

Annual Report

Valley of Peace Lutheran Church
May 2023



The Ministry of Valley of Peace Evangelical Lutheran Church

*Living in God's love and compassion, we are called to be disciples of Jesus Christ,
as the Holy Spirit works through us for healing, justice, and peace.*

Annual Report to the Congregation

May 21, 2023

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Secretary's Minutes of the May 15, 2022 Annual Meeting of the Congregation

Due to continuing concerns regarding the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic, this meeting was held in a hybrid format, with members of the congregation attending both in-person and virtually, via the Zoom platform.

Noting that there was a quorum present, President Jim Crofoot called the meeting to order at 11:12 a.m.

The meeting opened with Pastor Ashley Osborn leading us in prayer.

Secretary's Report: The Secretary, Lauren Pockl, read a summary of the minutes from the August 15, 2021, Annual Meeting and the January 30, 2022, Semi-Annual Meeting.

The report was moved for approval by Jim Jasper; seconded Joe Thom. All in favor; none opposed. Motion passed.

Treasurer's Update: Judy Greeninger provided an update on the results of the 2022 budget. For 2022, the congregation approved a budget of \$365,000, an 8% increase from the 2021 budget and which assumed that Valley of Peace would pay off the mortgage. We did pay off the mortgage on February 14, 2022, from the Dorothy Sanford funds.

As of the end of April 2022, VoP's expenses exceeded income by \$4,200, primarily due to high gas/fuel costs. Fuel costs this year are approximately \$4,000 more than they were at this time last year. Without the increase in gas costs, we would have a balanced budget.

So far in 2022, we have paid \$6,500 in building repairs. From the Dorothy Sanford Fund, which is invested with Thrivent, in addition to paying off the mortgage, we also paid for the new rooftop units (\$37,000), pastoral intern Raul (\$8,700), and the security doors (\$7,900). After paying those expenses, we have approximately \$567,000 invested with Thrivent (where Sanford funds are invested) after the first quarter of 2022 and approximately \$137,000 in the bank at the end of April 2022 (which includes operation and dedicated accounts. Overall, we are in good shape financially.

President's Report: Jim Crofoot thanked the members of the congregation for support during this year. He further thanked the staff for all they do for VoP and the key members of the church's committees.

Election of New Officers and Council Members:

Ruth Larson read the ballot. She stated that there are various open positions on the nomination committee and an open Parish Life position. Because only one person was nominated for each position, a vote of acclamation for the entire slate was requested.

Election of the new officers and council members was moved by Tom Ewald; seconded by Dan Johnson. All in favor; none opposed. Motion passed.

May 15, 2022 Minutes Continued

President Elect		
Pat McGraw		1 Year Term (President Year 2)
Treasurer		
Joe Thom		2 Year Term (reelect 2nd Term option)
Faith Formation		
Jon Larson		2 Year Term (reelect 2nd Term option)
Property		
Jim Jasper		2 Year Term - 2 nd Term
Social Ministry		
Barb Mikkelson		2 Year Term - 2 nd Term
Parish Life		
Open		2 Year Term (reelect 2nd Term option)
World Missions		
Patti Homstrom		2 Year Term - 2 nd Term
Worship and Music		
Darcie Rodman		2 Year Term - 2 nd Term
Church Council Young Adult		
Caitlin Enright		1 Year Term - 2 nd Term
Audit Team		
Becca Anderson		3 Year Term - 2 nd Term
Nominating		
Diane Hinderlie		2 Year Term - 2 nd Term
Open (2)		2 Year Term (reelect 2nd Term option)

Celebration of Outgoing and Installation of New Council Members:

Jim Crofoot thanked the outgoing council members (Ann Dybvig (faith formation); Judy Greeninger (interim Treasurer); Ruth Larson (President Elect; President; and Past President)).

2. Installation of new council members was had by Pastor Ashley.

Adjournment:

Motion for adjournment by Sally Daniels; seconded by Julia Madison. All in favor, none opposed.
Motion passed.

Secretary's Minutes of the January 29, 2023 Semi-Annual Meeting of the Congregation

Due to continuing concerns regarding Covid-19, this meeting was held in a hybrid format, with members of the congregation attending both in-person and virtually, via the Zoom platform.

Attendance:

In-Person: 44 members

Online: 6 members

Noting that there was a quorum present, President Tara Kuckkan called the meeting to order at 11:15 a.m.

The meeting opened with Pastor Ashley Osborn leading us in prayer.

President Tara Kuckkan noted that the purpose of the congregational meeting is to vote on the 2023 budget for Valley of Peace. The budget was discussed and recommended by the Church Council before being presented to the congregation. She then provided several directives to assist in a smoothly-run meeting.

Joe Thom was then called forward to present the proposed 2023 budget.

Proposed 2023 Budget

Joe highlighted several budgetary matters. Joe noted that Valley of Peace was on track with the budgeted monetary giving in 2022. At the end of 2022, there were some significant gifts in December that brought us in line with our original budget. As the Finance team considered 2023 and the needed budget, the various ministry teams were contacted, and their budgetary proposals were incorporated.

The 2023 budget is fairly flat with respect to 2022. Increased budget items include utility bills as energy prices have risen. We do not anticipate increased energy bills changing as we go into the new year. The repair and maintenance line item has also increased, primarily due to the water damage in the fireside room. There is scheduled maintenance for 2023 totaling \$26,000 (\$20,00 from dedicated accounts; \$6,000 from the budget) to resolve the exterior building issues.

The salary and benefits line item for staffing have decreased overall from 2022 to 2023.

The income line item is an estimate that is based on giving. This line item for 2023 has been kept consistent with 2022. The proposed expenses do exceed the estimated income based on last year's giving. The dollar amount may look large but when we look at our giving unit for Valley of Peace, divided by the deficit, it equals about \$8.00 per month of increased giving to cover the deficit.

Overall, the budget reflects the values of this congregation and the things that are desired to be done. Dave Gilyard had a question about grounds maintenance and the related increase from actuals in 2022 to 2023 budget. Pastor Ashley stated that the increase is due to several trees that need to be removed. Jim Jasper added that we likely need work every year for several years with respect to tree maintenance.

January 29, 2023 Minutes Continued

A question was presented from an online participant - is the lower-level remodeling in the budget at all? Joe stated that no, the lower-level remodeling is not included in the proposed 2023 budget. A committee has been convened to consider a capital campaign to raise the money to perform the lower-level work. This committee has started to meet and consider consultants. The committee hopes to report back in the spring. Pastor noted that the congregation needs to approve moving forward with the capital campaign to raise funds for the lower level.

Paul Mikelson noted that the Worship and Music budget looks small (less than spent last year). This is intentional. It is not that we are not going to spend on Worship and Music, but this group has about \$6,000 built up in a fund of dedicated cash and the trust to help support that ministry.

Pat Hepner had a question about building and maintenance and the \$6,000 for brick repair. Joe explained that this is for the brick work outside of the Fireside room. The mortar in the brick has dissolved, allowing water to come into the building. This work needs to be done and is expected to be performed in 2023.

Pat Hepner asked about the boiler, as well. Joe explained that we have brought in engineers to fully evaluate the total HVAC system at the church to provide us with the best approach to resolve all the issues with the HVAC system. It is also possible that the proposed lower-level work could include revisions to the HVAC system as well.

A comment was received from an online participant that maintaining the building is very important, especially as we have All God's Children Learning Center (AGCLC) utilizing the building as well. AGCLC is an important part of our ministry. Joe noted that there is a significant line item in the budget for AGCLC. AGCLC does pay for a significant portion of our building maintenance requirements out of their budget, which is how they also contribute to the congregation.

Jim Jasper moved to approve the 2023 Valley of Peace budget as presented; Bob Hoyt seconded. No further discussion. All in favor, none opposed.

Tara then addressed the budgeted shortfall for 2023 and how the congregation could make up that gap. If giving remains the same from 2022 to 2023, Valley of Peace will have a budget deficit of about \$10,000 for the year. Tara stated that if every family who gave to Valley of Peace during 2022 increases monthly giving by \$7.61 per month, that will cover the budget deficit. Tara issued a challenge to the congregation to prayerfully consider making that small monthly increased donation.

Adjournment

Shannon Jay moved for adjournment; Dave Gilyard seconded. All in favor. None opposed.
11:33 p.m. meeting adjourned.

*Minutes taken by Valley of Peace Council Secretary Lauren Pockl.

President's Report

When Pastor Ashley and I met to talk about our hopes for Council this year, what I kept coming back to was “dreams.” During the pandemic, so many dreams were put on hold. Weddings and birthdays and anniversary celebrations were cancelled. Seniors stopped packing to go off to college and instead opened up their laptops in their childhood bedrooms. As a church, we set aside plans for growing our music ministry, for our lower-level improvement plans, for so many other things. We had no way of imagining what would happen next, so we were forced to react, to operate out of necessity. And I truly believe we rose to the occasion. We accomplished big things. We made investments in technology that allowed us to continue worshipping and gathering in new ways. We crafted and passed a racial justice statement. But this year, we felt like it was time to start dreaming again. To that end, the Council began the year with a mini-Strategic Planning session. We invited each member to dream about what their team could be doing in the congregation and in the community 3-5 years from now, even after their time on Council would be over. We discussed those dreams and identified an overall theme for the year: “Invite to Gather.” After so much isolation, we felt it was time to invite each other to come together again, even if that was still virtually in many cases.

The Council began each meeting with a discussion of how our various teams had been inviting others to gather that month. We held a ministry fair to highlight the different ways to get involved with Valley of Peace. We started moving forward with the process of improvements to the lower level, which would allow us to expand the ways in which we gather and who would feel welcome and included in that space. We continued to expand our use of technology to allow more people to gather virtually. We welcomed new members to Council and our various teams, many of whom have not served in these roles before.

It has been an honor to serve as Valley of Peace Council President as we have resumed our dreaming and planning this year.

“For I know the plans I have for you, says the Lord, plans for welfare and not for evil, plans to give you hope and a future.”

