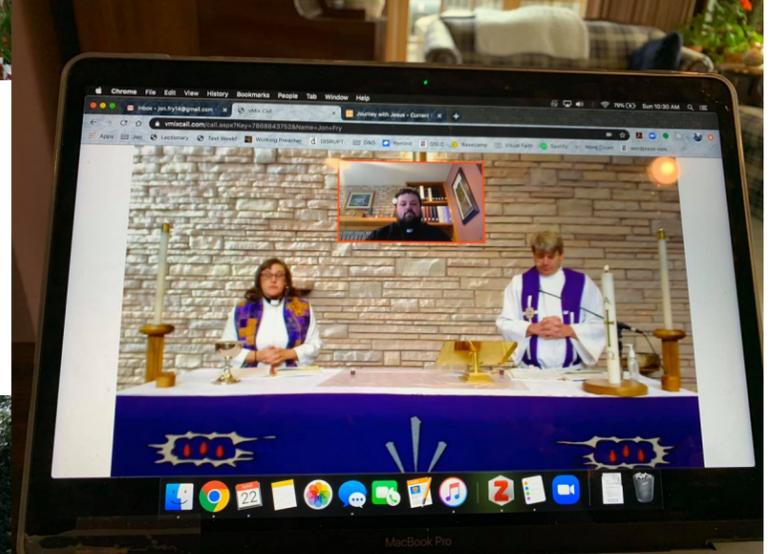




ANNUAL REPORT 2020

Our Saviour's Lutheran Church



**2021 Annual Congregational Meeting Agenda
January 31, 2021**

Ministry and Connections

Opening Prayer By: Pastor Michael

Welcome and Council Introductions By: Roger Sherman

Action Item

Approval of 2020 Annual Meeting Minutes By: Roger Sherman

Reports

Pastors' Reports By: Pastor Michael, and Pastor Leta

COVID Team Report By: Roger Sherman

Visioning Team Report By: Rosie Goetz

Church Council Report By: Roger Sherman

Treasurer's Report By: John Bleem

Action Item

Presentation of 2021 Proposed Budget By: John Bleem

Congregational Vote on Budget By: Roger Sherman

Highlights

Community Connection Updates

Prayer/Blessing

Blessing and Dismissal By: Pastor Leta

Adjourn

**2020 Annual Congregational Meeting Minutes
January 26, 2020 12:00 PM**

Table prayer

Welcome and council introductions: Jeremy Marburger

Approval of 2019 Annual Meeting Minutes:

Motion to approve by: Rob Behrens

Seconded by: Myles Crane

Motion approved for 2019 annual meeting minutes

Celebrate Capital Campaign and Stewardship: Pastor Michael
Habitat for Humanity tithe by Kristen Candelas

Reports:

Pastors' Reports: Pastor Michael, Pastor Leta

Ministry Report: Elisa Sherman on the Columbarium

Church Council Report: Jeremy Marburger

Treasurer's Report and Presentation of 2020 proposed budget

John Bleem

Motion to approve by: Rob Petterson

Seconded by: Vicki Eisele

Motion to close discussion- moved by Vicki. Motion approved

Motion approved for proposed 2020 proposed budget

Blessing and Dismissal: Pastor Leta

ROCKY MOUNTAIN SYNOD

The Church Becoming

When we introduced *Church Becoming* in late 2019 in anticipation of our 2020 Synod Assembly, we had absolutely no idea how fitting this theme would be. Church Becoming was intended as an invitation for all of us to step together into a space of renewal and transformation - to more fully become the church the Spirit is calling us to be for the life of the world. Three short months into 2020 our journey of becoming moved into turbo speed! Overnight we became a church meeting primarily online for worship; we became a church who gathered via ZOOM over hundreds of hours to brainstorm, lament, share resources, pray, plan, support, and be together.

