

**2019**

# **Annual Report of the Congregation**



## **Messiah Evangelical Lutheran Church**

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# Agenda for Messiah Evangelical Lutheran Church

## Annual Congregational Meeting—February 2, 2020 12:30 p.m.

*At Messiah Lutheran Church, we seek to answer God's call to love.*

1. Devotion & In Memoriam (Pastor Andrew Plocher)

2. Adoption of Agenda (Paul Marin, president)

3. Appointment of Recording Secretary (Paul Marin)

4. Reports:

- a. Pastors' Reports - comments (Pastor Andrew Plocher, Pastor Molly Eversoll)
- b. Staff Reports - comments (Jennifer Dodge, Inga Banitt, Kevin McGrath, Mike Hill, Dave Dagenais, Nancy Hoover, Jen Elsenbroek)
- c. Ministry Partner Reports
- d. Committee/Team Reports - comments

*Resolution: Be it resolved that the Pastors, Staff, Committee/Team Reports and reports from Ministry Partners be approved as presented, printed and distributed.*

5. Report of the Nominating Committee: (page 29)

- a. Additional Nominations
- b. Appointment of Tellers

6. New Business

- a. Budget for 2020: (distributed separately) (Doug Morton and Mike Hill)
- b. Elections (see Nominating Committee Report, page 29)
- c. Auditor's Report (page 30) (Kerry McGinley and Ron Hill)
- d. Approval of revised constitution and by-laws
- e. Other

7. Discussion Items

8. Installation of Newly Elected Council Members

9. Adjournment

# All Are Welcome Here

## Welcome Statement – Messiah Lutheran Church

We are Messiah Lutheran Church—a diverse Christian community in which members and friends alike can grow in faith, practicing a unity that transcends differences and reflects the love God shows to all people.

Wherever we are on our journeys of faith, we gather in worship and prayer around Word and Sacrament. Trusting in the leading of Christ Jesus, we reach beyond ourselves in service to neighbors near at hand and around the world.

We are single, married, partnered, separated, divorced, widowed, and in families of many shapes and sizes.

We are black, white, Asian, Hispanic and Native American.

We come with struggles and doubts as well as faith.

We are straight, gay, lesbian, bi-sexual, and questioning of our sexuality. Though born physically and emotionally male and female, we may be transgender in identity or presentation.

We are addicted, convicted, recovering, struggling, homeless, hungry, poor, sheltered, fed, rich beyond our needs, happy, sad, well-behaved or a bit unruly.

We are able bodied and differently abled, healthy, or ailing in mind, body or spirit.

We are conservative, liberal, progressive or totally apolitical in our attitudes, thoughts, and actions.

We are children, youth, men, and women of all ages and in all stages of life, and diverse in abilities, intellect, talents, country of origin, and every other category we may imagine!

We come sharing the insight of St. Paul that “there is no longer Jew or Greek, there is no longer slave or free, there is no longer male or female, for all of (us) are one in Christ Jesus.” (Galatians 3:28) We rejoice in the gift of our differences, certain that Christ lives in us and shines through us in all that we are. We believe we are called, as a community to reflect the abiding love of God into our hurting world.

We also acknowledge, in humility, that we are imperfect in welcoming others, since “all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.” (Romans 3:23) Yet, in Christ, we are forgiven and made new every day. So we live in a climate of welcome, forgiveness, and growth, as we seek to answer God’s call to love.

## *Pastors' Reports*

### Andrew Plocher Senior Pastor

What a whirlwind of a year! Almost exactly one year ago you extended a call to me to serve as one of your pastors, and I began that journey in mid-March. Since then, it has been a joy and privilege to get to know you and this amazing community we call Messiah Lutheran Church.

I am grateful for our amazing staff team – for Jen and Inga who keep the ship moving with deft grace, for Kevin and his cheerful energy at keeping our facility clean and functioning, for Mike and Nancy and their gentle savvy with people and financial numbers, and for Dave, Kathy, Lynne, and Judy for their gifts of music and worship. It has been a delight to get to know and work with this talented team. I'm grateful, too, for Pr. Allan and his patient pastoral presence as I began, and for the work that he and Pastor Don did as interim pastors before I arrived.

I hadn't expected that our search for an associate pastor would happen so swiftly after my arrival, but the Holy Spirit had other plans, and I am overjoyed that the congregation called Pastor Molly Eversoll to that role. She is a talented, smart, and confident pastor, and I am grateful to have her as my colleague in ministry here. I've especially enjoyed collaborating on our monthly book studies.

Your Council has been an incredible group of leaders during the time of transition and I continue to be inspired by their faithful wisdom and energy. We continue to be blessed by them and by all of you who give so much time and energy to the work of the church! Thank you!

In the ten months since I began, we've moved through many transitions and projects. We approved our organ repair and renovations and have raised much of the funds for that important work (which was completed in December). We replaced all the office computers and upgraded our technological capacity, and replaced multiple exterior doors and introduced an automated locking system. We held Vacation Bible School with the highest numbers in recent history; hosted Pastor Jairo, Ana, and Johana from Colombia; celebrated two festive installations; hosted numerous weeks of Room at the Inn; and planned and participated in an ecumenical community worship service with Bishop Michael Curry. Conversations about immigration and caring for the environment have been energizing, and we are now formally an AMMPARO (Accompanying Migrant Minors with Protection, Advocacy, Representation and Opportunities) "Welcoming Congregation." As this important work continues, I look forward to joining the team that will be going to New Mexico for a border immersion trip the first week of March and to continued conversations upon our return. All of these are just a few of the things going on in our busy congregation and building. I hope you'll take the time to read through this report and learn more about what has been done this past year.

It has also been wonderful to be creative with our worship liturgies, to create an Advent banner with Pastor Molly, and to write liturgical music with Tom Bronken. Our three worship services have shifted a bit, leaning into their respective worship styles, and in September we began using the Narrative Lectionary. I am hopeful that you have found these changes as meaningful as I have.

In the year ahead I look forward to continuing to get to know our beloved community. I am still working to learn names and appreciate your patience (and wearing of nametags). The more I get to know all of you, the more I love this community and the ministry that we are doing together. Thank you for the privilege of serving as your pastor in this wonderful calling. I am excited to see what the Holy Spirit has in store for us in 2020!

Your sibling in Christ,  
Pastor Andrew

## Molly Eversoll Associate Pastor

With the new year, the narrative lectionary is beginning to wind its way through the gospel of Mark, which is truly a fast-paced gospel. Jesus' ministry happened over the course of just 3 years! It certainly must have felt like a torrent of activity for the disciples and for Jesus. More now than any time in my life, I get it! We have been together for a little over 6 months now and it feels like it has gone by incredibly fast but so much has happened! I have been ordained and installed (with a beautiful service and a wonderful Mexican dinner!) and hit the ground running with the busy ministry that happens at Messiah.

The greatest gift, since you called me to be your Associate Pastor in July, is having the wonderful pleasure of getting to know you all. It has been a privilege to share in the moments of your lives. From the baptisms and confirmations, to hearing about the ways that the Word has spoken to you on a Sunday, to more difficult moments of pastoral care, and even when our baptismal promises are claimed in death, I have felt the weight, joy, and honor of being able to walk with you through these times.

I have loved being a part of the way that Messiah has reached out to the Marquette community through assistance, Room at the Inn, Pride, community meals, speakers, and beginning AMMPARO. It has certainly become apparent to me that Messiah has a reputation for being a church that cares: a church that reaches outside of these walls and actively seeks to live out Jesus' call to discipleship. I am constantly amazed and blessed to see your excitement for following in Jesus' ministry! It has been a pleasure to witness this and find ways to be a part of this ministry. One of my favorite outreach moments was helping to plan the community worship service at Northern with Pastor Andrew and Lydia Kelsey Bucklin from the Episcopal Diocese. We heard the gospel from Bishop Michael Curry and had some great music. It was such a moving service and so amazing to see people from different denominations coming together.

Beginning Koinonia Bible study has been so spiritually fulfilling. Bit by bit (very slowly) we are working our way through the Bible. While I come with some knowledge to share, the wealth of wisdom that this group has and their willingness to talk about difficult topics constantly surprises me. Delving deep into God's word is such an important part of my own faith and I hope that everyone is learning as much as I am!

While this is only a little snapshot of what has been happening these past few months, I could not imagine a better place to be. I want to express my gratitude and thankfulness for all of you, the staff, and Pastor Andrew. Thank you for all the support and kindness you have offered me. I am so glad to be called as your Associate Pastor and I look forward to all the ministry God will lead us to in future years.