Jeremiah 29:11

Respectfully submitted,
Tara Kuckkan, Council President

Pastor's Report

*The human mind may devise many plans,
but it is the purpose of the Lord that will be established.
Proverbs 19:21*

I am writing this report a bit earlier this year as I prepare for my sabbatical leave in mid-April. So, as I sit down to write this, I think it is important to note the date, March 14, 2023. This date is significant for me, and really for all of us in our church. It was three years ago yesterday (March 13, 2020) when the decision was made to cancel in-person worship and activities at Valley of Peace. Sunday, March 15, 2020, was our first live-streamed worship service. So, for me, when I think about three years ago on March 14, 2020, I remember that as a day of trying to prepare and plan for what would be next. I spent March 14, 2020, testing out Facebook Live, trying to figure out the best setup for my phone, thinking about how to communicate with folks, and preparing and discerning how to safely be the church in this season.

Sometimes it feels that I continue to be in the space of March 14, 2020. I continue to be in this space of discerning how to best prepare to be the church for right now. We are years out from the start of the pandemic, and yet, the effects of the pandemic and the shifts in our congregation/communion/nation/world continue to shape what church looks like right now.

In many ways, this past year even feels like a season of preparing. Preparing for our second summer of outdoor worship, preparing to say goodbye to two staff members (Zack Carlson and Sally Daniels Herron), preparing to hire and welcome two new staff members (Hsu-hui Wang and Kelsey Pierson), preparing to present plans for the lower level improvements, preparing for building improvements, preparing for new congregational leaders and programs, preparing to invest in our current ministries to help people connect in meaningful ways.

You will see in the reports that follow all of the ways our church has strong leaders who work hard to care for all our people, both members, visitors, and building users. The council this year focused on inviting people to gather. Your council leaders were intentional about building meaningful relationships with people that helped them connect to the church, one another, and to God.
Thanks be to God for these leaders!

I am grateful for our church, our staff, our leaders, and all the ways we plan and prepare for what it means to be the church in this season.

Now, let me just say, I have always felt like planning was a strength of mine. I pride myself on being able to thoughtfully make a plan, remember the details of the plan, and move through the stages of a plan. But, for some reason, this year it feels like all of the plans I have made, or even the space I need to plan, has fallen apart. I notice that I more easily forget details (I apologize if I have missed something for you) and I noticed that I find it more difficult to plan more than just one week, or sometimes even one day, at a time. I am sure there are many reasons for this; lingering pandemic effects, overscheduling, young children....

Pastor's Report Continued

But, as a person of faith, I began to have conversations with God about my frustrations at not being able to plan or to always have to shift plans that were made. And, I realized that often in the spaces where plans change or where I had not shown up feeling as prepared as I would have liked, I noticed God's presence even more in these times. This is one of the reasons I preach without notes. Yes, I prepare and make a plan, but I also trust the Spirit moving in the moment to see how God may show up in what I am saying to the community I am gathered with.

As your pastor, please do not hear what I am saying as an excuse for me not to plan. But, I have been reminded this year that God doesn't need our plans, our preparations, our perfect calendars or to-do lists. This year has reminded me that I often experience God's presence more in the moments of disruptions and times when I most need to rely on God when I don't have a plan.

I hope that in this next year we can hold both things to be true. That we can both be a church that makes plans and dreams of what God is calling us to do, but can also be flexible and open to how the Spirit will move and shift among us.

This is not easy work, and I find it sometimes even more exhausting to both plan and shift. But, as people of faith who trust in God, I believe this is what it means to be faithful. To both hope in what is to come and to know that we will not be alone in whatever unfolds.

Friends at Valley of Peace, my heart overflows when I think about our church. I am grateful for the five and a half years of ministry we have shared. A dear colleague of mine shared that after five years of ministry at a church things really get fun. What this person meant was not that it isn't fun before five years, but after five years there is trust that happens between a pastor and their church. I have always found this church to be a fun and trusting congregation, but I will acknowledge that I have sensed this shift after five years of being your pastor. There is deep trust and respect that I have for you and I believe you have for me. I know that when plans change/shift/fall apart, we have enough trust in one another and in God that we can enter into the unknown knowing that we are not alone.

I think I will always try to be a planner and I know that I have many plans and hopes for our church in the years to come. But, at the same time, I also know that whatever this year, or the next year, or the many years to come bring, nothing can change God's plan to be present at Valley of Peace and for God's presence to be made known in all that we do and all who we care for.

I look forward to all that is to come, both the planned and the unexpected!

Yours in Christ,
Pastor Ashley Osborn

Treasurer's Report

The 2022 expenses approved the congregation was \$365,222.
We ended the year with a \$9,565 deficit.

Income for year totaled \$379,366, with member giving exceeding the budget.
Year end giving was very strong that enabled us to meet budget.

Expenses for year totaled \$373,841.
Most expenses were in line with budget, except for gas that exceeded the budget by ~\$7,000.

In the dedicated accounts, we spent \$8,900 out of the Building Project Fund account to cover building repairs and maintenance.

Also at the end of 2022, Valley of Peace had over \$800k invested with Thrivent from the Dorothy Sanford estate.

Many thanks to the finance team, which includes Dave Gilyard, Paul Mikelson, Pam Syverson, Judy Greeninger, and Pastor Ashley.

Joe Thom, Valley of Peace Treasurer

Treasurer's Report Continued

Valley of Peace Dedicated Accounts: December 31, 2022

Account Shortcut and Description	Beginning Balance	Month Credits	Month Debits	YTD Credits	YTD Debits	Ending Balance
General Fund						
Memorial Gifts						
900 Memorials	62,281.35	0.00	0.00	14,585.05	16,143.79	60,722.61
925 Dorothy Sanford fund	20,771.36	0.00	381,282.00	594,038.66	614,404.34	405.68
Memorial Gifts Totals:	83,052.71	0.00	381,282.00	608,623.71	630,548.13	61,128.29
Dedicated Accounts						
901 Flowers	475.25	30.00	475.75	1,983.25	2,358.50	100.00
902 World Missions	2,524.38	32.00	0.00	384.00	1,000.00	1,908.38
903 Mission of the Month	889.78	0.00	0.00	0.00	250.00	639.78
906 Music and Worship Fund	3,763.81	0.00	0.00	2,934.19	529.19	6,168.81
907 Kitchen Fund	25,825.00	1,100.00	291.67	9,290.00	291.67	34,823.33
909 Every Meal	5,866.27	100.00	0.00	1,880.00	4,300.00	3,446.27
911 Retreats and Events	1,418.48	0.00	1,133.96	218.00	1,541.96	94.52
914 Building Project Fund	14,685.00	1,150.00	0.00	2,900.00	6,494.41	11,090.59
915 Transfers/Reimbursements	3,201.15	37.12	0.00	34,430.71	35,914.03	1,717.83
920 Reserve Fund	11,854.84	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	11,854.84
921 Pastors Discretionary Fund	3,140.95	0.00	0.00	72.29	1,572.72	1,640.52
922 Prepaid Member Contributions	3,000.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	3,000.00	0.00
923 Special Youth Fund	9,255.01	0.00	0.00	6,078.07	10,598.04	4,735.04
924 PPP Loan - Pandemic	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
926 Reconciling in Christ	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
927 Noble School	0.00	0.00	591.92	2,915.00	2,911.92	3.08
928 PRISM	30.00	0.00	0.00	1,100.00	830.00	300.00
929 Habitat for Humanity	100.00	0.00	0.00	5,460.00	5,000.00	560.00
930 Exodus Lending	0.00	0.00	0.00	200.00	200.00	0.00
932 Loaves and Fishes	0.00	0.00	0.00	125.00	125.00	0.00
933 Cherish All Children	995.00	820.00	0.00	820.00	995.00	820.00
934 Nigeria Scholarship fund	1,393.06	0.00	0.00	0.00	1,345.00	48.06
935 Funeral Account	0.00	0.00	0.00	1,614.54	1,691.02	(76.48)
Dedicated Accounts Totals:	88,417.98	3,269.12	2,493.30	72,405.05	80,948.46	79,874.57
General Fund Totals:	171,470.69	3,269.12	383,775.30	681,028.76	711,496.59	141,002.86
Total for selected dedicated accounts:	171,470.69	3,269.12	383,775.30	681,028.76	711,496.59	141,002.86

Treasurer's Report Continued

Valley of Peace Statement of Activities: December 31, 2022

Account Shortcut and Description	Current Month Actual	Current Month Budget	YTD Actual	YTD Last Year	YTD Budget vs. YTD Actual	Annual Budget
Income						
Offerings						
400 Member Contributions	46,043.55	27,324.92	327,915.63	327,898.94	16.63	327,899.00
402 Loose Offering	696.92	276.92	2,048.10	3,323.04	(1,274.90)	3,323.00
Offerings Totals:	46,740.47	27,601.84	329,963.73	331,221.98	(1,258.27)	331,222.00
Special Income						
406 AGCLC	2,500.00	2,500.00	30,000.00	30,000.00	0.00	30,000.00
407 Church Building Rental	280.00	333.33	3,767.60	2,516.20	(232.40)	4,000.00
408 Special Appeals/Other Income	15,089.93	0.00	15,634.29	19.07	15,634.29	0.00
Special Income Totals:	17,869.93	2,833.33	49,401.89	32,535.27	15,401.89	34,000.00
Income Totals:	64,610.40	30,435.17	379,365.62	363,757.25	14,143.62	365,222.00
Expense						
Ministry Teams						
500 Worship	516.05	141.67	3,094.67	2,220.96	(1,394.67)	1,700.00
501 Music	741.38	284.50	3,150.56	19.99	263.44	3,414.00
502 Parish Life	0.00	20.83	438.27	168.00	(188.27)	250.00
503 Education	237.08	325.00	2,680.54	2,761.16	1,219.46	3,900.00
504 Hospitality	25.38	83.33	1,208.87	476.34	(208.87)	1,000.00
505 Stewardship	0.00	18.75	0.00	375.68	225.00	225.00
506 Youth and Family	136.11	108.33	988.20	928.52	311.80	1,300.00
Ministry Teams Totals:	1,656.00	982.41	11,561.11	6,950.65	227.89	11,789.00
Benevolence Social Ministry						
512 ELCA - Mpls. Synod	1,250.00	1,250.00	15,000.00	15,000.00	0.00	15,000.00
General Ministry Expenses						
507 Banking Fees	137.51	208.33	1,568.75	2,264.37	931.25	2,500.00
517 Postage	326.87	120.83	1,276.54	1,060.99	173.46	1,450.00
518 Office Supplies	514.30	133.33	1,682.34	1,861.83	(82.34)	1,600.00
519 Telephone/Internet	427.36	491.67	5,556.79	3,231.84	343.21	5,900.00
521 Office Equipment	595.24	641.67	8,375.14	6,066.82	(675.14)	7,700.00
523 Technology and Licenses	735.99	208.33	1,775.97	2,627.60	724.03	2,500.00
524 Synod Assembly	0.00	33.33	300.00	120.00	100.00	400.00
General Ministry Expenses Totals:	2,737.27	1,837.49	20,535.53	17,233.45	1,514.47	22,050.00
Salaries						
Salaries Totals:	15,868.50	17,173.34	204,560.53	197,391.42	1,519.47	206,080.00

