

JUNE 27, 2021



Annual Report

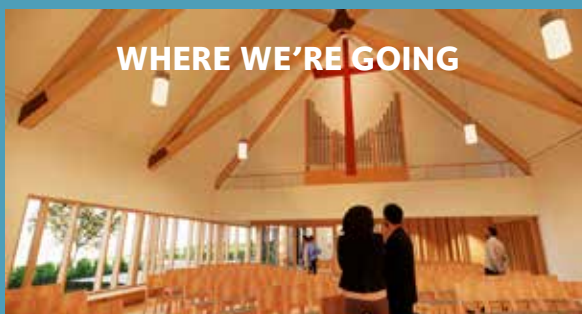
2020 - 2021



HOW IT STARTED



HOW IT'S GOING



WHERE WE'RE GOING



GOD'S CALL... OUR VISION

For the Life of the World

IMPORTANT: MEETING CHECK IN INSTRUCTIONS

Please use the Zoom link or phone (see back cover for information) to check in at the time set for your last name. Thank you for facilitating a smooth, timely check in for us all!

12:20-12:30 PM – A-G

12:30-12:45 PM – H-P

12:45-12:55 PM – R-Z

You will be held in a “waiting room” until the registration team can let you in. Please be patient – you may be in this waiting room for a while.

Once “in” the meeting, you will be sent into a breakout room with one of our registration teams. They will verify you as a voting member, mark you in attendance for our records, and ensure that your name appears correctly.

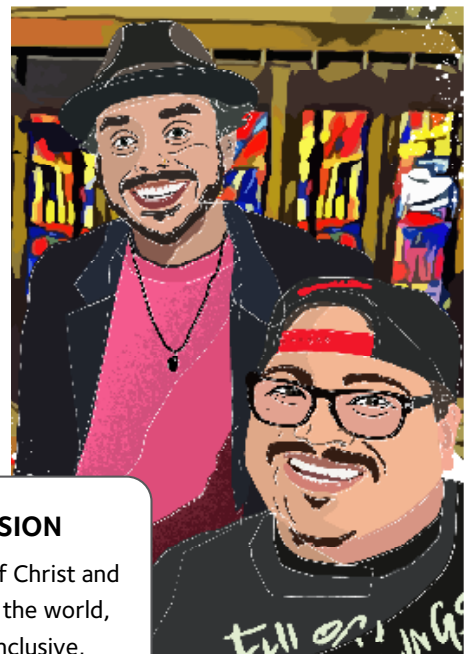
Your name should appear in your Zoom square like this: “First+Last Name”. Once you’re checked in, you will be sent from the breakout room back into the main meeting room. **DO NOT LEAVE ZOOM MEETING AFTER CHECKING IN.** While you wait you can enjoy some music, check out the info slides, or turn off your camera and mic and wait for us to begin at 1 PM.

For those who are joining by phone call, you will be able to vote using the “Raise Hand” feature on Zoom by entering *9 on your phone’s dial pad at the appropriate time. We will remind everyone of this before each vote.

ANNUAL MEETING AGENDA | July 27, 1 PM

1. Welcome – Introductions / Instructions
2. Opening Prayer and Song
3. State of the Church – Pastoral
4. State of the Church and introduction to Open Questions – Council
5. 2020-2021 Year End Financial Report
6. Honoring our Volunteers: Ballard Sunday Dinner
- 5 MIN BREAK
7. 2021-2022 Mission Budget Presentation & Vote
8. Vision-Aligned Building: Discussion / Sanctuary Sit-In Dates / Open House
9. Thank you to all retiring Council members
10. Introduction of Church Council Candidates- [LINK TO BIOS](#)
11. Election of New Church Council Members
12. Thank you to Staff, Council, Volunteers, and Congregation Members

Go in Peace. Serve the Lord. **Thanks be to God!**



OUR VISION

In the model of Christ and for the life of the world, we are an inclusive, devoted, caring and spiritual community that accepts challenges, takes risks and grows.



LITANY

L. O God of all power and love ...

C. ... we give thanks for your unfailing presence.

L. O God of all power and love, we give thanks ...

C. ... for the hope you provide in times of uncertainty and loss.

L. O God of all power and love ...

C. ... we ask you to send your Holy Spirit to enkindle in us your holy fire.

L. O God of all power and love, we ask you ...

C. ... to revive us to live as Christ's body in the world.

L. O God of all power and love, we ask to be ...

C. ... a people who pray, worship, learn, break bread, share life, heal neighbors, bear good news, seek justice, rest and grow in the Spirit.

L. O God of all power and love, we ask you to be with us ...

C. ... wherever and however we gather. Unite us in common prayer and send us in common mission, that we and the whole creation might be restored and renewed, through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

Build Us Up, Lord

1 Build us up, Lord, build us up; set in
2 Build us up, Lord, build us up; let our

us a strong foun - da - tion. Lead us to do your
lives re - flect your glo - ry. Cast a - way all our

ho - ly will; form and shape your new cre - a - tion.
doubts and fears; help us tell the world your sto - ry.

Build us up, Lord, build us up; as we
Build us up, Lord, build us up; help us

guide and teach each oth - er, help us to share your love with the
bear good fruit for you, Lord, give us vi - sion and keep us

world: ev - 'ry sis - ter, ev - 'ry broth - er.
sure. Grant us faith that's stead - fast and true.

Refrain
Grow - ing in Christ, we plant seeds for the king - dom; we fol - low in
faith what's be - gun! Lord, set in our hearts the pow'r of your
word to spread the news of your Son!

Text: Mark Glaeser, b. 1956, and Donna Hanna, b. 1952

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A MESSAGE FROM ELCA PRESIDING BISHOP ELIZABETH EATON

Dear friends in Christ,

This year has been a challenging one! The COVID-19 pandemic has changed the church and society. We have had to shift the ways we engage in ministry from a focus on in-person worship and meetings to livestream worship, virtual meetings and gatherings in the parking lot. We have had to shift to teaching children at home and working from home. We have not been able to travel to see friends or relatives or to celebrate life events. This has also been a time to address economic and social justice issues, to shift our thinking and our way of life.

