



HOLY TRINITY
LUTHERAN CHURCH
Annual Summit Report
2020



PASTOR WORDS

On March 15, 2020, the band prepared to play, Karen balanced her camera on a music stand, and I took a deep breath as we prepared to go “Live” on our Facebook page. Watching as the number of viewers began to increase, I tried to fill the time with words.

It felt so strange to look out at a sanctuary without people sitting in the chairs. To not hear the sound of kids asking for a snack. To not see cars whizzing by the front glass doors. As the music started, I pictured my kids at home watching, singing and dancing to the music on our living room rug. We braced ourselves for the year we were about to face, as our dreams were disrupted. We told stories of God’s faithfulness to God’s people in times of waiting and storms. At the end of the service, as Karen clicked “Stop,” those in that sanctuary collectively exhaled. I started to cry. I knew this was a day I would never forget. And I also knew this was the last time I’d be in that space, with those wonderful people, for a long time.

As we look back on the year 2020, we were faced with many challenges in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Our church building has been closed since March 15. We’ve been recording and worshipping from home for ten months. As a church, we have chosen to be both responsible and inventive. We have followed the MN Department of Health’s recommendations to move online out of care for our community, but we have also developed an intentional innovative spirit as we’ve adventured into the realms of digital ministry.

Now, time has passed. We said goodbye to beloved people. The kids are taller, more mature. The adults have aged, and we are (hopefully) wiser.

We turn to 2021 with hope and anticipation for resolution and reunion. In the pages that follow you’ll have a chance to look back at some highlights of Holy Trinity over the past year. And, despite the challenges, we pause to thank God for 2020.

- We thank God for love expressed through deferred get-togethers, and gatherings over screens and behind masks.
- We thank God for the opportunities for deeper and closer family connections that have followed cancelled plans and the disruptions to a fast-paced life.
- We thank God for the builders - those putting stakes in the ground of future opportunity.
- We thank God for the caregivers, health providers, and frontline workers courageously responding to the pandemic with warning, compassion, and resilience.
- We thank God for countless digital tools, ready-made to overcome barriers to in-person experiences, by making school, work, church, and social gatherings possible.
- We thank God for the human capacity to pivot, adjust, learn, grow, and face adversity with problem solving capabilities.
- We thank God for those who have stepped into confusion and ambiguity with initiative and steady leadership.
- We thank God for the prophets - speaking up against injustice and oppression, and serving as advocates for hope.
- We thank God for the seen and unseen expressions of support and encouragement to those isolated, struggling, and grieving.
- We thank God for people in the community who are in need, who help us see a greater responsibility to the common good, and invite our diligence to serve all people.
- We thank God for the gift of pause, open space, and downtime to be able to listen to your call to us.
- We thank God for the gift of faith that reminds us of God’s unwavering presence and love.

Thank you, good people of Holy Trinity, for your faith, flexibility, and faithfulness. May God continue to lead us and guide us for the sake of the community and for the sake of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Pastors Ben & Alicia Hilding

KEY STATS

1 - Wedding
7 - Baptisms
9 - Funerals
13 - Confirmands
54 - New Members
166 - New YouTube Subscribers
356 - New Facebook Page Likes
1,308 - Total Membership
\$63,278 - Given away to outside organizations



STAFF: Jon Bergquist (Volunteer Facilities Manager), Jamie Bisek (Office Manager), Jim Cody (Custodian), Gina Fadden (Graphic Designer), Rose Fife (Musician, Communications Specialist), Casey Fremstad (Director of Children, Youth and Family Ministry), Donna Galvin (Hospitality Coordinator), Diane Goulson (Visitation Pastor), Alicia Hilding (Co-Pastor), Ben Hilding (Co-Pastor), Lex Lammers (Musician, A/V), Deb Miller (Volunteer Staff, Interior Space), Tim Price (Musician, A/V), Rita Sapp (Worship Leader), Angela Schoenbauer (Video & Media Production Coordinator), Karen Taylor (Ministry Coordinator), Toby Thietje (Musician, Choir Director)

COUNCIL: Karla Klingfus (President), Tim Dittberner (Vice President), Mary Hanson-Busch (Secretary), Jesse Hemann (Treasurer), Robyn Smithson, Sande Schoenecker, Jackie Mackenthun, Jay Schoenebeck, Dirk Berger.



PRESIDENT'S REPORT

As I reflect over the last year, the pandemic comes to mind immediately. For a moment, it is overwhelming, weighs on my heart and casts a shadow over 2020. I also think about the divisive things that are happening in politics and our greater society related to racial justice. As many of us did, I frequently called on my faith and three words and phrases come to mind – resilience, compassion, and 'serving as a cornerstone.'

As we moved into the second quarter of 2020, our in-person worship practice halted temporarily and 'dreams' were momentarily disrupted. Our Pastors and staff had to pivot and think through how to worship as gathering in person was not possible. A communications team was expanded to support our digital footprint and our ability to reach the Holy Trinity congregation, our family members and friends around the world. As we gather back together for in-person worship in the future, we will still reach those who are unable to worship in person in a much greater capacity than before.