Yours in Christ,  
Pastor Molly

# 2019 Messiah Lutheran Church Statistical Report

## Attendance at Worship

	2019	2018
Average weekend attendance	261	254
8:45 AM	77	71
10:30 AM	137	140
Average Saturday night	45	43
Average Sunday School	16	14
Vacation Bible School	over 50	35 (approx)

## Special Worship Services

### Lenten services:

- Wednesday noon: 2019: 30; 2018: 32
- Wednesday evening: 2019: 40; 2018: 34
- Ash Wednesday: 2019: 141; 2018: 106
- Maundy Thursday: 2019: 75; 2018: 86
- Good Friday Day: 2019: approx. 125; 2018: 130
- Good Friday evening: 2019: NA; 2018: 50
- Easter Vigil: 2019: 59; 2018: NA, cancelled due to storm

Easter Sunday: 2019: 434; 2018: 348

- Sunrise: 70; 8:45: 140; 10:30 AM: 224

Christmas Eve: 2019: 588; 2018: 558

- 4 PM: 258, 7:30 PM: 206; 10 PM: 124

Funerals: 2019: 9 (7 member; 2 non-member; \*confirmed) 2018: 12

Carol Tuimala (Pr. Don Ludemann) 1-17; \*Ron Arntsen (Pr. Don Ludemann) 1-18; \*Bruce Funk (Pr. Don Ludemann/Pr. J. Douglas Paterson) 2-10; \*Bev Delke (Pr. Don Ludemann) 2-13; \*Eleanor Waatti (AP) 6-1; \*Ruth Garn 7-29 (AP); \*Bill Ryan (Pastor William Payne) 8-9; \*Nancy Kalweit (AP) 8-24; \*Jan Summersett (AP/ME) 8-29

Additional Member Deaths: 3 \*Phyllis Payne 2-18, \*Carolyn Ciullo 9-8; \*Jackie Dault 12-13 *memorial service will be July 20, 2020*

Baptisms: 2019: 6; 2018: 12

Grace Gronowski (Pr. Don Ludemann) 1-4; William Messenger (AP) 5-29; Audrey Rose Genschaw (Pastor Allan Johnson) 6-30; Bode Skaw (AP) 8-11; William Beauchaine (ME) 10-20; Fiona Fitzpatrick (AP) 11-9.

First Communions: 2019: 2; 2018: 0

Weddings: 2019: 1; 2018: 3

(\*confirmed) \*Whitney Buchan/\*Trevor Schampers (Pr. Bre Kinnunen) 7-20.

Confirmations: 2019: 5; 2018: 2

Aliina Maki-Warne 10-27; Liam Ulland-Joy 10-27; Meghan MacPhee 10-27; Hannah Bleckiner 10-27; Hannah Ruuska 1-12-2020

Membership Gains (\*confirmed)

- ⊙ By transfer from other ELCA congregations: \*Darley Kemppainen, \*Leslie White, \*Darlene Martin, \*Anna Zimmer, \*Molly Eversoll, \*David and \*Christine Echelbarger, \*Tim, \*Angela, Natalie and Brianna Weir, \*Ilene Mattson
- ⊙ By transfer/release from non-ELCA congregations: \*Sally McQueen, \*Bill Maki, \*Barry and \*Ann Johnson, \*IC and \*Grace Chien, \*Maddie Dykema
- ⊙ By Affirmation of Faith: \*Don and \*Kathy Grisham, \*Bruce Davey, \*Cheryl Mayer, \*Darren and \*Laurie Smith
- ⊙ By Baptism: \*Grace Gronowski

Membership Losses (\*confirmed)

- ⊙ By transfer to other ELCA congregations: \*Ally Lancour
- ⊙ By transfer (or release) to non-ELCA congregations: none.
- ⊙ Dropped at their own request: \*Joe, \*Terri and \*Ashley Oleksy

Total Membership Gains:

	Baptized	Confirmed
Through Baptism	5	1
Through Confirmation	0	5
Through Transfer	19	17
Through Affirmation	6	6
Totals	30	29

Total Membership Losses:

	Baptized	Confirmed
Through Death	10	10
Through Transfer or Release	4	4
Other Reasons	1	0
Totals	15	14

TOTAL MEMBERSHIP 1-1-2020 1108 BAPTIZED; 838 CONFIRMED

TOTAL MEMBERSHIP 1-1-2019 1093 BAPTIZED; 823 CONFIRMED (*membership rolls cleaned up Oct. 2018*)

TOTAL MEMBERSHIP 1-1-2018: 1353 BAPTIZED; 1095 CONFIRMED

Respectfully submitted,  
Inga Banitt, 1/24/2020



# Staff Reflections

## Jennifer Dodge's Reflections

It has been a pleasure to work with all of you in 2019! This was a big year for Messiah, getting a new senior pastor and associate pastor. We have seen a lot of change in the past two to three years and we are, as a church, holding strong. We have each of you to thank for that. Pr. Andrew and Pr. Molly are both a true blessing to this congregation. New ideas, a new set of eyes... They have not been afraid to dive right in. I hope you have enjoyed their monthly book studies and the weekly Bible study on Thursdays. There will be more gathering/fellowship events to come from these two.

I continue to work with the folks that want to come in for financial assistance, taking their calls, scheduling their appointments, greeting them when they arrive. Most are very appreciative when they leave. I also helped with the Giving Tuesday event we held at Messiah. I coordinated the lunch and dinner meals and scheduled the delivery of each. There were many others who helped to make this day a success, including Thrivent.

I have been working with Pr. Andrew & Pr. Molly on our weekly worship bulletins, looking at different ways to create them. They have a good eye for layout.

Thank you, to each of you for all you do to help this congregation! I am grateful to be a part of your church family. There is not a day that goes by in the office that I don't learn something new!

Peace be with you!

Jen Dodge

Parish Administrator

## Inga Banitt's Reflections

If I had to choose one word to sum up the past year, it would be THANKFUL. It is such a blessing to work with our pastors, our office staff, and Messiah's many wonderful volunteers. Messiah's members and friends are so generous in sharing their many gifts in our church and in the wider community. I'm in awe of what they do to answer God's call to love and serve our neighbors.

In 2019 we welcomed Pastor Andrew and Pastor Molly. Messiah is so fortunate to have such compassionate and gifted leaders! Pastor Andrew has brought many new ideas and insights to our publicity team—and you can see the results of this in upcoming church publications, local advertising, Facebook posts and more. Both Pastor Andrew and Pastor Molly have led Bible studies, book studies and lay school classes which have all been very popular. I've learned so much from both pastors in our work together and by their example.

One of my responsibilities is being the liaison for Luz y Vida, our companion congregation in Colombia. Last October we welcomed a delegation of visitors from Colombia—Pastor Jairo Suarez, Ana Mendivelso, and Luz y Vida member Johana Castellanos. Global Mission team member Bev Evans and I planned their 11-day visit to Marquette which they greatly enjoyed. I'm very thankful for all the Messiah members who opened their hearts and homes to welcome our Colombian friends.

I continue to work on the publicity team. Together we've planned advertising in local media (paid and free); continued to update our website; and posted on our very active Facebook page. Pastor Andrew has introduced us to Canva, an online design program which we've started to use on Facebook, our website and for posters. Our challenge as a team is staying relevant in the way we present our congregation to the world. Our church's message never changes, but the way we present it to an ever-changing culture (and to those who are not part of a faith tradition) often has to change!

Several church council members and I also had the joy of planning two receptions to welcome Pastor Andrew and Pastor Molly at their installation services. Messiah knows how to throw a good party!

I want to thank the members of the newly-formed church nursery team (Kristen Gordon, Mike OSullivan,

Jaime Davis and Maddie Dykema) who make sure this important ministry functions well and meets the needs of young families. I also want to thank the members of our altar guild (Penny Streeter, Lois Raikko, Laura Petrie and Midge Mattson) who faithfully care for our altar linens. There is so much important work going on at Messiah behind the scenes—and believe me, we in the office notice and appreciate it so much! I look forward to working with all of you in Messiah’s ministries in 2020.

Inga Banitt,  
Administrative Assistant

## Nancy Hoover’s Reflections

Review - After four years of being Messiah’s financial secretary, I’ve had the honor and opportunity to connect with many of you by phone, email, and/or in person. I appreciate learning more about you, receiving your feedback and having the occasion to hear your questions.

Service - My service to you continues to be in assigning your donations to the accounts that are important to you. If you pledge to multiple accounts, it’s important to write those separate account amounts on your envelope or check memo. Otherwise your donation is not automatically divided according to your pledge. However, you have other options. Slip a note inside your envelope; or contact me by phone or email to make sure your donation is applied appropriately.

Donations - We have many, and maybe too many, options for your donation giving. With the 2020 assigned envelopes there is now a line for General, Property, and Other if you wish to write in another account such as Organ or Community Assistance. Be sure to include a separate amount for that account. The pew envelopes were revised last year to show the special accounts; however you can still write in the general or property fund. To those of you that write in “where it’s most needed”, these donations are put in the general fund as that would be used to pay commitments and expenses as needed. The greatest donation changes for 2020, involved offering more electronic giving choices with the GivePlus Mobile App and the GivePlus Text option (855-932-0537). For sales, we expanded the cash or check options to offer our GivePlus Swipe card reader, making your Giving Tuesday donations and Fair Trade purchases easier if you preferred to use a card for these one-time gifts.

Organ - Thank you for responding to an additional pledge option for our organ fund. This was above and beyond normal expectations and came just prior to our year end plan for 2020 giving. All responses continue to be appreciated. The organ pledge started towards Fall of 2019, is continuing through 2020 and some have graciously committed to continue their pledge into 2021. As we are short of our organ fund goal, we are still accepting your pledges and also greatly appreciate all unpledged donations.

Statements - I made minor changes to the layout of your annual giving statement in 2018 with no impact to your results. Please review your statement as soon as possible and let me know if you have any questions. Messiah.NancyH@gmail.com.

Nancy Hoover,  
Financial Secretary

## Mike's Reflections

It is a pleasure to be part of Messiah, and a privilege to be a part of the staff. I thank you once again for the opportunity, and I hope I will have the opportunity to thank you every year for many more years!