In times such as this, our baptism in Christ makes a difference and makes us different. Like Christians before us, we recall that God is faithful to God's promises and God's people. We see that God enables us to connect with one another even when we are separated. Shifts in the world invite us to be innovative in how we do God's work and reach out to all ages in making disciples. We see that God is at work not only in our buildings but beyond them as well. We have found new ways to serve our neighbors and reach those in need.

As we experience this time of uncertainty, we sense something new emerging. In many places there are new strategies and renewed energy for ministry, often generated by emerging leaders. We have developed a framework to build on, and now is the time to engage in hard work together. As you do in your congregation, we want our collaborative efforts to be both faithfully thoughtful and sustainable. We want to build up the body of Christ today and for the future.

Looking across the church, I am grateful for your generous giving of time, talents and resources. Yes, God does continue to bless us! God will provide both relief from life's struggles and hope for a stronger church, God's church. We do not need to know how the future will unfold. As members in the body of Christ, we need only trust that God is with us and will provide.

Building up the body of Christ together,

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

"The gifts he gave were that some would be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, until all of us come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to maturity, to the measure of the full stature of Christ. We must no longer be children, tossed to and fro and blown about by every wind of doctrine, by people's trickery, by their craftiness in deceitful scheming. But speaking the truth in love, we must grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ, from whom the whole body, joined and knit together by every ligament with which it is equipped, as each part is working properly, promotes the body's growth in building itself up in love." —Ephesians 4:11-16

In the early verses of Ephesians 4, the apostle Paul writes to the Christians in Ephesus, a city on the Aegean Sea at the mouth of a river and at the intersection of three trading routes. The letter was written about ten years after the church had started. During the early years of this congregation, Jews and Gentiles from several ethnicities and nationalities had come together to form “one body.” Paul was aware that they had done well and commended them for their faith and love.

The word “one” appears more than seven times in the first four verses. This reflects the importance Paul gave to being called into the “unity of Christ.” He wanted to note that, although many of the church members came from far off, there is “one Lord, one faith, one baptism.” This oneness reflects God’s gift of reconciliation in Christ.

A second emphasis from Paul was that, as believers, they were to “bear with one another in love.” This would require humility, gentleness and patience as each of them practiced their faith. It would require tolerance to “maintain unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.”

A third emphasis was that each person had been given gifts by God and that these gifts were given to increase the whole. Because the Ephesian church was a young congregation and its members were just beginning in their faith journey, their understandings were often tossed to and fro. But as they grew in faith, each person contributed to building up the body of Christ.

The fourth and final emphasis was that by “speaking the truth in love,” each person must grow into Christ. This means taking time to learn about one another and their gifts. Knowing these gifts, we can do God’s work both within and beyond the faith community. When there are decisions to make or relationships to reconcile, we know to begin with prayer and reflection, always desiring to speak the truth in love — not for our own benefit but for God’s glory, that we might become more complete.

As our members and friends gather today, whether face-to-face or online, we are reminded of our calling into “unity in Christ.” We come from many places and work in many contexts, and yet we recognize “one Lord, one faith, one baptism.”

Whether new to a worshiping community or further along the journey, we realize that humility, gentleness and patience are required both in the good times and especially in times of uncertainty and struggle. God wants us to be more complete through our work. Christ provides the way. The Holy Spirit is with us for guidance and courage. Each of us has been given the gifts to be complete, and through our faithfulness we will grow stronger and work together as one body.

LET US PRAY: LORD, LET THE WORDS OF THE APOSTLE PAUL DWELL IN US DEEPLY. MAY WE EMBRACE THE RECONCILING POWER OF ONENESS WITH CHRIST. MAY THIS ONENESS GUIDE OUR CONGREGATION AS WE LIVE INTO THE NEW REALITIES OF THESE TIMES. AS WE MEET NEW PARTNERS IN MINISTRY, MAY WE TAKE TIME TO GET TO KNOW THEM WITH PATIENCE, HUMILITY AND LOVE. HELP US TO SEE HOW SHARING OUR GIFTS WILL MAKE YOUR WORK EASIER AND MORE FULFILLING WHILE BRINGING ALL OF US CLOSER TO CHRIST. MAY THE BLESSINGS YOU GIVE EACH DAY STRENGTHEN US TO A LIVING, DARING CONFIDENCE IN YOUR GRACE. AMEN.

STATE OF THE CHURCH

Dear Friends,

July 2020 – June 2021. A whole **year** shaped by the pandemic. Closed schools, shops, restaurants and, yes, churches. Plus, violence, insurrection, contested elections, and protests. **Could we ever have imagined this year?**

Although these losses and challenges drained and tried us, they could not block God's life-giving Spirit and unconditional love. Rooted in God's grace, our ministries never stopped serving God and our neighbors – we just found ways to do them differently:

- We gathered for worship each Sunday, through the miracles of technical adaptations. Our choir and musicians renewed our spirits via video and we welcomed visitors from other states and countries.
- Unsheltered people found stability through our Road to Housing Program with new outdoor facilities. Hundreds enjoyed take-away Ballard Sunday Dinners.
- Grieving, ill, and celebrating folks were blessed with cards, phone calls, notes, meals, prayers, and prayer shawls. Early on, each of us received a "Friendship Call", to see how we were faring.
- We voted on far-reaching decisions to expand God's work through our building renovation, and our annual mission budget.
- Undergirded by a grant, a consultant, and a cohort, our Faith Formation team worked throughout the year on intergenerational and family learning initiatives that will start this fall.
- New "Circles of Connection" small groups formed to combat pandemic isolation. Teachers and preachers from as far away as South Africa, inspired and challenged us. All adult classes met virtually, with steady participation.
- The very new Racial Justice Advocates ministry stirred us to greater awareness and engagement. Elizabeth Dickinson joined us as Social Justice Coordinator.

Whew! The Spirit was moving!