I reflect about the compassion our members had for one another and the greater community in a number of ways:

- Providing money to The Well in support of their youth and young adult programming
- Stocking the food pantry full for those that need support
- Raising \$15,000 for Prairie Point which will aid in housing security in larger MN community
- Offering Thanksgiving meals
- Drive-by celebrations for baptisms and confirmation
- Drive-by remembrances for members who passed away

Just prior to moving to an online format, we were progressing through our vision process and had our last vision huddle "Looking Forward" and a gift of an administrative wing was announced.

Construction began in May and is now close to completion. An additional gift was provided for some interior remodeling projects and those are underway as well.

The definition of a cornerstone in the Merriam-Webster dictionary is "a stone forming a part of a corner or angle in a wall, a basic element, a foundation". Ephesian 2: 19 – 22 states "Now, therefore, you are no longer strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief cornerstone, in whom the whole building, being fitted together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord, in whom you also are being built together for a dwelling place of God in the Spirit."

Our building at 1300 Main Street East in New Prague is a physical cornerstone of our faith. I've always felt that we are a giving group of people. Yet, in 2020 while being physically apart for most of the year, it became even more apparent to me that not only was Jesus present as a cornerstone, but we are an important cornerstone to one another and our greater community. Our church council thanks you all for your continued dedication to Holy Trinity. I would also like to thank Pastor Alicia, Pastor Ben and our staff for your creativity, commitment and desire to continue our journey and vision to share God's love for all people from one generation to the next.

It has been an honor to serve on our congregational council for the past three years and as the President in 2020.

Thank you,

Karla Klingfus

BISHOP'S REPORT

God's grace, peace, and hope be with you through our Savior, Jesus Christ. In a normal year, I would use this report to highlight the many ways the Synod partners with your congregation to bring good news to your communities. 2020 was hardly a normal year.

Like your congregation, the synod needed to adapt quickly due to the threat of COVID-19, to cancel some programs, introduce new events, and modify most everything else. I have been amazed by the innovation and hard work of congregational leaders. I want – and encourage you as well – to speak a word of deep thanks to leaders for all that has been asked of them to hold our communities together and foster their flourishing.

Shortly after lockdown restrictions began in March, synod leaders led training sessions on online worship and pastoral care, as well as conversations on the question of Holy Communion as part of distance worship. In April, our Synod Treasurer and Secretary led two sessions on applying for PPP loans. In May, we were privileged to host Dr. Michael Osterholm for a presentation which drew 400 pastors, bishops, and leaders; as well as 100,000 viewers afterwards. We gave over \$46,000 in Imagination Grants to 25 congregations to strengthen their online worship presence. This fall, we gathered leaders for a well-received conversation on creative ways to celebrate Christmas. The synod staff provided worship services in May, July, and December, giving congregational leaders a much-needed respite.

Yes, 2020 was hardly a normal year. On May 25, 2020, the killing of George Floyd lifted the veil once again on the pandemic of systemic racism that infects our world. Churches near the killing and the uprising turned on a dime to address the immediate needs, supported by partner congregations throughout the synod. Clergy marched in silence led by AME Presiding Elder Stacy Smith. The Minnesota Council of Churches – which includes all six ELCA synods – voted unanimously to support a multi-year process “Dismantling the Structures and Repairing the Damage of Racism in Minnesota.” The synod’s new racial justice web page (mpls-synod.org/outreach/racial-justice) provides key information for congregations to deepen their work for justice, including the new Center for Leadership and Neighborhood Engagement, led by Rev. Kelly Chatman.

In addition to these efforts, we continue our essential and ongoing work of supporting leaders and fostering congregational vitality. We are blessed with over 700 rostered leaders, 325 serving in calls and 377 retired. We work hard so the church has the loving, faithful, and theologically well-formed ministers it needs. In 2020, we supported 67 persons preparing to become deacons or pastors. In September, we were honored to receive a Lilly Grant that will support congregational cohorts committed to deepening their faith and neighboring practices. This month, we welcome Rev. Norma Malfatti as Director of Evangelical Mission who will promote our work in starting new congregations and accompanying our strategic ministries.

Our monthly conference meetings and other synod gatherings have revealed a real hunger among leaders to stay connected, learn from each other, and discern best practices for ministry in these times. We are honored and humbled by the calling to serve as convener of such holy conversations. It is the generosity of congregations like yours that make the synod’s work possible. Thank you! We seek to be careful stewards of every gift. With the PPP loan, which we pray will be forgiven, we hope to end our FY2020 year budget without dipping deeply into reserves.

I conclude this annual report with a word of deep gratitude for the privilege of serving as your bishop. And, I look forward to January 2022, when we can once again worship and gather in person– with hugs and handshakes and singing.