I appreciate how everybody works with my work schedule. You are much more likely to catch me working evenings (sometimes into the early morning hours) and weekends than during the "normal" work week. But utilizing phones, text messaging, and email, we make it work.

I appreciate all the different talents and abilities our staff and volunteers bring to Messiah. You truly make my job easier, and I know others are grateful as well.

One thing I would like to comment on. I am frequently asked about fees relating to electronic giving. Yes, we do indeed pay fees for this. And they do add up over the year. But that is not the whole story. When you consider all the time it saves both volunteers and staff members, the fees we pay are a bargain. No envelopes to sort through, no bank deposits to prepare, no donations to manually review and post to our records. And we receive your donations every month, which really helps us with planning our cash flow. In my opinion, the benefits to Messiah and to you far outweigh the cost of the fees. So please, don't let the fees keep you from giving electronically. It really is a small cost.

If you ever have any questions relating to our finances, please ask me. If I don't know the answer off the top of my head, I will find out and get back to you as soon as I can.

Yours in faith,  
Mike Hill  
Parish Accountant

## Dave Dagenais' Reflections

As I reflect on the past year at Messiah, I am once again most grateful for being able to be a part of the leadership in our outstanding music ministry!

The year 2019 was one of transition for Messiah as we bid a fond farewell to interim Pr. Don, thanked Pr. Allan for his service (and appreciate his continued presence and work on the projection slides). Messiah's music ministry provided triumphant and meaningful music for the installation services of Pastor Andrew in April and Pastor Molly in October. Some of our musicians were also involved in the NGLS Synod Assembly in Escanaba in May, in addition to providing so much music here at Messiah.

A major undertaking in 2019, the restoration of our Casavant Pipe Organ was completed in October. The support for the project has been tremendous as we move toward the fundraising goal. The result is outstanding; the organ has never sounded better! A big thank you committee members and to everyone who assisted with this project including those who gathered to move the scaffolding, choir risers, chairs and other equipment.

Guest musicians were brought in several times during the year to enhance worship. A partnership with the Queen City Arts Dancers was begun in 2018 and will continue in 2020. Their work always enhances worship and we very much appreciate their involvement at Messiah.

I'm very appreciative of our music staff: Kathy Strazzinski and Lynne Lanczy for your dedication and skills at organ and piano and Judy Quirk for your leadership of the bell choir. Thank you to the choir and bell choir members for your dedication this past year, all singers and instrumentalists who enhance

worship, our sound and video technicians for their work, Pr. Andrew, Pr. Molly, Tom Bronken, Sally McQueen, and the Worship and Music Team for your support and vision and to Jennifer and Inga for being so great to work with!

To the people of Messiah: Thank you for your continuous support of our music ministry and we always welcome your input and involvement!

Dave Dagenais  
Music and Choir Director

## Jen Elsenbroek's Reflections

What a wonderful year it has been for Journey!! AMMPARO (Accompanying Migrant Minors with Protection, Advocacy, Representation and Opportunities) provided our youth wonderful experiences! Thanks, in large part, to Pastor Don for letting me nag him into connecting me with Mary Campbell! Mary allowed our church to pilot the first module of a program called 'Bridging Youth to Youth'. Through that connection we had the opportunity to learn what immigrants are struggling with on a daily basis. We learned about their struggles both in their countries (particularly El Salvador) and on the Journey to our country. We were able to actually participate in a video call with people in El Salvador last spring. We all learned so much about one another! Through that experience, our confirmation class encouraged our church to become a 'Welcoming Congregation', the first and only in the Northern Great Lakes Synod! Yay Confirmation!

We are currently working on Module 2, which largely deals with the life of an immigrant youth after they have gained residence in the United States. Each of the stories encourages empathy and care. We will again be able to connect with youth on a video call later. What an awesome experience for our students!

We have 12 students in the class. 5 students were confirmed on Reformation Sunday and we gained 5 new 6th graders. Our class meets 3 times a month (on average). 2 times for class and one time for a social activity or service project. We meet at the lower level of North Fourth (the old Voices for Youth house). It is a great space for our youth to relax and hang out. We generally meet for class on the first 2 Sundays of the month and have a social event/ service project on the 3rd Sunday.

We take advantage of our surroundings and go on an annual Nature/Scripture hike (around Presque Isle) each fall. Each year, I find some Bible verses about nature and we take breaks as we circle the island to read them.

Another social event that was beyond spectacular this year was attending the Revival: Way of Love, UP North with presiding Bishop Michael Curry from the Episcopal Church. He was so thrilled that our class was there and he came over to meet each of our kids and posed for a picture with our class! Bishop Curry is a dynamic speaker and all of the students (as well as some parents) were happy they went! He made quite a positive impression!!

All of us love our December service projects. We delivered cookies/cards and sing Christmas Carols to homebound members. We also made cards for immigrants in Detention centers. Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Services hand delivers the cards we make. In 2019, we invited the entire church to participate after church on a Sunday and had a great response. We sent out 75 cards. It was wonderful to be part of spreading joy

Jen Elsenbroek  
Journey and Middle School Ministry

## Kevin McGrath's Reflections

As parish custodian, I would describe the previous year as being divided into two seasons, winter and non-winter. The winter season is heavily directed by the weather, namely snow and wind. Wind is like snow in that snow is blown onto the walkways, entryways, and steps, however, oftentimes it further worsens the situation by causing the snow to harden, which isn't easy to remove. In 2019, I cleared snow seventy-seven times, sometimes twice and occasionally three times in one day, ranging from an eighth inch up to thirty-three inches.

Another top priority of my time includes cleaning the restrooms. We have nine bathrooms with twelve toilets and three urinals which get daily usage, oftentimes servicing hundreds of people. I freshen up our facilities five times a week. That's fifteen units five times a week multiplied by twelve months for a total of 3,600 times a year. This include washing human feces from the wall, exterior of toilet and floor four times, three vomit clean-ups, and three dog poop removal and clean-ups.

The sanctuary is also a top priority as hundreds of people visit our sacred space each week. I vacuum the sanctuary weekly, occasionally more often, depending on other activities taking place. Last year, the sanctuary was vacuumed fifty-seven times and mopped thirty-five times.

As a rule, the building is vacuumed once a week with Magnuson Hall frequently being vacuumed more often due to its heavy usage. The kitchen, dish room, and choir room are swept before being mopped out. The building garbages are emptied on a weekly basis as well.

My other activities regularly include setting up and taking down tables and chairs in various areas throughout the building, such as Magnuson hall for quilting, community meals, receptions, showers, MOPS, RATI, Boy Scouts, Cub Scouts, and Ironing groups to name a few. Classrooms and the atrium also see modifications due to events such as RATI, Sunday school, Fair Trade events, speakers, worship, and the like.

Non-winter months are easier to plan. I mowed the lawn twenty-one times, cleaned the back parking lot and bushes, weeded around the complex, changed thirty-eight bulbs, washed the exterior windows twice and inside windows fifteen times, replaced thermostat batteries, clock batteries, and automatic door opener batteries, and inspected the fire extinguishers on a monthly basis. I attended Building and Grounds Committee meetings, kept inventory, and ordered supplies when necessary. I also repaired fifteen chairs and two tables, worked with volunteers to sand and paint the railing both in front and in back, scraped, sanded, primed, and painted Pastor Molly's office, cleaned walls in the stair wells, and clean hand rails, door knobs, and doors throughout the building. I staged Messiah's Rally Day set-up and take-down and clean-up of Summer Picnic.

I made numerous trips to haul loads to Goodwill, St. Vincent de Paul's, and the Salvation Army, and took mass mailing to the Post Office monthly, as well as made numerous trips to Menards. As you see, our active, well-used building and long, frigid winters make for a busy parish custodian!



December 31, 2019

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

As we put the last year into hindsight, we look forward again to what is to come. One might hope that in the year of our Lord 2020, we could expect deeper insight, clearer vision, and a more defined sense of purpose. That is certainly my hope for who we are as Church together and who you are as the body of Christ in your community.

There are those among you who might remember a time when the future of the congregation stretched in an unbroken and unswerving line. Councils and congregational leaders could, with some certainty, make plans for 5, 10, even 20 years in the future.

I do not believe that our current situation allows for such a long view. I think of the oil lamps of our ancient ancestors. My father enjoyed many excursions to the holy land on archeological digs. He brought home pottery shards and mosaic pieces, and a reproduction of an ancient oil lamp. This small lamp was a staple for any ancient household just as a flashlight is today. The lamp fits easily in the palm of your hand, with a small bowl to hold the oil and a smaller opening at one end to hold the wick for burning. And this hand-held lamp would give off just enough light for the person holding it to take one more step. The light from this small clay bowl would not illuminate the whole path. But it would ensure that your next step would be safe

*“Your word  
is a lamp to my feet  
and a light  
to my path.”*

*~Psalm 119:105*

as you would be able to see any immediate hazards, holes, uneven ground, or danger.

The Word of God, that is, the word made flesh in Jesus, is the light that will show us our next steps, one step at a time. We will not, cannot, see the entirety of our future. But digging into the life of Christ in study, prayer, conversation, and worship will most certainly shine a light.

I invite you to seek clearer vision in 2020, as a person of faith and as the Body of Christ journeying together. Look through the lens of the life & ministry and the death & resurrection of our Savior and Lord to see more clearly what direction, what effort, what decisions, what next step will be a faithful reflection of the light of Christ in your community and the world.