And while all this was going on, a tremendous planning and preparation effort was also underway, helping us embrace God's vision to expand worship, welcome, community, justice, and generosity.

- We avoided brokers, partnering with the Ballard P-Patch so the community garden could continue in perpetuity, and our building will be earthquake safe and accessible to all.
- Council is adopting a new model of governance, so our congregation can consider the challenges and questions ahead, and also strengthening staff, committees, and ministry teams. We have been so blessed by our outstanding and faithful council this year!
- We engaged Generis Consultants to guide our capital campaign and help us create a culture of faithful, joyful generosity.
- And, of course, by God's amazing timing, the pandemic gave us a year of renovation and renewal! It's almost complete, friends! We expect it to be on time and just under budget. Soon we will be opening our doors to welcome all, be a community hub for our neighborhood, invite partners to work for justice, and offer space to lift and restore spirits. We thank God for LZL Construction, for SHKS Architects, for owner's rep, Brandy Fox, and most of all for our Vision-Aligned Building Team, who have kept us on track for more than 5 years.
- A Community Engagement Task Force has begun gathering information about community trends, needs and assets, to help us consider how best to use our building for God and our neighbors.

Could any of us have imagined the year now ending? No. **And none of us can imagine what the coming year will hold. So, we put our trust in...**

...the "One who is able to accomplish abundantly more than all we can ask or imagine, according to God's power at work within us." Ephesians 3: 18-20

Looking back fills me with gratitude. Looking forward, I'm filled with excitement and hope! What God has done and will do through our beloved church is "Unimaginable!"

In gratitude and hope!



Pastor Kathy Hawks

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Hello Faithful Members of Our Redeemer's,

As we approach our second virtual Annual Congregational Meeting, I find myself pondering just how much we have learned and how far we have come as a congregation in the last 12 months. We have welcomed 18 new congregants, conducted Advent remotely for the first time, broken ground on our building remodel, welcomed a new Social Justice Coordinator (who is amazing by the way), been an example to other churches on how to "do church" online, and have started adding in-person Compline services Thursday nights. Reflecting on the last 12 months shows that we are constantly in a state of change (cue Transformation comments from a pastor) and leading the way.

While I can continue to list a lengthy number of statistics and facts that demonstrate our growth, what I find to be the most telling sign of how much we have accomplished is that week after week, we are meeting together and supporting one another. We have been creative and flexible in establishing new church norms that are taking place outside the church walls. We have successfully figured out how to gather, have church coffee hours, bible studies, children's church, and more online. We have demonstrated that, indeed, we are the Church. As much as I am eagerly awaiting the time we all gather in person in our newly renovated church building, I find great joy in seeing that despite this painful, physically isolating, and challenging last year we have shared, we have continued to be the Church in a way that brings life, comfort, peace, and joy to one another and our surrounding community.


As the Council looks forward to the new year ahead we eagerly await gathering in-person, hearing children run through the newly remodeled building, and sharing the peace. What a joyous occasion that will be!

The Mission budget put forth to you at the Annual Congregational Meeting reflects what we believe God is calling Our Redeemer's to be – a place that offers deep nourishment to the soul, a place dedicated to deepening relationships with one another, and a place that our community feels welcomed, included, loved in. This Mission budget is meant to be "lived in," so before voting a yea or nay, consider how God is asking you to live into the vision and mission of Our Redeemer's this next year.. and then live into that calling.

I want to take a moment to thank the council members who are ending their term this year. Terrance Rindler, Morgan Fowler, and Matt Grover have been dedicated to serving our church through sharing their expertise and giving of their time while prayerfully ensuring that Our Redeemers has continued to grow and flourish. For their service, we are grateful- thank you!



In Christ,



Shelbe Kukowski

[LINK here](#) to read bios of the new Church Council Members you'll be voting for at our Annual Meeting.

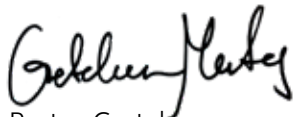
WORSHIP AND MUSIC – INFORMAL

2020 was an incredibly difficult year for musicians, as nearly every aspect of what making music, particularly in the worship life of a congregation, was stopped.

Our ensemble made a few attempts at recording, but found it both technically and artistically discouraging. We are immensely optimistic that our new sanctuary and the recession of the coronavirus will allow us to once again praise God through song in person!

Karen Lee and I both made valiant attempts (with much success!) to keep the music alive in our online worship. There is an immense stockpile of music videos on our church YouTube page (For example: <https://youtu.be/cJdwOYF3OTs>) that Karen and I have worked on both separately and together. I hope that you find this resource to be inspiration and solace for years to come – it surely was a labor of love.

Respectfully submitted by



Pastor Gretchen



Our first in-person service in 2021 was Thursday Compline on May 6 in Our Redeemer's parking lot. The service is now held in a private backyard at 2639 NW 95th Street, Seattle.

WORSHIP AND MUSIC – TRADITIONAL

Feeling grateful and inspired as we look back on the way God’s Spirit has been present through our online worship and music during this pandemic year.

Before COVID-19, none of us knew how to provide church on “Zoom” or how our Choir and Instrumentalists could sing/play together when each person had to record separately.

With joyful anticipation, we look forward to our new sanctuary and health conditions that allow us to gather together again safely. But in the meantime, we have learned many new skills and ways to use the talents that God has given.

Through the Acapella app, the Choir Creator app, and some expert editing from our resident trumpet player, Carey Rayburn, our musicians have learned how to create music in new ways. The time, dedication, and willingness of so many to venture out of their comfort zones while recording on their own is a gift. And hearing the combined efforts mixed into beautiful ensembles of sound is both exciting and meaningful.

I thank our pastors, staff, lay leaders, and congregation for all that has gone into keeping Our Redeemer’s a strong and supportive community of faith during these challenging times. And I especially want to recognize my colleague and friend, Pastor Gretchen Mertes, and every singer and instrumentalist who has participated in creating music during this past year. While we yearn for the chance to gather together in person again, please accept my thanks for all the ways you are keeping music alive while we wait.