Bishop Ann Svennungsen



CHILDREN, YOUTH AND FAMILY

HIRING CASEY FREMSTAD: In November 2019, the Church Council approved the hiring of a full-time youth ministry staff person in 2020. After a December fundraiser to kickstart this congregational investment in youth ministry, a team consisting of Jamie Sticha (chair), Tim Dittberner (council liaison), Sande Schoenecker (council liaison), Jamie Bisek (staff liaison), and Alyce Price (youth ministry leader), formed in February 2020 to oversee the hiring process. After posting the position and accepting applications, the candidate of choice was clear: Casey Fremstad. A 2020 graduate from Viterbo University with a degree in religious studies & theology, Casey joined the Holy Trinity team just weeks after graduation. With Bible camp counseling experience, a music background, and even barista experience, Casey jumped into the Holy Trinity community with an eagerness for creating meaningful faith formation opportunities even in the midst of a pandemic. We thank God for answering our prayer!

VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL: Our “@ Home with Jesus” VBS summer program took place July 6-10 and sought to remind children in the New Prague community that they are loved and Jesus still comes to us during this time of COVID. Stories of Jesus going to people’s homes were shared along with skits, games, music, and much more through daily videos! Families also had the opportunity to raise funds for the Prairie Pointe project through a noisy offering so those less fortunate might have the opportunity to call a space “home.” The VBS program reached over 100 kids and was made possible through the incredible efforts of over 60 Holy Trinity volunteers and staff!

CONFIRMATION: Confirmation looked quite different this year due to COVID-19, but our 6th-9th grade students continued to meet online for weekly large group teaching lessons and Zoom small groups. Our wonderful Small Group Leader team (10 leaders), helped the transition go smoothly from in-person to online faith formation. Students are currently assigned to various service teams to remain active in the HTLC community. The service teams are: Music Team, Scripture Reading Team, Little Free Food Pantry team, Children’s Ministry Skit Team, and the Social Media Team. Our 9th graders were tasked with writing faith statements, then given the opportunity to share them with their peers and Small Group Leaders over a socially-distanced campfire in the church parking lot. This proved to be a very unique and wonderful experience for all involved. A chilly church parking lot parade was organized to celebrate our 2020 confirmands for affirming their baptism and becoming active members of the church.

CHILDREN’S MINISTRY: Our two Children’s Ministry programs (Sunday School and Crew Time), combined this year to form a joint Children’s Ministry online faith formation program available for 3 year-olds to 5th graders on Wednesday nights. Children currently watch a large group teaching video filled with vibrant bible stories and music, and then meet with their family small groups via Zoom directly after for reflection and games. This would not be possible without our wonderful Children’s Ministry Small Group Leaders (13 leaders), who bring a sense of joy and wonder to the lives of these kids. One homebound volunteer faithfully sends out activity pages to their Sunday School students every week. Our 5th graders celebrated the important faith milestone of First Communion in the fall through a special celebratory outdoor service after being postponed several times due to Covid-19 restrictions.



It's the @ home with Jesus boogie



THE FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT'S NOT A LEMON

ADULT MINISTRIES

SIGNATURE EVENTS: Traditionally, Holy Trinity has three signature events: RibFest, Trunk or Treat, and Christmas Tea. Unfortunately, RibFest had to be cancelled in 2020. In order to stay aligned with guidelines from the MN Department of Health, Trunk or Treat was reimagined as the Drive-thru Halloween Spooktacular, where over 120 pre-packaged bags of candy were distributed. Christmas Tea, Plan B was reformatted into an online social event with Darcey Schoenebeck and Kim Gassner as hostesses, which translated into over 150 attendees.

HOSPITALITY: Despite a challenging year for Holy Trinity's Hospitality Team, they came together to distribute 100 free Thanksgiving meals (each one serving a family of 4-6), which included a turkey, mashed potatoes, corn, stuffing, cranberry, gravy, butter, dinner rolls, and a full pie. Thanks to the HTLC Endowment team for sponsoring the \$1,716 necessary to make this ministry possible.

CARING MINISTRIES: Visitation Pastor Diane Goulson continued overseeing the care concerns of Holy Trinity. Pastor Goulson wrote countless cards, walked with families as they said goodbye to a loved one, and hosted a weekly "Prayer time in the Garden" livestream service on Monday mornings.

RACIAL JUSTICE TASK FORCE: In response to the murder of George Floyd, HTLC's staff and council read Lenny Duncan's "Dear Church: a Love Letter from a Black Preacher to the Whitest Denomination in the U.S." In addition, a racial justice task force was developed, chaired by Melissa Horejsi. In an effort to increase educational opportunities for the community, Megan Schoenbauer organized a Little Free Lending Library of racial justice reading materials.

GOOD BOOK CLUB: Beginning in January, the Good Book Club launched a women's Bible study that sought to read the Bible in a year. After a strong start, the Good Book Club took a back seat during the pandemic, with hopes of resurrection in 2021.

