



BETHLEHEM LUTHERAN CHURCH

2022 Annual Report



WORSHIP



GROW



LIVE



CARE



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BLC Annual Meeting

October 31st, 2021 at 10:15am

General: BLC's annual meeting to approve spending plans, Council and Synod Assembly nominees and other resolutions. Meeting was held in person in the BLC sanctuary also offered via Zoom.

1. Quorum established
 - 60 attendees in person
 - 11 via Zoom
2. Pastor Hoffman opened with a prayer.
 - She's grateful for team ministry of the pastors and the congregation members.
 - One word to describe 2021: Pivot.
3. Council Nominees
 - Lisa Rosenbauer: second term, Aderyn Gantner: first term, Toni Thompson: first term
 - Those in person agreed to a voice vote
 - Approve slate of nominees: M/S/A
 - i. Unanimous in person and via Zoom
4. Synod Assembly Representatives
 - Lisa Rosenbauer, Marcy Adams, Ruth Hedin (alternate)
 - Those in person agreed to a voice vote
 - Approve slate of nominees: M/S/A
 - i. Unanimous in person and via Zoom
5. 2021 Financial Review
 - Began FY with \$77k in unrestricted net assets + \$406k income - \$364k expenses - \$24k transferred to Capital Reserve = \$96k. Increase of \$18k in Operating Reserve.
 - Variances in expenses: electronics for worship was the only negative; property, fellowship and education (less in person programs), and staff comp (Pastor Hoffman's leave and open admin position) all better than budgeted. PPP loan was forgiven. Contributions about \$20k less than anticipated.
 - 2022 priorities: Invest in BLC's mission and goals, Support & serve those outside our walls, Attend to the needs of our church
 - 2022 Council Commitments: Maintain existing level of support/service to our congregation, Renew focus on stewardship, Identify Special Mission opportunities outside our walls, Task the Finance Committee to develop an investment strategy
 - Anticipating about \$400k in receipts for 2022 which is about halfway back up to 2019 contribution level, we don't plan on investment income which creates deficit budget
 - Narrative Budget: Worship: 39%, Serve: 26%, Grow: 14%, Care: 12%, Live: 9%
 - i. Worship: Patty and Dave Chaffee shared video that they were grateful for the livestream during the pandemic, although they missed the community and connections in person
 - ii. Grow: started Faith Formation for All and FAITH5

- iii. Live: Donna and Jim Berner shared video about how technology saved church connections and on doing choir and children's sermons from home
- iv. Care: started caregiver support group
- v. Serve: focusing on social/justice issues and becoming "Hunger Activists", Mike Joyce shared video about how helping other builds community and relationships

6. 2022 Spending Plans (three)

- Church Operating spending plan up to \$417,323, estimated \$17,323 deficit budget: M/S
 - i. Approved 68 yes, 1 no
- Special Missions spending plan of \$30,000 from operating reserve: M/S
 - i. Q: is there a plan for spending this money:
A: there are 5 people on an ad-hoc committee to develop recommendations, congregation can share ideas with those members
 - ii. Approved 63 yes, 5 no
- Capital Improvements spending plan not to exceed \$5,000, from capital reserve for improvements to ventilation: M/S
 - i. Q: scope to solve the problem or do research on this
A: we've already done the research, estimates are around \$5k
Q: is it for the whole building?
A: primarily just the sanctuary for now, the property committee has put together small/portable filtration units for fellowship hall/classrooms
Q: what about replacing the carpet in the sanctuary?
A: property is aware of the issue but don't have numbers of that cost yet, may need to do a special congregational meeting if that'll be done this year
Q: is noise being considered for the sanctuary unit?
A: yes
Q: can the carpet be stretched and redone?
A: we've tried this a few times but will need a long-term solution
 - ii. Approved 68 yes, 1 no

7. BLC Constitution changes

- Adopting changes to Synod model constitution made by churchwide assembly in 2019
- Adding the Treasurer as a Council Officer position
- Amendments were approved at a special congregational meeting in July, 2/3 ratification needed at annual meeting
- M/S/A, 66 yes, 0 no

8. Investment in Ministry Fund

- No formal motion needed since Council approved the resolution
- Establish an endowment fund for the next 100 years of BLC. Initial goal to get to \$100,000, once reached, the fund will begin distributing 4% annually
- Q: where will the money come from? Operating reserve or donations?
A: will not come out of operating budget, although there are other reserves/restricted funds that could be moved into the endowment, may be separate fundraising campaigns, this could be an option for people doing estate planning

Q: we fund ministries beyond BLC walls already, is this replacing that?

A: no, this is not replacing Missions & Social Concerns or their budget

Q: how will the fund be administered?

