a three-year term
- Abby Ternus – resigned after completing her first year of a two-year term

Continuing Council Members in 2022:

- Betsy Clark (term expires end of 2022)
- Chris Sheldon (term expires end of 2022)

Nominees for 2022 Church Council requiring election by the congregation:

Three Year Term expiring end of 2024:

- John Rohr
- Marla Amborn

Two Year Terms expiring end of 2023:

- Open
- Open

One Year Term expiring end of 2022:

- Mira Stearns (continuing for one more year) – President
- Ken Smith (continuing for one more year) – Past President
- Judee Bramscher

Church Council Officers requiring election by the congregation:

- Vice President (to be established)
- Council Secretary (position is open)
- Patsy Olson, Treasurer
- Brad Wilm, Financial Secretary

Submitted by,

Betsy Clark

Statements from New Council Members

Marla Amborn

In 1989 Randy and I were looking for a church home and we joined St. Stephen and were married here in 1990. Our daughter, Marissa, was baptized and confirmed at St. Stephen. During the time she was young I taught Sunday School and Confirmation. I also played in the bell choir and served on the Worship and Music Committee. I was on the call committee that called Pastor Jim to St. Stephen and traveled with him and mission teams to Tanzania in 2010 and 2016 and to Tecate, Mexico in 2012. Twice I served on church council – in 1990-1993, and again 2004-2007, serving as council president the last year of each of those terms. During the second of those council terms, when Pastor Dan Brumm retired, I was active in the pastoral transition process which inspired me to respond to a call to ministry I had felt for many years. I attended Luther Seminary in 2006-2012 and was ordained at St. Stephen as a pastor in January 2013. From January 2013 to August 2021 I served as pastor at Immanuel Lutheran Church in Almelund, Minnesota. During that time, when I had Sundays off I attended St. Stephen and throughout that time have continued supporting St. Stephen financially. With the birth of our grandson this past July, I retired in August to be more available to care for him and also for my aging mother. Initially when I was asked to serve on council, I was reluctant since I've been less involved during the time I was away serving as pastor, but upon further reflection realized I have gifts to share, so if the congregation would like me to serve on council I'm honored to do so.

Judee Bramscher

I am honored to be asked to serve on the church council. I plan on being a voice for the seniors of this congregation.

John Rohr

I have served on council at least two previous times and am honored to be able to serve again. In the past, I have focused my effort on Youth activities. I hope to expand my responsibilities on the council. Thank you for putting your faith in me.

St. Stephen Lutheran Church

2021 Annual Report

2021

Treasurer's

Report

Treasurer 2021 Annual Report

The annual Report of the Church Treasurer for 2021 consists of the following items:

- Balance Sheet
- Budget vs Actual (Benevolence Fund)
- Budget vs Actual (Capital Fund)
- Cash Reserve Fund
- Budget vs Actual (Current Fund)
- Special Designated Accounts
- 2022 Proposed Budget Current, Benevolence, Capital and Cash Reserve Fund

Balance Sheet: Under Current Assets we have fluent cash assets totaling \$220,905.99. These cash assets consist of \$139,936.49 in our checking account; \$32,740.70 in our savings account; and 4 CD's totaling \$48,228.80. Please also note that we have not incurred any long-term debt. We are so very blessed to be in this position.

Benevolence Fund: Through pledged giving to our benevolence fund, we have been able to donate \$17,365.00 this past year to various non-profit organizations. We have a balance of \$1,249.87 remaining from our 2021 calendar year. I am very pleased to share with you that this past year we made donations to the St. Paul Ares Synod, Companion Congregation Lukani (Tanzania Scholarships and Tanzania Mission Trip scheduled for 2022), Tecate Orphanage and we provided a campership to Lake Wapogaset Summer Bible Camp.

Capital Fund: Through pledged giving to our capital fund (24,116.84) and the income received from Neighbors Helping Neighbors (6,000.00) we also received income from an insurance claim of \$36,730.00 and we received funds of \$20,976.83 for the new Digital Video System. This past year we were able to complete phase 1 of the furnace project at a cost of \$49,168.00, purchase and install a new Digital Video System at a cost of \$20,976.83 and repair the entrance to the church using insurance funds for \$36,730.00. We have a balance in our capital fund of \$97,886.06 remaining from our 2021 calendar year.

Cash Reserve Fund: This past year we were able to add an additional \$10,694.14 to our Cash Reserve Fund which existed of \$17,641.21 giving us a total of \$28,335.35.

Current Fund: We are offering one Sunday Worship Service on Sunday and we are continuing to provide GAP Worship Service on Wednesday Evenings and we were able to resume most of our programming and special events in 2021. We are truly blessed to be ending 2021 with **\$9,139.16** in our current fund account.

Special Designated Fund: The balance in the Special Designated Fund is **\$85,923.56**. This fund consists of several account categories. In our General Special Designated Accounts (800 account numbers) we have a balance of \$24,000.52. In the Funding Special Designated Accounts (810 account numbers) we have a balance of \$19,197.88. In our Tanzania Mission Special Designated Accounts (820 account numbers) we have a balance of \$21,982.29. In our Tecate Mission Special Designated Accounts (825 account numbers) we have a balance of \$2,900.00. In our Special Designated Memorial Accounts (830 account numbers) we have a balance of \$17,842.87.

This past year I have really enjoyed returning to worship services and I was truly grateful to be a chaperone in San Francisco with our youth. It is so very nice to see and hear the activity that has returned to our church. It truly is a blessing to serve as your treasurer. It is my intent to continue to be transparent, to keep lines of communication open and to serve in the best interest of St. Stephen. Please contact me if you have any questions or concerns,

Respectfully Submitted,
Patsy Olson

St. Stephen Lutheran Church
Balance Sheet
As of December 31, 2021

ASSETS

Current Assets

Checking/Savings

10 Bank Accounts

11 Current Fund Checking	139,936.49
12 Savings	32,740.70
13 Svg CD 304928 80B Endowment	6,501.03
14 Svg CD 306508 86R Endowment	17,634.08
15 Svg CD 306509 Investment	19,093.69
16 Svg CD 3 Mo Investment	5,000.00

Total 10 Bank Accounts 220,905.99

Total Checking/Savings 220,905.99

Total Current Assets 220,905.99

Fixed Assets

20 Property	1,326,700.00
21 Church Facility	564,000.00
22 Land	24,000.00
23 Other Buildings	474,000.00
24 Youth Building	2,388,700.00