Having witnessed the violence against George Floyd and other siblings of color, we became a church who engaged the collective work of anti-racism and dismantling white supremacy with greater energy and intention. In the midst of economic hardship, we became a church whose buildings suddenly served as food distribution centers, a church whose people mobilized to ensure for the basic needs of those most vulnerable during the pandemic.

There is no doubt we are a different church than we were last year. We aren't the same people of faith we used to be. And while it's not yet clear how this current chapter will finally shape our becoming, we know that the way forward does not lie behind us. As we move into the Spirit's promised future, we *claim our continued call to proclaim God's unconditional, cross-shaped love for the sake of world.*

We proclaim and embody God's love through our weekly worship and learning, through digital ordinations and installations, through the work of our Synod Council and our Candidacy Committee, through advocacy and outdoor ministries, through empowering leaders and growing in generosity, through our engagement on the border and our care of neighbors. We proclaim and embody God's unconditional, cross-shaped love as Church Together, through the people, congregations, and ministries of our Rocky Mountain Synod. Thanks be to God for YOU!

In Faith,
Bishop Jim Gonia

2020 Highlights

- 155 pastors, deacons, and lay leaders joined via zoom for our fall Theological Conference.
- 23 installations & 6 ordinations of pastors and deacons.
- 47.5% of mission support received in our synod was shared with our Churchwide Organization.
- Added 3 additional ZOOM accounts to accommodate synod-wide connectivity, hosting more ZOOM meetings than we can count!
- Nearly \$25,000 given away through Educate, Equip, Enact Ministerial Excellence Fund.
- 43 Congregations are participating in 4 generosity programs through 3E.
- 62 candidates are currently pursuing rostered ministry.

CHRIST'S CHURCH, BETTER TOGETHER



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COUNCIL PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Dear OSLC members,

This year I realized that the "church" is not the building, and I miss the building!

It also struck me that change, especially quick change, awakens something in us. For me, it awakened my faith. After all, faith wouldn't be needed if God's plan was clear. The biggest change came in March, when Church Council struggled with the decision to close the church building. It was an abrupt change that required the pastors and church staff to adapt quickly, and that's exactly what happened. I know I speak for everyone when I say thank you to the Pastors and staff for your optimism, your action, your leadership, and your dedication to our church community.

The pastors and staff weren't alone. A number of our members jumped in to make the virtual gatherings possible, and the choirs and musicians found new ways to share their music with us. I'm sure it wasn't easy, but they learned how to use new tools and technology, recorded parts separately, and socially distanced to record services and songs. Thank you for your commitment to the church and for finding ways to keep us connected to our faith and each other.

Council was also heartened by the congregation's continued financial support. Your giving enabled the church to fulfil our mission of supporting the needs of people and organizations "outside of our walls". This year OSLC donated funds to: ELCA Disaster Relief, ELCA Good Gifts, Larimer County Food Bank, Homeward Alliance, ISAAC, Lutheran Family Services, MARKA Church in Jordan, Mobile Laundry Truck, Murphy Center, One Village One Family, Pine Ridge, Putnam Elementary, ELCA World Hunger, Lutheran Campus Ministry, Sky Ranch, and Young Adults in Global Mission.

Despite these achievements, many meaningful moments were missed this year - we mourned the passing of so many members from afar, and it made me so aware of how important their presence and your presence has been in my life. We share the sorrow with so many who have lost loved ones this year, and we celebrate the lives that touched ours so deeply: Lynn Smith, Pat Cessnun, Jack Wisbon, Carolyn Clouser, Bill Lauer, Bev Greener, Milt Thompson, Chris Bachman, and Sondra Miklos

We also celebrate those who were baptized: Madeleine Healy, Kawika Bates-Young, and Asher Pacholek And those who were married this year, looking forward to their new lives together even in the midst of a pandemic: Ann Marie Labat and Lois Samer and Jon and Megan Fry

When it's safe to do so, I look forward to worshipping together in our sanctuary, seeing your smiling faces, celebrating our faith in each other, and opportunities to make a difference for each other and our community. And donuts - I miss donuts.