A: funds are intended to grow to \$100k then 4% gifted out

Q: can the committee change the targets/decisions?

A: the resolution creates the fund, after that the committee will create bylaws, policies, procedures, and the congregation will vote on those, the committee is working with the ELCA endowment foundation and their processes

- Approved: 50 yes, 8 no, 5 abstain

9. Meeting adjourned: M/S/A

Liana Thibault,
Council Secretary

BLC Congregational Meeting May 15, 2022 at 10:15 AM

General: A special congregational meeting was held in person in the BLC Sanctuary to approve the IMF Bylaws. General updates followed.

Council President, Lisa Meetze, called meeting to order 10:15 am with an opening prayer and reviewed the agenda. 69 members were in attendance satisfying the quorum requirement of 45 members.

Investment in Ministries Fund Discussion and Bylaw Vote:

1. Reviewed the IMF Bylaws to add to Constitution
 - The Bylaws were approved by Church Council in Feb 2022. As stated in the BLC Constitution, the Bylaws must then be approved at a legally called congregational meeting, by 2/3 vote of those attending and voting.
 - Roger Kolker provided some background information regarding the IMF Fund development process.
 - There were no questions from attendees following this presentation.
2. The meeting attendees voted by paper ballot to approve IMF Bylaws:
 - Yes - 64
 - No - 5
 - Abstain – 0

Financial Update:

Glenda Lockard, Treasurer, provided an update of BLC finances through April 2022.

- a. Receipts are 2% behind \$259,000 plan (\$5,500)
- b. Expenses better than \$252,000 YTD plan. Spent \$735 less than plan.
- c. Non payroll expenses were higher YTD (\$4,270) due to organ repairs

Questions:

- a. Are we expecting any upcoming large expenses? Glenda is not aware of anything.
- b. What is the current balance in the memorial fund? It is \$34,949.

Memorial Fund Discussion:

Church Council recommended a congregational affirmation vote to transfer \$25,000 from the Memorial Fund to the IMF to allow the account to be opened. Discussion:

- a. We currently have \$34,949 in the Memorial Fund with no requirements on how or when to use. The Memorial Fund has been used for larger projects at church.
- b. Questions:
 1. How much of Memorial Fund is restricted? Fund is self restricted – these are general memorial funds, not to be used for normal operating expenses. In the past, the fund helped purchase the baby grand piano – money was given for that purpose and was augmented with memorial funds.
 2. What does IMF stand for? Investment In Ministries
- c. Vote to was taken by paper ballot to affirm Council recommendation:
 1. yes – 56
 2. no – 10
 3. abstain - 1

Future Direction for BLC:

Our pastors talked about the future direction for BLC, and introduced our new theme, **Building Lasting Community**. Our compass will be love since Jesus told us to love one another. The discussion included the following highlights:

- a. We plan to continue with the virtual worship option, but we need to better blend the live and virtual communities.
- b. In the past, membership was a defined group. Now community is anyone taking part in mission and ministry of BLC, and they may not be church “members”. We have the opportunity for a broader reach through virtual spaces.
- c. We need to communicate better with those connecting virtually. 1st point of contact will not be in these walls – will be virtual. Some don’t attend in person at all. Need to be more experimental/entrepreneurial in future.
- d. Have started a podcast recognizing that people want to see what this community is about. This summer podcast will include interviews with people connected to this community.
- e. We will pair with other organizations and churches for bigger impact. An example is the Perinton response to Pines of Perinton fire. This inspired groups to help those who lost homes to transition to new life. Couldn’t do on our own – but by partnering with other churches/groups it was possible.
- f. Need to think creatively how we can do more of this. Want to be connected to community so we can help. Going beyond our walls.
- g. Expand traditional ways to provide support for our missions – serving beyond our walls. We can provide space to share, and stewardship will continue to be very important. IMF will provide another means to help in the future. We may even get support from people outside our walls.
- h. This is a beginning discussion, much more to come.

Motion to adjourn M/S/A

Meeting Adjourned at 11:00 with closing prayer by Pastor Amy.

Marjorie Gaul, Vice President



DALE SCHUMACHER

Dale has been a lifetime Lutheran. Teaching a Confirmation Class, ushering, and being a member of the Council are all roles that he has held over time. He first visited Bethlehem Lutheran Church when his grandson, Henry, was baptized there. And, although the pandemic delayed it, he and his wife joined BLC as soon as possible.