Total 20 Property 2,609,605.99

Total Fixed Assets 2,830,511.98

TOTAL ASSETS

LIABILITIES & EQUITY

Liabilities

Current Liabilities

Other Current Liabilities	-1,825.97
Payroll Liabilities	-1,825.97
Total Other Current Liabilities	<u>-1,825.97</u>
Total Current Liabilities	-1,825.97

Total Liabilities

Equity 1,462,864.70

Opening Balance Equity 926,037.76

Unrestricted Net Assets 222,529.50

Net Income 2,611,431.96

Total Equity 2,609,605.99

TOTAL LIABILITIES & EQUITY

St. Stephen Lutheran Church
Budget vs. Actual (Benevolence Fund)
 January through December 2021

	<u>Jan - Dec 21</u>	<u>Budget</u>	<u>\$ Over Budget</u>
Ordinary Income/Expense			
Income			
500 Benevolence			
501 Benevolence Income			
502 Pledges	18,482.50	18,400.00	82.50
504 Carryover Balance	132.37	132.37	0.00
Total 501 Benevolence Income	<u>18,614.87</u>	<u>18,532.37</u>	<u>82.50</u>
Total 500 Benevolence	<u>18,614.87</u>	<u>18,532.37</u>	<u>82.50</u>
Total Income	<u>18,614.87</u>	<u>18,532.37</u>	<u>82.50</u>
Gross Profit	<u>18,614.87</u>	<u>18,532.37</u>	<u>82.50</u>
Expense			
510 Benevolence Expense			
511 Synod & ELCA	12,000.00	12,000.00	0.00
513 Camping Ministry	0.00	0.00	0.00
514 Wapogaset Bible Camp	0.00	0.00	0.00
515 Camperships	65.00	250.00	-185.00
516 Other Camping Ministries	0.00	0.00	0.00
517 Lutheran Social Service	0.00	0.00	0.00
519 Auction Charity	0.00	0.00	0.00
520 Companion Cong. Lukani	4,100.00	4,100.00	0.00
521 Tecate Mission	1,200.00	1,200.00	0.00
522 Food Shelf & Families	0.00	0.00	0.00
524 Benevolence Other	0.00	0.00	0.00
525 St. Stephen Youth Mission	0.00	0.00	0.00
Total 510 Benevolence Expense	<u>17,365.00</u>	<u>17,550.00</u>	<u>-185.00</u>
Total Expense	<u>17,365.00</u>	<u>17,550.00</u>	<u>-185.00</u>
Net Ordinary Income	<u>1,249.87</u>	<u>982.37</u>	<u>267.50</u>
Net Income	<u>1,249.87</u>	<u>982.37</u>	<u>267.50</u>

St. Stephen Lutheran Church
Budget vs. Actual (Capital Fund)
 January through December 2021

	<u>Jan - Dec 21</u>	<u>Budget</u>	<u>\$ Over Budget</u>
Ordinary Income/Expense			
Income			
600 Capital Fund			
601 Capital Fund Income			
602 Neighbors Helping Neighbors	6,000.00	6,000.00	0.00
603 Capital Fund Envelope	24,116.84	29,400.00	-5,283.16
604 Capital Fund Other/Transfer	57,706.83	0.00	57,706.83
605 Carryover Balance	117,953.01	117,953.01	0.00
Total 601 Capital Fund Income	<u>205,776.68</u>	<u>153,353.01</u>	<u>52,423.67</u>
Total 600 Capital Fund	<u>205,776.68</u>	<u>153,353.01</u>	<u>52,423.67</u>
Total Income	<u>205,776.68</u>	<u>153,353.01</u>	<u>52,423.67</u>
Gross Profit	<u>205,776.68</u>	<u>153,353.01</u>	<u>52,423.67</u>
Expense			
605 Capital Fund Expenses			
605.1 Capital Audio Video Exp	20,976.83		
605 Capital Fund Expenses - Other	86,913.79	46,000.00	40,913.79
Total 605 Capital Fund Expenses	<u>107,890.62</u>	<u>46,000.00</u>	<u>61,890.62</u>
Total Expense	<u>107,890.62</u>	<u>46,000.00</u>	<u>61,890.62</u>
Net Ordinary Income	<u>97,886.06</u>	<u>107,353.01</u>	<u>-9,466.95</u>
Net Income	<u><u>97,886.06</u></u>	<u><u>107,353.01</u></u>	<u><u>-9,466.95</u></u>

St. Stephen Lutheran Church
Budget vs. Actual (Cash Reserve Fund)
January through December 2021

	<u>Jan - Dec 21</u>	<u>Budget</u>
Ordinary Income/Expense		
Income		
700 Cash Reserve Fund		
701.00 Cash Reserve Fund Income	10,694.14	12,000.00
702 Carryover Balance	17,641.21	17,641.21
Total 700 Cash Reserve Fund	<u>28,335.35</u>	<u>29,641.21</u>
Total Income	<u>28,335.35</u>	<u>29,641.21</u>
Gross Profit	<u>28,335.35</u>	<u>29,641.21</u>
Net Ordinary Income	<u>28,335.35</u>	<u>29,641.21</u>
Net Income	<u><u>28,335.35</u></u>	<u><u>29,641.21</u></u>

St. Stephen Lutheran Church
Budget vs Actual (Current Fund)
January through December 2021