Roger Sherman
Council President

COLUMBARIUM AND MEMORY

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- The Columbarium was expanded in the Spring of 2020 from 40 niches to 72 niches. A huge thanks to Sean Rogers and Hillside Construction for installing the expansion for us. They donated their time and expertise and we appreciate it so much.
- Thank you to all of the people who help us to keep the garden beautiful, especially the Columbarium Committee: Lois Lamb, Joel Lamb, Greta Irvin, Janice Stuber, Roger Sherman and Sara Halac. But we know others help as well -- you know who you are. Thank you!

GOALS

- Continue upkeep of the garden and make improvements to the garden, i.e. exploring the possibility of building a wall to help mitigate the traffic noise from Lemay.

INTERMENTS

Stephen Larry Bratton, Lynn Elizabeth Smith, Jack B. Wisbon, Milt Thompson, Dr. Robert Williams, William Clouser, Sr., Carolyn Clouser, and Earl Haugen.

Information about the Columbarium can be found in the office, and the committee is always happy to talk and answer questions.

STEPHEN MINISTRY

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- We have continued to meet virtually every two weeks for supervision reports for those with care receivers.
- Our Stephen Ministers continue to meet with their care receivers, now some face to face but from March to August it was usually via phone calls or Zoom.
- We will be having a Day of Remembrance on All Saints Day for those grieving the loss of loved ones and hope to have a special service in mid December for those who have difficulty with that time of year.
- We're thankful for wonderful support from the pastors and congregation.

GOALS

- We would like to train new Stephen Ministers but don't see that happening until mid 2021 or later.
- Have all Stephen Ministers matched with care receivers.

PASTOR LETA ARNDT BEHRENS

1st Corinthians 12:27--*Now you are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it.*

As I reflect on 2020, there were so many first times and first tries and "I don't know's"; it's impossible to count. We went from a solid building program and celebration, to empty rooms and chairs in a matter of hours. What I really believed was going to be a couple of weeks, is now hedging towards a year. While this time has not been easy, nor has it been enjoyable at every turn, it has still shown us who we are as a community and how we live in the grace and love of God. This church, you the people, have been a point of grace through your gifts of time, your support of ministries with your finances and donations, through your phone calls and check ins and innovative ways of connecting and being willing to take risks. So in keeping with the spiritual practice of gratitude, here are just some of the ways in which this past year brought blessing through the infusion of the Holy Spirit:

- Council and members calling each person and making sure they had what they needed in March
- Thoughtful, kind, compassionate leadership from all corners of the church in making tough decisions about COVID procedures, worship avenues and ways to connect together and in our community
- Small groups online, in neighborhoods, through phone calls and texts that brought prayers, support, food, and reminders of love
- All the people of the technology world who made what we do online possible and spiritual at the same time, gifting us new ways to be the body of Christ
- That for this community, walking with those in grief has not stopped even one little bit. Horns and signs are made for funerals, cards and calls sent for those in despair or alone, gifts given for graduations and Christmas, drivers and deliveries, and communion given with words of grace and blessing for those not online
- Volunteers for reading, for praying, for playing instruments and singing all in a new way with blended technology and iphones and recorders
- Musicians and music staff for their continued presence and gifting of music
- Youth and children who show up to connect and share their stories and who seem to grow really, really fast when we miss them face to face
- Faith and Justice Team coming together to teach, learn, and engage in conversations about race and justice in our own community and taking the next brave steps
- New spiritual practices being tried, new partnerships with other churches, the synod and community organizations
- Joining ISAAC and staying connected to the Food Bank and Homeward Alliance
- Faith Family Hospitality volunteers who continue to serve homeless families and to care for a very vulnerable population
- For our staff and their patience, their adaptability and their willingness to keep showing up where needed.
- For our preschool that has been able to stay open and care for the young ones
- The financial gifts to our congregation so we may keep making connections, worshipping together, learning, and serving
- Our Vision Team that kept on looking forward in a world that is stuck in place
- We have seen, heard, and experienced God through one another in ways we could not name a year ago and for that I am grateful

This is apostleship and our witness to God will keep going. It is our call. It is our love. It is the gift that we have been given to share with the world. May you enter into all the coming spaces with your whole beloved self and know that the future holds the grace and love of God.