Beyond church, Dale has been an educator and non-profit leader. Dale holds a Bachelor's Degree in Education, a Master's Degree in Elementary Education and a Master's Degree in Educational

Administration, all from the State University of New York at Fredonia. He taught 6th grade in Middle School for several years (9) before moving into administration. As an administrator, 21 of his 33 years in education were served as Superintendent of Schools. After retiring from education, Dale served for 13 years as the Executive Director of The Learning Web in Ithaca. The Learning Web is a nonprofit youth development agency providing experiential opportunities to youth in Tompkins County.

Dale and his wife of over 50 years, Ginny, live in Bushnell's Basin. They have four children and seven grandchildren, with whom they enjoy spending as much time as possible. Dale also enjoys golf, hunting and fishing, as well as woodworking.



JULIE OWEN

Julie and her husband Jeff Cook joined BLC in 2002 along with their four children (Shelby and Sarah Cook and Alyssa and Connor Owen). Julie previously served on council from 2015-2000. In addition, Julie has participated in Breadbreakers, LYLAS, taught Sunday school and assisted with the Bread Guild. Her roles both in the church and outside of the walls of the church are dedicated to developing diverse and inclusive communities with a focus on God's grace. Julie works at Heritage Christian Services and is

actively engaged with their International Ministries program - specifically supporting people with disabilities who live in Guatemala in securing health/medical supplies, adequate housing and an education.

Julie and her husband Jeff live in Fairport and enjoy time with family, traveling, being outdoors, bicycling and sports.

Co-Pastor's Report

Last year, the Council adopted two goals to focus our energy and efforts as a congregation:

Goal 1: The BLC community is engaged in the ministry of the congregation.

Goal 2: The BLC community builds intergenerational relationships and connection.

We have focused on these goals in our work together – and that's what it has been work that we do together. This past year has been a testimony to the gift of **team ministry**. We have been able to provide consistent leadership to BLC because we have been able to do handoffs and tag-teaming as life happens. We hope that modeling partnership in this way continues to shape the congregation as a place where we are truly in the work of ministry together. We can be responsive to needs as they arise because we are in this together. Everyone's gifts are needed and everyone's presence matters. Our partnership is dynamic (both in terms of being powerful and in terms of always changing!) and we both remain deeply grateful for ministry we share!

This year threw us a number of curveballs, both as we moved through stages of the pandemic (and all of the shifting required with various mandates on masking and distancing) and as we adjusted to staffing changes. We are delighted that **Raelynn Clare has completed one full year as Director of Music** and we have appreciated not only her musical gifts but her gift for drawing out the musicality of others. In June, we received **resignations from both Bethany Trippi, who served as Coordinator for LYO for the past 2 years and Beth Schoenfeld, who served as our Office Manager and Ministry Support Coordinator for the past 8 years.** We are grateful for both of their faithful and dedicated service!

While short-staffed, we have been managing the office and communication workflow since June with the assistance of many volunteers! **Special thanks to Ruth Sleeman, Margie Gaul, Roger Kolker, Kay Slattery, Sarah Morrisette, Bob Stoltz and Sherry Cook for working closely with us and managing pieces of the work that keep Bethlehem running smoothly.**

The development of the 2023 spending plan has provided us the opportunity to reflect on the office and communication work that we have been managing since mid-June and identify the staffing we think is essential moving forward. The essential functions that are needed fall into two groups. One grouping includes calendaring, communication, and administration. The other includes support for and management of volunteers. **We look forward to adopting a staffing structure that is both sustainable and meets our ministry needs for this season of life together.**

The primary focus of our time and energy is gathering around and proclaiming the Word and administering the Sacraments. Traditionally, this happens in **worship on Sunday morning**. In response to current realities, we have adapted and added additional ways to engage with the Word. Worship has become more accessible with

technology, and we are committed to continuing the livestream. There are also more needs to ensure that everything goes smoothly. **We continue to look for creative ways to engage people in worship and the flow of Sunday mornings.** We are grateful to our volunteers even as we are always looking for more people to lend a hand! If you notice any area that is not running smoothly, we are likely aware, and welcome your help with problem-solving!

We offered **outdoor worship opportunities** for Christmas Eve, Ash Wednesday and Easter Sunday. We have recently added a **Monthly Midweek Prayer and Communion** to connect with those who are not fully shut-in, but who are not able to gather in-person as part of our current worshiping community to participate in worship. We began sending an email on Mondays called **Between Sundays** that provides a connection to the previous day of worship for people who were not able to be present and any other resources/tidbits for faith formation we have to share. We also launched a new podcast, **The Word with Bethlehem Lutheran Church**, that provides an audio recording of Sunday's gospel reading and sermon. The intended audience is our BLC community – those who have not connected through the livestream, but would welcome a chance to hear the sermon, and those who wish to reflect on the sermon more deeply during the week. We added a second weekly episode that includes conversations between the Pastors and interviews of community members on **Living the Word** in daily life.