	<u>Jan - Dec 21</u>	<u>Budget</u>	<u>\$ Over Budget</u>
Ordinary Income/Expense			
Income			
100 Income Accounts			
101 Carry over Balance	20,614.74	20,614.00	0.74
102 Envelope Income	341,935.40	330,702.00	11,233.40
103 Loose Plate	4,760.36	10,000.00	-5,239.64
103.5 2019 Income Received 2020	0.00	0.00	0.00
104 Sunday School	0.00	0.00	0.00
105 Special Services	6,464.20	7,500.00	-1,035.80
106 Wednesday Evening Meal	2,569.80	1,000.00	1,569.80
107 Rental	525.00	500.00	25.00
108 NHN Utility Contribution	1,508.87	1,500.00	8.87
109 Music Festival	0.00	6,000.00	-6,000.00
110 Thrivent Choice	641.00	400.00	241.00
111 Altar Flowers	1,358.12	1,100.00	258.12
112 Coffee/Cookies	20.03	100.00	-79.97
113 Bank Interest	271.92	350.00	-78.08
114 Other Income	197.00	1,000.00	-803.00
115 Additional Income Needed	2,050.00	49,902.57	-47,852.57
116 Paycheck Protection Program	0.00	0.00	0.00
Total 100 Income Accounts	<u>382,916.44</u>	<u>430,668.57</u>	<u>-47,752.13</u>
Total Income	<u>382,916.44</u>	<u>430,668.57</u>	<u>-47,752.13</u>
Gross Profit	<u>382,916.44</u>	<u>430,668.57</u>	<u>-47,752.13</u>
Expense			
200 Budgeted Expenses			
Pastors & Lay Staff			
Total Pastors & Lay Staff	<u>292,417.29</u>	<u>343,513.57</u>	<u>-51,096.28</u>
300 Office Administration			
301 Postage			
301.5 Postage - Covid Related	196.16	300.00	-103.84
301 Postage - Other	2,403.44	2,200.00	203.44
Total 301 Postage	<u>2,599.60</u>	<u>2,500.00</u>	<u>99.60</u>
302 Equip & Maint.			
303 Copier & Printer Purchase	7,042.25	7,100.00	-57.75
304 Maint Service	0.00	0.00	0.00
305 Toner & other supplies	0.00	0.00	0.00
Total 302 Equip & Maint.	<u>7,042.25</u>	<u>7,100.00</u>	<u>-57.75</u>
306 Computer Equip			
307 Computer Equip Purchase	0.00	1,000.00	-1,000.00
308 Computer Maint	0.00	500.00	-500.00
309 Computer Software	663.51	1,000.00	-336.49
309.5 Computer Software - Covid	0.00	350.00	-350.00
310 Computer Equip Other	0.00	0.00	0.00
Total 306 Computer Equip	<u>663.51</u>	<u>2,850.00</u>	<u>-2,186.49</u>
311 Audio Visual Equip			
312 Equip Maint & Other	0.00	500.00	-500.00
311 Audio Visual Equip - Other	38.64	500.00	-461.36
Total 311 Audio Visual Equip	<u>38.64</u>	<u>1,000.00</u>	<u>-961.36</u>
313 Office Supplies			
313.5 Office Supplies - Covid	0.00	150.00	-150.00
314 Copier & Printer Paper	537.45	1,000.00	-462.55
313 Office Supplies - Other	920.71	750.00	170.71
Total 313 Office Supplies	<u>1,458.16</u>	<u>1,900.00</u>	<u>-441.84</u>
315 Printing	653.06	300.00	353.06

St. Stephen Lutheran Church
Budget vs Actual (Current Fund)
January through December 2021

	<u>Jan - Dec 21</u>	<u>Budget</u>	<u>\$ Over Budget</u>
316 Office Admin Other	0.00	0.00	0.00
Total 300 Office Administration	12,455.22	15,650.00	-3,194.78
320 Church Administration			
321 Memberships	165.00	300.00	-135.00
322 Insurance	18,376.34	16,500.00	1,876.34
323 Conventions	0.00	650.00	-650.00
324 Bank Fees	50.00	200.00	-150.00
325 Electronic Banking Fees	622.58	750.00	-127.42
326 Church Council	368.64	300.00	68.64
327 Church Admin Other	100.00	0.00	100.00
Total 320 Church Administration	19,682.56	18,700.00	982.56
330 Church Operations			
331 Natural Gas	7,097.42	7,500.00	-402.58
332 Electricity	10,157.72	10,000.00	157.72
333 Communications			
334 Telephone	1,288.32	1,320.00	-31.68
335 Internet	2,155.93	1,200.00	955.93
336 WEB Host	1,418.00	1,675.00	-257.00
Total 333 Communications	4,862.25	4,195.00	667.25
337 Water / Sewer	327.69	400.00	-72.31
338 Security	451.88	550.00	-98.12
339 Church Operations Other	309.99	0.00	309.99
Total 330 Church Operations	23,206.95	22,645.00	561.95
340 Maintenance			
341 Kitchen	90.61	100.00	-9.39
342 Mats & Mops	0.00	0.00	0.00
343 Snowplowing	3,495.14	2,750.00	745.14
344 Lawn Supplies	591.92	600.00	-8.08
345 Repairs	297.98	300.00	-2.02
346 Custodial Supplies	1,322.27	300.00	1,022.27
346.5 Custodial Supplies Covid	24.98	600.00	-575.02
347 Garbage	4,564.78	3,500.00	1,064.78
348 Pest Control	831.60	500.00	331.60
349 Maintenance Other	0.00	0.00	0.00
Total 340 Maintenance	11,219.28	8,650.00	2,569.28
350 Children's Ministry			
351 General	0.00	125.00	-125.00
351.5 General - Covid	0.00	100.00	-100.00
352 Curriculum	146.35	350.00	-203.65
353 Supplies	137.12	100.00	37.12
354 Bibles	106.34	100.00	6.34
355 Resources	255.02	200.00	55.02
356 Cradle Roll	0.00	150.00	-150.00
357 Baptism Gifts	18.03	125.00	-106.97
358 Christmas Program	0.00	75.00	-75.00
359 Vacation Bible School	248.05	100.00	148.05
360 Family Ministry	0.00	100.00	-100.00
361 Library	19.95	75.00	-55.05
362 Wed Night Program	0.00	150.00	-150.00
363 Nursery	0.00	100.00	-100.00
364 Teacher Trng & Recognition	0.00	100.00	-100.00
365 Children's Ministry Other	52.84	0.00	52.84
Total 350 Children's Ministry	983.70	1,950.00	-966.30
370 Youth Ministry			

St. Stephen Lutheran Church
Budget vs Actual (Current Fund)
January through December 2021