Respectfully submitted,



Karen Lee, Traditional Worship and Music Director





SOCIAL JUSTICE

In this year of Covid, our capacity to serve was limited... but we did what we could to share God's love, care and justice!

Ballard Sunday Dinners continued! Over eleven months we served banh mi, chili, Philly cheesesteaks and more to about 380 guests. We are especially grateful to those leads who kept BSD going during Covid: **Emilie Purvine, Sue & Dave Schoolcraft, Ronda & Jerry Andrews, Diane Myers, Ross & Dinah Coble, and Tom Bernard!**



A new ministry group, **Racial Justice Advocates**, was formed this year. They are committed to learning, reflecting and acting for racial equity. Members read and discussed several books and a film, attended a 6-week Synod workshop on Interrogating Privilege, and attended marches, a rally on violence against Asian Americans, and a prayer vigil for murdered and missing indigenous women. **Marie Brissette** chairs this group.

While we couldn't host Thanksgiving, we did provide 150 sleeping bags to people without homes through the Bridge Care Center. Thanks to **Julie Vannoy** for making this happen.

We also sent 30 quilts to **Lutheran World Relief**, and **Sharon Longaker, Nancy Paulsen, Eric and Niels Running** helped load at the First Lutheran Church of Bothell. We look forward to resuming school kits and loading in our parking lot this fall!



E-CYCLING EVENT

WITH  **LIVING GREEN TECHNOLOGY**  **our redeemer's**

JUNE 12th

10 AM - 2 PM

Our Redeemer's Lutheran Church
2400 NW 85th St, Seattle, WA 98117



We currently have four **Road to Housing** people living in their vehicles in our parking lot, as they work toward stable housing. Thanks to **Mandy Neill, Karie Stearns** and **Tom Bernard** for sustaining this program over this past year.

Finally, as Seattle opened up, we held a recycling event in June. Volunteers **Malaika, Liam and Phillipa Dugaw, Colin Neu, Sienna Seyler** and **Sarah Uhlemann** helped collect a shipping crate worth of electronics, an ambulance's worth of Styrofoam and two minivans of clothing, the latter for the **Bridge Care Center**. Think of all this rescued from our oceans and land!

Shannon Beck, former social justice coordinator, left in August 2020 to pursue pastoral care studies in Chicago. In March 2021, Elizabeth Dickinson joined our staff to support our congregation's social justice ministries.





SOCIAL JUSTICE

THANK YOU, Our Redeemer's, for your generosity! 10% of every dollar you give is "tithed" - given away as an offering to God. 7% supports our national and global ELCA ministries. 3% is given to community organizations and activities that enhance compassion, justice, hope and the flourishing of all God's creation.

Serving those without homes	\$6,650
Addressing hunger + Ballard Sunday Dinner	\$5,622
Working with immigrants and refugees	\$5,000
Seeking racial justice	\$3,500
Pursuing peace and interfaith relationships	\$1,500
Supporting communities during Covid	\$1,000
ELCA organizations lifting up LGBTQ+ communities	\$1,000
Faith-based advocacy organizations (multiple issues)	\$1,000
Cub Scout Pack 100	\$ 700
Earth Care: Earth Ministry	\$ 500
Our Redeemer's activities to support Lutheran World Relief	\$ 263



We look forward to a new church year in which we host Thanksgiving, clean beaches, collect food bank groceries in the church Narthex, and more!

Respectfully submitted by

Elizabeth Dickinson

Elizabeth Dickinson, Social Justice Coordinator



Spring 2021 Recycling Event



FAITH FORMATION

Adult Faith Formation – RENOVARE’

As our building has been renovated, so has our faith!

Can faith be formed in a vacuum? Nope. But it CAN be formed virtually! Our Redeemer’s teachers, learners, small groups, and new members are all a testament to that. Throughout this year, we did, in fact, cover what Martin Luther considered the “BASICS” of faith.

	R E N O V A R E ’	
Adult Faith Formation	BIBLE	<p>How Do I Read the Bible? Taught by Dr. Judy Snack, a wonderful NT scholar via zoom in April, May and June adult forums. Our Redeemer’s underwrote half the honorarium of this, so that others in the synod could also participate.</p> <p>Wednesday Morning Bible Study Our resident Bible rabbi, Carolyn Swanson, led her class through three series this year: The Exile: the Devastation of God’s People; First Thessalonians; and The History and Archeology of the Bible. The group is steady and enthusiastic, and Carolyn’s passion for scripture never wanes.</p> <p>Core Stories Pastors Gretchen and Kathy incorporated four core stories of scripture into preaching last fall (Creation, Exodus, Exile and Jesus of Nazareth).</p> <p>Holden Village @ Home Last summer we had a week of Holden-esque activities – bread baking, Holden Evening Prayer, a hike, and some crafts. Rev. Alan Storey of Cape Town South Africa also joined us via recordings of his classes at Holden Village. Then, thanks to the miracle of Zoom, Rev. Storey joined us live from South Africa to preach on the Exile and join in conversation with the congregation following about how that ancient story relates to his experience under apartheid and today.</p>
	WORSHIP	<p>Pastor Kathy helped us explore the four daily and sacramental actions making up Sunday worship: gather, listen/speak, eat/meal, and sent out.</p>
	CREED	<p>In January, member and retired pastor, Joshua Liljenstolpe brought his reflection and activism to the Trinity, a relevant and important way to talk about the mystery of God.</p>
	THE LORD’S PRAYER	<p>During Lent, Dana Wright showed us how the context of the Lord’s Prayer is rooted in justice. Members offered profound insights into five key words to create a wonderful lenten devotional.</p>



FAITH FORMATION

RENOVARE' continued

Theology on Tap

Who knew you could have theology on tap without a tap? But a large, steady group zoomed monthly to talk for conversation about things like miracles, racism and many, many more.

Circles of Connection

Small groups zoomed for 30 minutes weekly throughout this year, checking in, reflecting on Sunday's gospel with questions from Pastor Gretchen, and Ending with prayer. This was a new blessing due to the pandemic.

