



MESSIAH
LUTHERAN CHURCH
Embrace • Engage • Enhance • Explore

Annual Report 2023

Annual Meeting February 4, 2024

Table of Contents

1	Church Membership and Pastoral Act Report
4	Annual Meeting Minutes 2023
6	President's Report
7	Pastor Chuck's Report
9	Actioneers Report
10	Care Team Report
11	Facility Report
12	Finance Report
14	Endowment Report
15	Worship, Finance and Operations Report
16	Flathead Lutheran Bible Camp Report

2023 Church Membership and Pastoral Act Report

Children Baptized

Date of Baptism	Name
07/02/2023	Collins Carr Lacey
11/19/2023	Luke Eugene Sperry

Adults Baptized

Baptized Youth Confirmed

The following baptized youth participated in the Rite of Confirmation on Sunday, October 29, 2023.

Name

Aubrey Kestle

Peyton Kestle

Adult Affirmation of Faith

Date of Affirmation	Name
11/19/2023	Katherine Barber
11/19/2023	Cinthia Bottomley
11/19/2023	Robert Bottomley
11/19/2023	Mike Link
11/19/2023	Amy Link
11/19/2023	Carter Link
11/19/2023	Whitney Link
11/19/2023	Keri Olson
11/19/2023	Thomas Reed
11/19/2023	Justin Sperry

Received by Transfer

Date of Transfer	Name	Transferred from
11/19/2023	Linda Ahlvin	Our Redeemer's Lutheran, Ballard, WA
11/19/2023	Dielda Kuhlman	Bethlehem Lutheran, Renton, WA
11/19/2023	Don Kuhlman	Bethlehem Lutheran, Renton, WA
11/19/2023	Jon Kuhlman	Bethlehem Lutheran, Renton, WA
11/19/2023	Kate Larson	Key Peninsula Lutheran, Lakebay, WA
11/19/2023	Miles Larson	Key Peninsula Lutheran, Lakebay, WA
11/19/2023	Neil Larson	Key Peninsula Lutheran, Lakebay, WA
11/19/2023	Ross Larson	Key Peninsula Lutheran, Lakebay, WA
11/19/2023	Debra Pratum	Grace Lutheran, Des Moines, WA

11/19/2023	John Schlect	Calvary Lutheran, Kent, WA
11/19/2023	Sharel Sheldrake	First Lutheran, Bothell, WA

Received by Other Means

Date	Name	Reason
------	------	--------

Funerals and Memorial Services

Date of Death	Date of Service	Saint
12/25/2022	01/28/23	Joni Flory (NM)
01/09/2023	04/21/23	John Peckenpaugh
02/06/2023	03/03/23	Walt Bishop
12/19/2022	03/25/23	Douglas Liedahl
02/22/2023	04/22/23	Virginia Wohlhueter
05/03/2023	05/24/23	Donna Hutton Hoyt
09/03/2022	07/21/23	Lois Hixson (NM)
08/7/2023	8/25/23	Rick Perko
07/23/2023	10/21/23	Betty Savage (NM)

Death – No Service through Messiah Lutheran

Date of Death	Date of Service	Saint
02/03/2023	N/A	Armin Rosin
02/04/2023	N/A	Beverly Miller
05/12/2023	N/A	Hazel Brown
05/30/2023	N/A	Linda Hottle

Removed by Transfer

Date of Removal	Name	Transferred to
04/04/23	Rondi Mitchell (David)	St. Paul Lutheran, Newton NC
04/07/23	Sandra Wollum	St. Mark's Lutheran, Tacoma
05/02/23	Walt & Susan Richards	Immanuel Lutheran, Missoula MT
05/11/23	Chuck & Sharon Carlson	Light of Christ Lutheran, Federal Way

Removed for Other Reasons

Date of Removal	Name	Reason
-----------------	------	--------

Weddings

Date of Wedding	Names	Presiding Minister
-----------------	-------	--------------------

	Worship Attendance				
Year	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Weekly Average	243	650 online mainly	528 hybrid mainly	489 hybrid mainly	304 Hybrid
Easter Attendance	687	1760 online only	1064 online only	656 hybrid	600 Hybrid
Christmas Attendance	671	Website pre-recorded	455 hybrid	415 Hybrid	494 Hybrid