	<u>Jan - Dec 21</u>	<u>Budget</u>	<u>\$ Over Budget</u>
371 General	228.61	250.00	-21.39
371.5 General - Covid	0.00	250.00	-250.00
372 Sixth Grade Events	121.14	200.00	-78.86
373 Middle School Events	100.00	400.00	-300.00
374 Senior High Events	70.39	400.00	-329.61
375 TIM Team Events	0.00	0.00	0.00
376 Confirmation	312.96	500.00	-187.04
377 Seventh Grade Bibles	0.00	150.00	-150.00
378 Program Devel & Promotions	0.00	100.00	-100.00
379 Graduation Gifts	35.97	250.00	-214.03
380 Education	0.00	150.00	-150.00
381 Chaperone Expenses	438.80	900.00	-461.20
382 Youth Ministry Other	0.00	0.00	0.00
383 National Youth Gathering	0.00	0.00	0.00
Total 370 Youth Ministry	<u>1,307.87</u>	<u>3,550.00</u>	<u>-2,242.13</u>
400 Worship & Music			
401 General	18.85	350.00	-331.15
402 Choir Music	0.00	100.00	-100.00
403 Bulletins	34.96	200.00	-165.04
404 Communion Supply	168.02	350.00	-181.98
404.5 Communion Supply Covid	146.89	250.00	-103.11
405 Candles	413.30	200.00	213.30
406 Christmas Decorations	0.00	400.00	-400.00
407 Organ & Piano Tuning	856.00	800.00	56.00
408 Flowers	1,731.99	1,700.00	31.99
409 Worship Resources	893.21	0.00	893.21
409.1 Worship Resources	0.00	300.00	-300.00
409.2 Digital Subscriptions	168.58	300.00	-131.42
409.3 Random AV Hardware	814.76	300.00	514.76
409.50 Worship Resources Covid	898.06	300.00	598.06
410 Copyright	852.00	1,000.00	-148.00
411 Robe Cleaning	0.00	0.00	0.00
412 Supply Organist	0.00	0.00	0.00
413 Special Music	0.00	200.00	-200.00
414 School Year Events	47.55	0.00	47.55
415 Summer Events	0.00	200.00	-200.00
416 Worship & Music Other	0.00	0.00	0.00
Total 400 Worship & Music	<u>7,044.17</u>	<u>6,950.00</u>	<u>94.17</u>
420 Evangelism			
421 Evangelism General	0.00	0.00	0.00
422 Evangelism Ministry Team	0.00	0.00	0.00
423 Advertising	2,194.25	2,300.00	-105.75
423.5 Advertising Covid	0.00	200.00	-200.00
424 Live Nativity	555.75	1,000.00	-444.25
425 Trunks N Treats	0.00	250.00	-250.00
426 Nite to Unite	0.00	250.00	-250.00
427 Evangelism Other	0.00	0.00	0.00
427.5 Evangelism Covid	0.00	100.00	-100.00
Total 420 Evangelism	<u>2,750.00</u>	<u>4,100.00</u>	<u>-1,350.00</u>
430 Fellowship			
431 Fellowship General	0.00	100.00	-100.00
431.5 Fellowship Covid	0.00	250.00	-250.00
432 Senior & Retirees	0.00	0.00	0.00
433 Coffee & Cookies	0.00	160.00	-160.00
434 Special Fellowship Events	0.00	50.00	-50.00

St. Stephen Lutheran Church
Budget vs Actual (Current Fund)
 January through December 2021

	<u>Jan - Dec 21</u>	<u>Budget</u>	<u>\$ Over Budget</u>
435 Progressive Dinner	0.00	0.00	0.00
436 Music Festival & Auction	0.00	1,000.00	-1,000.00
437 Wed Evening Meal	2,023.23	1,750.00	273.23
438 Rally Day Sunday	238.19	600.00	-361.81
439 Fellowship Other	0.00	0.00	0.00
430 Fellowship - Other	0.00	0.00	0.00
Total 430 Fellowship	<u>2,261.42</u>	<u>3,910.00</u>	<u>-1,648.58</u>
440 Stewardship			
441 Stewardship General	0.00	0.00	0.00
441.5 Stewardship General Covid	0.00	50.00	-50.00
442 Envelopes	448.82	800.00	-351.18
Total 440 Stewardship	<u>448.82</u>	<u>850.00</u>	<u>-401.18</u>
450 Congregation & Com Ministry			
452 Foodshelf & Families	0.00	0.00	0.00
453 Befrienders	0.00	0.00	0.00
455 Cong & Com Ministry Other	0.00	100.00	-100.00
Total 450 Congregation & Com Ministry	<u>0.00</u>	<u>100.00</u>	<u>-100.00</u>
456 Adult Learning	0.00	100.00	-100.00
Total 200 Budgeted Expenses	<u>373,777.28</u>	<u>430,668.57</u>	<u>-56,891.29</u>
Total Expense	<u>373,777.28</u>	<u>430,668.57</u>	<u>-56,891.29</u>
Net Ordinary Income	<u>9,139.16</u>	<u>0.00</u>	<u>9,139.16</u>
Net Income	<u>9,139.16</u>	<u>0.00</u>	<u>9,139.16</u>

St. Stephen Lutheran Church
Special Designated Accounts
 January through December 2021

Jan - Dec 21

Other Income/Expense

Other Income

800 Special Designated Fund

800.01 Special Designated Accts

800.20 Adult Learning	357.95
800.26 AI - Anon	0.00
800.30 Audio/visual/Sound	564.13
800.35 Digital Ministry	4,535.76
800.40 Bell Choir	171.21
800.45 Bibles	20.00
800.50 Boutique	1,954.36
800.60 Bunco	0.00
800.70 Children's Ministries	1,101.93
800.75 Childrens' Library	100.00
800.80 Popcorn Fundraiser	32.00
800.85 Christmas Stories Vol 2	120.00
801.40 Cruisers	1,405.30
801.45 Womens Tea	151.42
801.50 Easter/Christmas garden	-46.10
801.70 Food Shelf	0.00
802.15 General Spec Desig Fund	51.07
802.20 Kitchen	488.83
802.21 Kitchen Refrigerator	200.00
802.25 Landscaping	292.46
802.30 Library	-228.58
802.40 Nursery	185.29
802.45 156 CD Fundraiser	260.00
802.60 Pastor's Discretionary	3,901.49
802.70 Pastor's Gifts	0.00
802.80 Photo Directory	-70.00
802.90 Prayer Shawl Ministry	25.00
803.10 Progresive Dinner	410.93
803.20 Puppet Ministry	0.00
803.55 OWLS, Senior Retirees	118.97
803.70 Relay for Life	0.00
803.75 Relay for Life - Youth	255.00
804.30 Superbowl Fundraiser	45.00
804.40 Tables and Chairs	160.00
804.50 Thanksgiving Meal	-244.96
804.70 Wedding & Funeral Fund	784.74
804.80 WELCA (funerals)	707.14
804.85 Yogadevotion	32.50
804.90 Youth Accounts	0.00
805.15 Confirmation	979.54
805.30 Youth General	1,687.65
805.40 Youth Gathering Trip	0.00
805.45 Youth Adventure Trip	59.24
805.47 Youth Mission Trip - Tec	2,416.69
805.48 Youth Mission Trip - SF	1,014.56
805.50 Youth Room	0.00

Total 800.01 Special Designated Accts	<u>24,000.52</u>
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810.00 Funding Accounts

810.10 Youth Scholarship Univ	1,858.14
810.20 Youth Scholar Pd Prog	300.00
810.40 General Endowment Fund	6,105.00

St. Stephen Lutheran Church
Special Designated Accounts
January through December 2021