As we journey together into 2020, I pray that God would give us enough light for the next step and courage to follow where Jesus leads.

*Be Thou my Vision, O Lord of my heart  
Naught be all else to me, save that Thou art  
Thou my best Thought, by day or by night  
Waking or sleeping, Thy presence my light.*  
*~ELW #793*

Yours in Christ,

Bishop Katherine Finegan

# Lutheran Campus Ministry at Northern Michigan University

*Peter answered him, "Lord, if it is you, command me to come to you on the water." He said, "Come." So Peter got out of the boat, started walking on the water, and came toward Jesus. But when he noticed the strong wind, he became frightened, and beginning to sink, he cried out, "Lord, save me!" Jesus immediately reached out his hand and caught him, saying to him, "You of little faith, why did you doubt?" (Matthew 14:28-31)*

Grace to you and Peace, Brothers and Sisters in Christ!

It is my honor and privilege to greet you in this letter and offer a few words about Lutheran campus ministry at Northern in 2019. Firstly, thank you for your long-standing support of this ministry. I am grateful to be getting to know you and look forward to meeting those of you whom I haven't met yet. Your partnership with LCM plays a vital role in the life of our ministry. I ask for your prayers and support as we begin our work together.

I was called as LCM pastor at Northern on September 14, 2019 and will be officially installed here at Messiah on February 16, 2020. The ministry so far has included two major facets. One, getting to know students through mostly one on one interactions over food or coffee, and two, organizing work bees and helping clean and freshen up the LCM house on College Ave. In addition to that, I have preached on behalf of LCM at Christ the King in Escanaba and at Messiah, hosted an ecumenical campus ministry Christmas party at our home, worked with a NMU marketing student to help create a "marketing/outreach" plan for this year, and am building relationships with local clergy both on and off campus.

The verses about Peter walking on water came to mind as I thought about the risk taking that seems necessary in this ministry. The waves were beating, the storm had risen and Peter wanted to step out of the boat. What risks for the sake of sharing the Gospel will we take as a church? I pray God's guidance as we seek to discern the Spirit's will in answering and living into this question. Peter got scared when he noticed the wild winds and began to sink. It's Gospel to hear that fear is part of the human equation as we take those leaps of faith and also Gospel that Jesus was right there to rescue, as we trust He will be for us as we do our best to serve, empower, play, love, advocate, teach, take Sabbath, and heal in Jesus' name. There are challenges and storms, but the promises we have in Christ so much stronger.

Thank you for entrusting me with this call. Thank you for your support and partnership in this ministry. God help and bless us all as we journey together with Jesus.

Yours in Christ,

Pastor Bre Kinnunen



# FORTUNE LAKE

*A place of grace in Crystal Falls, MI*

## **FLLC Highlights of 2019 “Lighting the Way – 90 Years and Beyond” in 2020!**

- In January, new director Amanda Rasner leaped into her challenging job with tireless enthusiasm, making summer staff recruitment a top priority.
- In May, Amanda was officially installed as FLLC’s 5<sup>th</sup> camp director at the annual meeting; board treasurer announced that a generous gift from the Norman Lamberg estate would retire the debt and add stability to finances.
- Over the summer, a well-trained summer staff welcomed 553 campers (increase of 29), including 218 intergenerational campers (increase of 42), and served 340 additional youth at 10 congregational sites.
- In Sept., 34 women attended an Inspired Yoga Retreat on site.
- In Oct., the annual Fall Fest raised almost \$21,300 (similar to 2018’s record total); a youth retreat for grades 3-6 welcomed 50 participants.
- In Nov., an Adoptive & Foster Families Retreat and UFO’s Crafters’ Retreat were held; Senior Day programs continued bi-monthly (except during the summer).
- During the fall, a master facility plan was developed by the property committee; top priority is to renovate the 3 duplex lodges (25 years old).  
At least \$200,000 will be needed to complete the upgrade and replace windows in both Emanuel Lodge (22 years old) and the dining hall (42 years old).
- A 90<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Committee began planning the 2020 celebration under the theme “Lighting the Way – 90 Years and Beyond.” An original musical called *One Wonderful Day* will be in the spotlight! Written, directed and produced by alumni professionals, the musical will be rehearsed by adult and youth campers during Musical Theatre Week. It will be performed Sat., Aug. 8 at 2 pm CDT at Crystal Theatre in Crystal Falls and will be followed by a buffet dinner at camp.

*Ruth Warmanen, FLAME coordinator*

“What a fantastic year we’ve had at Fortune Lake! God has bless us abundantly with safety, fun, and countless faith-affirming moments. People of all walks of life continue to flock to this Place of Grace for positive, life-changing experiences. As we move into our 90<sup>th</sup> anniversary year, I thank you for your partnership as together we seek to share the timeless story of Jesus Christ in an ever-changing world. See you at camp!”

*Amanda Rasner, camp director*





## Northern Great Lakes Water Stewards

Now moving into its 4th year, first initiated in 2016 as an interfaith environmental initiative, the Northern Great Lakes Water Stewards is a faith-based effort to preserve, protect, and sanctify the lakes and streams of Michigan's Upper Peninsula. Messiah continues to lead the way with both critical financial and moral support for this unfolding project which has included:

40 columns on the "Gift of Water" published in the Marquette Monthly by 40 different authors; 7 public community presentations (hosted by Messiah) involving physicians, ethno-botanists, Native Americans, musicians, physicians and clergy; 5 parish-based adult forums; 8 public service announcements produced and distributed for regional radio stations; and 2250 Northern white cedar trees planted by volunteers in the Yellow Dog Community Forest. Volunteers have included Messiah confirmation students and folks from all ages and backgrounds.

Moving into 2020, we are in the midst of raising resources to train and organize 4 volunteer stream and water monitoring teams that will be based in local parishes across the Upper Peninsula. Participating partners include representatives from Lutheran (ELCA), United Methodist, Episcopal, Jewish, and Buddhist traditions. On Friday evening, March 13th, Messiah will be the site in hosting a community presentation for the public in coordination with Northern Michigan University. Our guest will be Nancy Langston, an internationally known researcher and environmental scientist who will speak on "Lake Superior: A Sacred Legacy."

The Water Stewards Initiative is coordinated by the Cedar Tree Institute, a nonprofit organization that provides services and initiates projects in the areas of mental health, religion, and the environment. It is coordinated by Jon Magnuson and Paul Lehmberg, the priest of the local Zen Buddhist community. The NMU student currently serving as project facilitator is Kaitlyn Shepherd. We intend to be working closely with the Lutheran Campus Ministry (ELCA) to help coordinate this event.

For more information link to "Water Stewards" at <[cedartreeinstitute.org](http://cedartreeinstitute.org)>

Thank you to the faith community at Messiah Lutheran for leading the way in this ministry of deeper consciousness and moral commitment to help protect the natural resources which serve as our home in this corner of the Great Lakes Basin.

In Appreciation,  
Jon Magnuson

## Committee/Team Reports



### **Evangelical Lutheran Church in America**

God's work. Our hands.

#### **BeFriender Ministry**

The BeFriender Ministry at Messiah continues with its listening, caring ministry where a trained lay congregation member meets with a member of Messiah who is struggling with an issue and listens supportively and confidentially. We now have two new Pastors on board with our ministry and hope to continue with the traditional BeFriender Ministry structure along with making some changes. Our expanded ministry had included short-term hospitalization visits in conjunction with pastoral care within the local hospitals. Our new pastors are becoming familiar with BeFriender Ministry and we plan to discuss in 2020 how we will continue. Sadly, we experienced the loss of a dear Befriender, Jackie Dault, in December with her death. We have 7 active BeFriender ministers. We meet about monthly for continuing education and support. There were 9 BeFriender connections in 2019 and some of those will carry over into 2020.

Submitted by Karen Nelson

#### **Personnel Committee**

The Personnel Committee consists of Pastor Andrew, Michael Broadway (Chair), John Lindholm, John Coyne, Paul Marin, Karen Kimar-Johnson and Bill Davis.

In 2019, the Committee met every other month on Monday mornings at 7:00 am or as needed; beginning in 2020, meetings will begin at the more civilized time of 1:00 pm on Monday afternoons. The Committee reviews and makes personnel recommendations.

Submitted by Michael Broadway

#### **Faith Formation Team**

Members: Michael Davis, Myra Zyburt, Sherry Johnson, Madalyn Dykema, Holly Muscoe, and Traci Busick.

In 2019 the Faith Formation team continued to “seek to answer God’s call to love through lifelong Christian education.” We supported our Sunday School program and are grateful for the strong leadership of Holly Muscoe and Gina Fortin in coordinating the classes and for all those who have helped teach this year. We also ‘spun off’ a new ‘Nursery Team’ and are excited about their work at improving and energizing our nursery and child-care.

In June we held Vacation Bible School for over 50 children in our community! The theme was “Who is my neighbor?” and we’re thankful for all the volunteers who helped make it happen. We also continued our Prayer Partners program (Thank you, Sherry Johnson) and, with the leadership of Pastor Molly and Pastor Andrew, held our annual Christmas Pageant. Close to 20 children helped remind us of the Christmas story!

Overall, this year was one of transition. We look forward to new direction and the assistance of our pastors as we move into the new year. If you are interested in helping us revitalize our commitment to Christian education for all ages (not just our children), we’d love to have you join our team. Just talk to one of the pastors or to Inga.