Summary Information About Members 2023		
	Baptized	Confirmed
Members at the end of 2022	786	605
Members Received		
Children Received by Baptism	2	
Adults Received by Baptism		
By Affirmation of Faith	10	10
By Transfer from ELCA Congregations	8	6
From Other Lutheran Congregations	3	3
From non-Lutheran Congregations		
By Other Means		
Baptized Youth Who Were Confirmed		2
Total	23	21
Statistical Adjustment		
Members Removed		
By Death	10	10
By Transfer to Other ELCA Congregations	4	4
To Other Lutheran Congregations	2	2
To non-Lutheran Congregations		
For Other Reasons		
Total	16	16
Members at the end of 2023	793	610

Annual Meeting Minutes

February 5, 2023

Opening Prayer: Pastor Chuck opened the meeting in prayer.

Call To Order: Council President Anne Baunach called the meeting to order at 10:55 with a quorum of 61 confirmed members.

Adoption of Agenda: The agenda was presented in the Annual Report and on screen. Motion to approve the agenda as presented. (Lynne Inman/Charlie Radabaugh). Motion passed.

Adoption of Minutes: The minutes were presented in the Annual Report. Motion to approve the January 30, 2022 Annual Meeting Minutes as presented. (Katie Walda/Mary Lou Macarius). Motion passed.

New Business:

Nominations for Church Council: There are four council members whose terms expired or need to step away from council: Charlie Radabaugh, Dave Foss, Dan Ferguson, and Anne Baunach. Anne Baunach and Shannon Spicciati have agreed to run for council. There are still two spots to fill. Nominations for council from the floor: Pastor Susan Kirlin-Hackett nominated herself and Ernest Thomas nominated himself. Motion to accept the ballot as present and elect the candidates by acclamation. (Josh Luebke/Lynne Inman). Motion passed.

Constitutional Changes: Josh Luebke presented the constitutional changes which were also presented in the Annual Report. The changes bring Messiah's constitution in line with the ELCA and SW Washington Synod's model constitution. Motion to approve the proposed changes to the Messiah Lutheran Church's constitution. (Jonathan Baunach/Mary Lou Macarius). Motion passed

Financial Report & Proposed Budget: Council Treasurer Janene Nelson presented the year-end financial report for 2022. Last year's budget included putting aside a reserve of \$38,533 from the general fund reserve balance to balance the budget. However, the actual difference between income and expenses for 2022 was - \$31,729 so \$7,254 is going back into the general fund reserve. Janene then presented the 2023 budget and was also provided in the Annual Report. There is currently a difference in the budget of -\$54,932. The budget includes setting aside \$54,932 in the general fund reserve to cover that difference, if it is needed. Motion to approve the 2023 budget for Messiah Lutheran Church as presented. (Alan Melrose/Ross Chamberlain). Motion passed.

Old Business: No old business was discussed.

Election Results: As Council Ballot was approved by acclamation, balloted election results were not needed.

For the Good of Messiah:

- Adriana Chandler shared thanks for everyone in the congregation who has supported the quilters. The quilters sent over 500 school kits and sent quilts to Ukraine and Poland through Lutheran World Relief.
- Elisa Holman shared thanks for the Bombas socks distribution through Messiah Lutheran Church.
- Thanks was shared to Charlie and the Gathering Space redesign committee for all of their hard work.
- Pastor Chuck shared that, through the work of Charlie and Tia, the carpet in Galli Hall will be replaced soon.
- Pastor Chuck also shared thanks for Charlie for the redesign of Sigmar Chapel

- Charlie Radabaugh shared the plan for the 100th anniversary celebration. There will be a meeting towards the end of February. If you are interested in being a part of the celebration, reach out to Charlie or attend the meeting.
- Jan shared thanks for all who supported the Tech Team with all of the changes that came with the livestreaming.

Adjournment: Motion to adjourn the meeting. (Shelia McLaughlin/Lauren Mendez). Motion passed.

Closing Prayer: Pastor Susan closed the meeting in prayer.