"Dear Church"

White Privilege and the Church

George Floyd's murder and the protests following challenged us to learn more about racism in ourselves, in our assumptions of privilege, and in our own denomination.

*Opening Our Story: This Adult forum in the summer was a chance to talk over "privilege, perspective taking, and power". We shared resources:

Strength to Love: Martin Luther's timeless collection of sermons was a book discussion.

*Dear Church: A Love Letter from a Black Pastor to the Whitest Denomination in the US. Written by a Lutheran Pastor, this was a state-wide zoom discussion moderated by a PLU professor.

The Journey

Yes! We DID journey together this spring during Lent with those interested in exploring faith and/or membership. We were able to have break-out room small groups, and substantial conversations. Thanks to all who participated!

Consider & Celebrate

And as if all this were not enough, we were also blessed by Stephanie Running's Advent Devotional, called Consider and Celebrate.

Holy Listening

Group spiritual direction, led by Sharon LeVan

Respectfully submitted
by Pastor Kathy

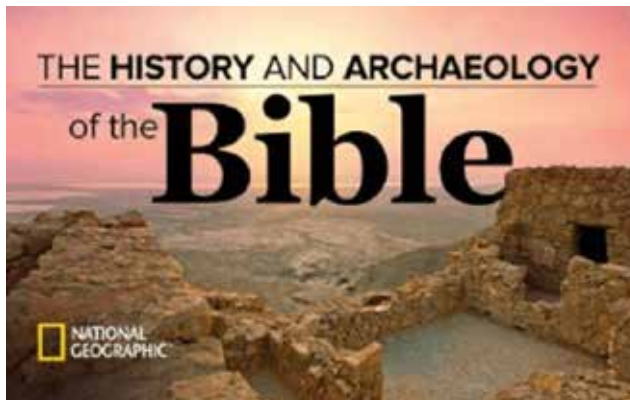


FAITH FORMATION

Wednesday Morning Bible Studies

by Carolyn Swanson

This Zoom Bible Study Group branched out with an entirely new format, using one of the Great Course Videos that, in turn, teamed up with the National Geographic to present via Zoom *The History and Archaeology of the Bible*. Adding to its excellence is the narrator, Geographic Historian Jean-Pierre Isbouts, DLitt. (Look him up.) This course is 24 sessions of 30-minute videos taking us from Genesis to Revelation. The presentation includes actual footage from the places the Bible talks about. Then, of course, we have time for prayer and discussion.



Journey with Abraham from Ur; See Egypt with Joseph; Follow desert footprints with Moses; Rejoice with the Hebrew band who made it to the Promised Land; Rock as three empires crumble, Assyria, Persia, Greece; Be in Judea under the Roman Empire; Be with young Jesus and the violence that surrounded him; Watch the Rise of Christianity.

Other learning possibilities: Consider where Jesus may have learned the Torah and become a rabbi. Explore the momentous period of David's kingship, beginning with his selection of Jerusalem as the Israelite capital, and examine

excavation evidence at ancient sites that relate to the story. Chart the dramatic events within the house of David: the story of David and Bathsheba, the tragedy of Absalom, and the struggle over succession that led to the anointing of David's son Solomon as king.

The good news is we are not finished and will continue to meet until August 4. That means you could join in for the last sessions depending on when this report issues. You need a Zoom link which I provide each week (even though it is the same link). Try it out on Wednesday mornings from 10:30 AM until noon. Talk to some of those who are taking it to see if I am exaggerating. I, myself, have learned so much. In fact, the book of Romans opened up to me in a new way having been in Paul's world. I am hoping to use the same media experience with a different course. You can tell I am excited. It has been a great experience in this otherwise anxiety-ridden year!





FAITH FORMATION

Circles of Connection

Circles of Connection began with the desire to stay connected and create connection while we have been distanced in the pandemic. Throughout the past year, we have had weekly guides that contained three parts specifically adapted to work for zoom, but that also work in person: 1. Check In, 2. Bible Reading and reflection (based on the previous week's worship texts), and 3. Prayer. We have 12 groups of 4-8 people who meet weekly to participate in these circles.

Seeing how this format was working so well for adults, the program was extended to be shared with households that have kids as well.

Each week, four circle guides are put together and shared with the congregation – Preschool, Elementary School, Youth, and Adult. As part of the faith formation team's goal of having materials for parents and kids to explore faith together, we have had a great time sharing these tools with the whole congregation.

Bible Connection for Families: Pentecost +2

An interactive reflection based on Sunday's Bible stories
-- just for you!



our redeemer's
LUTHERAN • BALLARD



Easter Sunrise Service 2021



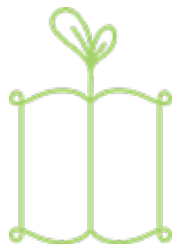
FAITH FORMATION

The past year has been a year of discernment and growth in the area of faith formation for our youngest and most energetic members.

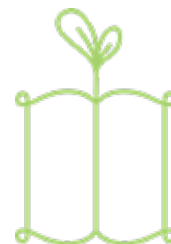
The Faith Formation Team was formed to re-imagine Faith Formation for our youngest members at Our Redeemer's. We developed a vision which has been our guidepost for creating a vital and engaging Children and Youth program. Covid has caused us all to pause, yet in the case of the Faith Formation Team, it has allowed us the space and time we have needed plan a revitalized children's program which will debut along with our newly renovated building in September of 2021!

Our program is based in relationship: Relationship to God, and relationship to each other. We know that one of the most powerful of relationships are those that are intergenerational. We invite members of all ages to be a part of this essential program. Each of our classes will have a teacher and host. The teacher will be imparting the selected curriculum for the day, while the host will greet each child and assist in the classroom. We need 3 teams of two for each grade level class so that our children come to know many adult leaders in church, but even more importantly, develop strong, positive relationships with each member of the teaching team.