We continue to look for ways to engage in **Crucial Conversations**. In partnership with St. Luke's Episcopal Church, we hosted a Zoom presentation and conversation on "Christian Nationalism: the Intersection of Religion and Politics" in January. It included a presentation by The Very Rev. William H Petersen, a theologian, historian and member of St. Luke's. Close to 60 individuals participated in the January 24 presentation and around 40 returned for the small group conversation the following week.

We are grateful for the efforts of the **Re-Opening Team** who guided decisions for our safety as we navigated the COVID-19 pandemic for the third year. Members included: Matt Beutel, Brian Edwards, Margie Gaul, Kristina Henry, Julie Owen, Bob Stolze, Rick Walker, and Pastor Amy. We lifted the masking requirement on June 26 which made it possible to again share food fellowship.

The year was punctuated by **100th Anniversary activities**. The 100th Anniversary Committee worked tirelessly in implementing these events and adjusting them, as needed, to suit our current circumstances. Please extend your appreciation for their work when you see them – Bob Anderson, Jim and Donna Berner, Matt and Vicki Beutel, Sherry Cook, Bob and Phyllis Stock, Doug and Celia Topping and Sue Towsley.

The adoption of the bylaws to create an Endowment – **Investment in Ministry Fund** – was overwhelmingly adopted by the congregation at the Special Congregational meeting on May 15. Great thanks to the IMF Team – Paulette Costanza, John Costanza, Mark Gaul, Roger Kolker, John Panko, and Neil Vokes – for carrying out the council's request to explore the development of an endowment fund for Bethlehem.

Throughout the year, we have asked: **how do we do church in a changing world?** Who is showing up? Where are people showing up? How are people engaging their faith? How do we meet people where they are? Reflecting on these questions has led us to try some new things this fall, including Worship for Kids, highlighting children's choir on a 6-8 week basis (so families can opt in to prepare for the next offering in worship rather than commit to a whole year), continuing to tweak how we organize worship leadership (scheduling in advance vs. recruiting volunteers before worship), drop-in time for LYO (because we noticed high-school aged kids were hanging out on Sunday morning while siblings were in confirmation or choir and wanted to give them a space to gather), and the new monthly prayer service with communion. We continue to keep our eyes and ears open for where and how people are or want to be connected. If you have thoughts, please share!

We continue to believe that BLC must clearly claim a vision for BLC's future that includes engaging people in new and different ways in the life of the congregation in order to continue equipping all people to follow Jesus.

Grateful, as always, to be in partnership with you!

Pastor Hoffman and Pastor Amy

P.S. Two personal notes:

- Pastor Amy serves this year as an **Internship supervisor** for Lisa Frauens, who is completing her preparation for ordained ministry at St. Timothy Lutheran, Geneseo. In this role, she meets weekly with Lisa for ministry supervision and also accompanies Lisa in her leadership role at St. Timothy.
- Pastor Hoffman has begun classes in a PhD program in Human Development at the University of Rochester! She is grateful for an expanded circle of conversation partners and looks forward to where and how her learnings will inform the ministry we share at BLC.

VISION, MISSION AND COMMITMENT

VISION: *Where we are headed*

BLC exists to equip every child of God to follow Jesus.

MISSION: *What we do*

Following Jesus means we:



WORSHIP the Living God: Worship glorifies God and gathers us together where we are transformed by word as well as baptism and communion and prepared to serve.

Worship is the heart of our congregational life from which everything flows. Worship provides an experience of the living God that deepens our faith and calls us to action in daily life. Worship shapes us with beautiful music, well-prepared leadership and thoughtful preaching. Worship stretches us to experience the living God in new ways but is always grounded in forming community and witnessing to an authentic Lutheran understanding of faith in Jesus Christ. Worship is energetic, thoughtful, intentional, and full of joyful noise.



GROW in Faith and Discipleship: We cultivate multiple ways to learn about and deepen faith for people of all ages and life stages, as well as those with varied faith experiences.

We provide opportunities for people to grow, learn, be challenged by and be invigorated in their faith in Jesus Christ and God's free gift of grace made known in him. We reach out to people who are new to or curious about Lutheran Christianity and welcome and integrate them into congregational life. At the same time, we seek for all members to continually develop in their journey with Christ. Age-appropriate and intergenerational learning experiences are provided throughout the week, and encouraged for all according to their interest. Parents understand that they serve as role models and primary teachers for their children about the faith. They are encouraged and supported in this vocation by being actively engaged in their own faith development. The foundation for faith development is Biblical and consistent with Lutheran Confessions.