Respectfully submitted,

Jonathan Baunach

Jonathan Baunach
Council Secretary

President's Annual Report to the Congregation - 2023

While at church this morning, I paused to read the letter from the secretary of state congratulating us on our upcoming 100th anniversary. It caused me to wonder – what did the founders of MLC think the ministry and mission of this congregation would be? Did they ever dream about the changes in the demographics of our community? Did they think we would have a brand new high school across the street from our church campus? Could they imagine that three other congregations would be worshipping in our space? Would they have ever guessed what an important role MLC would play in this community? And now as we approach our anniversary celebration – what will the next century of Messiah's ministry be like?

I wish that I had the gift to be able to see the future. I am confident that MLC will continue to be a strong and thriving part of the Auburn community moving forward. Why? It's because of the amazing people that make up the MLC family.

Thank you to our pastoral staff – Pastor Chuck, Pastor Bridget, and Pastor Susan – for providing the leadership that this congregation relishes. Your gifts and talents balance each other out so well. We are thankful for ALL that each of you do for the congregation.

And for the staff – we are so lucky to have each of you. Lynne Inman, Tia Monsen, Katie Walda, and Jan Nelson. You are the backbone of our congregation – and we are so grateful for all that you do.

Charlie Radabaugh – that you for being the volunteer extraordinaire – that stepped up during retirement to say, "You need a building manager? I can do that!" I appreciate all the time, energy, and creative energy that you give to Messiah.

Thank you to our church council – Sheilia McLaughlin (VP), Ernest Thomas (Secretary), Jonathan Baunach (Treasurer) along with Josh Luebke, Susan Kirlin-Hackett, Lauren Mendez, Janene Nelson, and Shannon Spicciati. You all have helped to guide this congregation through another year – and I am so grateful for all the time that you have put into this work. A special thank you to Janene as she ends her term on council. You will be missed.

For our other volunteers who quilt, sew, repair, watch our finances, sing, play instruments, read in worship, teach classes, cook, feed the hungry, manage our food bank, sort clothing, clean, rake leaves, vacuum, prepare communion, acolyte, usher, etc., you make Messiah tick.

Here we go – onwards and upwards as we enter our second century.

And to God alone be all glory –

Anne Baunach
Congregation president

Annual Report for 2023

Pr. Chuck Harris
January 15, 2024

“Songs of thankfulness and praise, Jesus, Lord, to thee we raise” is the opening line of a favorite hymn for the Time after Epiphany. As the hymn continues, we sing of the many ways God-in-flesh is made manifest to the creation – past, present, and future.

As we enter the year of our 100th Anniversary, remembering Messiah’s past, celebrating the present, and anticipating the future is a great framework to guide our community life of faith throughout 2024. The centennial committee has been hard at work planning and preparing for our life together this year, and I look forward to the celebrations ahead of us. Mark April 28 in your calendars as an extra special day of celebration!



One of the ways we are celebrating our 100th anniversary is to highlight each week a Messiah volunteer ministry group. Already this January, we have spotlighted our church council and our food ministries. These volunteer efforts, along with all the ones we will lift up in the weeks to come, are the heartbeat – the pulse – of Messiah’s significant and sustained effort to be God’s hands in our Auburn and South King County communities. I am so thankful for all our volunteer ministries, and I invite all our members and friends to discern which volunteer ministry might be the one to which you are called.

In addition, I want to highlight the vital infrastructure in place alongside our volunteer ministries. This is the network of relationships among us, at which, in key places, is a Messiah staff member. Our Messiah staff all play a key role in helping to facilitate our larger common ministry, and the wealth of knowledge, dedication, and good humor demonstrated by Messiah’s staff is outstanding.

First, I want to thank Tia and Charlie for what they do to help make Messiah function as an organization. Together, they play a key role in making our financial life, our building and property, and our operational capability run smoothly so that we can do ministry in Auburn and beyond. It is important to note that Charlie does this all strictly as a volunteer, and his giving of time and talent is both amazing and a testament to how God is calling him to live out his faith.



Tia, also, is our worship manager, and her gifts and skills in helping make worship, both in-person and through our livestream, work wonderfully is a great gift. She undertakes all her roles here at Messiah with a cheerfulness and optimism that keeps the rest of the church staff uplifted and supported.