Pastor Leta

PASTOR MICHAEL STADTMUELLER

“Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for (Jesus) who promised is faithful.”
Hebrews 10:23

I would like to start my report with a lament that comes out of my feelings and events of the year 2020: God, I am crushed by this pandemic. I am saddened that some have had to die alone. That many who want to mourn together could not at so many times this past year. That our children cannot play as they want to play. I struggle to know how to best support those who feel isolated. I am mad that a disease isolates us to the point where some relationships grow stagnant. I am scared that we are becoming more polarized in our world. I am angry that persons of color are experiencing a much higher rate of infection. I am numb, tired and unsure that the actions that I have taken are enough. And yet, you God, have walked with your people through every land and every time and will walk through this time with us. I read your word and am humbled to remind myself of your great acts and the saints who have gone before us who led us through those times. I am supported by the church which continues to rise up and am thankful for your creation and people who have created innovations that have supported us in sharing your word through this dark time. I give thanks for the Holy Spirit that promises that those who appear alone or even feel alone are not. I give thanks for all those who continue to stir their tired embers, that their flames may burn anew again.

I am tired, but as I reflect; I am thankful. I wanted to start this way because if anything, this year has been raw. Pastor Leta pointed out to me in the first week of the pandemic what another had said that resonated with both of us, “I’ve never been a pastor in pandemic before.” I must admit it. I felt vulnerable, scared and unsure. But, as I reflect on the pandemic, there is God’s Spirit coming to us over and over again. These are ways I have experienced it:

I am thankful for the church. That in this time you have supported the church in its mission and in its worship. You have sought to gather online with us. You have been patient and helped us deliver to the needy. You have been active in the community beyond our walls. Your support has led us to end the year ready to engage in 2021 in manners that can lift up and support our partners in ministry around the community.

I am thankful for our staff who has thoughtfully adapted and sought to continue to find ways to support the ministry. The music coordinated by our musicians and using so many volunteer gifts was amazing. The administrators rolled with the punches and remained flexible for the many changes that had to occur. Our Intern Pastor Jon went out of his way to gain knowledge on video editing. I am grateful to work with my Co-Pastor, Leta Behrens. This has been a difficult year for many pastors, I am thankful that I have a partner in ministry to work through difficult decisions with and one who is so wise.