LIVE Our Faith in Daily Life: We develop multiple points of connection between faith and daily life that extends beyond worship.

God sends us into the world and equips us for action – in our community, in our schools, at our work, in our homes and everywhere we live. Serving, learning, sharing, growing and inviting others to join with us in all we do is vital to who we are as Christians. We witness to our faith through our words and actions and encourage members to humbly minister in their daily lives in ways that serve real and known needs. In all our life, we seek to steward God's abundance.



CARE for One Another: We build and foster intergenerational relationships within the BLC family to cultivate a faith community in which each person is valued as a fellow child of God.

Relationships matter for us. We know and love one another. We value one another even when we don't agree. We share our joys and concerns. We pray for one another. We encourage each other to share our gifts with the church and community. Building relationships, growing new friendships and expressing care and support for one another are the work of the entire congregation.



SERVE Our Neighbor: We reach out to the world for the purpose of serving our neighbors near and far, especially those who are marginalized and easily forgotten.

By the power of the Holy Spirit, we are called to be the hands and feet of Christ in our world today. We do this as part of a wider church as well as through our own congregationally based ministries. We give permission to members to start ministries consistent with the teachings and traditions of our faith. We listen for the Spirit's guidance, the congregation's discernment and our neighbor's needs to identify the life cycle of each ministry. In doing this we are attentive to the gifts and passions of congregational members and allow ministries to grow, adapt or end. We seek partnerships with others for the purpose of service. In all our ministry, we seek to manifest the gifts of the Spirit for the sake of our neighbors.

COMMITMENT: *How we do the work*

Called by the Holy Spirit, trusting in the grace and love of God, each of us will:

Cultivate a safe environment that enables us to take risks and step outside our comfort zone.

We know that we have been given the gifts of God's forgiveness and grace and are called to share them with others. We understand that people often react or don't act at all because of fear. We want to create a church that believes a glorious failure is better than a mild success. We accept the changes that come as we find new ways to show and share God's love in this time and place. We extend grace to all and believe that we are all trying our best.

Meet people where they are at all ages and stages of life.

We believe that BLC should reflect the gifts, experiences, faith stories and cultures of diverse ages and multiple generations. We desire to create an environment that encourages us to intentionally work, play, and worship alongside one another. We need to be aware of who's missing and intentionally create spaces where we can learn from each other and share life together.

Recognize our God-given talents and put them to work in the world.

We believe that we all have gifts to share. We strive to use those gifts in the ministry of BLC and throughout God's Kingdom. We value everyone's contribution and understand that there are many different ways for us to respond to God's gracious love, including through our daily actions as parents, family members, friends and employees; our commitments as citizens and community members; our efforts in social service and volunteerism; our voices offered in public witness for justice; and more.

Teach, encourage and learn from one another.

We take joy and comfort in the Word of the Lord. We know that a deep understanding of God's Word prepares us to be witnesses in speech and in action of God's rich mercy in Jesus Christ. We are curious about the perspectives of others and seek to find new voices to expand our understanding. We learn through many different means, such as Sunday School and Adult Education programs, book studies and discussion groups, personal daily devotionals, and conversation with family or friends.

Understand that we are in a relationship with the wider church.

We know that we cannot be church alone and we support the ELCA vision of fostering unity among the children of God for the sake of the world. We desire to develop our relationship with the Upstate Synod, the church-wide organization, and global partners. We understand that each congregation has a variety of gifts and we seek to use BLC's unique gifts in cooperation and support of the wider church. This means facilitating the ecumenical and interreligious work of congregations, synods and church-wide ministries, supporting the reception of our full communion agreements, and accompanying others, including our interreligious partners.

Provide and allocate resources to fulfill our vision and mission.

We recognize that we are called to be faithful stewards of the tangible gifts God has so abundantly given to us, including financial resources. We strive to practice generosity in our daily life and in the life of the congregation. We understand that we should use all that God has entrusted to our care - our time, our talents and our treasures - to love God and our neighbors.

The Vision and Commitment statements were developed through the conversations held at the Council and Core Ministry Team Retreat held in November 2015, congregational potluck dinners in January and April 2016 and Cottage Meetings in January/February 2016. The Mission reflects the Purpose statements that were adopted in 2013. Collectively, the Vision, Mission and Commitments below give us clear direction about where we are going, what we are doing and how we will carry out ministry together.