Second, I want to thank Jan and Katie as they offer their gifts to Messiah with a tremendous benefit for our whole community. Katie plans and leads worship and gathers in musicians and vocalists of all kinds to inspire us in our praise of God. Jan leads



in worship vocally, and she also works with Katie to bring to life a new practice among us, which is titled the Messiah Chamber Music Ensemble. Whether vocally (Jan) or instrumentally (Katie) the two work together to enhance our worship life with the gift of great music.

Jan, also, manages our digital communications. This is so much more than working on the website, providing updates through Constant Contact, or making posts on our various social media channels. She is a creative thinker, intense planner, and a visual artist that helps make our ministry and mission at Messiah

come alive in the world of digital communication. In short, she creates engaging pictures of our life together and shows the world what Messiah is all about.

Third, I want to thank Pastor Bridget and Pastor Susan for their gifts and enthusiasm for ministry at Messiah as my ordained colleagues. Together, the three of us are the Office of Pastor here at Messiah. We each have different roles and responsibilities, and the tasks we do flow out of the office known as Word and Sacrament ministry, to which we have been called and in which we support one another. We laugh together, we share our joys and sorrows together, and we work to think and act in a forward direction together for the benefit of Messiah's next 100 years of mission and ministry.

Finally, I want to thank Lynne for her deep experience in Messiah ministry, her gentle and yet strong care of the rest of us on staff, as well as the congregation as a whole, and for her ability to help us all see how Messiah's past influences the present and serves as a strong foundation for the future. Lynne embodies the great spirit of Messiah mission and ministry, and we are all so blessed that she continues to share her gifts and wisdom with us.

As we move into 2024, let us do so with a spirit of joy, celebration, and anticipation of the great and amazing things God is doing, and will yet do, among and through us! Blessings to all, Pr. Chuck

Actioneers Annual Report for 2023

In January, we went to Black Diamond Bakery—everyone enjoyed the good weather and a wonderful lunch.

In February, we hosted a Valentine's party at Messiah led by Pr. Susan and Judy Ruud.

In March, we enjoyed a beautiful trip to see Snoqualmie Falls and were given a tour of the lodge followed by lunch nearby.

In April, we hosted a time of connections at Messiah and potluck lunch.

In May we traveled to PowellsWood Garden in Federal Way and walked their beautiful grounds, then had lunch at Olive Garden nearby.

In June Senior Vacation Bible school was offered at the end of the month led by Pr. Susan. Everyone had a wonderful time, and we look forward to this being an annual event

Attendance had been declining for the past 18 months. Messecars and Jensen's decided to suspend Actioneer events for the future.

We will continue hosting the Auburn High School Jazz and Show Choirs at Galli Hall to perform their Christmas Show in early December, followed by a potluck lunch.

Bill and Carol Messecar

Care Team ~ 2023

The members of the Care Team include: Blaine Benjamin, Mary Bush, Mary Mondt, Carol Messecar, Phyllis Steinle, Amanda Flanery, Judy Ruud, Pastor Susan. Vicki Gilthvedt-Wickham participated until her move in 2023.

The task of the Care Team is to maintain contact with MLC members who may or may not be able to attend worship services. Contact includes phone calls, cards, and visits. Additionally, that Care Team informs Pastor Susan of the status of members. The Team meets monthly. MLC members not on the Care Team are encouraged to inform Pastor Susan of pastoral care needs that she can address. This ministry is congregation-wide! It takes a village to care for each other.

In 2023 the following was accomplished:

The communion kits were refurbished with a new version of a communion liturgy. The kits are available to Care Team members who provide in-home communion.

The Care Team proposed a Cooling Center to Council for approval. The proposal was to make the Youth Room available to MLC members during hot summer days. A list of protocols was developed, which were approved by Council and posted. The room was not utilized in 2023, so the Care Team revisited the protocols and changed the hours of availability, which, hopefully will make the effort more attractive to those seeking a cool place to escape the heat.