This year, despite our distanced nature, we had a flourishing "Sprouts" class for 3-5 year olds on Zoom, with great participation and fun. ▷



◁ **Our Christmas Pageant was an adventure in screen sharing!**



We even managed to have a few in-person junior high hangouts last fall. ▷

We are so excited to be in person this fall, and to get back on track with teaching our littlest ones how much God loves them.

Respectfully submitted
by Pastor Gretchen





COMMUNITY

Our 2021 Auction

Our 2021 auction, "Field of Dreams" was a rousing success! With everything from banjo players to trivia, liturgical candles to vacation spots in Palm Springs, we gathered on zoom and knocked it out of the park! Our hosts, Tim Hunter and Pastor Gretchen, stepped up to the bat and had everyone feeling at home. We had over 70 households attend the live event! Amazing! Our fund-a-need item was special seating for the sanctuary, raising over \$10,000.



The general fund raised around \$6,000 from the silent auction online, and \$12,000 from the live auction!

Thank you to all our generous donors, our organizers and volunteers, and everyone who participated in this fun and important way of supporting the ministry of our church. Let's do it again next year!

(If you purchased an item or pledged to the Fund-a-Need, please remit your funds ASAP if not yet done!)



Fellowship Groups: Madonna's Book Group continued on throughout the year. Men's Breakfast and Life Masters groups are on hiatus until in-person meeting is possible.

We give thanks for those who have blessed Our Redeemer's for years, now alive in God:
 Blanche Anderson, Shirley Anderson, Sylvia Cook, Ben Egaas, Mary Mangold,
 Fred Nelson, Pete Paulson, Ernie Templin, Jim Voss.

Caring Community Team – by Julie Vannoy

We are a group of 13 +/- who meet every other month, traditionally accompanied by a potluck lunch, and work to support the members of our community in a variety of ways.

<i>Card Ministry</i>	Our members send cards of support in times of need, hardship, illness, surgery, sorrow and cards to celebrate joyous occasions – births, baptisms. Cards are also sent for our Blue Christmas service and All Saints Day. During this past year+ we have also sent cards of support to all the families – parents and kids dealing with at home/virtual schooling. For those without computer access we branched out and have delivered <i>Christ In Our Home</i> devotionals to those without a way to access that online or pick up from church. During the time of Covid, we initiated Friendship Calls in an attempt to keep connections and engagement strong while quarantined.
<i>Blue Christmas</i>	The Caring Community Team provides the reception following our Blue Christmas Service – a service of quiet/comfort apart from the usual joyful exuberance of Christmas, offering a time and place for those for whom Christmas may be a time of stress, pain, loneliness. Our great hope is that we will be able to provide this reception in December 2021.
<i>Meals</i>	The Team continues to deliver meals to those in any situation where a meal will help – after a hospitalization, during an illness or perhaps after the birth of a child. We do our best to help with transportation to/from church for those who need it.
<i>Noble Knitters</i>	Our lovely knitters continue to make and provide beautiful, comforting prayer shawls, and a multitude of warm caps distributed at Thanksgiving. Others manage the prayer list and chain.
<i>Women's Retreat</i>	This group initiated the first Women's Retreat in 2014. With the pandemic, we have not been able to have this – maybe in 2022?
<i>Emmaus Visitors</i>	Our Emmaus visitors are amazing people who share communion and community with homebound members on a monthly basis. They offer companionship, prayer, communion and a sense of community and connection to those who are no longer able to attend church.
<i>Welcoming Wisdom</i>	Traditionally this has been a luncheon that we plan during the summer to honor those in our congregation who are 80 years and older and 'wiser'. It's a time of fun, laughter, music and sharing with those who have much to teach us. Look for the special way we are honoring our older and wiser this year in an upcoming <i>The Visitor</i> . We're definitely looking forward to our "traditional luncheon" in 2022!
<i>Prayer Chain</i>	Nine folks pray for the needs of those in our community, and for any requests forwarded to them. This is a powerful, but largely invisible ministry. To participate, contact Mary Peters .

Would you like to join our great group of caring individuals? If you are interested or have questions contact Julie Vannoy, julianne.van@comcast.net.



WELCOMING MINISTRY

We Thank
God for....
18 New
Members!

Virtual Hospitality + No Zoombombing!

In last year's report, I talked about how hospitality seemed difficult or impossible in a pandemic but that it was still an important part of Our Redeemer's ministry. Our staff and volunteers were up to the task despite the changes to hospitality over this past year. For example, our virtual coffee hour now utilizes breakout rooms to better facilitate conversation, and we still took prayer requests, welcomed new members, and had Sunday virtual worships to attend to. Here are some stats from the past year:

582	Prayer Requests (includes petitions from worship services)
18	New Members
144	Coffee Hour Breakout Rooms on Zoom
366	Average Weekly Attendance for Virtual Worship Services

Most of this past year's Welcome Ministry was a continuation of what began last year – virtual worship through Zoom and Facebook Live, and a virtual coffee hour afterward on Zoom. Recently, we started posting each week's sermon on YouTube for those who want to listen again.

Each year, we are asked to complete a report about our congregation for our synod. One of the key sections of this report looks at average attendance for weekly services. Prior to the pandemic (e.g. in 2018 or 2019), this was relatively easy to report—one person equals one person. But for a year in a pandemic where most of the weekly worship services are held virtually, it becomes way more complex to track attendance. For each device that is joining the service on Zoom or Facebook Live, there could be any number of people participating. The Synod provided a formula to estimate attendance which is helpful but ultimately it is still just an estimate.

Here is a reminder of all the ways to join worship:

- Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/OurRedeemers/>
- Zoom: <https://zoom.us/j/822691346>
- YouTube (videos of past services, sermons, and our musical playlist): Our Redeemer's Lutheran Church – Seattle: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCp3iGmXVaTX7InglgDx26UA>

I am proud to say that we have had zero issues with Zoombombing during the entire time of running services and meetings virtually. A Zoombombing: "refers to the unwanted, disruptive intrusion, generally by Internet trolls, into a video-conference call." (Wikipedia). To do this we become knowledgeable of Zoom's security features, including keeping up-to-date as Zoom introduced new features, and a lot of practice meetings with myself using multiple devices.

