



AUGSBURG LUTHERAN CHURCH CONGREGATIONAL ANNUAL REPORT

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Congregational Council	Page 2
Standing Committees	Page 3
Pastor's Report	Page 4
Congregational President	Page 5
Altar Guild	Page 6
Cemetery Committee	Page 7
Memorial Committee	Page 8
Parish Life	Page 9
Parish Statistics	Page 10
Preschool Report	Page 11
Property Committee	Page 12
Social Ministry	Page 13
Stewardship and Finance	Page 14
Worship and Music	Page 15
Christian Education	Page 16
Operating Summary	Page 17

Augsburg Lutheran Church

ELCA

100 N. Mineral Springs Road

Porter, Indiana 46304

(219) 926-1658

Congregational Council

Officers:

		<u>Phone No.</u>
Pastor	Rev. Erik Bernth	926-1658
President	Caroline Ward	916-0341
Vice President	Travis Dunlap	617-8395
Secretary	Jim Babcock	929-8297
Treasurer	Robert Ton	921-3599

Members and Committee Assignments:

Christian Education	Kaitlin Ferguson	771-7923
Evangelism	Don Freese	926-6262
Pre-K Liaison	Jim Babcock	929-8297
Property	Brian Gustafson	929-5891
Social Ministry	Jim Fant	926-3517
Stewardship & Finance	Travis Dunlap	617-8395
Worship and Music	Janice Holguin	983-9556

Appointed Member Positions:

Archivist/Historian		
Financial Secretary	Brian Ton	395-1734

Church Staff:

Pastor	Rev. Erik Bernth
Church Secretary	Tara Hodgson
Organist / Vocal Choir	Jane DeVries
Bells / Choirs	Ann Ballinger
Youth Group Director	Ann Ballinger
Pre-K Director	Lorene Schaudt
Custodian	Tara Hodgson

Revised 01/04/2023



AUGSBURG LUTHERAN CHURCH

NOMINATING COMMITTEE REPORT for 2023 FOR CONGREGATIONAL COUNCIL, COMMITTEES AND POSITIONS NOVEMBER CONGREGATIONAL MEETING

CONGREGATIONAL COUNCIL: - 3-year term, max 2 consecutive terms

Term Ends	Until Dec. 2023	Until Dec. 2024	Until Dec. 2025
Caroline Ward	Dennis Brubaker		Caroline Ward
Karen Riefe	Kaitlin Ferguson	Jim Babcock	Travis Dunlap
Jennifer Dimitroff	_____	Jim Fant	_____
Don Freese	_____	Brian Gustafson	_____

AUDIT COMMITTEE: - 3-year term

Term Ends	Until Dec. 2023	Until Dec. 2024	Until Dec. 2025
Debra Gruzosky	Jim Fant	Shirley Freese	Debra Gruzosky

MEMORIAL COMMITTEE: - 2-year term, max 3 consecutive terms

Term Ends	Until Dec. 2023	Until Dec. 2024	Until Dec. 2025
Lorene Schaudt	Matt Wesley	Maria Becking	Lorene Schaudt
Jim Fant	Brian Gustafson	Heidi Babcock	Jim Fant

CEMETERY COMMITTEE: - 2-year term, max 3 consecutive terms

Term Ends	Until Dec. 2023	Until Dec. 2024	Until Dec. 2025
Jim Babcock	Keith Gesse	Mel Bigger	Jim Babcock

NOMINATING COMMITTEE: - 2-year term, 1 outgoing CC member

Term Ends	Until Dec. 2023	Until Dec. 2024
	Travis Dunlap	_____
Don Freese	Don Freese	_____

CONFERENCE/SYNOD DELEGATES: - 2023 (TBD)

Female Rep. _____ Male Rep _____

REPORT OF THE PASTOR

People of God at Augsburg:

It's no secret that the last two years have been challenging ones for most church communities, including our own. Attendance at worship is generally down and with that comes additional financial stress. Coupled to that is anxiety about the future of Christianity in our nation. Situations like this demand a response, often crystalized into two views: continued anxiety or seeing the future as an opportunity. While 2002 was by no means a terrible year here, we have a before us now a chance in 2023 to make a new start and to try some new things-- exactly what our intention is.

As I wrote, 2002 was not a bust; we continued to gather in person for worship as a community while maintaining an online presence via YouTube. We added a Wednesday night liturgy to lead up to Christian Education, which was moved from Sunday to Wednesday. Participation at "Sunday School" on Wednesday and Confirmation preparation has been equal to if not better than it was on Sundays. The children did a great job at the Christmas program on December 18, and we look forward building on that in the new year.