For the second year, a Senior VBS was offered the end of June. It is growing in popularity! What became clear was that many folks particularly enjoyed having dinner together. Following up, the Care Team developed a proposal for the Finance Team to offer a monthly meal, fellowship, and Bible study. The meal would be lunch during the NW dark months and dinner as NW days grow longer. It will be a new line item included in the 2024 budget ~ a modest amount that will make the meal free/affordable. And, there will be a Senior VBS again in summer of 2024! There is an old song lyric, *"The more we get together, the happier we'll be!"* Research is clear: Loneliness is epidemic. Care Team hopes to minister to and with those who are lonely.

The Senior newsletter was sent to MLC members each month with the exception of August. The intent is that MLC members who do not have computer availability and/or skills would receive information regarding our life together. The Care Team discussed at length the issue that folks who can get the twice-weekly MLC update would not receive the paper newsletter. Additionally, the newsletter is available in the online update. So, those who have computer availability and/or skills ~ just print a copy for yourself ~ a BIG thank you for those who do so. . .

Thanks, too, to Judy Ruud, Pastor Chuck, Pastor Bridget for your wonderful articles! Thanks to Mary and Bill Bush who have provided the copies, envelopes and postage for the last 3 years! Cheers!

Respectfully submitted,
Pastor Susan Kirlin-Hackett

Facility Report 2023

Well, here we are, 2024, and this past year has kept the facility team busy. With a facility of this size, everyday Tia and I are addressing something, everything from water damaged floors, leaking roofs, to a sink filled with water beads. We have learned how to use a commercial carpet extractor/cleaner and can now light the kitchen stoves without reading the instructions. The list goes on and on and I am not sure we can be surprised by anything we see now (don't take that as a challenge please).

In 2023 there has been an increase in the use of this building. Currently we lease space in our facility to seven groups and have provided short term rental to additional groups not listed.

1. Kings Chapel (new in 2023)
2. Seventh Day Adventist
3. Presbyterian Church
4. Sons of Norway
5. YMCA
6. Kiwanis Club
7. Take off Pounds Sensibly (TOPS)

Some highlights for 2023

- New Carpet in Galli Hall (matches carpet installed in gathering space)
- New parking lot lighting
- Repaired north parking lot (new asphalt)
- New double oven in the kitchen
- New chairs in the chapel
- New gathering furniture for space outside of the chapel (matches furniture in upper gathering space)
- New water bottle fill station located by main restrooms.
- Modified hallway classroom restroom for use as a unisex restroom
- Updated sanctuary and Galli Hall lighting to LED fixtures
- Hired a new Janitorial service.
- Sold Church van.

Respectfully Submitted by,

Tia Monsen, Charlie Radabaugh

Facility/Maintenance Team

Finance Committee Report for 2023

We started off the year with a general fund reserve of \$115,520.05 which included \$54,932 that we set aside to cover the planned budget deficit for 2023 which was approved by the congregation at our annual meeting in Feb. 2023. Giving and income started out slow the first three months through March, but bounced back in April and May. Giving and income were down for June, Aug., Oct. and Nov., but were up for July and Sept. and increased significantly for Dec. We finished the year with a deficit of \$31,331.97, but it was much better than the planned budget deficit of \$54,932. This was primarily due to the addition of a new renter, Kings Chapel, starting in April, which added an additional \$37,035 in rental income for the year. Income for the year was \$664,528.90 and expenses were \$695,860.87. Expenses were 0.5% higher than what had been originally budgeted due to increased utility rates and switching to a new custodial service. We added \$7,800 to the general fund reserve for the sale of the church van.

Messiah's Community Assistance income for 2023 (Side Aisle Giving) was \$12,648.31, 1% higher than anticipated. The Community Assistance fund supports Messiah's Community Meal, Wednesday Food Bank, Faith Action Network and Community Benevolence programs. We are thankful to the congregation for making a contribution to Messiah's Community Assistance fund along with their regular giving to Messiah. With the addition of the new renter, Kings Chapel, Messiah's Building Rental income for 2023 was \$96,549.50.