Faith Formation Team

## Welcome and Outreach Team

The Welcome and Outreach team, under the new wing of Pr. Andrew, has had another successful year. The current team consists of Jaime Davis, chairperson, Sarah Zeller, secretary, Allan and Gail Edgar, Sarah Janda, Ruth Robb, Herb Grenke, Grant Soltwisch, and Jennifer Dodge. This year we said good-bye to both Phil and Nancy Hoover as they moved on from this particular team.

As a team, it is our goal to make those new to our church feel welcomed and those in our church family feel connected. With this mission in mind, we take on a variety of tasks. We pen and send "Welcome Notes" to those who visit our church services each week. When we see frequent visitation from people, we reach out to them and invite them to a Get-Aquainted evening. At these events we usually provide fellowship, give a brief history of Messiah as well as information on our church mission and becoming a member. These evenings are currently undergoing some changes as we look for ways to improve upon what we've always done. This year we also took on a new responsibility of contacting those who are members of our church family but who we have not seen at church in quite some time. The two events that our team historically has sponsored include Rally Day and Everybody's Birthday. Rally Day, as always, was a great success and a wonderful way to end the summer and start the new year or Sunday School. Next year, we look forward to re-introducing the bounce house idea that the kids all love so much. In the Spring, we hosted the 2nd annual Everybody's Birthday event. The celebration was a well-attended success and we look forward to continuing this newfounded tradition. People left with an extra piece of cake, a smile, and hopefully a connection to somebody they got to know a little better through their attendance at this wonderful event. We are thankful for another successful year and look forward to continuing this work into 2020.

Submitted by,  
Jaime Davis

## Financial Assistance Team

Number of Individual visits at Messiah in 2019 - 332

Funds Distributed - \$34,317.00 (Up \$10,000 from 2018)

Average amount per visit - \$103,36

Help Most Requested:

Housing - \$14, 472.

Gas Cards - \$1728.

Utilities - \$8824.74

Medical - \$1356. 67

Insurance - \$237.74

Auto Expenses - \$2049.41

General Assistance - \$3218.85

Miscellaneous - \$2429.74

Referral Sources:

Community Action, Salvation Army, Room At The Inn, St. Vincent de Paul, Lutheran Social Services, SAIL, Veteran's Administration, Child and Family Services, Marquette Housing Commission, DHS, Pathways, Great Lakes Recovery, Harbor House/ Women's Center, Lake Superior Partnership, UP Health Systems, County Jail, Churches, Landlords, Water Department, Lutheran Social Services, Family, Friends, "Google".

Thanks to the volunteers, Bill Davis, Dick and Karen Oslund and Mary Lou Blomquist; Jen and Inga who take the calls and make assistance appointments; Mike Hill who keeps the financial records and all who contributed to this ministry in 2019.

Submitted by Mary Lou Blomquist

# Worship and Music Team

Team members: Marilyn Andersen, Jenny Broadway, Tom Bronken, Carl Hammerstrom, Chrys Hendrick, Sally McQueen, Anna Mendelin, Bev Ojala, Carol Ontto

Music staff and pastors: Dave Dagenais, Pastor Molly Eversoll, Interim Pastor Allan Johnson, Pauline Kiltinen, Lynne Lanczy, Interim Pastor Don Ludeman, Pastor Andrew Plocher, Judy Quirk, Kathy Strazzinski.

The following events occurred during 2019:

1. A celebration of inclusiveness, with an emphasis on youth, was held on the weekend of February 16 – 17 at all services and a Sunday morning forum.
2. The Queen City Arts Dancers presented at all three services on the weekend of March 2-3.
3. The full set of kneelers were installed for the entire season of Lent beginning with the Ash Wednesday service of March 6.
4. Pastor Don's interim assignment ended on the weekend of March 9 – 10, and a farewell luncheon was held for him following the 10:30 service of that weekend.
5. Pastor Andrew Plocher began his ministry at Messiah on March 18, and his first services were the weekend of March 23 – 24.
6. The Hildegard Johnson Music Scholarships were awarded to Emma Maki-Warne, Maija Maki-Warne, Aliina Maki, and Meghan MacPhee at the March 24 services.
7. Lenten services were fairly well attended. The 6 pm timing conflicted with choir practices and the Community meal, and it was suggested that the service be moved to 6:30 in future years.
8. The installation service for Pastor Andrew was held on Sunday afternoon, April 14 (Palm Sunday).
9. Palm Sunday (April 14) used the Palm Service, rather than the Passion Service. The Maundy Thursday was well attended. The Good Friday Service was held from 12:30 to 3 and broadcast on the radio. There was no Good Friday Tenebrae Service. The Saturday Easter Vigil service included the Queen City Dancers. The Easter Sunday services consisted of the 6:30am Sunrise Service at McCarty's Cove and the two regular time services at Messiah.
10. The Queen City Dancers participated in the worship service on Pentecost (June 9), and the Marquette Male Chorus participated on Holy Trinity Sunday (June 16).
11. The organ pipes were removed on July 8 as the first step in organ refurbishment.
12. August 18 - recognition for Pastor Alan for serving as intern pastor at Messiah Lutheran Church.
13. Chrys Levesque Hendrick resigned from the Worship and Music Team after many years of service. Tom Bronken turned the chairmanship of the team to Sally McQueen.
14. Beginning September 8, the Narrative Lectionary was implemented giving the congregation an opportunity for greater Bible literacy.
15. The Bell choir added a fourth octave of bells in September.
16. Planning for The Workshop for Church Musicians (to be held October 17, 2020) began in September.
17. Chancel arrangements were finalized after the organ refurbishment was completed. The only change from previous arrangement was moving the bell choir down to the northwest corner of the congregational area.
18. Pastor Molly Eversoll's installation service was held on Oct 27 (Reformation Sunday) and was well attended. The organ was back in commission for the first time that Sunday and people commented on its improved clarity.
19. The theme for Advent Services was "What Can't Wait".
20. The Blue Christmas Service was retitled the Longest Night service, and it coincidentally occurred on the longest night of the year, Saturday, Dec. 21.
21. The Children's Christmas Pageant was simplified in its format and happened at the December 15 10:30 service.
22. Christmas Eve services followed their normal pattern with 30 minutes of music preceding the 7:30 and 10pm services.

Respectfully submitted by Sally McQueen

## Mothers of Preschoolers (MOPS)

This year is the fourth year of Marquette Area MOPS and has been the biggest transition year to date. But despite the big change the group has remained strong in numbers and support.

The biggest change was going from the "Core Four" leaders to three main leaders. Nancy Hoover was the only original "Core Four" that came back to lead; with Alyssa Barker and Courtney Ter Mors stepping up to take over management of the group. It Takes a Village: The new leading members of the group have brought new life and energy to MOPS. Co-Coordinator: Alyssa Barker and Courtney Ter Mors are dedicated at working year-round, putting together the fine details and long hours. They have put a lot of faith in God to guide them through this first year and have been blessed beyond measure as the group continues to thrive.

This year wouldn't have been possible without the return of Nancy Hoover to provide the financial bookkeeping and as a main mentor for the new leaders as they started out. Nancy also helps bring in different volunteers from the area and keeps us updated with what's happening at Messiah.

In addition to coordinators and mentors, we have 18 registered moms this year, 13 are returning members. Our registered moms have more than a combined total of 35 children and we have provided care for a great majority of them.

Everyone involved has helped to create a greater awareness of MOPS and Messiah's presence in and around our surrounding communities.

None of this would be possible without our amazing group of volunteers. We have been blessed with numerous Messiah and Marquette community adults and teens that volunteer their time and talent at our monthly meetings. We couldn't provide a MOPS event without them! The volunteers change from month to month but we roughly have averaged more than 10 volunteers per month to help with setting up and taking care of the kids. The MOPS core focus has always been about providing a ministry for support, faith and love for children and their families in the Marquette area. We are proud to continue and stand united in our vision and dedication for the group. But none of this would be possible without the incredible and overwhelming support from our numerous adult volunteers, NMU and high school childcare volunteers and MOPS member moms stepping up to fill numerous roles.

**Vision Statement:** Marquette Area MOPS is a welcome and safe gathering place for moms to make great connections and be encouraged with hope. The goal of this group is to share God's love and provide moms a refuge of support wherever they are in their faith journey.

### Noteworthy events and service projects:

**-Marquette Community Baby Shower Diaper Drive:** During the month of March 2019, our moms donated packages of diapers for the area's community baby shower. We also accepted donations from Messiah members and had a bin in the church for those and donations from community members as well. The community baby shower is a free event open to pregnant moms and those who have babies 6 months of age and younger. The goal of the shower is to assist families with obtaining some baby items for the infants who might otherwise go without, and to inform them of services and resources available. MOPS donated about 80 new packages of diapers!

**-MOPS International Leader Training Event:** We are currently working with a coach in Houghton on putting together a training session for the summer of 2020. Due to the changes in coaches over the past year there wasn't a possible training session for the summer of 2019. At the training session coordinators will learn all about the next theme and how to be better engaged with your group. It will also be the perfect opportunity to get to know members of other MOPS groups around.

**-Fall Fest Volunteer Sign UP:** Marquette Area MOPS and the Morning Marquette MOPS groups teamed up to provide a table at NMU's Fall Fest in August. We provided interested students in details of what our group does, times and dates. We also provided a sign up sheet for volunteers. Marquette Area MOPS had an overwhelming number of students sign up. We reached out to a majority of them and were able to fill our volunteer need in less than 24 hours.