Treasurer's Report Continued

Valley of Peace Statement of Activities Continued: December 31, 2022

Benefits

Benefits Totals:	3,563.99	3,475.24	43,760.89	40,349.52	(2,057.89)	41,703.00
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Building and Grounds Maintenance

536 Building Repairs and Maintenance	1,287.33	741.67	9,777.80	21,486.00	(877.80)	8,900.00
537 Contracted Building Services	107.67	116.67	2,520.71	9,476.22	(1,120.71)	1,400.00
538 Grounds Maintenance	1,051.24	525.00	2,685.24	11,399.13	3,614.76	6,300.00
Building and Grounds Maintenance Totals:	2,446.24	1,383.34	14,983.75	42,361.35	1,616.25	16,600.00

Utilities

539 Sewer and Water	301.62	275.00	3,604.43	3,430.93	(304.43)	3,300.00
540 Electricity	1,137.79	1,333.33	17,398.99	14,983.60	(1,398.99)	16,000.00
541 Gas/Fuel	1,038.31	833.33	17,602.48	9,420.10	(7,602.48)	10,000.00
542 Sanitation/Disposal Service	355.35	291.67	4,399.32	3,341.16	(899.32)	3,500.00
Utilities Totals:	2,833.07	2,733.33	43,005.22	31,175.79	(10,205.22)	32,800.00

Insurance & Debt Reduction

543 Insurance - Property & Liability	5,102.75	1,600.00	20,434.02	18,341.38	(1,234.02)	19,200.00
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Expense Totals:	35,457.82	30,435.15	373,841.05	368,803.56	(8,619.05)	365,222.00
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Income - Expense:	29152.58	0.02	5524.57	(5,046.31)	5524.57	0
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Treasurer's Report Continued

Valley of Peace Statement of Financial Position: December 31, 2022

	Year to Date Balance	Year Begin Balance	Balance Last Month	This Month Change	Year to Date Change
Assets					
Checking					
100 Checking Account 1 - General	0.00	(15,851.07)	(28,032.84)	28,032.84	15,851.07
101 Checking Account 2 - Dedicated	79,101.69	85,681.01	78,291.91	809.78	(6,579.32)
108 Checking Account 3 - Memorials	61,128.29	84,004.32	442,410.29	(381,282.00)	(22,876.03)
Checking Totals:	140,229.98	153,834.26	492,669.36	(352,439.38)	(13,604.28)
Investments					
320 Dorothy Sanford Endowment Fund	873,239.93	815,678.12	578,067.02	295,172.91	57,561.81
Total Assets:	1,013,469.91	969,512.38	1,070,736.38	(57,266.47)	43,957.53
Liabilities					
Payroll Withholding					
205 Employee Add'l. Life	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
200 Social Security Withholding	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
201 Medicare Withholding	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
202 Federal Withholding Tax	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
203 Minnesota Withholding	0.00	0.00	702.00	(702.00)	0.00
206 Employer FICA	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
207 Dependent Health Withholding	0.00	0.00	241.15	(241.15)	0.00
204 Employee Add'l. Retirement	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
208 Health and Dependent care FSA	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Payroll Withholding Totals:	0.00	0.00	943.15	(943.15)	0.00
Credit Cards					
250 2-Pastor Credit Card	461.67	(15.99)	379.20	82.47	477.66
251 1-Youth Director Credit Card	215.19	171.07	736.40	(521.21)	44.12
252 4-Office Credit Card	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
253 3-Ministries Credit Card	353.06	87.00	56.95	296.11	266.06
Credit Cards Totals:	1,029.92	242.08	1,172.55	(142.63)	787.84
Total Liabilities:	1,029.92	242.08	2,115.70	(1,085.78)	787.84
Net Assets					
Net Assets					
300 Net Asset	865,912.56	626,009.63	570,739.65	295,172.91	239,902.93
Dedicated Accounts					
Without Donor Restrictions	141,002.86	171,470.69	521,509.04	(380,506.18)	(30,467.83)
With Donor Restrictions	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Dedicated Accounts Totals:	141,002.86	171,470.69	521,509.04	(380,506.18)	(30,467.83)
Current Period Changes to Net Assets	5,524.57	0.00	(23,628.01)	29,152.58	5,524.57
Total Net Assets:	1,012,439.99	797,480.32	1,068,620.68	(56,180.69)	214,959.67
Total Liabilities & Net Assets:	1013469.91	797722.4	1070736.38	(57,266.47)	215747.51

Children, Youth & Family Report

The 2022-2023 children, youth, and family program year saw a return to a more traditional model at Valley of Peace. Coming off of three years of online and hybrid faith formation options amidst the Covid-19 pandemic, students returned this year to more in-person faith formation opportunities and events. As always, the Children, Youth, and Family Team focused on providing education and faith formation opportunities that fostered growth and spiritual development and strengthened relationships. We are so grateful for the ways the Spirit moved through our programming needs and for the many ways that this community showed up for our young people.

Some highlights from this year in CYF programming include:

New CYF Team Formation

With CYF Chair, Kelsey Pierson taking on the position of Ministry Support Coordinator at Valley of Peace in October 2022, the CYF Team welcomed Dustin Froyum to the Chair spot. During this transition, we also took time to build up the team in general. We now have five individuals (Kari Roll, John Hovde, Chad Schneider, Joan Maland, and Jon Ewald) who have committed to serve this team with Dustin Froyum and Emilie Moravec. We are grateful for the diverse skills and experiences that this team brings and we look forward to dreaming and planning CYF programming and activities in the future.

All God's Children Learning Center Faith Formation

Emilie Moravec and Pastor Ashley continued to build relationships with the students and families at All God's Children Learning Center this program year. Emilie and Pastor Ashley rotated through weekly bible studies in the preschool classrooms and monthly Children's Church for the whole Center. AGCLC families were also invited to community faith formation events this year including a "Frosty Fun and Bubbles" event, worship, and occasional caregiver conversations.

Children's Faith Formation

Children in kindergarten through fifth grade met in person at Valley of Peace Sunday mornings prior to worship. We were so excited to have a roster of fabulous leaders who worked in rotation leading Children's Faith Formation for the first time since before the Covid-19 pandemic. This helped foster relationships with other adults in our congregation. We also continued with Milestone Ministry recognizing families and children at various ages and spiritual development throughout the year.

New to summer programming, we brought in Green Lake Bible Camp counselors to help with Vacation Bible School in August of 2022. This was a new partnership for Valley of Peace and helped us to provide safe and exciting VBS programming to our preschool - 6th grade students.

Family Camp- We were able to offer a Family Camp opportunity in the summer of 2022 for individuals of all ages. We returned to Camp Wapo and Pastor Ashley and Emilie Moravec led Family Camp at the Wilderness Canoe Base in July 2022. This program was well-received and we hope to make family camp a part of regular summer programming at Valley of Peace.

Children, Youth & Family Report Continued

Confirmation

Valley of Peace Jr. High confirmation students (6th-8th grade) joined Pastor Ashley and Emilie Moravec on Wednesday evenings throughout the program year in person. This year we delved into what it meant to be a community. We started the year with a look at the major world religions, moved into the Christian traditions, and ended the year talking about Lutheranism and Valley of Peace Lutheran Church. We also had a great group of confirmation mentors who met with students once a month in small groups. In hope of providing more continuity in the confirmation program, we choose not to participate in Wildfire activities. We did however, join area Lutheran churches on an Abundant Life Retreat at Camp Wapo over the 2023 MLK Weekend. We hope to make this retreat a regular part of our confirmation curriculum.

Youth Group

The Valley of Peace Youth Group, 8th-12th grade, gathered monthly for service projects and outings. Highlights included a summer kayak day trip, Whirly ball and bowling, and creating hospice kits for Global Health Ministries.

Here are some of the other VOP activities that kept our children and youth busy this year:

June 2022

Diapers and Donuts: Families with young children met on the Valley of Peace playground every Sunday in the summer of 2022 before worship. This was an informal time to gather as young families, play, and build relationships.

Youth Kayak Day Trip: Junior high and senior high youth were invited out on the St. Croix River for a day of kayaking, reflection, and adventure in June of 2022. Students and chaperones kayaked down the St. Croix River to the Osceola Landing (about 7 miles & approximately 2-3 hours of paddling time) with a stop for lunch and devotions.

July 2022

Family Camp We returned to Camp Wapo and Pastor Ashley and Emilie Moravec led Family Camp at the Wilderness Canoe Base in July 2022 for four Valley of Peace households. Our activities included devotions, canoe day trips, campfires, and water fun.

August 2022

Vacation Bible School Along with counselors from Green Lake Bible Camp, we hosted four days of all day Vacation Bible School for kindergarten through sixth grade children in August of 2022. This was the first time we had offered VBS from 9 am - 4pm, allowing for more childcare for working families. Participants rotated through worship, snacks, games, bible study, and craft activities. All God's Children Learning Center preschool students also participated in VBS worship and morning bible study.