To help Messiah maintain a regular cash flow throughout the year, the Finance Committee recommends automatic giving using Thrivent "Simply Giving", "Recurring Giving" through your own bank, or VANCO "Online Giving". We suggest using Thrivent "Simply Giving" or "Recurring Giving" through your own bank because it saves Messiah the fees that VANCO charges to process payments. Those who are not participating in an automatic giving program are encouraged to do so. To learn about the various options for giving to Messiah, go to Messiah's website mlcauburn.org and click on the "Make an Offering" link. Remember to update your automatic giving for any contribution changes that are planned for 2024.

The Finance Committee met monthly in 2023 along with the Treasurer (Jonathan Baunach) to analyze financial reports, monitor income and expenses and strategize how best to utilize our financial resources to serve the ministries of Messiah.

In the fall, the Finance Committee together with the Executive Committee kicked off Messiah's 2024 stewardship drive, "That all may flourish". We received a combination of 107 Statements of Intent and/or "Simply Giving"/"Recurring Giving" automatic giving pledges from our members, pledging \$469,253 for Messiah for 2024. Thank you so much for those of you who were able to participate in our stewardship drive this year for your continued financial support to Messiah.

One of the primary tasks of the Finance Committee is to develop a budget each year. The "draft" budget that we have developed for 2024 currently has a total income of \$666,030 and total expenses of \$732,088 which results in a deficit of \$66,058. The Executive Committee along with Messiah staff are

actively reviewing the “draft” budget to come up with ways to reduce this deficit both by generating more income and cutting expenses. Covering this deficit will likely require additional funding from the congregation along with using some of Messiah’s general fund reserve. The final 2024 budget will be sent to the church council for review and will be presented to the congregation for approval at the annual meeting on Feb. 4, 2024. A narrative of the budget follows:

Income: General undesignated income was calculated from statements of intent and/or automatic giving received during our stewardship campaign. For those who did not pledge, a forecast based on 2023 actual giving was made. This identified giving income is projected to decrease by \$11,784 for 2024, a 2% decrease from 2023. Other incomes (rental, special offerings, community assistance, etc.) were estimated at 2023 actual values and adjusted as needed. Rental income is projected to increase by \$14,991 for 2024, a 16% increase from 2023.

Expenses: The budget is grouped in areas of Messiah’s ministries reflecting the Messiah Mission and Vision statements. Within these areas are specific line items. The Finance Committee used 2023 actual expenses as the basis for many of the 2024 budget expenses and adjusted as needed. Staff compensation updates will be reviewed by the Executive Committee and the church council. Property expenses were increased by 19% due to the increased cost of utilities for 2024. Budget variances will be reviewed by the Finance and Executive Committees each month.

Summary: Messiah’s income is largely contingent on the congregation fulfilling statement of intent commitments. An exhaustive analysis is being made to ascertain income projections and to cut expenses. We are hopeful for the congregation’s continued generosity and financial support for 2024.

For the Finance Committee (Duane Gatzke – chair, Ross Chamberlain, Beverly Melrose, Vicky Carlsen & Jonathan Baunach - Treasurer).

Messiah Lutheran Church Endowment Fund Committee
Report for 2023
Messiah Endowing Today for Tomorrow

Members: Anne Baunach, Mary Berglund, Ross Chamberlain, Beth Gatzke, Shannon Spicciati

Your Endowment fund 2023 beginning balance was \$604,227. The 2023 ending balance including interest, dividends and distributions was \$688,387. The return on investment for the year was 11.3%.

Donations to the MLC Endowment Fund from its inception in 1993 through 2023 year-end total \$341,530. During that same time, the Endowment Fund has distributed over \$232,066. The MLC Endowment funds are invested in six Vanguard funds, and a Business Checking Account at Umpqua Bank.

In order to sustain the endowment fund 'forever' per MLC bylaws, the committee can distribute between 3 and 6% of a rolling 5-year average of the annual value of the endowment fund. The committee establishes each year's distribution % at the beginning of the calendar year. The committee considers inflation, dividend growth and yearly performance of the funds when establishing the funds available for distribution. For 2023, the distribution rate was set at 4% for a value of \$24,977. Of the \$24,977 available, \$15,396 was distributed.

The Endowment Committee approved nine distributions in 2023. Two seminary scholarships and seven missions of Messiah Lutheran. One recipient of a seminary scholarship was Hannah Johnsrud, currently in her third year at the Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago. The other seminary recipient was Andrew Larsen who was recently ordained as a Minister of Word and Service in the ELCA.