**-Diaper Changing and Baby Feeding Station:** We provided a diaper changing station and baby feeding station to two summer events this year instead of just one. We hosted at Blueberry Fest at the end of July and at the Marquette County Fair in August. At Blueberry Fest our tent didn't last long against the strong storm winds blowing downtown that day; but we were able to provide shelter to a couple moms before we had to take the tent down. The tent provides a semi-private area for families with little ones who need a break. Inside the tent there are chairs, a changing station, wipes, and water provided. We also include informational pamphlets and a poster about Marquette Area MOPS.

**At the County Fair** the tent was up for three days and had overwhelming support and positive reviews both verbally and written and on Facebook. We have received permission to continue providing the family station at both the events and look forward to providing this service again.

**-Sister Stockings:** In November and December 2019, our group collected donations for the Sister Stockings. Sister Stockings is a local, women-helping-women holiday project that began

in 2016. Each year, nominations are made for special women in Marquette County to receive a stocking gift. Nominations are kept secret until the gift is received. The nominees must be women having an unusually difficult year with circumstances that leave little for her own self-care. These could be women recently separated, divorced, widowed, caring for a sick child or aging parent, or faced with an illness, grief, or unexpected loss. The stocking is filled with countless gifts of encouragement, hope, and sisterhood. The goal of the gifts is to uplift each woman's soul, fuel her resolve, and bestow a belief that life WILL get better. Donated items included candles, fuzzy socks, makeup, wax melts and warmers, jewelry, chocolates, and other goodies. MOPS members also volunteered to help sew and stuff the stockings with all the gifts. This was an amazing opportunity to help other women in our community.

**-Kids Yoga/Centering for the Season:** Although it didn't work out this year we hope to try again next year to coordinate with Pastor Andrew and his wonderful wife Anna and their Centering the Season yoga sessions. We would love to do a Yoga Session with Moms and a separate one with kids before Thanksgiving to help with relaxing before the holidays.

**What is MOPS:** It's an international, Christian support network of women who share a common bond with preschool age children. The organization provides mentorship, leadership development, relevant teachings, and creative activities. Our monthly events are a time to laugh, learn and share during an evening of desserts, prayer, listening to a speaker or video, and honest conversations with a positive sisterhood of support. The children enjoy a snack, activities/crafts, and end with a video while in child-care. Our MOPS program welcomes all moms, during pregnancy and with children from birth through kindergarten.

We've had a multitude of speakers provide parenting advice and tips and techniques on self-care for moms. Our leaders and moms work together to plan activities outside of the meetings like Moms Night Outs and playdates too. So far we have had a positive parenting presentation, a painting class, a night tour of Marquette, and a pizza night at Aubrees.

**Marketing/Updates:** Our Facebook page, [www.facebook.com/MarquetteAreaMOPS](http://www.facebook.com/MarquetteAreaMOPS), as well as a private Facebook group for our registered moms, continue to be our biggest venue for communication for our events and discussion between meetings. Facebook and word of mouth have been our primary marketing for new members. During the summer, we again marketed by placing flyers throughout the community. We

continue to advertise our monthly meetings in the Marquette Monthly. We held a MOPS open house in the fall for new and current members to register for the new year. Our planning meetings have become quicker and easier over time.

We have a handful of moms who join the Core Four to provide input and fresh ideas each month. We have learned, and continue to learn, how to keep things simple.

We continue to keep our events and topics listed in the MM calendar and this year we had TV6 and the Mining Journal write articles on our help with Sister Stockings.

**Timing:** The MOPS events coincide with the academic year, running September through May.

We have continued to host one evening meeting per month, on the 2nd Thursday of each month. The meetings start at 6p until 7:30.

**THANK YOU:** A very special thank you goes out to those who have donated time, food, money, and especially to our pastoral support from Pastor Andrew Plocher and Pastor Molly Eversoll and the amazing support from the Messiah office staff Jen and Inga! We couldn't do this without you.

Submitted by Alyssa Barker

## OWLS (Older Wiser Lutherans)

The Older Wiser Lutherans (OWL's) mission is to have activities for folks who are generally 55 years old and older; however, we are an open group and welcome all.

The Committee for 2019 consisted of Betsy Little, Jean Whitman-Shelby, Linda Ruohoniemi, Ron Hill, Ruth Hill, Ray Jarvis, Kathy Soltwisch, Grant Soltwisch, Marilyn Andersen, Linda Berry, Jan Julian, Boli Soderberg, and Louise Anderson. Our goal is to have some type of get together monthly during fall, winter, and spring.

We started the year with our favorite activity of eating out!! In February, there was wonderful attendance at dinner at Red Lobster Restaurant. In March, the Lagniappe's annual "Fat Tuesday" lunch buffet occurred, and we celebrated Pi Day on 3/19 (instead of 3/14), but the pie (and coffee) were enjoyed by all. The OWLS continued their activities with a talk by the Barrier Free Store, a tour of the Raptor Center in Harvey, and we finished off prior to summer break with our annual picnic at Presque Isle Park. In the fall, we had our one and only planning meeting for the year. The activities continued with a tour of the Beaumier UP Heritage Center at NMU (and coffee at Starbucks on campus), a movie, Ghostbusters, at Thomas Theaters, and a cupcake decorating afternoon with Wil Kilpela serenading on the accordion while the OWLS

configured owls onto the cupcakes. These cupcakes were enjoyed the following Sunday by anyone who attended coffee hour between Sunday services. The Dance Zone offered to introduce various forms of dance to us along with the opportunity to try the dances. We finished off 2019 with our annual Christmas party. In addition to the previously mentioned gatherings, the OWLs continued their weekly walking (and coffee) at the Dome (wintertime) or Mattson Park (summertime). In addition, we prepared and served for a Lenten Luncheon. We are busy folks, and it takes many people to plan and coordinate these functions. Thank you to everyone who makes the OWLs possible. We look forward to more activities during 2020 and would love to have you join us.

Submitted by Louise Anderson

## Global Mission Team

Team Members: Judy Quirk, Bev Evans Dave Blomquist, Mary Lou Blomquist, Carol Bell, June Ackroyd, Rachel Skaw, Inga Banitt, Susan Shaver, Pastor Andrew Plocher

Once again the Global Mission Team experienced an exciting year. We continue to communicate with and pray for our companions in Tanzania and Colombia, conduct fair trade sales and raise funds for world hunger.

In June a delegation of three, Elizabeth Beyne, Linda Carlson and Judy Quirk, visited Azania Front Cathedral, our companion church, in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania. Their companion church committee, ably lead by Cuthbert Swai, shared the services, Sunday school, committee, choir, Bible study, and life of the congregation. We visited historic and cultural sites as well as missions to the street children and medical/women's health mission. The visit to Azania's satellite congregations was eye-opening. We felt surrounded by the Holy Spirit the entire time we were in Tanzania including during the safari at the end of the trip.

The Global Mission Team is working on the timeline for a visit from Azania Front Cathedral.

In October Messiah welcomed a delegation of visitors representing our companion congregation (Luz y Vida) in Bogotá, Colombia. The group included Pastor Jairo Suarez, Ana Mendivelso (a psychologist in the national office of the Lutheran church in Colombia), and Luz y Vida member

Johana Castellanos. We had hoped more members from Luz y Vida could come to the US but unfortunately four out of the five applicants were denied their visas.

Global Mission team member Bev Evans and Inga Banitt planned the group's 11-day visit to Marquette which they greatly enjoyed. Their time in Marquette included worship, visits to schools in Republic and Negaunee, meeting with Spanish language students at NMU, a Lutheran Campus Ministry gathering, several concerts, a day trip to the Munising area, time with Messiah's Sunday School and confirmation students and much more. They also presented an evening program about their lives and work in Colombia. We are thankful for the Global Mission team and Messiah members who joined them in many of these activities or provided a meal. We hope to send a delegation from Messiah to Colombia in 2021.

Our fundraising efforts for World hunger were led by Mary Lou Blomquist. She reports the following:

Our "Everyone Deserves A Piece of the Pie" campaign yielded \$4,801.68 for the Synod Assembly World Hunger offering. The campaign culminated with Pastor Allan graciously taking a pie in the face from Esme Ulland-Joy who was the top fundraiser in the Sunday School. Another \$1650.00 was contributed at other times, making a total of \$6451.00 for 2019.

During the Christmas season we stress ELCA Good Gifts with a "Eliminate Ugly Sweaters and Ties" focus. Members were reminded to consider gifts that make a difference around the world. We sponsored an ELCA Domestic Hunger Grant which yielded \$10,000 for RATI in 2019, another \$8,000 is allocated for 2020 and \$6,000 for 2021. We heard from our Colombian visitors of programs in Bogota which are funded through ELCA World Hunger, making a personal connection with the programs we support.