SUSTENANCE FOR THE WEARY SOUL: Due to the challenges faced in 2020, Holy Trinity hosted a seven-session, online adult education class moderated by Dr. Chris Johnson titled, "Sustenance for the Weary Soul."

STAYING CONNECTED: Despite the physical barriers to gathering, Holy Trinity continued to stay connected in various ways throughout the pandemic. Confirmation groups sent care kits to seniors. Photographers took front porch photos of families. Folks organized secret Santa exchanges and ornament exchanges. The Misfits small group continued to meet outside. The Amazing Grays group met outside when they could, and learned how to use Google Duo when they couldn't. The Holy Spirit keeps us connected!



WORSHIP

WORSHIP: Worship is the center of our mission at Holy Trinity. Following the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, all worship services shifted online to a pre-recorded format. Musicians recorded their parts from home, splicing together their audio and video submissions for a cohesive song. Pastors Ben and Alicia preached from a corner of their guest room. Folks gathered around TVs, tablets, phones, and computers to make worship a priority together.

BAPTISMS: During the pandemic, HTLC practiced "at-home baptisms." Families made an outdoor baptismal font, the pastor came with a camera in hand, all wore masks, and the family ended up pouring water on the newly baptized. This made for a memorable experience, and a video of the baptism was included in the following worship service.

FUNERALS: Upon the recommendations of the Minnesota Department of Health, HTLC reformatted memorial services during the pandemic. In some cases, there was a private outdoor service in a family's backyard, others had a service at a cemetery, others had the memorial service entirely online. In each case, HTLC tried to come alongside the unconventional format with a video tribute for the deceased included in worship.

PARADES: Following some milestone events, Holy Trinity hosted congregational parades. It was a demonstration of solidarity as the vehicles processed through the Holy Trinity parking lot to welcome the newly baptized, celebrate the confirmation class, or share condolences with the grieving.

DRIVE-IN COMMUNION: Throughout the pandemic, different churches tried different approaches to celebrate the sacrament of Holy Communion. HTLC hosted a couple Drive-In Communion services, where participants brought their own communion, parked in the parking lot, and shared communion at a safe distance. In addition, on Christmas Day, we shared Holy Communion over Zoom.

ADVENT KITS: During advent, HTLC took a break from regularly scheduled CYF programming, and invited the whole congregation to participate in advent devotionals. A printed publication was distributed and daily devotionals videos were scheduled. Thanks to Jon Bergquist, Karen Taylor, and the Horejsi family for providing handmade advent logs and kits.

50 YEARS OF ORDAINING WOMEN: In May, Holy Trinity celebrated the 50th anniversary of the ELCA and predecessor bodies ordaining women. Former HTLC council president, Rev. Sherri Sandoz gave the opening prayer. Former HTLC staff member Rev. Heather Kistner read Scripture, and former HTLC pastors Andrea Olson and Paula Ziems worked with Pastors Alicia Hilding and Diane Goulson to create this celebratory service.

GUEST PREACHERS: In 2020, Holy Trinity was blessed with a series of guest preachers. Gospel Kordah spoke on Martin Luke King, Jr. weekend and Rev. Diane Goulson highlighted the saints of our congregation who remain homebound. Janae Becher preached for the senior-led worship service and US Navy chaplain and ELCA Pastor Aaron Fuller preached on Veteran's Day. Presiding Bishop of the ELCA, Rev. Elizabeth Eaton, preached on Trinity Sunday, and the Minneapolis Area Synod provided two synod-led worship services, one with Pastor Kelly Chatman preaching, and one with Bishop Rev. Ann Svennungsen preaching.

WORSHIP PHASES: For January and February, in-person worship services were abuzz. At the beginning of the pandemic, Holy Trinity created different worship services on Sundays and Wednesdays. Pastors Ben and Alicia tried a child-friendly "Chapel in the Playroom. Following Lent, HTLC launched an informal, social service titled "HTLCheck-In." Beginning in September, a second, nearly identical worship service was scheduled for Wednesday evenings.

CONGREGATION PARTICIPATION: One of Holy Trinity's values is "Community." The community of HTLC took collective ownership of the online worship experience, volunteering to serve as readers, musicians, greeters, or participating in collective efforts such as the Apostle's Creed, Lord's Prayer, or Silent Night. Thank you for all who contributed to these online worship experiences!