Donations to the Endowment Fund are a great way to support both current and future generations. There are several ways to donate. Cash/check, stock shares donation, charitable trust transfers, and planned giving to name a few. Please contact the Church office to be put in contact with a committee member that can assist.

Forms are available in the church office and on the church website to apply for Endowment funds.

Shannon Spicciati
MLC Endowment Fund Committee Chairman
Ross Chamberlain
MLC Endowment Fund Financial Secretary

Worship, Finance and Operations Manager

Annual Report 2023

Happy New Year Messiah Members and friends! This year has been full of learning new tasks, enjoying a busy and full building and celebrating God through worship and prayer.

Charlie Radabaugh and I took over the Finance Manager position in March. It has been a year of learning everything from printing checks to filing tax forms. A SPECIAL THANK YOU to Pam Downing who has given us her expertise through texts, facetime and in person meetings on questions we have. She has been invaluable to Messiah, and we are so thankful.

The building is a busy place. You can read more about our building in the Building Maintenance Report.

Worship is continuing to thrive here at Messiah. Our new Chamber Music Ensemble has provided beautiful special music throughout 2023. Our worship numbers in person and online have increased throughout the year. Thank you to all our volunteers who sing, play, usher, set up communion, read and provide technical support. We couldn't do it without you.

A special thank you to Charlie Radabaugh, who is our VOLUNTEER Building Manager. He has given so much of his time and care to this building.

I look forward to a 2024 full of growth, excitement, and positivity in our Messiah family.

Blessings,

Tia Monsen



Flathead Lutheran Bible Camp

2023 ANNUAL REPORT SUMMARY

"Thank you for the incredible generosity and hospitality. We had a wonderful weekend. The sauna is lovely. Your staff is so helpful and kind. We love FLBC — it is such a sacred place." ~ Weekend Retreat Guests

2023: THE YEAR AT A GLANCE

The year-round staff, led several Outreach programs, for youth at churches — only a 'few' had to cancel because of snow

Summer staff recruitment: Karen, Program Director, & Richie, Wilderness & EE Director, visited college campuses around the country to recruit the best summer staff ever! Including 5 international staff!

Year-round staff, travel to Lutherhaven for summer planning retreat & to learn from our counter parts in camping ministry in Idaho.

Pastors Grant & Amanda Applehans accepted the call to serve as Co-Associate Directors, overseeing development, marketing, retreat programming, day camp, volunteers etc.!

JAN '23

FEB '23

MAR '23

MAY '23

A wonderful summer with 2,225 campers, learning through activities, worship and Bible study, with our theme, "Holy Trinity — Wholly Love"

Cabin #1 is now the new Sauna dedicated to God's glory in honor of Don Stadler, volunteer builder.

Celebrating 80 years of ministry! Over 300 people gathered to hear retired directors Rev Gary Cockrell and Brad Abbott, share the history of the camp. Cindy Pokorny created beautiful photo presentations of the 80-year history of FLBC! All enjoyed a picnic, and concert with 'Just Move.'

A notice of \$35,000 given to the Shalom Home... construction begins with contractor Tim Rogge. Architect, Gretchen Krumm

SUMMER '23

JULY 1 '23

AUG '23

Goal reached to re-build the outdoor chapel, with 27 benches adopted. Construction began this fall. Amphitheatre remodel fund raising project begins. 55 benches needed, \$750 each, with a plaque for each one.

Program begins to engage donors in Naming an Endowment, for staff scholarships. \$25,000 per year for 5 years, for a total of \$125,000 to start generating funds for staff scholarships. To date, two funds have been established.

Pastors Grant & Amanda Applehans installed as Associate Directors.

We welcome new Community staff members, and plan the programs for the Harvest Festival, Grief retreat, the Bible in 24 hours, Advent retreat, young adult retreat and much more!