Our preschool ministry continues to be strong, and we are eager to find ways that the church community can better interact with the preschool families. Further, our support of the Westchester Township Food Pantry and First Contact continued to be very strong, and we are confident we are helping local families in need. We again were able to assist Yost Elementary School with their annual coat drive, and also provided financial support to the Porter County Youth and Family Services Bureau for their "Tot Shop" that provides baby supplies to needy families. Further, we continued to support Lutheran World Relief with the personal care kits.

Expect new things in 2023 in addition to what I have mentioned above, especially as we look to rebuild from the pandemic disruption. In 2023 we will all be asked to commit in a variety of ways to the ministry this place offers, especially as we undertake new beginnings here.

I want to thank outgoing Church Council members, and all the people here who make ministry happen. I also want to thank all of you for your continued support of this community of faith. I am optimistic about what we can accomplish in the coming year.

Sincerely yours in Christ Jesus Our Lord,

Pastor Bernth

CONGREGATIONAL PRESIDENT

12/23/2022

First, at the end of this calendar year, I am mindful not only of our accomplishments, but also some special people: dear, departed ones lost this past year and before, cherished in loving memories which are especially poignant during this joyous Christmas season. They are remembered!

I wish to thank the council members for all their collective and generous efforts during this past year. It has been an exciting and challenging time, to continue reawakening church life “in person.” Council members have enthusiastically supported some unexpected but rewarding projects. In January we made traditional committee chairmen assignments, but the challenge was made to reach beyond committee descriptions and work as a team to expand and accomplish some unique goals. Congregational highlights of 2022 (an incomplete but representational list,) have included Memorial Day service at Burstrom Chapel; a joyous Christmas program; the Annual Corn Roast and congregational picnic; Easter Sunday service complete with the first return of the congregational brunch; enrichment of Wednesday evenings education and worship especially to involve the children, complete with social programs to draw the children, and those who are young at heart; a successful VBS; ongoing contributions to First Contact, Westchester Food Pantry, Lutheran World Relief, including a record number of schoolbags sent on their way this year; weekly in person Sunday services with continuing YouTube recording for those who could not attend in person; Consecration Sunday and brunch; all of the holiday worship schedules; and, of course, the roofing of Burstrom Chapel.

Financially, the current environment for churches in general remains challenging. You are all familiar with information Council has shared with the congregation. The challenge in the coming year will be to face the economic uncertainty with faith, perseverance, creativity, ongoing dedication to our ministries, as well as fiscal responsibility.

Council members for 2022 have included Mary Klein, President; Caroline Ward, Vice President; Bob Ton treasurer; Karen Riefe, secretary; Jim Babcock; Dennis Brubaker; Stephanie Crook; Jennifer Dimitroff; Jim Fant; Kaitlin Ferguson; Don Freese; Brian Gustafson; Lyle Munn. Thank you all for your participation and dedication.

Lastly, I thank you the congregational members who live their lives in faith, who support the ongoing missions and vitality of this worship community. Thank you for working with your 2022 president!

Yours in Christ

Mary Klein

ALTAR GUILD

The members of the Altar Guild prepare the altar and worship area for worship and occasional services. We care for the articles that are used in the worship services such as: changing paraments and vestments, preparing for communion and baptisms, replacing candles, dusting, and checking that the pews are clean and in order. We help the Cross-bearers prepare for their duties prior to the services. Following services, we clean the communion materials and return them to their storage places. We also take care of the altar flowers for the families who may have sick or shut-in members.

Most of the preparations for worship are done on Fridays or Saturdays.

The Altar Guild dedicates its efforts and ministry to the Glory of God.

We invite all members of the congregation to join us in this very purposeful part of worship in our church. Ask any Altar Guild member about joining us!

The following are current member of the Altar Guild:

Karen Adcock

Heidi Babcock

Kaitlin Ferguson

Debra Gruzosky

Heather Harwood

Sarah Olson

Sharon Robey

Pam Stawitcke

Caroline Ward

CEMETERY COMMITTEE

Augsburg –

There was one burial and one cremation this year.

No cemetery lots were sold this year.

All the flags and artificial flowers were removed in the fall. The torn and faded flags were taken to the VFW to be disposed of in an honorable way.

The new grave was covered with top soil, raked, and seeded in the spring.

Small sticks and limbs were picked up.

In the late fall, graves with artificial flowers and dead ones were removed for winter.

Burstrom –

No burials or cremations this year.