MISSION/OUTREACH

CONGREGATIONAL TITHE: Holy Trinity is committed to giving 10% of all offerings away. This is our congregational tithe. The Mission/Outreach team determines where these funds should go. A total of \$49,899 was donated in 2020 to the following organizations:

- \$22,000 Minneapolis Area Synod
- \$2,920 School Supply Drive
- \$6,295 to Beacon Interfaith Housing Network (includes Hope House)
- \$1,047 to River Valley Health Services
- \$1,684 Little Food Pantry
- \$5,000 Christo Obrero (Christ the Worker) is a mission of the Lutheran Church (ELCA) to accompany Latino families in Shakopee and Chaska. (Year 1 of 3-year commitment)
- \$1,928 to HTLC leadership discretionary funds
- \$524 National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI)
- \$3,000 to Lutheran Disaster Response (Mpls congregations affected in the riots)
- \$1,500 to the Peace Center
- \$3,000 to the HTLC Confirmation students who competed in groups to earn funds to donate to the organization of the winner's choice. The winning 6th grade boys selected Duck Cup Memorial, a non-profit organization that is dedicated to providing resources for mental health awareness and suicide prevention.
- \$1,000 to Southern Valley Alliance

MISSION/OUTREACH TEAM: Team Lead Julie Popple, Mary Eagen, Rose Fife, Pastor Ben Hilding, Amber Kahnke, Marge Larsen, Tim Miller, Liz Nelson, Sande Schoenecker, Dennis Tietz, and George Winn

MONTHLY MISSIONS: Holy Trinity is a very generous congregation and regularly participated in a "Mission of the Month." These "in-kind" donations totaled approximately \$11,200.

February: Diapers were collected and distributed to the New Prague Area Schools Early Childhood programs, the Peace Center, and the Little Food Pantry.

March: Food for the Peace Center was collected as part of MN's FoodShare campaign.

April: HTLC members generously donated food to the Little Food Pantry and masks to Parkview Medical Clinic.

May: HTLC members sent monetary donations directly to the Peace Center.

June: HTLC members generously donated food, hygiene/household products, and masks to the Little Food Pantry.

July: Two additional Little Pantries were constructed and installed by Jon Bergquist. HTLC members donated anti-racism books and household supplies to stock the new shelves.

August-September: HTLC members generously donated food, hygiene/household products, and masks to the Little Food Pantries.

October: HTLC members walked and raised money for the South of the River Crop Hunger Walk.

November: Winter coats and clothing were collected and donated to Le Sueur County Adopt-a-Family and foster care programs.

December: Knitwear (including hats, mittens, scarves), and snack goodie bags were collected and distributed to the Little Food Pantries to be used as stocking stuffers.

SYNOD ALLOCATIONS: Given the pandemic and social unrest, the Mission/Outreach Team focused on state and local organizations in 2020. Minneapolis Synod allocations from our tithe contributed to National and International needs on our behalf (approximately 6% and 12% of our Synod tithe, respectively).



Vision 2020

OVERVIEW: In the summer of 2019, Holy Trinity began an intentional visioning process. After completing the first two phases ("Looking Backward" and "Looking Inward") in 2019, the final two phases ("Looking Outward" and "Looking Forward") occurred in early 2020. Vision team members included Gina Fadden, Nikki Hauck, Dennis Jasperson, Jackie Lee, Chris Loose, Jim and Janet Morris, Michelle Newman, Pat Remfert (chair), and George Winn.

LOOKING OUTWARD

HUDDLE: On January 5, the Vision 2020 process held an "Outward Huddle." With a buffalo-plaid Minnesota theme, guests Bishop Ann Svenningsen, Rev. Jeffrey Engholm, Dr. Rolf Jacobson, and Howie Smith reflected on the church's mission from the outside perspective.

ROAD TRIPS: Dennis Jasperson coordinated a series of road trips to other local congregations, ELCA congregations, and destination congregations to bring back ideas, best practices, and clarity into the particular calling God has for Holy Trinity.

MISSION MOMENTS: George Winn organized mission moments featuring voices from the community reflecting on needs that our church could respond to. Guests included Mayor Chuck Nikolay, Rita Goggins (Peace Center), Susan Eckstrom (Praha Village), Tony Buthe (NPAS), Craig Freeman (Beacon), Debra Bodensteiner (The Well), Amber Kahnke (River Valley Health Services), and Brad Skogerboe (NPAS Activities Office).

LOOKING FORWARD

HUDDLE: On March 1, the fourth and final Vision Huddle had a theme, "Faith Can Move Mountains." Our guest speaker was former presiding Bishop of the ELCA, Rev. Mark Hanson. Since the focus was on the future, many of HTLC's young people had leadership roles.

DREAMERS DISRUPTED: Michelle Newman organized 19 small groups to reflect and dream about the future of HTLC. While the groups got off to a great start, COVID-19 disrupted these groups as all church activities moved online. In response, the Vision team issued a congregational survey to collect this data for the final report.

FINAL REPORT: Following the conclusion of the four phases, the Vision Team gathered and interpreted the data collected at each stage. A final writing team comprised of Pat Remfert, Pastor Ben Hilding, Darcey Schoebeck, Jen Saylor, and Karla Klingfus drafted a final vision/mission/values statement for Vision Team and Council review. The final report was distributed to the congregation for the kickoff worship in September.