Children, Youth & Family Report Continued

September 2022: Children's Faith Formation, Confirmation, and Valley of Peace Youth Group were up and running as of Rally Sunday, September 11, 2022

Blessing of the Backpacks - We celebrated and prayed for our Kindergarten students and all returning to school in worship on Sunday, September 11, 2022. Students received backpacks tags and a devotional letter prior to worship.

October 2022:

Kids and Money Milestone Event: Second and fifth grade students were recognized for their commitment to learning more about stewardship and how we can manage money in October 2022. We prayed for the students in worship and families received devotions along with a gift from Valley of Peace.

Halloween Scavenger Hunt: The CYF Team hosted the 4th annual Halloween Scavenger Hunt around the community. Valley of Peace members signed up to have a prize bucket placed on their doorstep and students (all ages) were given addresses, answered riddles at each stop, and collected prizes throughout the hunt. The hunt ended at Valley of Peace for a community hymn sign. Unfortunately, the event was not well attended and we are assessing the desire or timing for this type of event for next fall.

Movie Night: The CYF team hosted a movie night in October 2022. We watched "Soul" in the Fireside Room and collected winter clothes for Noble school.

December 2022:

Christmas Program: Emilie Moravec rehearsed with the Children's Faith Formation group to put together a Christmas program completed with props, narration, and songs. The children gathered the morning of Sunday, December 11th in worship to tell the story of the birth of baby Jesus in their own way.

January 2023:

Abundant Life Retreat Over the MLK Weekend, a small group of confirmation students from Valley of Peace, along with Emilie Moravec and Pastor Ashley, headed to Camp Wapo for an Abundant Life Retreat with four other Lutheran congregations. We brought in a facilitator to talk with the students about the intersections of community, sexuality, and faith.

February 2023:

3rd Grade Bibles We celebrated another Milestone Event and our 3rd graders received their new Bibles in worship on Sunday, February 5, 2023.

CYF Fundraiser The CYF Team hosted two fundraising events in February of 2023. One at Davanni's Pizza and the other online for a silent auction. We raised over \$2,000 during these events for summer programming and were so grateful for the support of the Valley of Peace community.

Children, Youth & Family Report Continued

March 2023:

Prayer Milestone We celebrated a Prayer Milestone event with 1st and 4th grade families on Sunday, March 5th. Teaching, experiencing, and practicing prayer early in a child's life establishes a strong foundation for the child's faith journey. This Prayer Milestone was one more way for the congregation to keep its baptismal promise to equip parents to pass on faith.

April 2023:

Holy Week Hunt The CYF Team hosted the 2nd Holy Week egg hunt in conjunction with the Palm Sunday brunch following worship. Participants hunted for eggs and collected images from the Holy Week story to redeem a special prize bag.

First Communion We celebrated First Communion with two students this Maundy Thursday. Families baked their own bread at home and came forward individually during the service to receive the sacrament.

May 2023:

Confirmation Spring Projects All confirmation students will be asked to complete an End of the Year Project. This year, students have been studying religious communities. Each student will be asked to depict or display their understanding of how God is working in the world. These projects will be put together and shared with the Valley of Peace community in mid May.

Welcoming Young Children Milestone On Sunday, May 28th Emilie Moravec will host an event especially for young children and their families. We will be kicking off the "Diapers and Donuts" summer ministry program and also introducing our young children and the adults who care for them, to worship and the worship space. Children will have the opportunity to explore the sanctuary and surrounding church areas on their level and even crawl and jump around in their own time and space.

We look forward to continued growth and development for these young people in the year to come.

Emilie Moravec, CYF Director
Dustin Froyum, CYF Chair

Faith Formation Report

Adult Forum

For this year our themes for Adult Faith Formation were Bible Study, Mission of the Month, Justice, and “potluck”- a variety of topics. We returned to in-person gathering with several members joining us online. With a lot of help from Pastor Ashley, Matt Dellwo, Andy Dybvig, and Ann Dybvig we enjoyed the wonderful technology that was generously donated a year ago for many presentations.

Highlights from each of these themes included the following:

Bible Study

- Wes Syverson led us through a five-session comparison of the Gospels.
- Jon and Ruth Larson facilitated a three-session study of the book of James.

Mission of the Month

- Habitat for Humanity: Paul Mikelson updated us on Valley of Peace’s involvement with Habitat for Humanity including the history of Valley of Peace member involvement, with a focus on our project in August.
- PRISM: Guest Speaker, Kevin Lytle gave an overview of PRISM’s services. We discussed underlying causes of food insecurity in the community and how PRISM is helping families stretch their budgets by providing healthy food through its food shelf. He also shared data about how the problem of food insecurity has increased since COVID 19.
- Loaves and Fishes: Guest Speaker Latisha Moening, the Director of Volunteers & Outreach with Loaves & Fishes, joined us to focus on outreach & networking within the community to bring more interest and connection around the mission of Loaves & Fishes. She has a goal of not only educating the community on how Loaves & Fishes works for our communities, but also building true relationships with the hopes of encouraging continued involvement.
- Global Mission: We learned from Rev. Barde Benedict Cham via Zoom. Rev. Barde Benedict Cham is a pastor with the Lutheran Church of Christ in Nigeria (LCCN) currently working on his Ph.D. in Systematic Theology. He is the former pastor of our companion congregation, St. Luke Cathedral in Mayo. We got outside of our usual American perspective to see how God is moving and working in Nigeria!
- Exodus Lending: Executive Director, Anne Leland Clark, joined us to share exciting updates for the mission of Exodus Lending as they fight usurious lending through equity-centered lending and advocacy. We learned about their work this session at the State Capitol and how they are innovating to lend to communities who have been intentionally excluded and exploited by our financial system.
- Noble School: Guest speakers Michael Rieckenberg and Melissa Stawloske will update us on Noble School on April 16, 2023.
- Cherish All Children: Guest Speaker Joy EcElroy will update us on Cherish All Children on May 21, 2023

Justice

- Guest Speaker Jack Hurbanis from the Eco Faith Network of the Minneapolis Area Synod shared how Lutherans are joining together to build a more sustainable, just, and equitable future for God’s Creation with a focus on advocating for increased access to energy efficiency upgrades for CenterPoint and Minnesota Valley Electric Co-op. and how we can make a difference.

Faith Formation Report Continued

- Guest speaker Joe Davis, a nationally touring artist, educator, and speaker based in Minneapolis shared his spoken word poetry and thoughts on how people of faith can embody God's grace, seek out learning opportunities, and transform our relationships to promote racial healing.
- Laurie Eaton and Gloria Dei Lutheran Church Immigrant Justice Team members Claire Hoyum and Lenore Franzen shared the journey of discernment that catalyzed their congregation to create an apartment for an asylum-seeking family. We learned about the joys and challenges of this ministry of hospitality and how it is transforming their congregation.
- Bob Hoyt helped us look at how the ELCA has addressed the housing need and how Minneapolis has responded to this need.
- Shennon Jay facilitated a conversation about RIC (Reconciling in Christ) and VoP. Where have we been? Where are we now? What do we hope to be in the future? We learned how Reconciling Works advocates for the acceptance, full participation, and liberation of all sexual orientations, gender identities, and gender expressions within the Lutheran Church.
- Ann Dybvig helped us rethink our Lawn as an Act of Social Justice. What if your yard could be something more than a lawn - a place of beauty and an expression of love and compassion for God's. You don't need to be an expert gardener, and she promised that many changes to your yard can be less time and money for you, and better for the environment as compared to caring for turf grass.
- Guest Speaker Brandon Schorsch with Jewish Community Action taught us how antisemitism, like most forms of marginalization, is about far more than slurs or personal hatred. Antisemitism, like other oppressions, is a complex universe of stories, political ideas, events, folklore and myths that can and are currently being used as tools to enact social harm.
- Paul Mikelson and Anna Campbell provided an overview of the 1619 Project and presented some of the examples of how Black history has shaped the American culture over the past 400 years. Much of this history is unknown or not discussed in our society.
- Guest Speaker Perry Jacobson will inform us about "Your Legacy: Family, Church and Charity" on April 23, 2023.

Potluck

- Skip Humphrey led us on a timely discussion of Exploring Christian Citizenship in our Democracy. Using biblical references to citizenship responsibility, we discussed how we might better our American Democracy by acting on these principles.
- Tara Kuckkan, a former Behavioral Therapist has experience working with people with mental illness in a variety of settings discussed how we can be better allies for people with mental illness and warning signs that someone might need help. Tara introduced the ALGEE method of assisting when someone is in a mental health crisis and provided information on Mental Health First Aid training and certification.
- Nancy Rogness shared thoughts and stories about end-of-life experiences. Nancy sees birth and end of life events as being incredibly similar - both momentous transitional stages that we experience, and having a plan can help...even when plans go out the window. And in both cases, it is comforting to know that we are not alone. God will continue to be with us during times of love and loss, laughter, and tears.

Faith Formation Report Continued

- Laurie Eaton led a discussion on “What is a Christian response to national, state and local elections?” We explored what might be faithful responses for us as individuals and as a community. We considered biblical perspectives, some analysis from political action organization like ISALAH, and the media treatment of election results.
- Dan Johnson explored with us How Our Minds Work and Utilizing Our God Given Potential. Dan helped us to consider the psychological mind and how we can work to best direct our thoughts. Steve Peter’s book, “The Chimp Paradox”, was the basis for this forum.
- Jon Larson challenged us to Bible Trivia, Bible Family Feud, and Bible Bingo. While some of the women from VoP were enjoying the Women’s Retreat, Adult Faith Formation enjoyed some fun and games as well!
- Tom Ewald will teach us about Hinduism and Meditation on April 20, 2023.
- Guest Speaker Doug Cox will update us on Global Health Ministries on May 14, 2023.