SEPT '23

FALL '23

WINTER '23

2023 BY THE NUMBERS!

1742 guests (retreats/events/EE Students) served during our fall, winter, & spring programs • **150** participants served in 3 communities during Fall/Winter/Spring through our outreach program • **7** weeks of regular FLBC Summer Camp for youth, families, and groups + **2** additional weeks of serving Intermountain Residential and Montana Youth Diabetes Alliance! • **815** Youth, on site campers (week-long, day campers and partial week campers) • **191** Glacier Wilderness campers • **154** Week-Long Family campers & Grand campers • **1065** Summer Retreat guests (June, July and August) • **18** weeks of Day Camps in congregations, with over **380** campers! • **50** Incredible adult volunteers • **58** Summer staff from **13** different states and **3** countries joined our **12** year-round staff to make **1 AWESOME TEAM!**



406.752.6602 • 603 S. Main Street, Kalispell MT 59901 • office@flbc.net • www.flbc.net

Pastor Bridget's Annual Report – 2023

Last year at the Extravaganza – a conference for volunteers, staff, and ministers working with children, youth, and family – I attended a class on how to minister to Gen Z. In that class the instructors talked about the three big questions youth are asking right now, which are: “Who am I?” “Where do I belong?” and “What difference can I make?” These might be questions that you asked yourself when you were in middle or high school; they may even be questions you are asking yourself now!

The church has a huge role to play in helping youth (and people of all ages) answer these questions. Alone, many youth believe they are not enough or only worth their follower count, that they only belong where they can make themselves fit in, and that their purpose is to choose a good career and follow it forever. But as a congregation, we can help each of our young people know that they are a beloved child of God, that they belong with God's people, and they are invited into God's greater story.

Faith formation continues to evolve and grow as we shift from a model that is primarily knowledge based to one that centers relationships with God, with one another, with the congregation, and with the community. We still have programs geared to different ages that present Bible stories in age-appropriate ways. Faith Foundations is for K-6 and gives kids building blocks of Bible stories and illustrating activities. Faith in Action starts in 7th grade and works with students to grow in faith, discern what God is doing in the world, and to join in. This year they are also joining up with the high school group as they prepare to travel to the Youth Gathering in New Orleans by learning how they were created to be brave, authentic, free, disruptive, and disciples. We still celebrated our graduating seniors, took a group to Flathead Lutheran Bible Camp, and proudly watched two youth affirm their baptisms.



And this past year we also adapted programming to help youth answer those three big questions. We began sending out postcards to help each student celebrate their baptismal birthday. We joined other area ELCA congregations for a middle and high school retreat last winter, for a Young Adult VBS over the summer, and for an elementary school retreat this fall. We added more places in Faith in Action lessons to talk to members of the congregation and participate in worship leadership. We made Vacation Bible School cross-generational and used curriculum from ELCA World Hunger to highlight the work we do through the wider church. We added Mission Sunday lessons, discernment, and planning into Faith in Action every month.



Thank you for helping our youth know that they are beloved children of God, that they belong here with us at Messiah, and that they are invited into God's greater story! Thank you for supporting Mission Sunday, for engaging with youth in the Gathering Space as they complete scavenger hunts, for gleefully taking part in cross-generational activities, for teaching, chaperoning, or supervising, for buying butterbraids and coffee and donating to the Youth Gathering, for praying for our children, youth, and families, and most of all, for showing God's love to all our students! I could not do faith formation alone, and I deeply appreciate the ways you are living out the promises you made to all our kids at their baptisms. If you would like to have an even greater role in this amazing, transformational, and joyful work, don't hesitate to let me know!



Pastorally, this was a great year, and I continue to love getting to know Messiah and the city of Auburn better and better! I was able to baptize several children, including my new niece, Runa! I marched in my first Pride parade with others from Messiah. I spent 10 weeks this fall participating in Auburn's Civics Academy and learned so much about this city's history, resources, challenges, and joys, along with meeting many others who love living in Auburn. I also was able to get to know others in the Synod better, through the Bishop's Convocation, hosting the Synod gathering, going to cluster meetings in Enumclaw, and attending a couple ordinations. Finally, I started our first of hopefully many opportunities to volunteer with Arcadia House. It has been a joy to see God at work with and among us, and I can't wait to see how we will experience God's love and pass it to others in the year to come.

Peace,

Pr. Bridget

(PS, thank you Endowment committee for the generous grant to help me go to the Extravaganza!)