	<u>Jan - Dec 21</u>
810.50 Punky Jackson Children's	2,601.69
810.60 Smith Family Fund	2,143.48
810.80 Window Lighting Fund	6,189.57
810.00 Funding Accounts - Other	0.00
Total 810.00 Funding Accounts	19,197.88
820 Tanzania Accounts	
820.05 Tanzania General Fund	4,903.09
820.10 Tanzania Mission Trip	3,397.38
820.11 Tanzania Dispensary	0.00
820.15 Tz Basket Fund	472.50
820.20 Tanzania Scholarship Fd	11,879.98
820.30 Tanzania Well Project	0.00
820.40 Tanzania Medical Spls	100.00
820.50 Lukani Motorbike	854.00
820.60 Pastor Comoro Visit	363.44
820.70 Lukani Church Roof Proj	0.00
820.80 Children's Offering	11.90
820.90 Comoro Support	0.00
820.95 Agriculture Project	0.00
820 Tanzania Accounts - Other	0.00
Total 820 Tanzania Accounts	21,982.29
825 Tecate Accounts	
825.10 Tecate Mission Trip	2,900.00
825.20 Tecate Instrument Fund	0.00
825.30 Tecate Orphanage Support	0.00
825 Tecate Accounts - Other	0.00
Total 825 Tecate Accounts	2,900.00
830 Special Des Memorial Accts	
830.05 Other	0.00
830.24 Appel, Dorothy Memorial	917.00
830.26 Bendickson Joan Memorial	2,246.97
830.27 Bendickson, Don Memorial	185.00
830.28 Benson, Lowell Memorial	20.00
830.31 Bathen, Jeff Mem	515.00
830.32 Bathen, Marge Memorial	380.00
830.33 Branwall, Arlene Memoria	1,764.83
830.39 Brosi, Lois Memorial	70.00
830.73 Geisler, Memorial	50.00
830.76 Claassen, Helen Memorial	1,605.00
830.94 Demarey, Sedelle Memoria	175.00
830.98 Dignin, Mary & Mel Mem	0.00
831.00 Felland, Gordon Memorial	0.30
831.01 Freshwater, Joan Memoria	145.00
831.03 Hondlik, Ed Memorial Fun	0.26
831.22 Johnson, Elaine Memorial	496.00
831.40 General Memorial Fund	400.00
831.76 Garrett, Bruce Mem	210.90
831.77 Garrett Tom, Memorial	623.00
831.79 Gates, Beverly Memorial	560.00
831.83 Geyer, Bob Memorial	1,135.00
831.91 Holton, Harold Mem	0.00
831.93 Jensen, Arnie Memorial	20.00
831.95 King Marge Memorial	1,124.00
831.97 Krey, Paul Memorial	25.00
832.43 Arlin Moeller Memorial	250.00

St. Stephen Lutheran Church
Special Designated Accounts
January through December 2021

	<u>Jan - Dec 21</u>
832.44 Ester Molitor Mem Fund	0.61
832.45 Mohelski Family Mem	0.00
832.51 Moren, Tom Memorial	255.00
832.81 Peck, Wendell Mem	570.00
832.83 Peck, Lorna Mem	795.00
832.85 Peterson Gladys Memorial	330.00
832.95 Redepenning, Floyd Mem	1,000.00
833.23 Skudlarski Julie Memoria	315.00
833.29 O'Brien-Teegarden Memor	0.00
833.30 Olson, M Memorial	360.00
833.31 Westeberg, Dean Mem	0.00
833.69 Caroline Felland Mem	149.00
833.74 Larry Ogden Memorial	670.00
833.75 Jack Gerver Memorial	480.00
Total 830 Special Des Memorial Accts	<u>17,842.87</u>
Total 800 Special Designated Fund	<u>85,923.56</u>
Total Other Income	<u>85,923.56</u>
Net Other Income	<u>85,923.56</u>
Net Income	<u><u>85,923.56</u></u>

St. Stephen Lutheran Church
2021 Annual Report

**2022
Proposed
Budget**

St. Stephen Lutheran Church Budget vs Actual (Current Fund)

January through December 2021

		Jan - Dec 2021	2021 Budget	Council Approved 2% Salary Increase 2022 Proposed Budget
Ordinary Income/Expense				
Income				
100 Income Accounts				
	101 Carry over Balance	20,614.74	20,614.00	9,139.16
	102 Envelope Income	341,935.40	330,702.00	320,679.00
	103 Loose Plate	4,760.36	10,000.00	6,000.00
	103.5 2019 Income Received 2020	0.00	0.00	0.00
	104 Sunday School	0.00	0.00	0.00
	105 Special Services	6,464.20	7,500.00	11,000.00
	106 Wednesday Evening Meal	2,569.80	1,000.00	3,600.00
	107 Rental	525.00	500.00	1,000.00
	108 NHN Utility Contribution	1,508.87	1,500.00	2,100.00
	109 Music Festival	0.00	6,000.00	0.00
	110 Thrivent Choice	641.00	400.00	1,000.00
	111 Altar Flowers	1,358.12	1,100.00	1,200.00
	112 Coffee/Cookies	20.03	100.00	250.00
	113 Bank Interest	271.92	350.00	250.00
	114 Other Income	197.00	1,000.00	250.00
	115 Additional Income Needed	2,050.00	49,902.57	54,245.33
	116 Paycheck Protection Program	0.00	0.00	0.00
	Total 100 Income Accounts	382,916.44	430,668.57	410,713.49
	Total Income	382,916.44	430,668.57	410,713.49
	Gross Profit	382,916.44	430,668.57	410,713.49
Expense				
200 Budgeted Expenses				
Pastors & Lay Staff				
	Total Pastors & Lay Staff	291,417.29	343,513.57	321,648.49
300 Office Administration				
301 Postage				
	301.5 Postage - Covid Related	196.16	300.00	0.00
	301 Postage - Other	2,403.44	2,200.00	2,700.00
	Total 301 Postage	2,599.60	2,500.00	2,700.00
302 Equip & Maint.				
	303 Copier & Printer Purchase	7,042.25	7,100.00	7,000.00
	304 Maint Service	0.00	0.00	0.00
	305 Toner & other supplies	0.00	0.00	0.00
	Total 302 Equip & Maint.	7,042.25	7,100.00	7,000.00
306 Computer Equip				
	307 Computer Equip Purchase	0.00	1,000.00	1,000.00
	308 Computer Maint	0.00	500.00	750.00
	309 Computer Software	663.51	1,000.00	750.00
	309.5 Computer Software - Covid	0.00	350.00	0.00
	310 Computer Equip Other	0.00	0.00	250.00
	Total 306 Computer Equip	663.51	2,850.00	2,750.00
311 Audio Visual Equip				
	312 Equip Maint & Other	0.00	500.00	500.00
	311 Audio Visual Equip - Other	38.64	500.00	0.00
	Total 311 Audio Visual Equip	38.64	1,000.00	500.00
313 Office Supplies				
	313.5 Office Supplies - Covid	0.00	150.00	0.00
	314 Copier & Printer Paper	537.45	1,000.00	750.00
	313 Office Supplies - Other	920.71	750.00	1,000.00