This team also sponsored the global craft fair and sales which was so well managed by Rachel Skaw and Beth Wendricks. Rachel reports:

Messiah hosted two successful Global Fair Trade Markets in 2019: one small market during the Colombia delegation's visit in the fall where we sold handmade goods from our brothers and sisters from Caracoli and one larger market in November. The first market brought in \$416 and that will go

directly back to supporting the artisans in Colombia. In November (the 23rd and 24th), we sold \$5,682.87 worth of fair trade items using SERRV, Sharing the Dream in Guatemala, remaining Colombia goods, pins from Dar es Salaam, and more. This was about \$1100 more than the previous year. Global Fair Trade Market organizers included Marie Moasio, Rachel Skaw, and Beth Wendricks and there were also many volunteers for set up and day-of assistance. We also had a bake sale which earned over \$263 and this money will be put toward marketing for the market next year as well as shipping costs to get the unsold items back to their respective locations. Total income for the year was \$6,361.87.

Overall, both markets were well attended and shoppers were pleased. If anyone is interested in helping organize the event and/or helping with set up and day-of tasks, please let Rachel Skaw know at [rachel.skaw@gmail.com](mailto:rachel.skaw@gmail.com). Thank you.

Submitted by Judy Quirk, Inga Banitt, Mary Lou Blomquist and Rachel Skaw

## Stewardship Team

The Messiah Lutheran Church Stewardship Team met at 6:30 AM on the 2nd Tuesday of most months. Members who participated during the year included Mike Coyne, David Blomquist, Cary Bjork, Sarah Kemppainen, Lynne Hamerstrom, Eric Walters, Brent Skaw, Laura Petrie, Erik Bergh, Interim Pastor Don Ludemann and Pastor Andrew Plocher.

The team produced a "Stewardship Story" for the "Messiah Messenger" monthly. We reviewed the results of the returned "Time and Talent Forms" and the financial pledges from our fall Commitment Weekend, 2018, and worked on the planning and execution of the 2019 Commitment Weekend. As of early January 2020, there have been 156 returned pledge cards compared to 183 a year ago. Overall our pledging looks very good, but if you have not completed and return your pledge forms as well as the Time and Talent forms, please do so. Even if your pledge is not changing or if you give via an electronic giving option it is very helpful for budgeting purposes if you also complete a pledge form (available online: [bit.ly/messiah2020](http://bit.ly/messiah2020)).

We supported the organ rehabilitation and upgrading pledge drive as well as "Giving Tuesday" and the fundraising for the Messiah Assistance Fund. There have been 51 pledges for the restoration of our wonderful organ received so far - thank you. The Assistance Fund helps many local people meet their needs for food, housing, transportation, etc, and this

year we raised nearly \$30,000 for those efforts. Your contributions to this fund are greatly appreciated and very important.

Projects by the team also included supporting and advertising Messiah teams and committees. Watch for information on our video monitors before and between services. We recommended implementing more methods for electronic giving.

The "Volunteer Thank You Dinner" held on May 22 was successful and was attended by at least 110 members and volunteers.

Environmental stewardship was discussed and the "Creation Care Team" was founded and resulted in one program in 2019 with more being expected in 2020.

Thank you for your support. The Stewardship Team would like additional members! Please consider becoming a part of it. The meeting time can be changed to fit the needs of our members so the meeting time is negotiable.

Your Stewardship Team

## AMMPARO Team

Members: Pastor Molly Eversoll, Tom Bronken, Barry Johnson, Ann Johnson, Cathy Seblonka, Jen Elsenbroek, Susan Shaver, Anne Weaver, Inga Banitt

AMMPARO, accompanying migrant minors with protection, advocacy, representation, and opportunities, is a ministry of the ELCA. Messiah's AMMPARO Task Force began meeting midway through 2019. With the excitement and energy of the Journey Students' commitment to learn about immigration and refugee issues within the United States, the AMMPARO Task Force was founded.

The Task Force is hopeful that through education and service, Messiah will be able to find ways that we can help to live out Jesus' message: when we welcome the stranger, we welcome Christ.

Throughout the second half of 2019, the AMMPARO Task Force has hosted a conversation on immigration in the United States led by Dr. Michael Broadway, supported a pastors' book study on "Enrique's Journey," organized a congregational trip to the border through Border Servant Corps (that will take place in March), found ways for Messiah to contribute financially to an organization helping refugees and migrants at the border, and planned an intergenerational Christmas card making event for children in detention centers. In 2020 we already have two speakers planned: Mary



Flynn from Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Services (2/5) and Mary Campbell from AMMPARO (4/1). We are grateful for Messiah's continued support and passion for learning about immigration and refugee issues. We hope to continue to find ways that we can be a welcoming place for the wider community to learn about immigration issues and find ways to be advocates for those in need.

Pastor Molly, on behalf of the AMMPARO Task Force

## Social Action Team

Team members are: Emily Coyne, Fred Maynard, Grant Soltwisch, Judy Quirk, Ron Tervo, Sandy Grenke, Betsy Little, Susan Shaver and Anne Weaver.

The Social Action Team had an active year. Some of the highlights are as follows.

Reconciling in Christ was recognized in January with an emphasis on youth.

In the spirit of Martin Luther King Day JJ Packs were promoted and continue to be an ongoing project. These help to provide meals for schoolchildren on weekends.

The team explored ways to provide transportation to worship and other Messiah activities for those who need rides. We work with the church office to coordinate this and have developed guidelines for participants.

A \$50 donation was made to assist with transportation of clients to the Free Store.

Items were submitted for the Messenger and the E newsletter concerning social justice issues including climate change and immigration.

A forum was held April 3 on climate change led by Fred Maynard and Cary Bjork.

Messiah continued membership in Bread for the World. Judy Quirk coordinated offerings of letters along with information on global child and maternal nutrition and other hunger-related issues.

We supported Messiah becoming an AMMPARO (Accompanying Migrant Minors with Protection, Advocacy, Representation and Opportunities) congregation.

An ELCA video study was received titled "Discovering Islam" which was previewed and will be used for

a study in 2020.

We welcome new members and ideas at any time. Just let one of the team members know of your interest.

Many thanks to Pastor Andrew and Pastor Molly for their guidance and to Jen and Inga for their support.

Respectfully submitted,

Anne Weaver

## Creation Care Team

Several members of the social action team and stewardship team have met to explore the formation of a creation care team. A forum on faith and climate in April began the effort; and a videoconference was viewed and discussed in August. Each event had 12-15 members in attendance. People interested in planning for future educational programs and/or identifying specific congregational projects related to creation care are asked to contact Fred Maynard, Cary Bjork or Pastor Andrew.

Submitted by Fred Maynard

## Publicity Team

Team Members: Julie Aho, Emily Fitzpatrick, Diana Magnuson, Myra Zyburt, Inga Banitt

Mission: We promote the ministries of Messiah Lutheran Church through local media; advertising; posters and brochures; Facebook and our webpage.

Highlights for 2019:

We welcomed Diana Magnuson to the team.

Pastor Andrew introduced Canva, an online design program which team members have started to use on Facebook, Messiah's website and for posters.

Inga updated the website to reflect staff changes and other changes during this time of transition in pastoral staff.

We placed advertising in a variety of locations/venues including: tables at Jeffrey's Restaurant, Lake Superior Theatre programs, Marquette Symphony programs and Marquette Choral Society.

We were especially pleased at the response to our promotion for Messiah's Global Fair Trade Market.

This promotion was done through the combined efforts of the publicity team and the market coordinators, Rachel Skaw and Beth Wendricks. The Facebook promotion was very effective, and Marquette Monthly designed an attractive ad for us.

We continued the procedure for free press releases submitted to local media – including print, TV and radio.

We distributed a flyer to the children in the elementary schools advertising Vacation Bible School. We said farewell to two publicity team members- Julie Aho and Myra Zyburt. We thank both of them for all they have contributed to the publicity team over the years!

Goals for 2020:

Continue to update Messiah's webpage and brochures.

Recruit new members for the publicity team. We are looking for people who have graphic design, writing, advertising, or marketing skills

Complete work on two new printed items: a half-page welcome card and a bookmark describing Messiah ministries and volunteer opportunities.

Continue to work with all committees and teams to tell the story of Messiah and invite the community to attend our worship services, programs and other events.

Submitted by Inga Banitt

## Nursery Team

Team members: Kristen Gordon, Madalyn Dykema, Mike OSullivan

The Nursery team met on March 6 and April 9. Collaboration on new activity totes for the children, cleaning schedule for the nursery, and other business took place. The team established a goal to meet quarterly.

In June, Inga Banitt asked if the team would be interested in exploring the possibility of starting a preschool at Messiah. In her email June 6, Inga wrote: "I asked the church council to put it on their agenda for their meeting last month. They talked about the idea for at least 20-30 minutes. Essentially they'd love to see something like this happen and Erik Bergh volunteered himself as the council's 'point person' but none of them felt they had the time, energy or experience to pull off such a big project."

Subsequently a special meeting to discuss the possibility of starting a preschool at Messiah was held on July 8, 2019 with Kristen, Madalyn, and Mike in attendance. Guests included three previous employees of St. Christopher's Preschool before it closed. They had previously toured Messiah facilities with Jennifer Dodge, Madalyn, and Mike on June 28. Mike attended the Building and Grounds (B&G) Committee meeting on July 11, 2019 with one of St. Christopher's previous employees and presented the space needed for preschool. The entire basement floor would be needed for preschool and 1200 feet of outdoor space would also be required. B&G Committee members explained this would not be feasible at this time due to existing lease and lack of outdoor space availability.

The nursery was full of children on Sundays throughout the year, with 5-10 children enjoying each 10:30 to 11:30 am service time and often several children enjoying the 8:45 to 9:45 am service time. The nursery was also staffed for special occasions. We had no problem staffing the nursery with current rotating staff of Jamie Davis, Madalyn, and Mike. Cayla Chapman worked in the nursery January through July.