So, what does the Welcome Ministry do? The core of the Welcome Ministry is hospitality. The ministers and volunteers work to truly see those who are new to our church, both visitors and potential members. We help them become involved and find where they belong within the community of Our Redeemer's. **Want to get involved?** Email me (office@ourredeemers.net).

Respectfully submitted by



Katlin Dickinson-Laurence
Office Coordinator & Welcome Minister

LOOKING AHEAD: 2020-2021

Dear friends of Our Redeemer's,

Thank you for your faithful generosity during this difficult year!

Last year at this time I wrote that there were still many unknowns for the upcoming fiscal year. That proved true as the pandemic extended beyond our best guesses. The 2020-2021 fiscal year saw a decrease in both in-person loose offerings and in building usage/rental income. At the same time, all our expenses across the board came in below budget. Our Redeemer's also received a second PPP "draw" that was not in the 2020-2021 budget and left the church with positive balance to end the year. Please view the year to date 2020-2021 financial report for a breakdown of this past year's finances.

This next fiscal year will hopefully prove more predictable, yet there are still some unknowns. For instance, income brought in by building use is not yet clear. We will have a beautiful, newly renovated building. We have been approached by groups who want to rent it, and we are hopeful that as this pandemic becomes a pandemic no longer, our neighbors will see our building as an ideal place to gather, bringing in rental income.

Council and staff incorporated a new budget process this year, utilizing the book, "Governance and Ministry", by Dan Hotchkiss. Council created a *Vision for Ministry*. Staff then used this to set their goals, with budgets necessary to realize those *Vision for Ministry Goals*.

The proposed 2021-2022 Mission Budget Summary tables are a little different this year. In past years, the proposed budget was compared to the previous year's adopted budget. That proves of little use as the 2020-2021 budget accounted for pandemic and renovation anomalies. You will see instead this year a comparison over a wider range, with the actual financials for 2019-2020 and 2020-2021, and not the budgets for those years.

The proposed 2021-2022 mission budget includes the following increases:

- This fiscal year we will move back to in-person gatherings and worship, which increases re-lated expenses back to what they were pre-Covid, from welcoming guest musicians to perform using the impressive acoustics in our remodeled sanctuary, to the practical costs of custodians, janitorial supplies and snacks for the kiddos during Sunday's faith formation classes.

- The pandemic provided some wonderful opportunities that we will carry forward to achieve our mission. One of these is the ability to offer both worship and connection through virtual means. This has proved to be an incredible gift to our homebound members and has provided us the opportunity to spread the word of God to a wider sea of people. Will we continue to offer this gift as we move back to in-person services. Costs to provide this method of spreading God's message will continue as we maintain the platforms and software that make this possible.
- Staffing will increase slightly as we adopt our synod's cost of living adjustment guidelines of a 1.7% increase to salaries. Staffing accounts for 67% of this upcoming year's budget. We welcomed our new Social Justice Coordinator in March and will move into this new fiscal year fully staffed. As Council and staff steer us toward our Vision of Mission, we have included trainings for staff and leaders in the budget to utilize the gifts we bring and best navigate any upcoming changes and challenges. Earlier this year Our Redeemer's voted in favor of hiring Generis as stewardship consultants to help us expand our culture of generosity. *The Stewardship* budget line reflects their consulting costs for this.

There is a call to increase envelope offerings 12% compared to our estimated 2020-2021 envelope offerings. Council is aware this budget for ministry calls on us to stretch. But before proposing the increases, Council asked for our capital campaign consultants, Generis', input. They have extensively analyzed Our Redeemer's financial records—from giving patterns, expenses, individual donor statistics and on- and are confident the increases to the budget are indeed, achievable at this pivotal time in the life of our congregation and our mission. Moving back to in-person worship along with the ability to welcome guests to holiday services will aid us in achieving this goal.

Staff and Council are incredibly excited to welcome you back into the building and thank each of you for sharing your own gifts, as together we make achieving Our Redeemer's mission possible.

In service,



Karie Stearns
Parish Administrator

ANNUAL MISSION FINANCIAL REPORT

Fiscal Year 2020-2021

YTD-May + projected June

Income	2020-2021 Adopted Budget	2020-2021 Year-to-Date Income (11+1)	Favorable/ (Unfavorable) Variance- \$ Amt	Favorable/ (Unfavorable) Variance- %
Envelope Offerings	513,750	499,288	(14,462)	-3%
Loose Offerings	28,130	3,205	(24,925)	-89%
Church Use	29,000	25,060	(3,940)	-14%
Fundraising	19,500	20,823	1,323	7%
Interest	100	1,853	1,753	1,753%
Other Income	52,067	130,703	78,636	151%
TOTAL INCOME	\$642,547	\$680,932	\$38,385	6%

Envelope Offerings were within 3% of our budget, while *Loose Offerings* were 89% under budget due to worshipping virtually for the entire fiscal year. While there was some shift from loose to online giving, the shift did not compensate for the offerings lost from virtual worship. *Church Use* income reflects parking use income but was lower than projected as the building was closed. The building was closed more of the year than was anticipated due to the construction schedule shifting after the budget was created. *Fundraising* reflects the amount received to date, there are still outstanding funds as of the end of the fiscal year. *Other Income* budget denotes Payroll Protection Plan (PPP/Cares Act) first-draw funds allocated for the 2020-2021, while actuals reflect a portion of the first draw and all second-draw funds. Thanks to PPP, this year, we did not transfer \$15,000 from Calvary funds into staffing expenses (as per the 2014 Strategic Plan).