FACILITIES

OFFICE WING ADDITION: A designated gift of a fully funded administrative wing addition was announced at the final Vision Huddle. Thanks to George and Joan Winn, this office wing addition includes a main reception area, seven offices, a conference room, and two bathrooms which include showers. The project was entrusted to Deutsch Construction, and ground was broken on June 2. Despite some minor setbacks with supply scheduling, the addition was near completion at the conclusion of 2020.

FELLOWSHIP HALL/ BATHROOMS: With the facility vacant due to COVID-19, due to a second generous donation from the Winn family, remodeling work began on the Fellowship Hall and two sets of bathrooms. The new look in the Fellowship Hall will include decorative maple beams, a suspended ceiling tile grid for acoustic purposes, new light fixtures, and a luxury vinyl tile floor that matches the office wing addition and south hallway. The two sanctuary bathrooms are being converted to "ADA compliant" single occupancy non-gendered bathrooms. These two bathrooms, as well as the two bathrooms inside Door 2 are in the process of getting updated ceramic tile, new toilets, sinks, mirrors, grab bars, and doors.

LIVE-STREAMING: In preparation for the return of in-person worship, equipment for live-streaming has been purchased and configured for use in the sanctuary. \$10,000 was spent on three cameras that support panning, tilting, and zooming, a video switcher that allows volunteers the ability to pick which angle to feature during a service, and various upgrades in projectors, cords, and other A/V items. Audio from the soundboard will be mixed with the video and fed live to Facebook and YouTube simultaneously. This will produce a quality live stream service to reach the numerous online viewers we have gained in 2020. The live video feed from the sanctuary will also be sent to TVs throughout the building (Nursery, Fellowship Hall, Paul's Place, the south entrance and Narthex).

INTERIOR PROJECTS: Corresponding with the purchase of live stream equipment, the sound booth was expanded. The water heaters in the sacristy and off the sanctuary were replaced. The choir microphones were relocated, the sanctuary center speakers were removed and side speakers were mounted, and the large cross from the center of the sanctuary was temporarily removed with a new location to be determined.

EXTERIOR PROJECTS: With the new addition, the old equipment shed was moved to the southeast corner of the parking lot. Mike Ryan and Jon Bergquist then constructed a tractor shed to house the lawn mowing equipment. Due to the increased demand of the Little Free Food Pantry, two additional and identical pantries were constructed, one housing personal care items and the other anti-racism resources.

HOLY TRINITY PRAYER GARDEN: While the physical building was closed, Jon Bergquist created an outdoor prayer garden with a cross and benches in order to provide a space to go for prayer. This prayer garden provides a place of solitude and communion with God.

STAFFING: In December 2019, Mike Ryan was hired in a six-month interim position as Facility Manager. At the conclusion of his contract, Jon Bergquist stepped in to serve in a volunteer capacity. In December, Jeff Tolzmann agreed to accept these responsibilities as Bergquist headed south for the winter. Deb Miller continues to serve as a volunteer staff member leading an Interior Space Team. Jim Cody continues to serve as a faithful custodian, ready to respond to cleaning the church as needed.



ADMINISTRATION

RISK MANAGEMENT: Paul Newton, Kim Gassner, and Pastor Alicia have continued to serve as the Risk Management Team, bringing in experts to inform the necessary topics at hand. This team's goal is to identify potential congregational risks and research/propose procedures to reduce or avoid them. This has been a particularly demanding year for this team with COVID-19 risks for the congregation. This team has worked diligently to stay attuned to updates from the ELCA, Le Sueur County Public Health, State Department of Health, Center for Disease Control, Mayo Clinic, and the World Health Organization in order to make informed recommendations to our Church Council regarding our church's practices each month. At the onset of COVID-19, this team developed a COVID-19 Preparedness Plan, including a four-phased plan for our life together (Online, Online/Outdoors, Indoors following recommended protocols and protective measures, and Indoors without precautions).

BRANDING REDESIGN: In conjunction with the Vision 2020 Report distribution, Gina Fadden and Karen Taylor oversaw a brand redesign effort. The new logo was approved by the church council, a clothing line item was developed, and hand bags and bumper stickers were created in partnership with ID Threadz. The virtual store remains open.

CONTINUING EDUCATION: In February, Pastor Alicia Hilding, Pastor Diane Goulson, Jesse Hemann, Jackie Mackenthun, and Sande Schoenecker attended the Minneapolis Area Synod Toolkit event. The Minneapolis Area Synod changed their format for the annual Bishop's Theological Conference, which was held on Zoom with the theme "Jubilee Reclaimed: The Time is Now" featuring Dr. Cynthia Moe-Lobeda and Bishop Yehiel Curry. In August, Pastor Ben Hilding and Rose Fife attended Luther Seminary's "Essential Skills for Church Digital Marketing," presented by Ryan Panzer and Dr. Michael Chan. Afterward, Pastor Ben Hilding participated in a Digital Ministry Learning Community at Luther Seminary hosted by Ryan Panzer, author of "Grace and Gigabytes: Being Church in a Tech-Shaped Culture." These weekly meetings included pastors from the United States, Canada, New Zealand, and South Africa. Casey Fremstad began her Masters of Arts degree in Ministry from Bethel Seminary, and Rose Fife began her Master of Arts in Strategic Communications from the University of Iowa.