Compiled: September 2017

Parish Register (through 9/31/2022)		Baptized	Confirmed	
Total Membership as of 9/30/2021		568	556	
Members Received				
	By Baptism	0	0	
Affirmation of Faith/Transfer In				
	October 3, 2021	1	1	Lucina Brogan
		2	2	Julie and Dave Merges
		2	2	Robin and John Panko
		2	2	Ginny and Dale Schumacher
	Subtotal	7	7	
Affirmation of Faith/Confirmation				
	May 29, 2022	0	1	Torsten Cardinal
		1	1	Alison Henry (baptism is statistical adjustment)
		0	1	Sofia Jorge
		0	1	Allison Runke
	Subtotal	1	4	
Members Received through 09/30/2022		8	11	
Members Removed				
Death				
		1	1	Iona Jones (d. December 10, 2021)
		1	1	Elenore Bulau (d. January 14, 2022)
		1	1	Ricki Shaefer (d. June 21, 2022)
		1	1	Coralee (Lee) Rosenbauer (d. September 23, 2022)
	Subtotal	4	4	
Transfer Out		0	0	
Members Removed through 09/30/2022		4	4	
	TOTAL	572	563	(as of September 30, 2022)

CHURCH COUNCIL REPORT

Lisa Meetze, Council President

This year has seen the pandemic winding down and the world recovering from it. Familiar faces have been more special to us all due to being able to see them better and seeing more people in person. We have shared our stories about how the pandemic has impacted us all, changed the way we see things and made us focus on what is important. Freedoms have come back- being able to meet up with family and friends more freely, no longer requiring masks in public, and being able to enjoy life in the aftermath.

BLC has transitioned this year from wearing masks and social distancing to seeing each other without masks, enjoying hearing more of musical talent and starting up social time after church. This has included celebrating BLC's 100th anniversary through a series of guest speakers and culminating with the Anniversary picnic.

Technology has allowed BLC to stay connected to those near and far- through Livecast Worship, Zoom meetings, communications, and Podcasts. This has all happened through the generosity of the volunteers at BLC- learning from each other, helping each other, encouraging each other.

During this past year, the work of the church council has Continued. Some of the things that have been completed this year include:

- Council has continue to focus on the two long term goals for BLC that were established in 2021: focus on increasing engagement and fostering intergenerational relationships within BLC and the surrounding community.
- IMF resolution was approved at the October 2021 Annual meeting. In May 2022, the congregation approved modification to the constitution's Bylaws to allow for the creation of the Investment in Ministries Fund and the congregation affirmed council's recommendation to move \$25,000 from the Memorial Fund to the IMF. Council established the IMF Committee and appointed its members.
- Team has been formed to determine updates required for a sanctuary refresh. Team will focus on how BLC is using the space and to make the setup for Livestream more permanent.
- Sharing our Blessings one time grants were distributed and the congregation was able to help some local organizations.
- It was decided to start doing Financial Audit over a 2 year basis due to size of our church. So the 2021 and 2022 Audit will be combined.
- Use of technology continues to augment and enhance our worship experience.

Overall, this has been another amazing year- Praise be to God! BLC has had such a supportive congregation as we, like so many others, have learned what the new normal looks like.

I started on Council the year COVID hit (2020)- this was my first year as Council President. Although the past few years have not been easy, I have learned so much being on Council. I want to thank everyone who has been on Council with me and the Congregation who has supported the Council and BLCs work this year. A special thank you to both Pastor Amy and Pastor Hoffman. These past few years have been difficult for all- but you have continued to guide BLC and Council with your passion and grace.

As BLC transitions past COVID, I look forward to Building Lasting Community with BLC.

CARE OF PROPERTY REPORT

Bob Stolze, Chair

Property Committee and Landscaping Team, October 2022

Bob Stolze, Property Committee Chairman, 585-857-6350

Members: Brian Edwards, David Chaffee, John Salvador, Matt Beutel, Rolf Maxa, John Schmeelk, plus numerous landscape and gardening volunteers.

While I have your attention...

Look around at our beautiful church, and think of the wonderful things that happen here and what it does for our members and our community. Now picture yourself changing a light bulb, hanging a blind, mowing the grass, watering the flowers... Can you see yourself doing even one of these things? We need more hands to help make light work. Call, text, or email Bob Stolze at 585-857-6350, bob.stolze@rochester.rr.com. It's fun! It's satisfying! No skills required!

Also, we're always looking for people who can help operate our online streaming during services. It uses a software tool that manages the cameras and extra content. If you feel a little Hollywood in your veins, give Bob a call. It's a fun and interesting job!