Expenses	2020-2021 Adopted Budget	2020-2021 Year-to-Date Expenses (11+1)	Favorable/ (Unfavorable) Variance- \$ Amt	Favorable/ Unfavorable Variance- %
Social Justice / Outreach	80,554	52,696	27,858	35%
Pastoral Staff	256,495	255,995	500	0%
Worship & Music	29,455	27,355	2,100	7%
Fellowship & Caring	1,200	140	1,060	88%
Faith Formation	3,300	(302)	3,602	109%
Stewardship	7,686	6,313	1,373	18%
Communications	49,720	48,570	1,150	2%
Facilities	74,823	47,797	27,026	36%
Administration	116,941	115,941	1,000	1%
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$620,174	\$554,505	\$65,669	11%
NET INCOME	\$22,373	\$126,427	(\$27,284)	-122%

The Social Justice Coordinator position was not hired until March resulting in lower than budgeted expenses for *Social Justice/Outreach*. All other expenses come in lower than budgeted primarily due to the pandemic and less in-person activities at the church building. Inclusive of the PPP/Care Act funding we expect to end the year with approximately \$126K net income.

PROPOSED MISSION BUDGET SUMMARY

Fiscal Year 2021-2022

Income	Actuals			Budget	Increase/(Decrease) vs. FY 2020-2021	
	2018-2019	2019-2020	2020-2021	2021-2022 Proposed	\$ Amt	%
Envelope Offerings	476,152	486,539	499,288	566,048	66,759	12%
Loose Offerings	25,454	18,087	3,205	25,000	21,795	87%
Church Use	45,570	39,571	25,060	46,000	20,940	46%
Fundraising	25,039	18,384	20,823	25,000	4,177	17%
Interest	(235)	2,549	1,853	1,000	(853)	-85%
Other Income	-	26,033	130,703	-	(130,703)	n/a
TOTAL INCOME	\$571,980	\$591,163	\$680,932	\$663,048	(\$17,885)	-3%

The 2021-2022 proposed budget reflects a 12% increase in *Envelope Offerings* compared to 2020-2021's giving. We anticipate *Loose Offerings*, *Church Use* and *Fundraising* to return to pre-pandemic levels with the return to in-person services. With the foreseeable end to the pandemic, *Other Income* from PPP loans/grants will cease to occur and no *Other Income* is projected in the 2021-2022 fiscal year budget.

Expenses	Actuals			Budget	Increase/(Decrease) vs. FY 2020-2021	
	2018-2019	2019-2020	2020-2021	2021-2022 Proposed	\$ Amt	%
Social Justice / Outreach	75,956	72,952	52,696	85,730	33,034	39%
Pastoral Staff	229,040	247,461	255,995	259,851	3,856	1%
Worship & Music	34,666	30,627	27,355	34,558	7,203	21%
Fellowship & Caring	2,791	1,286	140	1,950	1,810	93%
Faith Formation	6,432	6,245	(302)	3,395	3,697	109%
Stewardship	8,649	5,337	6,313	16,143	9,830	61%
Communications	36,276	40,309	48,570	47,818	(752)	-2%
Facilities	104,434	97,928	47,797	90,502	42,705	47%
Administration	95,588	109,403	115,941	123,101	7,160	6%
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$593,832	\$611,548	\$554,505	\$663,048	\$108,543	16%
NET INCOME	(\$21,852)	(\$20,385)	\$126,427	-	(\$126,427)	-19%

Social Justice/Outreach expenses will increase in accordance with the projected increases in giving and the addition of the filled Social Justice Coordinator position. Staff salaries increased 1.7% to meet our synod's cost of living adjustment guidelines. We expect *Facilities* costs to approximate pre-pandemic levels. Seemingly large increases in many ministries reflect return to 10 months of pre-pandemic activity levels.

BUILD THE VISION... SHARE THE VISION

Construction Project Up-Date - by Jim Arnold

Here we are about to conclude our renovation project by late July. It has been a work in progress beginning with the Fellowship Hall, completed a few years ago, but also a comprehensive overall facility reconfiguration and upgrading to a structure dating from the 1940's with various projects completed along the way in the 1950's and beyond.

A Vision Aligned Building Committee was formed in 2013 consisting of members with varying professional backgrounds and building experiences. Their mission was to reconfigure our facility to enable application of a group of strategic initiatives approved with our Strategic Plan.

Considerations included modernization, safety concerns, poor space utilization and a worship environment that is flexible and reverent in nature with improved audio capabilities and lighting. All of these while maintaining important connections to our past as a worshipping congregation.

Two architectural firms and one General Contractor have provided guidance and excellent communications to us as concepts evolved. Congregational communication and input were important guides as well.

Here is what to expect when we are able to re-gather as the Our Redeemer's family worshipping together:

- Total reconfiguration of our sanctuary in a flexible manner while maintaining historical elements. Fully ADA compliant including reduced floor levels for better access.
- Provision of multi-use spaces for meetings, including a flexible retractable wall system in the Fellowship Hall, a conference room adjacent to the sanctuary with state-of-the-art technology and an additional conference room accessed from the Narthex.
- A Prayer Chapel for quiet reflection.
- Full ADA unisex restrooms on the main church floor as well as in the lower level classroom area and preschool.
- Provision for direct access to the lower level area through a full glass entry which floods the area with natural light.
- An improved office and administration area for the staff.
- Elimination of the "library/classroom" building which opens the facade of the church to natural lighting with controlled window shading mechanisms.
- The organ relocated and modernized.
- The sacristy modernized and made more flexible.
- Repair of "found" issues including several roof leak areas.





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*temporary mailing address

Congregational Annual Meeting

June 27 | 1:00 PM on [ZOOM](#)

We will celebrate and review the ministries and fiscal year coming to a close and vote on the Fiscal Year 2021-22 budget and new Council Members.

Our annual congregational meeting will be a virtual Zoom meeting.

Zoom link: <https://zoom.us/j/822691346>

Join by Phone Call: +1 (206) 337-9723A

Meeting ID: 822 691 346

Please join in!

Would you appreciate assistance participating? Need a computer or a helping hand?

Please contact Katlin Dickinson-Laurence at office@ourredeemers.net.

QUESTIONS? Please contact a Council member,
[Parish Administrator Karie Stearns](#), or one of the pastors.