St. Stephen Lutheran Church Budget vs Actual (Current Fund)

January through December 2021

				Council Approved 2% Salary Increase
		Jan - Dec 2021	2021 Budget	2022 Proposed Budget
	Total 313 Office Supplies	1,458.16	1,900.00	1,750.00
	315 Printing	653.06	300.00	650.00
	316 Office Admin Other	0.00	0.00	0.00
	300 Office Administration - Other	0.00		0.00
	Total 300 Office Administration	12,455.22	15,650.00	15,350.00
	320 Church Administration			
	321 Memberships	165.00	300.00	200.00
	322 Insurance	18,376.34	16,500.00	18,400.00
	323 Conventions	0.00	650.00	500.00
	324 Bank Fees	50.00	200.00	75.00
	325 Electronic Banking Fees	622.58	750.00	625.00
	326 Church Council	368.64	300.00	300.00
	327 Church Admin Other	100.00	0.00	100.00
	Total 320 Church Administration	19,682.56	18,700.00	20,200.00
	330 Church Operations			
	331 Natural Gas	7,097.42	7,500.00	7,500.00
	332 Electricity	10,157.72	10,000.00	10,000.00
	333 Communications			
	334 Telephone	1,288.32	1,320.00	1,320.00
	335 Internet	2,155.93	1,200.00	2,300.00
	336 WEB Host	1,418.00	1,675.00	1,430.00
	Total 333 Communications	4,862.25	4,195.00	5,050.00
	337 Water / Sewer	327.69	400.00	425.00
	338 Security	451.88	550.00	500.00
	339 Church Operations Other	309.99	0.00	0.00
	Total 330 Church Operations	23,206.95	22,645.00	23,475.00
	340 Maintenance			
	341 Kitchen	90.61	100.00	100.00
	342 Mats & Mops	0.00	0.00	0.00
	343 Snowplowing	3,495.14	2,750.00	2,750.00
	344 Lawn Supplies	591.92	600.00	600.00
	345 Repairs	297.98	300.00	300.00
	346 Custodial Supplies	1,322.27	300.00	1,200.00
	346.5 Custodial Supplies Covid	24.98	600.00	0.00
	347 Garbage	4,564.78	3,500.00	5,040.00
	348 Pest Control	831.60	500.00	500.00
	349 Maintenance Other	0.00	0.00	0.00
	Total 340 Maintenance	11,219.28	8,650.00	10,490.00
	350 Children's Ministry			
	351 General	0.00	125.00	125.00
	351.5 General - Covid	0.00	100.00	0.00
	352 Curriculum	146.35	350.00	200.00
	353 Supplies	137.12	100.00	100.00
	354 Bibles	106.34	100.00	75.00
	355 Resources	255.02	200.00	275.00
	356 Cradle Roll	0.00	150.00	100.00
	357 Baptism Gifts	18.03	125.00	75.00
	358 Christmas Program	0.00	75.00	50.00
	359 Vacation Bible School	248.05	100.00	900.00
	360 Family Ministry	0.00	100.00	0.00
	361 Library	19.95	75.00	75.00
	362 Wed Night Program	0.00	150.00	0.00

St. Stephen Lutheran Church Budget vs Actual (Current Fund)

January through December 2021

			Council Approved 2% Salary Increase
			2022 Proposed Budget
	Jan - Dec 2021	2021 Budget	
363 Nursery	0.00	100.00	0.00
364 Teacher Trng & Recognition	0.00	100.00	25.00
365 Children's Ministry Other	52.84	0.00	0.00
Total 350 Children's Ministry	983.70	1,950.00	2,000.00
370 Youth Ministry			
371 General	228.61	250.00	350.00
371.5 General - Covid	0.00	250.00	0.00
372 Sixth Grade Events	121.14	200.00	100.00
373 Middle School Events	100.00	400.00	100.00
374 Senior High Events	70.39	400.00	400.00
375 TIM Team Events	0.00	0.00	0.00
376 Confirmation	312.96	500.00	600.00
377 Seventh Grade Bibles	0.00	150.00	150.00
378 Program Devel & Promotions	0.00	100.00	0.00
379 Graduation Gifts	35.97	250.00	200.00
380 Education	0.00	150.00	0.00
381 Chaperone Expenses	438.80	900.00	500.00
382 Youth Ministry Other	0.00	0.00	0.00
383 National Youth Gathering	0.00	0.00	1,000.00
Total 370 Youth Ministry	1,307.87	3,550.00	3,400.00
400 Worship & Music			
401 General	18.85	350.00	350.00
402 Choir Music	0.00	100.00	100.00
403 Bulletins	34.96	200.00	200.00
404 Communion Supply	168.02	350.00	350.00
404.5 Communion Supply Covid	146.89	250.00	0.00
405 Candles	413.30	200.00	300.00
406 Christmas Decorations	0.00	400.00	400.00
407 Organ & Piano Tuning	856.00	800.00	800.00
408 Flowers	1,731.99	1,700.00	1,750.00
409 Worship Resources	893.21	0.00	1,000.00
409.1 Worship Resources	0.00	300.00	0.00
409.2 Digital Subscriptions	168.58	300.00	300.00
409.3 Random AV Hardware	814.76	300.00	1,000.00
409.50 Worship Resources Covid	898.06	300.00	0.00
410 Copyright	852.00	1,000.00	875.00
411 Robe Cleaning	0.00	0.00	0.00
412 Supply Organist	0.00	0.00	0.00
413 Special Music	0.00	200.00	200.00
414 School Year Events	47.55	0.00	0.00
415 Summer Events	0.00	200.00	200.00
416 Worship & Music Other	0.00	0.00	0.00
Total 400 Worship & Music	7,044.17	6,950.00	7,825.00
420 Evangelism			
421 Evangelism General	0.00	0.00	0.00
422 Evangelism Ministry Team	0.00	0.00	0.00
423 Advertising	2,194.25	2,300.00	2,300.00
423.5 Advertising Covid	0.00	200.00	0.00
424 Live Nativity	555.75	1,000.00	725.00
425 Trunks N Treats	0.00	250.00	200.00
426 Nite to Unite	0.00	250.00	250.00
427 Evangelism Other	0.00	0.00	0.00