Property Committee highlights:

- BLC is back in normal operation, in a safe and thoughtful way.
- Our 100th Anniversary Celebration went wonderfully, and we supported that as needed.
- We've continued to improve our online streaming of services with the intention of it being a permanent part of what we do. We have a team of operators who make this happen each week, and to them we are grateful.
- We installed a quiet exhaust fan in the sanctuary, capable of exchanging all the air every six minutes. (We run it at about half that rate during services.)
- All of our exterior lights have been converted to LED fixtures and bulbs. The results in lower cost due to savings in energy and maintenance.
- All lighting in the sanctuary has been converted to LED bulbs with proper dimmers.
- A hybrid meeting capability has been set up in the Fellowship Hall. This allows any group to include both remote (via Zoom) attendees and in-person attendees. It works well and is being used for Wednesday Bible Study and other meetings.
- Installed vertical blinds in all the top floor west wing rooms. (ie. the choir wing.)

Plans for the coming year

- Sanctuary improvements. We've assembled a Sanctuary Refresh Committee which is looking at our sanctuary and how we use it. This is prompted by our near-term need to replace the carpeting and reorganize the area in the rear by the usher station. Now is a good time to take a longer view of our sanctuary and how we use it. The group is discussing flooring, seating, and the overall flexibility of our space. There are significant issues around traffic flow and wheelchair access, and also with spaces for musical and other activities. The Refresh Committee is exploring ideas and will gather input from the congregation as part of developing a proposal for congregational approval. The

members of the group are David Chaffee, Margie Gaul, Jim Jefferis, Raelynn Clare, Bob Stolze, and our Pastors.

- Replace drinking fountains. The ones we have are broken down.
- Install a hood on our stove, to improve ventilation in the kitchen.

CARE Ministries at Bethlehem has included several separate programs: Barnabas Ministry Fellowship Committee, Greeters & Welcomers, Prayer List & Eucharistic Ministers.

Barnabas Ministry During the past year, the Barnabas side of CARE has remained committed to their mission. The sending of greeting cards, visiting the homebound and caring for those who live alone continued. The knitters are now making prayer squares along with prayer shawls. The new group formed to give encouragement to those caring for others continues.

Fellowship Committee held the BLC Great Race in October 2021. About 40 participated and had a fun day in spite of the wet conditions. No other activity was held.

Outdoor refreshments (Lemonade Time) resumed in May and continued in the courtyard with lemonade, iced tea and goodies through the summer. In September it was renamed Sunday Fellowship and has moved to the narthex. Coffee, tea and cocoa with donut holes will be offered beginning in October. We are anxiously awaiting a new coffee maker which has been back ordered.

We're hoping to offer a Pot Luck Supper soon and to reinstate Simple Suppers (Wednesday Fellowship) before Lenten Worship Services. We will again host the Tree Lighting on the First Sunday in Advent, November 27. See you then!

Greeters and Welcomers have been absorbed into the new Hospitality Committee. Prayer List and Eucharistic Ministries were taken over by our office coordinator.

BLC Investment in Ministries Fund Report

October 2022

Mark Gaul, Chair – Investment in Ministries Fund (IMF) Committee

IMF Committee Members:

John Costanza	jc_spaceguy@hotmail.com	585-398-7391
Paulette Costanza	p.stanza@hotmail.com	585-398-7391
Mark Gaul	markrgaul@gmail.com	585-781-4379
Roger Kolker	roger.kolker@gmail.com	585-415-4594
John Panko	jpanko19@yahoo.com	386-956-6881

2021-2022 Highlights:

Working in concert with Church Council, the Finance Committee, and the congregation, the IMF Team coordinated the development and approval of the BLC Investment in Ministries Fund (IMF). As defined in the Bylaws approved by the congregation, the purpose of the IMF is as follows.

C5.05.04 The purpose of the Fund is to support needs and people beyond the walls of Bethlehem Lutheran Church.

- a. The Fund may not be used for annual church operations such as staff compensation, office supplies, utilities, etc.
- b. The fund is to support or benefit people/ministries outside of Bethlehem Lutheran Church's membership.

In 2021 – 2022, the following milestones were achieved:

- August 19, 2021 – Council approves Resolution to establish the IMF
- October 24, 2021 - Congregation approves Resolution to establish the IMF
- February 17, 2022 – Council approves IMF Bylaws
- March 17, 2022 – Council approves IMF Policy
- May 15, 2022 – At a Special Congregational Meeting, the congregation approves the IMF Bylaws, formally establishing the fund. Congregation also endorses Council's decision to direct \$25,000 from the Memorial Fund as the initial contribution to establish the BLC Investment in Ministries Fund with the ELCA Foundation.
- June 2022 - IMF Team officially becomes the IMF Committee, as required by the IMF Policy, after being nominated by the Finance Committee and approved by Council

Plans for the coming year:

- Continue to educate the congregation on how to make outright and deferred gifts to the IMF, including providing for BLC in member estate plans.
- Staff a table in the narthex with information on the IMF and with personnel to answer questions

Bethlehem Lutheran Church
Statement of Activities - Church Operations
October 1, 2021 through September 30, 2022

	Fiscal Year 2022		
	Actual	Budget	b/(w)
Receipts			
Contributions	\$ 384,070	\$ 398,091	\$ (14,021)
Special Receipts	4,187	2,000	2,186
Total Receipts	\$ 388,257	\$ 400,091	\$ (11,834)
Spending			
Worship & Music	\$ 15,421	\$ 10,510	\$ (4,911)
Christian Education	1,386	2,450	1,064
LYFE (Formerly Youth)	875	2,000	1,125
Fellowship	1,019	2,000	981
Other Ministries	1,595	1,500	(95)
Missions & Social Concerns	52,673	53,050	377
Synod Mission Support	57,611	59,714	2,103
Staff Compensation	241,319	252,056	10,737
Care of Property	38,190	39,771	1,581
Office & Administrative	24,042	24,272	230
Total Expenses	434,131	447,323	13,192
Inc/(Dec) in Net Assets	\$ (45,874)	\$ (47,231)	\$ 1,357

Bethlehem Lutheran Church
Statement of Financial Position
At September 30, 2022

ASSETS

Current Assets

BOA Checking Account	18,048
BOA Savings Account	7,033
Merrill Lynch Account Cash	6,746
Merrill Lynch Account Securities	219,979
ELCA Foundation	23,721
Prepaid Expenses (Deposits)	-
Total Current Assets	275,527

Property Plant & Equipment

Land	35,000
Building	1,450,000
Computers & Other Electronics	5,000
Furniture	10,000
Musical Instruments	20,000

Less: Accum Depreciation	(1,484,500)
Rental Property (net of Depreciation)	120,000

Total Property Plant & Equipment	155,500
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Other Assets	-
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TOTAL ASSETS	\$ 431,027
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431,027.25

LIABILITIES

Current Liabilities

Accounts Payable	\$ 5,918
Payroll Tax Liabilities	-
Other Liabilities	2,063
Total Current Liabilities	7,981

Long Term Liabilities

Ruth Circle & Women's Fellowship	371
National Youth Gathering Accrual	10,354
Youth Fund Raising	7,363
IMF Holding Account	-
Security Deposits	2,100
Pastor's Continuing Ed	5,731
Pastor's Discretionary	1,436

Unrealized Investment Gains	59,443
Unrealized Investment Gains - IMF	(1,279)
Total Long Term Liabilities	85,519

Total Liabilities	93,500
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NET ASSETS

Unrestricted	52,190
Capital Reserves	87,119
Program Reserves	12,728
Investment in Ministry Fund	30,490
Non-Liquid Net Assets	155,000
Total Net Assets	337,527

TOTAL LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS	\$ 431,027
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431,027.25

Financial Activity of Non-Fixed Assets
October 2021 through September 2022

	Unrestricted Funds			Restricted Funds					Total
	Church Operations	Rental + Investments	Total	Memorial Fund	100th Anniversary	Scholarship Fund	Capital Reserve	IMF	
Net Assets on 10/1/2021			\$ 96,029	\$ 34,715	\$ 5,173	\$ 3,679	\$ 92,119	\$ -	\$ 231,714
Income (Oct21 - Sep22)									
Contributions	384,070		384,070	275	500	100		5,035	389,980
Other Receipts	4,187	5,622	9,809						9,809
Rents Received		9,000	9,000						9,000
Total YTD Income	388,257	14,622	402,879	275	500	100	-	5,035	408,789
Expenses (Oct21 - Sep22)									
Inside Our Walls	323,848	65	323,913		4,110	1,000	5,000	30	334,053
Outside Our Walls	110,283		110,283	41					110,325
Investment Property		13,598	13,598						13,598
Total YTD Expenses	434,131	13,663	447,794	41	4,110	1,000	5,000	30	457,976
Transfers (Oct21-Sep22)									
Memorial Fund to IMF				(25,000)				25,000	-
100th Anniversary to IMF					(485)			485	-
Reverse 2020 journal entry			1,077		(1,077)				-
Total YTD Transfers			1,077	(25,000)	(1,562)	-	-	25,485	-
Increase/(Decrease)	(45,874)	959	(43,838)	(24,766)	(5,173)	(900)	(5,000)	30,490	(49,187)
Net Assets on 09/30/2022			\$ 52,190	\$ 9,949	\$ -	\$ 2,779	\$ 87,119	\$ 30,490	\$ 182,527