VoP Book Club

(Summary respectfully submitted by Nancy Rogness)

Our Book Club read the following books this year:

- **Why We are Polarized**, by Ezra Klein
- **Lost City of the Monkey God**, by Douglas Preston
- **Unveiling Grace: The Story of How We Found Our Way out of the Mormon Church**, Lynn K. Wilder
- **The Naked Don’t Fear the Water, An underground journey with Afghan Refugees**, by Matthieu Aikins
- **The Healing of Natalie Curtis**, by Jane Kirkpatrick
- **The Color of Food**, by Natasha Bowen
- **Gloryland** by Shelton Johnson
- **Nervous Conditions**, by Tsitsi Dangarembga
- **The Water Dancer**, Ta-Nehisi Coates
- **Jesus and the Disinherited**, Howard Thurman

We continued to meet via Zoom, which turns out to be a nice option for most folks. Our books are selected by the group each year from submissions by the members. This helps with the variety of topics, so we continue to be surprised, learn, and grow.

Small Group Bible Study

In addition to Sunday Adult Forum, there were two small-group Bible study options for women and men this year. Coordinated by Elaine Lofquist, Rebecca’s Circle met in-person (with an option to participate online). The monthly meetings offered an opportunity for women to socially reconnect and followed the Bible study offered in Gather magazine. Jon Larson continued a monthly men’s Bible study group, following Tony Dungy’s Quiet Strength and Dare to be Uncommon Bible studies.

It is a joy to work with the dedicated members of the Adult Faith Formation committee who bring enthusiasm and ideas, lead sessions, invite speakers, promote, and show up to learn about our journey with God and his world.

Respectfully submitted,

Jon Larson

Adult Faith Formation Committee Chair

Hospitality Report

We made some changes to the Narthex and rearranging some furniture to make it more friendly and welcoming to our younger visitors and their small children. We have added a coffee/snack cart in the Narthex and it has been very well accepted.

We continue to send cards to our shut ins so that they continue to feel included in small ways with the church. We made cards with a beautiful picture of our windows in the church with the sun shining through.

I want to thank my committee members, Sally Daniels Herron, Chrys Johnson, Margaret Wallace, Matt and Abby Stetler, Diane Hinderlie, Heide Hovde, Sara Hoge, Christine Weatherman and Nancy Rogness for the wonderful help they give in volunteering by writing the cards, being at the welcome center and the coffee cart. It is very appreciated.

Respectfully submitted,
Julia Madison

Property Report

During this period, we returned to worship in the Sanctuary and resumed other meetings throughout the building. The Property Committee continues to communicate via email which not only works well but is also a preferred method by all.

Listed below are actions that have taken place over the last 12 months.

1. Many ash trees were removed in 2022 due to decay and safety issues. We will need to continue to need to remove or trim trees and start planting new trees as we go forward.
2. While in discussion about the need to replace the boiler, a new committee was formed to initially look at the feasibility of solar power and has since expanded to all energy needs. This committee is not a part of Property but wanted it noted why energy discussions are not included in this report. There is also a second group that is having the mechanical systems reviewed as well as a lower level task force that again you can read about in other reports.
3. Required safety and licensing inspections all met with no issues causing delays in issuance of necessary operating paperwork for either VoP or AGC. City of Golden Valley is requiring a grease trap to be installed in the kitchen but has agreed to wait until October of 2023 since we might be expanding the kitchen area. They agreed that we need to know the location of the drain before we spend up to \$6000 adding this feature.
4. We looked at adding a concrete slab to create a patio area on the north side of the lower level just off the parking lot but the cost will make this prohibitive at this time.
5. Security doors were installed in the lower entrance that can be locked and opened remotely in response to safety concerns for the building. Cameras and doorbell system were added as well as a key fob system for easier access for AGC and church staff.
6. Boiler continues to require ongoing repairs and we priced out a new one but are holding off until we look at solar options.
7. We continued to have a roof leak in the choir loft area and we replaced the flashing and some tiles and it appears we are staying dry in that area finally.

Property Report Continued

8. The leakage on the west wall in the Fireside Room is due to masonry issues and while we missed getting on a repair schedule in 2022 we are getting on one soon in 2023. This is a significant repair that will cost \$27,000.
9. Commercial dishwasher in the kitchen needed to be replaced to keep AGC in code compliance so that was completed in first week in March. Original cost was \$14,000 but the company gave us a \$2000 discount. If/when new kitchen is remodeled the dishwasher can be moved with minor plumbing adjustments.
10. The library has long needed attention and so a group of volunteers are starting this process on 3/25. We will remove the carpeting and look at replacing with large carpet squares that can be changed out with spills etc. We also removed the many bookcases that AGC had and will declutter the area so that it is a more appealing area to meet in.
11. We are still intending to replace the rest of the 13 garden plots in the old 4H garden on the terrace to create a real community garden. One of the scouts plans to upgrade this area as his Eagle Project and our hope is to get families from Noble School that might not have access to such an area interested in taking over a plot. We also can get assistance from a local organizer who is helping create community gardens throughout the city.
12. As the snows have finally melted from the parking lot you will also notice that after years of patching we are really at a point that replacement must be truly considered in the near future.

I again cannot say enough about the guys on the Fix-it Crew. They give a lot of time and Valley of Peace is very blessed to have such a great group.

We are always looking for additional members and **EVERYONE** is welcome as sweat equity is more important than any particular skill sets. Please take the time to thank the Fix It Crew:

**Steve Collin, Pat McGraw, Craig Franz, Dave Gilyard, Paul Mikelson,
Wes Severson, Joe Cherra, and Sten Pearson.**

Racial Justice Report

Throughout 2022 and into 2023, your VOP Racial Justice team has continued to put effort into a number of projects, and to discern how best to engage our congregation in the work of justice and equity.

- We try to have some thoughts, ideas or resources related to justice and/or anti-racism in the **Voice** each month.
- Our group has created a **Prayer for Volunteers**, to guide us in our work within VOP and out in the community. That prayer is printed below.
- Many of our team have attended **workshops and seminars** in the community to continue to be educated and informed on the work of diversity, inclusion, equity and anti-racism.
- Two sign strips were added to our electronic sign on the corner, reading, “**Called and Committed to Justice**”, in order to proclaim to the community a foundation of our church mission.
- We had various speakers from the Racial Justice Team and from our congregation speak during our **Lenten Worship Services** around the Theme of ‘The Practices of Lent for a Renewed Community’. Many of these topics connected traditional practices of lent with our continued work for justice, and in particular our antiracist work. The conversation with a small group of folks on Thursday mornings were also fruitful as we named our continued work and our hopes for our congregation to continue to engage in racial justice work.
- We have had much discussion and work on the idea of a **land acknowledgement** for VOP. Our Racial Justice Statement does include the words,
- “We recognize that we live and worship on land taken from the Wahpekute band of the Santee Dakota Nation.”
- However, we see this as a bare bones beginning of a more complete acknowledgement statement, and of determining appropriate action to take for the future. More discussion and research will continue this year.

Racial Justice Report Continued

- We have designed our **VOP CARES** logo, to distinguish activities, community outreach efforts and education relating to justice. You will see us use this logo ongoing.

- Some members of VOP enjoyed a visit to the **Hennepin History Museum**, to view two great exhibits on community justice and equity, including one about the impact of the 35W highway on the south Minneapolis neighborhood that was bisected by that construction.
- We hope to take advantage of other learning opportunities in our community in the coming months. Stay tuned!
- We will be connecting with various groups, committees and teams at VOP in the coming months, to re-address what we can all do and be aware of in the work of justice, equity and anti-racism. Our community and world are far from perfect, and it will take intentional awareness and action from us all to make positive change for our future and the future of our children. It is simply what God commanded of us in Micah 6:8 -

*. . . to do justice,
to love kindness,
and to walk humbly with your God.*

Prayer for Volunteers

We invite Valley of Peace Members and groups to use this prayer as an invocation and reminder of our call as we engage in the work of justice and relationship building with all of God's people.

Good and gracious God, may we be mindful today of your love and your Word as we set out to be in relationship with you and your people.

- May we remember from Genesis 1:26 that all people are created in your image, God, and that you have named us good.
- May we practice kindness and respect as we talk to each other and engage in our service to the whole community and in service to you, God.
- May we count on you God to guide us in being mindful of our intent and also of the impact we may have on others.
- *Optional: May we assume positive intent and enter into relationships with curiosity and wonder.*
- May we be open to new ideas as the lives of others may be very different from our own.
- May we hold the stories of others with care and confidentiality.
- May we remember that it is better to be compassionate rather than to be right.
- May we remember that we are only experts on ourselves and our own experiences.
- Grant us God, hearts of generosity, empathy, compassion, patience, dedication, and unity, today and always.
- Creator of all, we pray these things in your name. Amen

Respectfully submitted,

The VOP Racial Justice Team – Ann Dybvig, Laurie Eaton, Bob Hoyt, Shennon Jay,
Joan Maland, Barb Mikelson, Pastor Ashley Osborn, Nancy Rogness

We welcome any and all new members to this important work!

Just talk with any of us for more information.

Our next meeting is scheduled for June 1, at 7:00.

We are also grateful for the faithful service and input from retiring members of our team, Jim Jasper and Ken Schneider. Thank you for your dedication to justice!

Social Ministry Report

Social Ministry is a vibrant, multi-faceted part of life at Valley of Peace, demonstrating the generosity and community involvement of so many of our members. Each month throughout the year we invite congregation support and participation with a designated ministry. It is important to note, that every one of our Mission of the Month initiatives supports, nourishes, assists and enhances the lives of individuals of color and of many cultures in our community.

Our commitment to Racial Justice at work!

Here is a sampling of what has been accomplished in the past year.

2022

July –

Exodus Lending is a nonprofit helping Minneapolis families break their cycle of payday loan debt. During the past year nearly 300 families were assisted by this program, which not only helps them financially, but offers financial counselling so they can break the cycle of debt and extremely high interest. We received \$200 in contributions for **Exodus Lending** from our congregation. Contributions of \$580 also were sent to **PRISM**.

August –

Valley of Peace has had a long-standing relationship with our neighboring school, **Noble Elementary**. In addition to having volunteers go in weekly to work with students on reading skills and other subjects, VOP members donated 182 items to the **School Supply Drive**.