St. Stephen Lutheran Church Budget vs Actual (Current Fund)

January through December 2021

		Jan - Dec 2021	2021 Budget	Council Approved 2% Salary Increase 2022 Proposed Budget
	427.5 Evangelism Covid	0.00	100.00	0.00
	Total 420 Evangelism	2,750.00	4,100.00	3,475.00
	430 Fellowship			
	431 Fellowship General	0.00	100.00	0.00
	431.5 Fellowship Covid	0.00	250.00	0.00
	432 Senior & Retirees	0.00	0.00	0.00
	433 Coffee & Cookies	0.00	160.00	150.00
	434 Special Fellowship Events	0.00	50.00	0.00
	435 Progressive Dinner	0.00	0.00	0.00
	436 Music Festival & Auction	0.00	1,000.00	0.00
	437 Wed Evening Meal	2,023.23	1,750.00	2,000.00
	438 Rally Day Sunday	238.19	600.00	250.00
	439 Fellowship Other	0.00	0.00	0.00
	430 Fellowship - Other	0.00	0.00	0.00
	Total 430 Fellowship	2,261.42	3,910.00	2,400.00
	440 Stewardship			
	441 Stewardship General	0.00	0.00	0.00
	441.5 Stewardship General Covid	0.00	50.00	0.00
	442 Envelopes	448.82	800.00	450.00
	Total 440 Stewardship	448.82	850.00	450.00
	450 Congregation & Com Ministry			
	452 Foodshelf & Families	0.00	0.00	
	453 Befrienders	0.00	0.00	0.00
	455 Cong & Com Ministry Other	0.00	100.00	0.00
	Total 450 Congregation & Com Ministry	0.00	100.00	0.00
	456 Adult Learning	0.00	100.00	0.00
	Total 200 Budgeted Expenses	373,777.28	430,668.57	410,713.49
	Total Expense	373,777.28	430,668.57	410,713.49
	Net Ordinary Income	9,139.16	0.00	0.00
	Net Income	9,139.16	0.00	0.00

St. Stephen Lutheran Church Budget vs. Actual (Benevolence Fund)

January through December 2021

	Jan - Dec 2021 Actual	2021 Budget	2022 Proposed Budget
Ordinary Income/Expense			
Income			
500 Benevolence			
501 Benevolence Income			
502 Pledges	18,482.50	18,400.00	18,500.00
504 Carryover Balance	132.37	132.37	1,249.87
Total 501 Benevolence Income	18,614.87	18,532.37	19,749.87
Total 500 Benevolence	18,614.87	18,532.37	19,749.87
Total Income	18,614.87	18,532.37	19,749.87
Gross Profit	18,614.87	18,532.37	19,749.87
Expense			
510 Benevolence Expense			
511 Synod & ELCA	12,000.00	12,000.00	12,000.00
513 Camping Ministry	0.00	0.00	0.00
514 Wapogaset Bible Camp	0.00	0.00	0.00
515 Camperships	65.00	250.00	250.00
516 Other Camping Ministries	0.00	0.00	0.00
517 Lutheran Social Service	0.00	0.00	0.00
519 Auction Charity	0.00	0.00	0.00
520 Companion Cong. Lukani	4,100.00	4,100.00	5,400.00
521 Tecate Mission	1,200.00	1,200.00	1,200.00
522 Food Shelf & Families	0.00	0.00	0.00
524 Benevolence Other	0.00	0.00	200.00
525 St. Stephen Youth Mission	0.00	0.00	0.00
Total 510 Benevolence Expense	17,365.00	17,550.00	19,050.00
Total Expense	17,365.00	17,550.00	19,050.00
Net Ordinary Income	1,249.87	982.37	699.87
Net Income	1,249.87	982.37	699.87

St. Stephen Lutheran Church Budget vs. Actual (Capital Fund)

January through December 2021

				Jan - Dec 2021 Actual	2021 Budget	2022 Proposed Budget
Ordinary Income/Expense						
Income						
600 Capital Fund						
601 Capital Fund Income						
602 Neighbors Helping Neighbors				6,000.00	6,000.00	6,000.00
603 Capital Fund Envelope				24,116.84	29,400.00	25,000.00
604 Capital Fund Other/Transfer				57,706.83	0.00	5,000.00
605 Carryover Balance				117,953.01	117,953.01	97,886.06
Total 601 Capital Fund Income				205,776.68	153,353.01	133,886.06
Total 600 Capital Fund				205,776.68	153,353.01	133,886.06
Total Income				205,776.68	153,353.01	133,886.06
Gross Profit				205,776.68	153,353.01	133,886.06
Expense						
605 Capital Fund Expenses						
605.1 Capital Audio Video Exp				20,976.83	0.00	5,000.00
605 Capital Fund Expenses - Other				86,913.79	46,000.00	32,000.00
Total 605 Capital Fund Expenses				107,890.62	46,000.00	37,000.00
Total Expense				107,890.62	46,000.00	37,000.00
Net Ordinary Income				97,886.06	107,353.01	96,886.06
Net Income				97,886.06	107,353.01	96,886.06

St. Stephen Lutheran Church Budget vs. Actual (Cash Reserve Fund)

January through December 2021

	Jan - Dec 2021 Actual	2021 Budget	2022 Proposed Budget
Ordinary Income/Expense			
Income			
700 Cash Reserve Fund			
701.00 Cash Reserve Fund Income	10,694.14	12,000.00	12,000.00
702 Carryover Balance	17,641.21	17,641.21	28,335.35
Total 700 Cash Reserve Fund	28,335.35	29,641.21	40,335.35
Total Income	28,335.35	29,641.21	40,335.35
Gross Profit	28,335.35	29,641.21	40,335.35
Net Ordinary Income	28,335.35	29,641.21	40,335.35
Net Income	28,335.35	29,641.21	40,335.35

St. Stephen Lutheran Church

2021 Annual Report

**Special
Reports**



SAINT PAUL AREA SYNOD
EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA

2021 Annual Report of the Synod

by Bishop Patricia Lull | January 2022

***"Let us hold fast to the confession of our faith without wavering,
for he who has promised is faithful."*** - Hebrews 10:23



This past year has been a wild ride. COVID-19 vaccinations opened a roadway to imagine more in-person gatherings just as political rancor made it less attractive to be together with those with views other than our own. Summer brought better weather for worshipping outdoors, fall programming was planned, and then a rise in infections from the Delta variant caused new caution and restraint in our church gatherings.