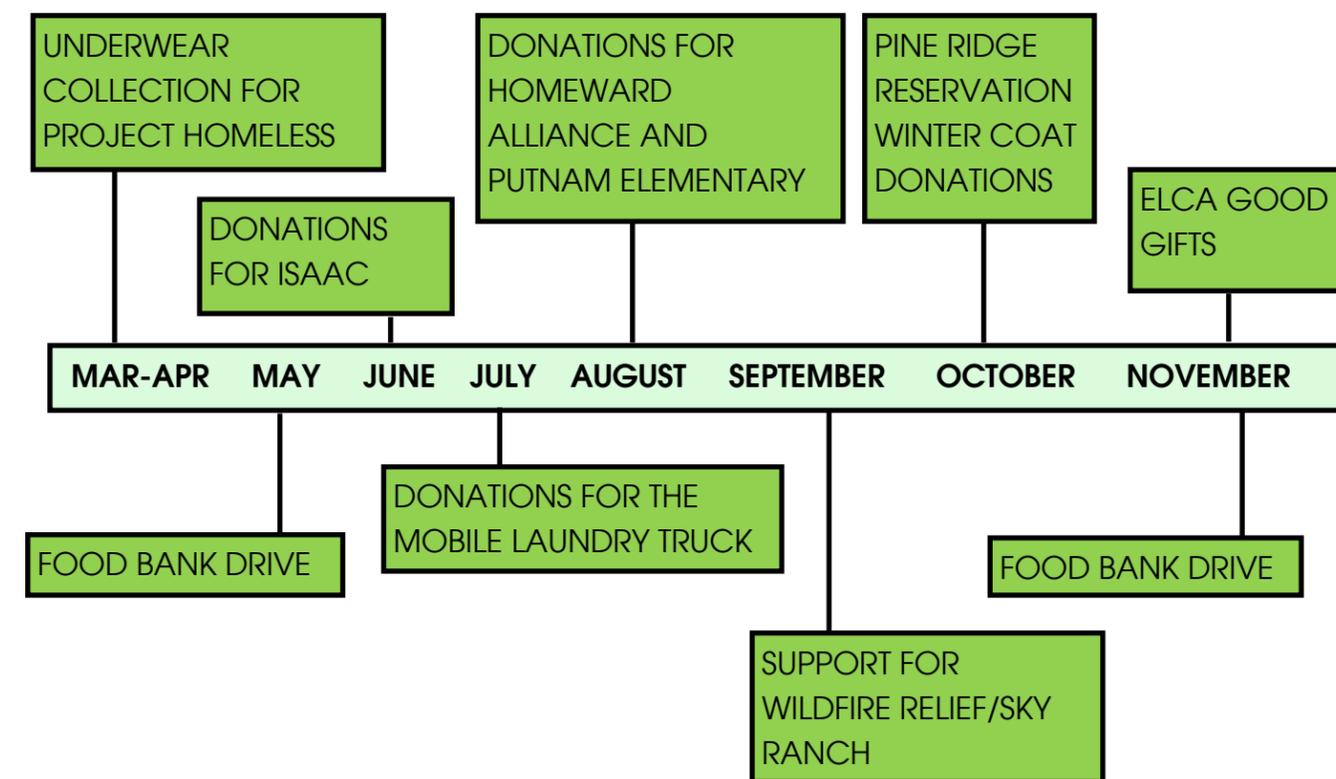
I am thankful for church leadership who found time to continue to walk with the church to make hard decisions. I am thankful for our COVID Team, a group of medical professionals and church leadership who have supported us in every decision. We are thankful for our many committees that have continued to find ways to be active and relevant, as well as the individual leaders who would check in on us and our well being as leaders of the church.

To each of you I am thankful for your adaptation and flexibility. I never imagined getting so many people to join us online. To have an annual meeting online is a tremendous adaptation! We have persevered together and we are better for it.

As we look toward the coming year, we hope and pray this pandemic will be defeated. We seek to find ways to come together, but for now, we give thanks your support has carried us through. Pastor Leta’s report uses the word “Apostleship.” I would like to echo those words. We are learning to carry the Good News in this time and place. We are learning to be God’s apostles for this generation.

Blessings and Peace,
Pastor Michael Stadtmueller

OUTSIDE OUR WALLS



OTHER ORGANIZATIONS WE SUPPORT



GOAL

- Continue to provide the congregation with the avenue to donate supplies and economic support for non-profit organizations of the ELCA, city of Fort Collins, and other organizations here and worldwide that attempt to feed, clothe, and encourage others in need and improve the lives of the underprivileged people “outside our walls”

FAITH & JUSTICE

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Affirmed LGBTQ Families in the Community
- Participated in "Lutheran Day at the Legislature" with LAM-CO
- Led two Adult Education Forums: "Immigrants & Refugees" & "Dialogues on Race"
- Organized God's Work. Our Hands Sunday Event - Faith & Justice Fair (Education, Advocacy, Community Outreach)
- Began to partner with local community advocacy groups (e.g. ISAAC)
- Created a list of advocacy resources on the OSLC Website

GOALS

To continue finding ways to be advocates for those in our community.