MISSION IMAGINATION GRANT: Holy Trinity received a Mission Imagination Grant from the Minneapolis Area Synod's Resurrection Advisory Fund Committee for \$2,000, which went towards necessary technological purchases needed for pre-recorded worship services.

ANNUAL REVIEWS: In October and November, each supervisory position conducted annual reviews with their staff members.

SYNOD ASSEMBLY: The Minneapolis Area Synod Council voted to cancel the 2020 Synod Assembly.

ELCA COLLEGE CONNECTIONS: This year, due to COVID-19, each of the ELCA colleges offered their Advent/Christmas worship services online. We highlighted these great offerings in worship during Advent. Holy Trinity is part of the Gustavus Association of Congregations. Pastor Alicia served on the Board of the Association of Congregations at Gustavus.

COMMUNICATION SHIFT: In early 2020, the website was updated and reformatted. At the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, the staff began working remotely, and consequently made a shift to producing weekly email updates ("HTLConnections"), instead of monthly printed newsletters. Due to the recommendation of professional blogger Hannah Stonehouse Hudson, we launched a Facebook group called "New Prague HTLC Community." The shift online also increased the traffic on HTLC's Facebook page, as we went from 539 likes on March 1 to 887 likes by December 31, as well as HTLC's YouTube page, where we increased from 16 subscribers to 182 during that same time.

STAFF SHIFTS: In June, Holy Trinity hired Angela Schoenbauer as a Video Production intern. In August, Pastor Alicia announced that she would be decreasing her time in order to respond to the changed needs of the family because of the COVID-19 pandemic. HTLC was then able to continue Angela Schoenbauer's part-time role, and also hired Gina Fadden as a part-time Graphic Designer, and Rose Fife as a part-time Communications Specialist.

FINANCES/ENDOWMENT

STEWARDSHIP: This year's stewardship theme was "Why Give? Because You Just Don't Know Who, When or Where It's needed." This theme developed out of a recognition that, during a difficult year, we have been able to meet many needs that we couldn't have anticipated thanks to the generosity of HTLC. Stewardship team members include: Bailey Hinricher, Shelly Reimers, Lona Rookaird, Laurie Thorp, Jenny Walser, Mark Walser (chair), and Pastor Alicia Hilding.

	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017
# of pledges	127	122	106	96	87
Pledge Total	\$356,957	\$373,502	\$325,764	\$294,340	\$298,064
# of Electronic Givers	110	83	83	58	42

ENDOWMENT: In 2020, Holy Trinity was able to grant six requests for different causes which totaled \$13,380. The gifts went to: 1) Prairie Point Housing Project - \$5,000 2) VBS Virtual Program for the community - \$164 3) "The Well" supporting local youth - \$2,500 4) "School Supplies Giveaway Night" - \$2,000 5) Pastor Obrero's work with youth in the Chaska area - \$2,000 6) Drive-Thru Thanksgiving meals at Holy Trinity - \$1,716. The Jan 1, 2020 balance carried by the Endowment Fund with the St. Paul Foundation was \$255,416. The Endowment team received \$9,775 from that fund in 2020. A contribution was made in 2020 to the fund in the amount of \$6,000. Team Members include: Craig Horejsi, Chris Loose, Pat Sticha, Joanna Hansen, Jed Trachte (chair). (Pastor Alicia Hilding and Karla Klingfus served as advisory members.)

LAND SALE INVESTMENT: In November 2015, Holy Trinity sold land and invested that money for future ministry. Each year the land sale proceeds are designated by the Land Sale Team. In 2020, the Land Sale investment earnings were given to the Capital Savings account, which helped cover capital costs throughout the year. Additionally, in November 2020 the Land Sale Team approved using proceeds from a maturing \$35,000 bond to help pay for needs and enhancements related to finishing the building addition that were outside of the original budget.

AUDIT COMMITTEE: Members Nate Kahnke, Barb Niemeyer, and Dan Popple completed a successful audit of the congregation's financial practices.