Every Meal is a ministry that serves the children of Noble School by providing bags of food for the weekend. We partner with Valley Presbyterian and Unity Minneapolis in our support of Noble with this program. VOP pledged and contributed \$2000 in August for **Every Meal**.

VOP also participated in our annual build week with **Habitat for Humanity**, with 26 volunteers. We surpassed our fundraising goal, and contributed \$5000 to the Habitat organization for their work in affordable housing.

October –

Through **Loaves and Fishes**, a weekly free community meal is served at Brunswick United Methodist Church, and Valley of Peace is committed to prepping and assisting once per month. VOP members contributed \$125 and volunteer hours to this organization.

The **Winter Clothing Drive** for Noble Elementary School brought in 44 clothing items, and \$592 used to purchase new winter clothing items.

November –

Gathered a car full of toys and gifts for the **PRISM** Holiday Gift Drive.

Social Ministry Report Continued

December –

As a founding church for **Cherish All Children**, VOP remains supportive and involved in keeping children safe from exploitation.

Cookie and lefse sale brought in \$820 for **Cherish All Children**

2023

January –

We remain grateful for and committed to our status as a **Reconciling in Christ** congregation, offering a true welcome for all. Shannon Jay and Jim Jaspers presented in Adult Faith Formation on RIC.

February –

With a focus on **Global Missions** in February, VOP continues to support ministries in the Lutheran Church of Christ in Nigeria.

March –

We hosted a concert by Caritas, benefitting **Cherish All Children**

VOP supports **PRISM**, our community social assistance organization throughout the year. In March we were able to contribute \$300 and many bags of food to **PRISM** for Minnesota Food Share Month.

April –

We held the **Book Drive** for **Noble Elementary School**. VOP members have always been generous with book donations that help keep kids reading during the summer.

May –

Supported a sponsorship for **PRISM's Taste of the Burb's** annual fundraiser, with a \$250 contribution.

What a tale of generosity and commitment to social justice and equity at Valley of Peace! In addition to piles of winter clothing, school supplies, gifts, books and groceries, our congregation members have made possible nearly **\$9900 in contributions** to our Mission of the Month organizations, from June 2022 to May 2023! Our members also volunteer in many ways for these organizations and others throughout the year.

Please consider how you can be involved in and supportive of these organization that VOP has chosen to assist! I will be happy to connect you with congregation members involved with these community organizations!

Respectfully submitted by,
Barb Mikelson
Council Member

World Missions Report

Thanks to the generous donations by the congregation and some hard work, the Global Missions Team accomplished the following in 2022:

A \$1000.00 donation was made to the Minneapolis Area Synod for the construction and establishment of the Lutheran University of Nigeria in Demsa, Nigeria. This will provide access to higher education and opportunities for an underserved area.

The committee, along with Ruth Larson, also worked closely with Lutheran Social Services to facilitate the re-settlement of the Afghan refugees in Minnesota. The committee solicited and received four types of donations: in-kind, on-line, (through the Target Charitable Donations link), Target gift cards, and monetary. Committee members picked up, received, sorted, and organized in-kind items from VOP and several sister congregations at the Lutheran Social Services office in downtown Minneapolis. Donations of in-kind items, and website orders included school supplies and essential household items, (personal hygiene kits, cleaning supplies, housewares, clothes, masks, and sanitizers). The total value of donations from congregation members was approximately \$1280.00 which included \$880.00 in monetary donations earmarked for Afghan refugees.

Without the help and generosity of the congregation, family, and friends these gifts would not have happened. We thank you for making it possible and being the active hands doing God's work to welcoming the exiled, feeding the hungry, caring for the sick, relieving the poor, and working for a better world. Thank you.

Respectfully submitted,

Patti Holmstrom, chair

Catherine Martignacco, committee member

Elaine Lofquist, committee member

Melissa Dellwo, committee member

Ann Dybvig, committee member

Worship & Music Report

The Worship and Music Team serves to bring together the Valley of Peace congregation and wider community for renewal in faith, strength, mission and purpose, by hearing the Word of the Lord, receiving the sacraments of Baptism and Holy Communion, and rejoicing in the gifts given by our Triune God.

Together with the pastoral and music staff, the team assumes responsibility for worship planning, preparation and participation, altar care, worship arts, and a wide variety of music opportunities.

We are incredibly blessed to have such a wonderful staff and gifted volunteers.

Changes that you may or may not have noticed in worship:

- All inclusive bulletins to use during worship, especially when expecting visitors
- Began passing the peace once again – Rally Sunday 2022
- Began passing the offering plates—Rally Sunday 2022
- Individual candles were used during the singing of *Silent Night on Christmas Eve*
- Moved the time, within worship, when we receive the offering so that we may not distract from those sharing special music
- An updated balcony which now uses newly purchased chairs after the removal of the old damaged pews
- The youth bell choir first shared their music during the Children & Youth Christmas Program
- The Valley of Peace community was invited to purchase their own Easter flowers to decorate the sanctuary, after a fire destroyed the Lynde Greenhouse

New opportunities:

- Team Fair held outdoors which was an opportunity to learn about each team and join them if interested.
- Training sessions for those who volunteer during worship and those who volunteer outside of worship were held in February 2023

Worship & Music Report Continued

Staff Changes:

We said goodbye to our music director, Zack Carlson-Giving, who resigned to focus on his new marriage. His last Sunday with us was July 31, 2022 and we were able to honor him with a \$500 gift card from the congregation. Our new music director, Hsu-hui Wang, began her ministry with us on September 15, 2022. She continues to direct the Chancel and Valley Carillon Choirs and has added a youth bell choir.

She has also encouraged more special music to be shared by individuals and groups. Sally Daniels Herron, our parish administer, retired from her years of service at Valley of Peace. Her last day was October 31, 2022. She was honored with a reception following worship on November 6th. We hired Kelsey Pierson, long term member of Valley of Peace, to become our Ministry Support Coordinator. She began her ministry with us the week of November 1st.

Holy Communion Changes:

How we served holy communion and what we offered evolved as we moved through the pandemic. We moved away from partaking, in our pews, with prefilled cups with grape juice and a gluten-free cracker. On Reformation Sunday, October 16th we were offered gluten-free wafers or home baked bread, wine or grape juice using compostable cups and prefilled cups were also available. Two lines were formed on either side of the center aisle. Ushers guided parishioners forward to receive either home baked bread, gluten free wafer or the prefilled elements. Each parishioner then picked up a compostable cup from a basket and were offered either wine or grape juice. Communion servers then filled these using a small pouring chalice. After receiving the elements each parishioner placed their cup in a basket lined with a compostable bag.

Laurie Eaton generously gifted us four smaller pouring chalices. During this time more volunteers became necessary to assist with the serving of communion. And the Altar Care team spent more time with preparing for communion and clean up afterwards. More bread bakers are needed.

Holy Communion Serving Feedback survey from February 5, 2023 resulted in almost an even split between those preferring to receive communion through intinction (bread is dipped into wine/juice from common cup). and those preferring to receive communion when wine/juice is poured into compostable cups. Taking into consideration all the changes that we have introduced with Holy Communion since Covid, a decision was made to continue serving using the compostable cups for the wine/grape juice and bread, until Rally Sunday. Beginning on Rally Sunday Holy Communion will be offered by Intinction with prefilled cups as an option. Holy Communion will be offered twice a month and holy days/festivals.

Licensing for music and liturgy:

Being good stewards of what we use and paying accordingly for the use of music and liturgy, that is live streamed, brought significant changes in our annual costs. Licenses for live streaming music are needed to be purchased annually. We need three different licenses to cover all of the music and liturgy that we use. These licenses will be included as budget items in the future.

Sundays & Seasons cost \$360. Our subscription includes an annual license to use and reproduce sundaysandseasons.com liturgical materials and designated artwork for our congregation. This covers live streaming, liturgical music and podcasts. ONE LICENSE cost \$277. This gives permission to reprint, podcast, and record songs for our congregation. It also allows us to search and download high resolution music image files to use in our worship bulletins. CCLI : Christian Copyright Licensing International cost is \$226. This license covers access to lyrics, display lyrics, print songs, record services, custom music arrangements and song translation.

Sabbatical for Pastor Ashley:

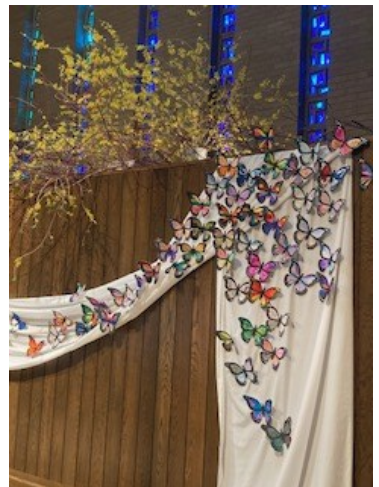
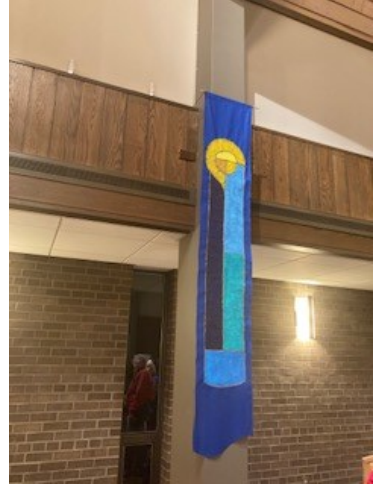
In November 2022 Pastor Ashley requested to take a twelve-week sabbatical focused on rest, reflection and renewal. A sabbatical centered around planting and flourishing would include three components for Pastor Ashley: planting and flourishing in my head & heart, my home, and my community. The council was presented with this request and voted unanimously to grant this time for Pastor Ashley. A commissioning for sabbatical took place during the worship service on April 16, 2023. Pastor Ashley will return from sabbatical on July 16th. Pastor Wes Syverson will lead worship and be on call from April 17 to May 31. Pastor Laurie Eaton will lead worship and be on call beginning June 1 to July 11. Upon Pastor Ashley's return there will be times in Sunday worship to share what she and the congregation have engaged and learned during a sabbatical time. She will also hope to connect individually with households at Valley of Peace beginning in the fall of 2023 to hear what they are seeing planted in our midst and their hopes for how the church continues to flourish because of our shared work and the growth that God offers.