Across the synod, book groups were launched, tackling tough questions of racial justice and long overlooked inequities in communities of color. Leaders embraced important soul work to understand their own bias and resistance to change. Congregation councils wrestled in new ways to understand what it means to be the church today. Live streaming became common place in sanctuaries large and small.

Looking back, 2021 was both a tough year and a transformative time. Last January, did any of us really think we would still be wearing masks and keeping social distance the following Christmas? Yet, when challenged in so many ways, in congregation after congregation, we learned to **hold fast** to God's promised faithfulness; a wild ride indeed.

Undeterred by not being able to gather in person, at the digital Synod Assembly in mid-May, we launched the synod-wide Planting Hope Campaign. Over the next two years we will work together to raise \$2.75 million dollars to deepen the Spirit's work within and beyond the 109 congregations and mission starts of the synod. Your participation will help us:

- Invite neighbors into life in Christ;
- Renew the congregations of the synod;
- Raise up the next generations of leaders;
- Invest in a transformative project on the East Side of St. Paul
- with Lutheran Social Service of Minnesota.

The congregational phase begins now in early 2022 with congregations setting aside six weeks this year to introduce the campaign and to invite financial participation. More information on the Planting Hope Campaign can be found at <https://spas-elca.org/planting-hope/>.

This synod places high emphasis on raising up the leaders needed for the work of this synod and across the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. Currently, 38 persons are in the candidacy process, preparing to serve as deacons or pastors. Five candidates were ordained this past year for service in the Saint Paul Area Synod. They include Pastor Tammy Wilkerson, Pastor Teleen Saunders, Pastor Amy Mihelich-Smith, Pastor Linqing Chu and Pastor Bristol Huffman Reading.

105 University Avenue West, St. Paul MN 55103
651-224-4313 | www.spas-elca.org

In addition, during 2021, 20 persons were installed in new calls in congregations or in specialized ministries. That's a lot of call committee meetings, prayerful deliberations, and congregational meetings. How grateful we can all be that this work did not stop during the disruptions of the pandemic.

Amid the many changes in our communities, strong ministry requires lifelong learning. We are grateful to be in the third year of a generous grant from the Lilly Endowment to support the ongoing learning of pastors and deacons. In 2021, the nine members of the first round of the Second Act Cohort, for pastors and deacons in years four through 10 of public ministry wrapped up their two years together. Ten other pastors and deacons will form a second cohort in early 2022. They will be accompanied by mentors, more experienced clergy with a commitment to walk with rising leaders. Also, the Kubernesis Seminar, for those discerning a call to senior leadership positions, continues to meet quarterly and is eagerly anticipating their capstone sailing trip adventure in August of 2022. A third cohort for Leaders of Color continues to explore how best to invest the resources from the Lilly Endowment to deepen community, learning and support.

It is not enough to have strong, agile pastors and deacons; resilient lay leadership is also necessary for congregations to thrive. This past year, five congregations participated in a Liberating Structures cohort, learning together how to embrace new opportunities for deepening faith and expanded commitment to others beyond the congregation's walls. Three additional congregations are pursuing a tailor-made renewal process. Six congregations have participated in community listening and engagement training. Do you recognize your congregation's involvement here? If not, the synod staff is here to assist you.

While mission support for synod and ELCA churchwide work has been shared at 96% of that budgeted for the year, many congregations do worry about money matters and seek to strengthen their stewardship skills. This past year, nine congregations – perhaps including yours – participated in a year-long training called Stewardship for All Seasons. It is good to remember that none of us need to navigate these days without encouragement from others.

Pandemic restrictions on global travel challenged the synod's long-standing partnerships in the Iringa Diocese of Tanzania and in Guatemala but Zoom and video connections opened new ways to be a church that is both local and global. We are especially grateful that in March, Astine and Ryan Bose were able to begin their two years of volunteer service with Bega Kwa Bega in Iringa. God has shown us and our global partners new ways to be connected, habits which will endure long after the pandemic winds down.

Let me end with a special word of thanks to the synod staff. Along with Ryan and Astine Bose, Rolf Lowenberg-DeBoer joined the staff as an assistant to the bishop in March. Other staff include Michael Gold, office assistant; Pastor Justin Grimm, director for evangelical mission and assistant to the bishop; Peter Harrits, director of Bega Kwa Bega and assistant to the bishop; Deacon Krista Lind, assistant to the bishop; Anna Marsh, executive assistant to the bishop; Alicia Rodriguez, office manager; David Roinas, synod finance administrator; and Mary Smith, director of communications.

It has been a wild ride of a year and yet at every rollicking turn along the way, God's faithfulness has sustained us and those we are called to serve. **Hold fast**, we can say to one another. Please know what a joy it is for all of us to serve with you in the Saint Paul Area Synod.

Yours in God's service –



Bishop Patricia Lull



A MESSAGE FROM ELCA PRESIDING BISHOP

*Elizabeth
Eaton*

Dear friends in Christ,

The last year has been one of adapting and learning. In many places we have seen vibrant and vital ministry spring forth from changes made due to the pandemic. Digital worship opportunities have introduced to our congregations people who may never have walked into one of our buildings. Many congregations have found new ways to invite people to share their generosity through online giving. And many ministries have found just how vital they are as they continue to serve alongside people in their communities.

The first chapter of James, verse 17, reminds us that "Every generous act of giving, with every perfect gift, is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow due to change." Yes, this has been a season of change, but Scripture also reminds us that we serve a generous, steadfast God.

While we stay rooted in God's enduring, unchanging promise, God also gives us the gifts of creativity and learning. Across all three expressions of the church we have used those gifts to serve God, love our neighbor and share the good news of Jesus Christ. In this time of change, we have opened our arms wider to meet people where they are, living into the reality that we are not defined or confined by the four walls of our buildings.

Through all this, I am so grateful for your generous sharing of creativity, time, talents and resources. All good gifts do come from God, and we are called to share and use those gifts. We have and will continue to answer that call. There is still much change and learning to come, but God's steadfast love energizes us for the work God is still doing in the world through this church.

Elizabeth A. Eaton

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

"Every generous act of giving, with every perfect gift, is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow due to change."



1965 East County Road E, White Bear Lake, MN 55110
651-777-1107, www.ststephenwbl.org