FINANCIALS – GENERAL FUND

REVENUE	2021 Budget	2020 Budget	2020 Actual	2019 Actual
Member Contributions- General Fund	\$481,350	\$475,593	\$451,331	\$447,359
Member Contributions- Building Fund	9,600	11,995	9,760	11,182
Land Sale Income	12,439	17,123	16,932	18,479
Other Income	76,329	66,410	25,947	75,367
TOTAL REVENUE	579,718	571,121	503,970	552,387

EXPENDITURES	2021 Budget	2020 Budget	2020 Actual	2019 Actual
Operating (Visioning)	\$1,000	\$3,000	\$5,294	\$0
Other Operating	103,359	104,404	92,662	118,351
Total Personnel	369,316	374,713	343,385	298,867
Team: CYF Ministries	7,508	5,004	6,549	5,346
Team: Faith Formation	1,500	1,500	751	1,461
Team: Worship & Music	4,988	6,215	4,785	5,912
Team: Hospitality	8,250	18,000	3,509	18,358
Team: Property	5,000	8,200	10,644	6,725
Team: Council	2,004	1,800	2,188	2,512
Team: Mission/Outreach	50,244	50,921	49,899	48,016
Team: Stewardship	2,124	2,700	2,077	1,275
Team: Shared Ministry	5,325	6,724	370	5,566
Capital Improvements Transfer	12,439	21,119	20,928	28,088
Synod Events	1,300	1,300	40	980
Continuing Education	2,256	1,752	927	1,360
Radio Broadcasts	3,105	3,000	3,102	3,102
TOTAL EXPENDITURES	579,718	610,351	547,110	545,918

REVENUE OVER EXPENDITURES	2021 Budget	2020 Budget	2020 Actual	2019 Actual
NET TOTAL	0	(39,230)	(43,140)	6,468

FINANCIALS: COMBINED BALANCE SHEET

ASSETS	General Fund	Short Term Designated	Endowment Fund	Capital Improvement Fund	Plant Fund	Grand Total
Cash/Checking- General (State Bank)	\$14,831	\$76,516	\$2,971	\$0	\$0	\$94,318
Capital Reserve/ Building Account	0	0	0	58,637	0	58,637
Mission Term Investment Fund	0	0	0	293,446	0	293,446
Investment- St. Paul Foundation	0	0	0	0	263,587	263,587
Equipment & Furnishings	0	0	0	0	2,900	2,900
Improvements	0	0	0	0	1,600	1,600
Re-roof Church	0	0	0	0	35,213	35,213
Church Building	0	0	0	0	1,650,000	1,650,000
TOTAL ASSETS	14,831	76,516	2,971	352,083	1,953,300	2,399,702
LIABILITIES & FUND BALANCES	General Fund	Short Term Designated	Endowment Fund	Capital Improvement Fund	Plant Fund	Grand Total
Accounts Payable	\$6,565	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$6,565
Nursery Fund	12,730	0	0	0	0	12,730
Accrued Payroll	44,200	0	0	0	0	44,200
Line of Credit- State Bank	61,709	0	0	0	0	61,708
2nd Line of Credit- State Bank	42,357	0	0	0	0	42,357
Mortgage	0	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL LIABILITIES	\$167,560	0	0	0	0	\$167,560
FUND BALANCES	General Fund	Short Term Designated	Endowment Fund	Capital Improvement Fund	Plant Fund	Grand Total
Net Investment in Plant	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	2,169,851	2,169,851
Designated	0	76,516	2,971	352,083	(216,551)	215,029
Undesignated	(152,729)	0	0	0	0	(152,729)
Total Fund Balances	(152,729)	76,516	2,971	352,083	1,953,300	2,232,141
Total Liabilities and Fund Balances	14,831	76,516	2,971	352,083	1,953,300	2,399,702

ANNUAL MEETING AGENDA

DATE: January 24, 2021, 10:00 a.m., Zoom

- 1) CALL THE MEETING TO ORDER- PRESIDENT KARLA KLINGFUS
- 2) OPENING PRAYER– PASTOR BEN HILDING
- 3) NOMINATE PARLIAMENTARIAN
- 4) DISTRIBUTION OF MATERIALS
- 5) DECLARATION OF QUORUM
- 6) APPROVAL OF AGENDA
- 7) APPROVAL OF 2020 ANNUAL MEETING MINUTES
- 8) PRESIDENT’S REMARKS
- 9) PASTORS REMARKS
- 10) 2020 YEAR IN REVIEW VIDEO
- 11) ENDOWMENT UPDATE
- 12) LAND SALE INVESTMENTS UPDATE
- 13) FINANCIAL REPORT- JESSE HEMANN
- 14) APPROVAL OF 2021 OPERATING BUDGET
- 15) ELECTIONS - TYLER KIENOW
- 16) ELECTION RESULTS (If necessary)
- 17) CLOSING PRAYER - PASTOR ALICIA HILDING
- 18) ADJOURNMENT

CHURCH COUNCIL: Chris Hauck, Michelle Newman, Mark Walser

NOMINATING TEAM: Dirk Berger, Crystal Blank, Lindsey Cornell, Karla Klingfus, Ana Podratz, Jay Schoenebeck

ENDOWMENT TEAM: Dean Podratz (3 years), Dan Popple (3 years), Jed Trachte (1 year)

AUDIT COMMITTEE: Daryl Thietje

MINNEAPOLIS AREA SYNOD CONVENTION: Luke Friendshuh, Nikki Hauck, Liz Nelson