Navigating how to live out our mission while living in the midst of an ever-changing pandemic has been a challenge. We are grateful for our gifted staff, amazing volunteers and our accommodating Valley of Peace community. Each decision we make we do so with the reminder that we are an inclusive and welcoming community.

Worship & Music Team: Beth Brandt, Laurie Eaton, Linda Franz, Pat Hoyt, Barb Mikelson, Emilie Moravec, Pastor Ashley Osborn & Darcie Rodman.

Worship Arts Report

Your VOP Worship Arts committee continues to ensure that our services are enhanced visually throughout the year. Thank you to Dan Weatherman, Emilie Moravec, Anna Campbell, Melissa Dellwo, Matt Dellwo, Lori Akin, Barb Mikelson & Kristy Collin for their help!



Lower Level Task Force Report

May 2018 ... Council Directive ... to form a Lower Level Building Committee to develop a master plan for the items outlined in the Summary Report of Lower Level Facilities Survey, up to and including engaging an Architect.”

Those improvements would include Kitchen renovation, additional ADA Unisex Restroom, and Fellowship Hall renovation.

In March 2020, our Team made an initial presentation of suggested Lower Level Improvements to the Congregation Executive Team which was well received. Our intent at the time was to then present to the Council. COVID-19 HIT and that presentation never occurred! It was felt that it was not an appropriate time to pursue a capital improvement project during the Pandemic, so the Project was placed on hold.

With Covid-19 restrictions lifted, our Team presented a proposed concept of the Project to the VoP Executive Team and Church Council in August 2022. The presentation encompassed renderings, as well as preliminary opinion of probable cost.

With guidance from the Council, our Team together with Miller Dunwiddie Architects, were asked to make a presentation of the renderings, project plans and opinion of probable costs to the congregation in Fall of 2022.

November 20, 2022 - following morning worship in the Fellowship Hall, a presentation was made to the congregation of proposed improvements to the Lower Level.

Our presentation included ... 1) preliminary renderings showing a complete makeover and expansion of the Kitchen; 2) adding a ADA-compliant Unisex Restroom; 3) a complete makeover of the Fellowship Hall. Also, included was a very preliminary opinion of probable cost for the project, broken out by area. The cost as projected for the entire project exceeded one million dollars.

Since the meeting in November, we have posted the renderings in various areas of the building looking for additional comments and questions.

Lower Level Task Force Report Continued

Based on comments received at the November meeting, and follow-up comments/questions by VoP members, we are narrowing our focus for Lower Level improvements to the following ...

- Fully-functional enlarged Serving Kitchen meeting Dept of Health Regulations
- Adding an ADA Unisex Restroom/option to convert an existing restroom
- Limiting improvements to the Fellowship Hall if financially feasible to the following:
 - Installation of energy-efficient windows
 - New lighting
 - New flooring

We recently asked our Architect from Miller Dunwiddie to look at, refining and further development of the previous concept design drawings. This will include ... Kitchen area & Equipment, Restroom, and Fellowship Hall (windows, lighting and floor). It will include ...

- Develop additional information on materials and finishes for a general contract to estimate
- Engage a kitchen supplier to assist in developing a budget for kitchen equipment
- Engage a general contractor to provide a more detailed estimate of construction costs

Our plan is to bring to the congregation, at the Semi-Annual Meeting in May, a proposal to approve the Architect's fee for the next phase of Design Development.

The Design Development phase will provide us with a higher level of detail as to equipment, finishes, and a current construction cost for the project.

We thank you for your patience and look forward to advancing this project in the coming months.

Many thanks to the Lower Level Improvement Team...

Sally Daniels Herron, Pete Mikelson, Pastor Ashley Osborn, Sten Pearson, Dan Weatherman who have faithfully served this past year.

Respectfully submitted,
Dave Gilyard

Solar/Mechanical Systems Task Force Report

The Valley of Peace Solar/Mechanical Systems Task Force was formed in March of 2022 with the initial purpose of studying the feasibility of installing a solar system to reduce fossil fuel use and energy costs and soon broadened the scope to include other alternative energy sources.

After initial consultation with mechanical/electrical engineers, it was determined that geothermal was not feasible due to lack of open area to drill the wells as well as high cost.

It would be possible to install wells in the parking lot, but would result in the expense of repaving, making it even more expensive. Additionally, the water table is likely high due to the proximity of the creek, making geothermal less efficient as well as causing possible permitting problems.

A feasibility study for a solar panel installation was requested of Minnesota Interfaith Power & Light (MNIPL), a faith-based non-profit, utilizing Apadana Solar Technologies, a local solar installer. Results were presented to the task force in September of 2022. The study provided three solar location options and the costs associated with each. The least expensive option, which locates the panels on the flat roofs, would cost around \$72,000 after rebates and pay for itself after 15 years. There is an option to have solar panels funded by a third party investor as well, but with less cost savings to the church over time. Regardless of panel cost and energy savings, the benefit to the environment is something still to be considered.

An energy audit was performed at no cost by EnerChange, a nonprofit organization. The report's suggestions for energy saving measures included new thermostats, boiler tune-up, and an HVAC study. Due to the age and condition of the boiler, the task force thought it advisable to consider a boiler replacement as well as look at the condition of the other mechanical systems, many of which are relatively old.

Steen Engineering was engaged to assess the condition of the building's mechanical systems. The resulting report assessed condition, age, energy efficiency, and code compliance, also noting life expectancy and replacement cost. The task force prioritized the systems for replacement based on these findings as well as importance to the various uses of the building. A Mechanical Equipment Replacement Cost Estimate, dated 3/16/2023, was presented to the church council at its March meeting. The estimate recommended immediate replacement of the boiler and pumps, new programmable thermostats, and office area and fellowship hall HVAC units with an associated cost of \$288,000. Systems suggested for near-future replacement totaled \$190,000.

The energy audit, solar report, and mechanical systems needs assessment are archived on the church server.

Respectfully submitted, Solar/Mechanical Systems Task Force members:
Dan Weatherman, Dave Gilyard, Steve Hoge, Skip Humphrey, Pat McGraw

Altar Care Report

This year in Altar Care we are preparing the altar for worship and for communion. We are serving communion on the first and third Sundays using compostable cups for wine and juice. We are using home made bread with the option of using the pre-filled communion kits. We will begin communion using intinction and serving every Sunday on Rally Sunday in September. We continue to use Best Wishes florists for our Sunday flowers.

Our team is Kathy Boesen, Claudia Arohanson, Pat Hepner, Steve Collin and Melissa Dellwo. Our volunteer bakers are Barb and Noah Mikelson, Pam Syverson, Jon and Clara Osborn, Laurie Eaton as well as Kathy Boesen and Pat Hepner.
We welcome all volunteers!

Linda Franz, Chair

Every Meal Report

Every Meal is a weekend food program supported by Valley of Peace and two other partner churches to provide bags of food for Noble School children during the school year. Every Meal offers five culturally diverse meal choices for the families to chose from and bags are sorted accordingly. We participate with this program by handing out the food bags on Fridays at Noble and giving a monetary donation once a year to defray food costs.

Noble School and Every Meal continue to be an important ministry for Valley of Peace.

Linda Franz, Coordinator

Personnel Committee Report

The VoP Personnel Committee works to assure consistent, professional, and fair employment practices for our church staff members.

The committee includes elected members Tara Kuckkan and Sara Hoge, Pastor Ashley, and Council Past-President Jim Crofoot. Membership is defined by VoP Bylaws. This committee does not meet on a regular schedule, but meetings and discussions take place as relevant topics arise.

This year, Sally Daniels Herron retired and Zach Carlson-Giving resigned from their positions on Valley of Peace staff. The Personnel Committee met to revise both job descriptions and assist in the interview and hiring process for Hsu-Hui Wang as Director of Music Ministry and Kelsey Pierson as Ministry Support Coordinator.

The Personnel Committee also worked with Pastor Ashley to revise the VoP Employee Handbook and clarify paid time off policies and procedures.

Additionally, members of the Personnel Committee participated in Pastor Ashley's annual review and provided support to Pastor Ashley as she provided annual reviews to the staff. We wish to express our appreciation to the staff of Valley of Peace for their continuing leadership in face of the challenges of staff turnover and continuing to worship and minister both in-person and remotely over the past year.

Respectfully submitted,
Tara Kuckkan, Committee Chair

AGCLC Report

AGCLC Board of Directors

Jamie Williams
Kelsey Maynard
Jon Tester
Pat McGraw
Judy Greeninger
Mary Hovden
Jim Jasper
Patricia Starks-Faggétt

2022 was a year full of changes for All God's Children. Within the course of the year, we had two Directors move on from AGC due to personal life changes. At the end of November, I stepped into the Director role as an interim position and accepted this position full-time at the end of February. I joined AGC in February 2020 and am excited to see what the future holds for AGC!

We have experienced staffing struggles in our Preschool Program but have hired some fantastic new team members for our Toddler and Infant Programs. Even through these staffing struggles, the staff members at AGC have been incredibly flexible with their schedules and room assignments to support the rest of the team. In 2022 we supported four of our staff members as they continued their education and celebrated with them as they officially became Teacher-qualified!

Over the last year our staff have been working hard to implement our new curriculum and complete additional training so that we can become 3 or 4 Star Rated through Parent Aware this upcoming Spring. We are excited to see our staff members' hard work come to fruition as we finalize our Parent Aware evaluation.

Towards the end of 2022, All God's Children did see a decrease in enrollment and tuition, but this has begun to turn as we have entered 2023! By the end of April, we will have 51 of the 72 available enrollment spots filled.