Inga Banitt organized staffing and other communication throughout the year.

MOPS children enjoyed the nursery one Thursday per month September through May.

We all feel truly blessed and thankful to be a part of the Messiah Lutheran Church Nursery.

Submitted by Mike OSullivan

## **Building and Grounds Team**

Team members: Cindy Kotila, Peter Kotila, Ron Strazzinski, Bob Cambensy, Dick Goodney, Dan Niemi, Dave Skoog, Kevin McGrath, Bruce Robertson, Erik Bergh, Pastor Andrew Plocher

Messiah, and adjoining properties, constitute a large facility, and the Buildings and Grounds Committee is tasked with her various maintenance and up-dating needs. The weekly and daily maintenance is handled by our very capable custodian, Kevin McGrath, who also keeps us apprised of larger issues. Among those needs addressed by B&G in 2019, were minor electrical and plumbing updates and repairs, purchase and installation of a new AED, parking lot cleaning and line painting, touring with and noting Fire Marshall concerns, and researching possibilities for display of confirmation photos.

There were also some major projects around Messiah with which B&G was involved.

This fall, B&G was finally able to coordinate the installation and wiring of exterior doors and their computer-aided locking system. Not all of the bugs have been worked out of the system, which controls five entrances, but the future looks promising.

The major cleaning, maintenance, and updating needed this year on our organ was executed out-of-house, by a professional organ company. Under the guidance of Kathy and Ron Strazzinski, and with minor help from B&G and others who moved risers, the entire massive, but delicate instrument (most of which you cannot see), was removed and shipped to their facility by company professionals in the spring and then returned and reinstalled in the fall. The result is evident in her magnificent sound!

While B&G was able to address numerous minor needs and help with a few major issues, others are

on hold pending evaluation of the MLC financial outlook. Lighting for musicians is at the top of our list for 2020.

Anticipating and financing the myriad needs of MLC became a focus of the team this past year. Initially, we looked into the possibility of researching and setting up a spreadsheet of the numerous systems (plumbing, heating, electrical, flooring, windows, etc.), and then breaking those systems into their numerous parts (rooms, use, wear, etc.). By the time we got that far into the process we realized we were creating a monster! The list was almost endless - and that before we even researched and entered any data about age, replacement, sources, etc. - which was where the REAL work would begin. Enter Pr. Andrew.

Now, rather than re-inventing the wheel, Messiah is hiring a company that will come to Marquette this winter, look at our entire property, assess our needs with fresh eyes, and lay out a plan of action. We are looking forward to the process and their report. It should be exciting!

Submitted by Cindy Kotila

## Women of the ELCA (WELCA)

Messiah WELCA circles continued to meet for Bible study, fellowship, and special projects.

Rachel Circle collected items for Lutheran World Relief (LWR) baby care kits and presents for youth at Great Lakes Recovery during the month of December. Ruth Circle collected items for LWR personal care kits, and Women Reaching Women collected items for the LWR school kits. The LWR kits along with quilts from Messiah's quilters were loaded on a boxcar last October. These quilts and kits will be shipped all over the world to people in need. The totals for this shipment were:

461 Quilts	50 Baby Kits
76 School Kits	89 Health/Personal Care Kits

The circles provided three lunches for members of Norway Grove Lutheran Church (Wisconsin) who come to Marquette every July to work on Habitat for Humanity projects.

\$150.00 of circle offerings were gifted to WELCA of Northern Great Lakes Synod. This money is often used for scholarships to attend larger synod events. Additional offering money received in 2019 will be designated for 2020 Lenten offerings.

Submitted by Inga Banitt

## Fortune Lake Lutheran Camp

Fortune Lake Lutheran Camp: A Place of Grace

Fortune Lake Lutheran Camp is owned and operated by the 80 congregations of the Northern Great Lakes Synod and several other Lutheran congregations in the Upper Peninsula. It is licensed by the state of Michigan.

Fortune Lake welcomes people of all faiths and all ages during all seasons. For more than 85 years, Fortune Lake Lutheran Camp has been a special place where God's abundant grace is not simply taught, but experienced.

The theme for this past summer camping season at Fortune Lake was "Transformed Community" (Romans 12:2). 553 campers were onsite as well as 340 additional young people at 10 different sites with congregational day camp ministries. 218 campers of all ages attended the intergenerational events: Women and Kids Week, Grandparent/Grandkid Camp, Family Week, and Family Half-Week.

Amanda Rasner completed her first year as camp director. She was hired in December 2018 and was installed following our annual meeting this past spring.

Thanks to all who contributed to the "Truckin for the Lord" fundraiser. Sufficient funds were raised to purchase a new (to Fortune Lake) truck.

The Tenacious 200 are the persistent and unyielding group that loves Fortune Lake dearly and aspires to pass blessings forward. 200 sustaining donors, giving monthly at different levels, will keep Fortune Lake budgets balanced and provide the opportunity for them to improve and expand faith giving opportunities for years to come. More information on the Tenacious 200 and how to join them is provided on the Fortune Lake website.

Fortune Lake is currently seeking applications for summer 2020 staff positions. If you or someone you know is interested, please check out the job descriptions and application on their website.

Fortune Lake delegates are Kathy Godec and Herb Grenke.

Submitted by Kathy Godec  
FLAME representative

# Nominating Committee Report

## For Council:

(3), three year terms. Mike Coyne will serve for another term. Kurt Mensching and Ruth Robb have been nominated to serve on council.

## Congregational Committees:

Endowment Committee—(1), three year terms. Nomination for one candidate from the floor.

Finance Committee—(2), two year terms. Kerry McGinley is up for re-election; Stephen Luty has been nominated to serve.

Nominating Committee—(3), two year terms. Molly Smith, Jaime Davis, Dave Blomquist.

Personnel (2), three-year term. John Lindholm has agreed to extend a one-year term for the sake of balancing elections. The committee wishes to have 6 members, 2 elected each year. This is proposed in constitutional changes. Bev Evans and Al Edgar have agreed to serve.

Audit Committee-- (2 needed): Ron Hill, Kerry McGinley

## Other elections:

Fortune Lake delegates— Herb Grenke and Kathy Godec are currently serving.

Synod Assembly—Messiah needs three voting members, plus pastor(s).  
Nominations from the floor.

## Finance Committee

Committee members: Doug Morton (Treasurer), Mike Hill (Parish Accountant), Nina Nelson, Mark Paupore, Kerry McGinley, Eric Walters, Interim Pastor Don Ludemann, Pastor Andrew Plocher

In 2019, Messiah once again kept the Finance Committee busy. The budget was a frequent agenda item. With the major changes in personnel (especially calling two new Pastors), it was necessary to amend the budget a couple of times during the year. Besides personnel costs, there were other things, like snow removal expenses, which for some reason were rather high in 2019. It is looking like 2020 might be a repeat.

Although not part of the General Fund Budget, the Finance Committee monitored the financial aspects of the organ renovation project, including deciding to fund the project internally, from our reserves, with the expectation that the reserves will be replenished from pledges for this project. Included elsewhere in the Annual Report is a financial report on the organ project.

Other projects we oversaw the finances for included replacement of our office color copier/printer, upgrading the office computers, exterior door replacement and repairs, and a new electronic door locking system. We also recommended to the Council that we transfer approximately \$22,000 from undesignated memorials to our capital projects fund, to bring it up to \$50,000. This fund can be used to pay for, or at least provide seed money, major capital items, like replacement of boilers, roofs, etc.

And, of course, we prepared the proposed 2020 budget. We reviewed our insurance coverages, and especially thank Bill Weaver for all his work on this.

We continue to work with the Audit committee. We are happy to report that all prior year audit work has been completed, and we are working to coordinate the completion of the 2019 work.

We meet monthly to oversee the finances of Messiah, reviewing financial reports, bank statements, check details, credit card statements, budget preparation, etc.

Mike Hill, Parish Accountant

# Audit Committee

March 15, 2019

The Audit Committee has completed the review of the books for fiscal year 2018. All accounts appear to be in order and accurate. All individuals who support the financial reporting have done an excellent job. All recommendations made after the audit last year have been completed.

Recommendation:

The Church Treasurer review and initial all Reconciliation Statements as prepared by the Church Accountant monthly.

Yours in Christ,

Kerry McGinley and Ron Hill  
Audit Committee

## Insurance

Messiah's insurance carrier is Church Mutual of Merrill, Wisconsin, an ELCA endorsed and recommended insurance company.

Insurance costs 2019:

Workers Comp	\$1,684.00
Renewal Package	\$8,563.00
Umbrella	\$700.00
Total:	\$10,947.00

Insurance Coverage for 2019:

GENERAL AND PROFESSIONAL LIABILITY  
\$2,000,000 to \$5,000,000

BLANKET PROPERTY COVERAGE BUILDINGS & PERSONAL PROPERTY (\$2,500 Deductible)  
\$7,500,000

(Includes church, church content (including organ and piano), garage, garage content, 1024 N. 4th St. (one-family rental property and proposed youth outreach program), 1029 N. 3rd St. (Synod and LSS Offices).

UMBRELLA LIABILITY LIMITS FOR \$2,000,000 on all properties.

We will receive a small credit in our annual renewal for the automated door locking system installed fall of 2019.