INTERN PASTOR JON FRY

John 20:19 - *When it was evening on that day, the first day of the week, and the doors of the house where the disciples had met were locked for fear of the religious leaders, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you."*

Before I write an annual report or newsletter article, I typically search my files to find and reread the previous report I submitted. Sometimes this is to reorient myself, to refresh my memory, or to make sure I don't say the same thing twice, however, this year feels different. In rereading my report from January 2020, it was like a time capsule into a different world. The youth were fundraising and preparing for Ecuador, we were beginning a Young Adults group, and I was only slightly familiar with iMovie software.

While this year has been different, at times painful, and not at all what should have been, I think there are some small things we can celebrate together. We found ways to worship digitally, and in small groups outdoors, to love and care for the most vulnerable in our community. We've been able to gather on Zoom with people of all ages to learn, grow, and lament together. We've supported local and global ministries that provide support to those in our world who are in need. Most of all, we've continued to find ways to live out God's mission in our lives and in our world.

February will mark the start of my official internship at Our Saviour's. While this doesn't mean much for my day to day responsibilities, it marks the formal process of being evaluated for seminary and ELCA purposes. I invite your prayers for the soon to be formed Internship Committee and their work accompanying me in this journey. I am truly grateful for the love and support of the Our Saviour's community.

As we look ahead, into 2021, I lift up Jesus' words, "Peace be with you." Peace be with you as you wrestle with risk management, peace be with you as the socio-political landscape of our country frustrates you, peace be with you in situations where you have to say no to family and friends, and peace be with you as you discern where God is calling you in this new year.

Peace be with you,

Intern Pastor Jon Fry

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Adjusting to the various levels of COVID and being flexible throughout a pandemic.
- Finished a new Photo Directory that was available in hard copy and online.
- Helped to set up and organize small groups and volunteers.
- Sending out Daily Devotionals via ENews and Facebook to help people stay connected.
- Worked with COVID Team on creating policies and procedures alongside the Larimer County guidelines and Rocky Mountain Synod recommendations
- Kept the Website Updated with Resources and Events
- Switched to a new database that makes administration easier.

GOALS

- Find more and better ways to connect.
- Switch to and learn new softwares that will help create better online communication and organization.
- Continue to adjust as needed throughout the pandemic.

VISION COMMITTEE

The Visioning Team was initially formed in January of 2019 with its first official meeting March, 2019. The committee has met monthly until October, 2020.

Team Members: Fred Castor, Brian Dunbar, Madelyn Mihm, Kris Eisele, Rosie Goetz (chair), Natalie Grapes, Sara Halac, Shannon Wagner, and Rob Petterson. Pastors Leta and Michael are the team consultants. Jim LaDoux of Vibrant Faith, joined the team in January, 2020. As a coach, Jim has provided the team with expertise, guidance and materials to help chart new pathways forward.

Determined Visioning outcomes:

- Clarify who we are as a congregation and where God is leading our faith community.
- Listen deeply to our congregation and local community, discerning how we can best serve others.
- Create a written plan that describes our congregation's priorities and how we will move into our preferred future.
- Create systems and norms that sustain our congregation's mission, vision, values and culture.

Based on input from the congregation (Vitality Survey) and community leader interviews, the Vision Team identified two primary areas of ministry to expand on. The first focused ministry area is new member welcoming, support and engagement and the second is enhancement of spiritual growth and development across the lifespan. In June of 2020, two project sub teams were launched. The sub teams met multiple times during the summer and fall months.

Welcoming and Engagement Sub Team. This team worked on initiatives to help welcome and support new members and also explore ways to increase engagement in the wider community.

Spiritual Awakening and Growth Sub Team. This team focused on initiatives to enhance individual and group spiritual development across the lifespan.