In regard to the AGC facility, we would like to give a huge thank you to the VOP maintenance team and Jim Jasper specifically! We are very appreciative of their hard work in helping maintain the building when issues big or small arose.

Anna Pearson
AGCLC Director

Memorial & Endowment Trust Report

The purpose of the trust is to provide resources for new opportunities for mission that are not planned for in the budget of the congregation. Christian stewardship helps us to bless others beyond our own lifetimes. The trust does that.

A gift may occur while the donor is living or through the donor's will. An honoring gift in thankfulness for a living friend or family member is an excellent way to ensure that person's gifts of ministry are carried on in perpetuity. Donations of any size are welcomed.

If you have an Individual Retirement Account (IRA) you can make a Qualified Charitable Donation (QCD) directly from your funds to the trust. A QCD can help you reach your Required Minimum Distribution (RMD) without having to pay income tax on the amount of your donation. As a charitable gift it will lower the tax you would normally need to pay. You save on your taxes and help the mission of Valley of Peace! This process can also be used where an investment has gained a considerable amount and you would like to give that stock or a portion of it to offset your taxes. We encourage you to use your tax advisor in developing these efforts to give to the trust.

Income from gifts provides the congregation with funds for new and unbudgeted programs or items. The principle stays in the trust and continues to grow. Contributions can be earmarked to fund mission support, music, youth programming, etc. The trust currently has two endowments: for music and for youth programs.

Valley of Peace Memorial and Endowment Trust Overview for 2022

The trust's investment allocation is in a moderate risk portfolio.

Cash/Cash Alternatives	\$22,272	7.75%
Equities	\$124,276	43.2%
Fixed Income	\$141,043	49.0%

Total as of 12/31/2022 \$287,591

Value of account 12/31/2021 \$343,215

Value of account 12/31/2022 \$287,591

Percentage change for 2022 -16.2%

This follows major gains in the past five years. The gain in 2021 was \$24,162.

Memorial & Endowment Trust Report Continued

Dividend and interest income in 2022 \$11,991
Trust investment value 3/16/2023 \$295,207
Estimated income for 2023 \$8,900

Valley of Peace Memorial and Endowment Trust income and expenses for 2022

<u>Income</u>	<u>2022</u>	<u>2021</u>
Contributions	0.00	\$1,545
Interest/Dividends	\$11,991	\$10,788
 <u>Expenses</u>		
Grants approved from trust	\$4,385	\$9,940
UBS Management Fees	\$175	\$175
 Balance (includes Excel bonds)	 \$315,282	 \$377,956

Grants approved from trust in 2022

Joe Davis speaker fee \$935
Bike rack \$1,000
Habitat for Humanity \$1,000

Worship (designated fund) \$1,100
Youth (designated fund) \$350

Total grants in 2022 \$4,385

Members of the trust board:

Christy Flikke
Jon Larson
Annette Balkenende
Zachary Pierson
Bob Gullick, Investment Officer
Mary Hovden, Treasurer
Bob Hoyt, Chair

Memorial & Endowment Trust Report Continued

Members of the Trust Board:

Annette Balkenende, Christy Flikke, Bob Gullick, Mary Hovden, Bob Hoyt, Jon Larson & Zachary Pierson

Christian stewardship leads us to bless others beyond our own lifetimes. Valley of Peace Endowment and Memorial Trust helps our congregation do just that. The income from the Trust provides the congregation with funds for new and unbudgeted programs or items. The principle stays in the Trust and continues to grow. Any size gift is appreciated. Your gift will live on through the Valley of Peace Endowment and Memorial Trust.

There are several ways individuals can contribute to the Trust:

- A gift may be made through the donor's will.
- A gift may be made in thankfulness to a friend or family member.
- A gift may be made in memory of an individual.
- If you have an Individual Retirement Account (IRA), you may make a Qualified Charitable Donation (QCD) directly from your IRA to the Valley of Peace Trust. A QCD can help you reach your Required Minimum Distribution (RMD) without having to pay income taxes on the amount of your donation. As a charitable gift it will lower the taxes you would normally need to pay. You save on your taxes and help the mission of Valley of Peace! Check with your tax advisor to see if this is an option for you.

A gift to the Trust is a great way to assure that an individual's life and ministry is carried on in perpetuity. Your contribution may be undesignated or earmarked for a special purpose such as: mission support, music, youth programing, a scholarship, or any number of things.

VOP Trust Investment Overview 2022

Bob Gullick, Investment Officer

The majority of the investments are managed by UBS Financial.
Our Investment Allocation is a Moderate Risk Profile.

The allocation of the investments at 12/31/2022 was:

Cash/Cash Alternatives	\$ 22,272	7.75%
Equities	\$ 124,276	43.2%
Fixed Income	\$ 141,043	49.0%

Total as of 12/31/2022: \$287,591

Value of Trust Investment Account on 12/31/2021: \$343,215

Percentage change for 2022: -16.2%

This follows major gains in the past 5 years. The 2021 gain was \$24,162.

Memorial & Endowment Trust Report Continued

Report from December 31, 2022

INCOME AND EXPENSE

	2022	2021
Income		
Contributions	\$ -	\$1,545
Interest/Dividends	\$11,991	\$10,788
Market Value changes	\$(70,105)	\$24,162
Total Income	<u>\$(58,114)</u>	<u>\$36,495</u>
Expenses		
Grants approved from Trust	\$4,385	\$9,940
Investment Management Fees	\$175	\$175
Other Trust expenses	\$ -	\$2,846
Total Expenses	<u>\$4,560</u>	<u>\$12,960</u>
Net Increase (Decrease) to Trust	<u>\$(62,674)</u>	<u>\$23,535</u>
TRUST BALANCE	<u>\$315,282</u>	<u>\$377,956</u>
2022 Grants Approved from Trust:		
Speaker Fee-Joe Davis		\$935
Bike Rack		\$1,000
Habitat for Humanity		\$1,000
VOP Music from their designated funds		\$1,100
VOP Youth from their designated funds		<u>\$350</u>
		<u>\$4,385</u>

Bishop Ann Svennungsen Report



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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

In Christ,
Bishop Ann Svennungsen

Presiding Bishop Elizabeth Eaton Report

A MESSAGE FROM PRESIDING BISHOP ELIZABETH EATON



Dear friends in Christ,

We have seen many changes throughout the years and throughout the world. Sometimes we've been left yearning for the days when things didn't feel so complicated. Other times, we have seen something new happen and have asked, "Why did this take so long?" The church has been through its own changes as well. Some of these have left us wishing for simpler times while others have us waiting for even more to come about.

But, dear church, God still is unchanging. God's love is still the foundation on which the church was built. While we have seen many changes, both in the world and at the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, the eternal love of God and the good news that dwells with Christ's death and resurrection continue to provide hope for everyone. This is why our mission remains steadfast, whether that is through our traditional mission work in places near and far or from new ventures and visions that encourage us to think of different ways to reach even more people.

The writer of Hebrews reminds us: "Do not neglect to do good and to share what you have, for such sacrifices are pleasing to God" (13:16). That could not be truer in the work we have been doing in each expression of the church. Your gifts continue to benefit the good work of spreading the good news throughout your communities, your synods and the whole church. We are all answering the call to continue to do good work with the help of your support, whether that is through your resources, your time or your talents.

I am grateful for your generous support of each expression of the church. God calls all of us to continue to do the good work, and you continue to answer that call. We also continue to join you in that call and will remain true to looking toward God's unchanging promise. There is still much change and learning that will come before us, but God's steadfast love energizes us for the work God is still doing in the world through this church.

In Christ,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Elizabeth A. Eaton". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

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

“Do not neglect to do good and to share what you have, for such sacrifices are pleasing to God”

(Hebrews 13:16).

Member Statistics Report

Baptized Members, as of May 2023: 288

Confirmed Members, as of May 2023: 239

Average Sunday Worship Attendance (In Person): 70

Average Sunday Worship Attendance (on Facebook Live): 10

Baptized from May 2022-May 2023

Emerson John Pierson

Oliver James Pierson

Deaths from May 2022-May 2023

Cheri Haynes

Darryl Gene Slinde

Joan Amy Gates

Nancy Long

William "Bill" L. Nelson

Audrey Lorraine Walberg

Darlene Gieseke Peterson

Mary Ann Hancock

Richard "Dick" Ekelund



NEW BUSINESS AGENDA FOR MAY 21, 2023 ANNUAL MEETING

- I. The Finance team has proposed moving \$50,000 from the Dorothy Sanford fund to a dedicated fund related to the lower-level improvements. This transfer would be used to fund a feasibility study for a Capital Campaign, and the Design Development phase of lower-level improvements (see item II.)
- II. The engagement of Miller Dunwiddie Architecture Firm to complete the Design Development phase of lower-level improvements. This phase includes the engagement of a general contractor for validation and cost estimating, engagement of a food service design and supply company for kitchen equipment, layout and budgeting, and revision of previous concept plans to reflect the feedback received by the congregation.
- III. Sponsorship of a Venezuelan family.
- IV. Acknowledgment of Outgoing Elected Leaders
- V. Election of New Officers & Council Members
- VI. Motion to Adjourn

Please check the calendar at www.valleyofpeace.org for the latest information on events and activities at Valley of Peace.

OUR MISSION STATEMENT:

Living in God's love and compassion, we are called and sent by God to be disciples of Jesus Christ, as the Holy Spirit works through us for healing, justice, and peace.

Valley of Peace Staff

Pastor (on sabbatical)

Ashley Osborn
aosborn@valleyofpeace.org

Organist / Pianist / Accompanist

Beth Brandt
beth_erin@yahoo.com

Director of Children, Youth and Family

Emilie Moravec
emoravec@valleyofpeace.org

Ministry Support Coordinator

Kelsey Pierson
office@valleyofpeace.org

Director of Music

Hsu-hui Wang
music@valleyofpeace.org

Visit us online at

www.valleyofpeace.org

Community Resources

COVID-19 Public
Hotline for questions:
1-833-431-2053

Mental Health
Crisis Line:
Crisis (274747)



Evangelical Lutheran
Church in America

God's work. Our hands.