The first initiative seeks **to strengthen engagement with people during their first year of membership.**

- Council members will be asked to follow up with new members from the three most recent newcomer classes to build caring relationships with them, and to inform them about ministry opportunities that are aligned with their interests and gifts.
- A small task force will be formed to review the current resources given to new members and will suggest updates to these resources, if needed. The task force will survey the new members to evaluate engagement over time and establish a means to track contacts and survey results.
- New members will be invited to connect online via Face book or Twitter, and to participate in emerging small groups and special events that allow people to worship, learn and serve together.

The second initiative will **help shape an ongoing vision and plan to support people's learning and spiritual growth.** The team advises the formation of a committee to help guide Spiritual Awakening and Growth. The following initiatives are recommended:

- Planning and promoting sermon talkbacks
- Expanding the menu of adult education opportunities and small group ministry gatherings
- Forming a resource bank for those wishing to explore topics in greater depth.
- Posting links and resources on the church's website that foster spiritual awakening
- Scheduling spiritual growth testimonies that will be held during worship services and posted online via the website, e-news, YouTube channel and Facebook.

Ongoing visioning steps for 2021:

2021 will bring continued work with the visioning process. The pastors and designated planners will seek ways to refine our next visioning steps. The initiatives will then begin to be incorporated into current and new ministries.

LIBRARY

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- In early 2020, we were able to purchase additional display attachments for our second mobile book kiosk near the Library.
- Due to the pandemic, other goals have been put on hold. This included our spending, which we suspended in order to do our part to hold down church expenses. While we did not purchase new books this year, we were able to purchase an additional 25 titles at the end of 2019. We also processed several more donations at the end of last year, and in 2020 also. We look forward to the day we can share these wonderful books with you.
- We do have a couple of requests: Could you keep your book donations for the Library at home until the church building reopens? Right now we cannot process them, but we will let you know when we can accept them again. Also, if you could check your bookshelves for some of our "lost" books and return those when the building reopens, we would be grateful. Thanks so much for your help, understanding, and support!

GOALS

- Submit a copy of the Library catalog for the OSLC website by the beginning of the year
- Purchase some new titles, if finances allow
- Host book displays once it is safe to do so, especially to share our more recent titles

OSLC AT A GLANCE



Membership at OSLC

Year End	Received	Removed	Year End
2019	2020	2020	2020
984	29	28	985

Average Attendance 2019

338

vs.

Average Attendance 2020

525



Baptisms

Madeleine Healy
Kawika Bates-Young
Asher Pacholek



Weddings

Jon & Megan Fry
Ann Marie Labat &
Lois Samer



Deaths

Lynn Smith
Pat Cessnun
Jack Wisbon
Carolyn Clouser
Bill Lauer
Bev Greener
Milt Thompson
Chris Bachman
Sondra Miklos



Confirmands

Braden Asmus
Adam Bajcsi
Billy Bridge
Shay Davis
Josh Hennen
Thomas Rogers
Zach Skinner
Rainier Williams

WORSHIP & MUSIC

CHANCEL CHOIR & BRASS CHOIR

We have been able to meet virtually and continue to share our music with the congregation. We welcome new members at any time to share in the celebration of song! Thanks to efforts of Sheri McKelfresh, Melanie Reed, and Carol Bisbee we were able to create a virtual caroling collection for our members to enjoy and share with others.

YOUTH CHOIRS

We transitioned to virtual rehearsals in the spring, purchased virtual choir curriculum.

WINDSTRINGS

We were successful in maintaining Windstrings participation during Covid.

WORSHIP VOLUNTEERS

We have been able to create a way for members to volunteer their time and energy to produce worship assistant recordings for our online services.

HANDBELL CHOIR

We were able to resume practicing after 6 mos. with individual tables spread 6 ft. apart. We can only do rather simple music because we don't have the heavy foam padding needed to do special effects at every table. We have been reusing a lot of our music library. The Bjorlo family gave us memorial funds to purchase new music lights and gloves which was very much appreciated!

CHILDREN, YOUTH, AND FAMILY

We created virtual fellowship & resource options for families.



We created ways for our youth to continue meeting safely in person.

We distributed materials for an at-home VBS and other at-home activities!