In late fall, graves with dead and artificial flowers were removed for the winter.

All the flags were removed (torn and faded) for the winter and taken to the VFW to be disposed of in an honorable way.

The roof of the chapel was removed and completely redone.

Another big thank you to the church members that worked on the chapel, and Brian Gustafson for helping when needed.

This Report submitted by Committee Members:

Mel Bigger

Keith Gesse

Jim Babcock

MEMORIAL COMMITTEE

The mission of the Memorial Committee is to carefully and prayerfully consider the purposes for which the memorial donations will be used by the congregation. The intentions of the donors of the memorials are important factors in making decisions, as are the appropriate uses of the gifts. The honor paid in memory of a departed loved one is a precious thing for those making the donation, and this makes any decisions very important and are not taken lightly.

During the calendar year 2022, there have not been major disbursements for the purchase of memorial items from monies that are currently in the Memorial Fund. As needs arise for important worship purposes, some non-designated money has been used in the past, after reasonable discussion has taken place.

At the time when a memorial gift is to be considered, there are opportunities to discuss that with Pastor or a member of the Committee, whose members' names are available in the church office.

Respectfully submitted by the Memorial Committee

PARISH LIFE

The Parish Life Committee encourages and promotes fellowship and interaction among all Congregation members and guests. We implement activities that may include dinners, seasonal and special events, picnics, coffee hours, among others.

During 2022, we supported a number of activities including the Easter potluck, corn roast annual church picnic in August, pumpkin carving/Halloween party, the hanging of the greens, and the Christmas potluck.

Looking forward to 2024, the Parish Life committee continues to work on additional events including family movie nights, soup and salad night, spring and fall church clean up, Wednesday Lenten potluck dinners before midweek evening service during Lent, cookie sales, fried chicken sales, trips to local baseball games, and game night for families.

Yours in Christ,

Stephanie Crook

PARISH STATISTICS

Baptisms –1

Aaliyah Nikole Grimes	6/5/2022
Delilah Rose Grimes	6/5/2022
Phoenix Marie Grimes	6/5/2022
Natalia Pol	4/16/22
Cecelia Pol	4/16/22

Confirmed – 1

Sophia Higgins 11/ 6/22

First Communion –

Natalia Pol	4/16/22
Cecilia Pol	4/16/22
Avriana Spears	5/15/22
Everly Spears	5/15/22

Deaths - 5

Patricia Bergren	2/19/22
LaVerne Schrader	2/28/22
Dan Sisco	5/3/22
Jean Buckley	5/16/22
Ray Wesley	11/12/22

New Members

Janice Holguin	2/2/22
Bo Ramoska	12/28/22

PRESCHOOL REPORT

Pre-K enrollment for the 2022-2023 school year has rebounded post Covid. Two-day enrollment is at 12, three-day is 11, and three-day extended is also 11 students. Tuition remains at \$110/month for 2-day class, \$150/month 3-day, \$225/month 3-day extended. The last staff pay raise was given during the 2021-2022 school year. Registration for next school year is underway.

PROPERTY COMMITTEE

The Property Committee continued to support the mission and vision of Augsburg through the day-to-day upkeep of the church's assets. In addition, the committee continued implementing the items of the "Walking in the Light" Capital Campaign.

The "Walking in the Light" Capital Campaign LED light fixtures replacement has been completed. The remaining lights to be converted to LED technology are the fixtures in the kitchen and replacement of the incandescent bulbs in the glass globes both in the upstairs hallway and Narthex.

The H&A systems for the sanctuary have been operating well. One of the three units has been shut down due to the failure of the heat exchanger coils. The replacement of this coil has been put on hold due to repair cost of approximately \$4500. This condition needs to be addressed in the coming year.

A new dishwasher and garbage disposal were installed at the parsonage this past year. We are investigating what looks like water damage in the front bedroom ceiling. An immediate cause has not been identified. Further investigation will be needed and repairs are required.

Repair of the fascia and gable ends of the parsonage garage with aluminum and steel material has successfully held out the squirrels. They did manage to create a hole in the soffit which has been repaired.

Burstrom Chapel's cedar roof was replaced this spring. The congregation voted to secure a loan for this repair. A go-fund-me page was also created to help fund this expenditure. The remaining list of repairs to the Chapel will be done by volunteers.

Thanks to the many volunteers that have helped during the completion of the above projects. Special thanks to Rob Ahrendt and Jack Anderson for their continued attention to maintenance at Burstrom Chapel.

Respectfully submitted,

Keith Gesse

Brian Gustafson

Dennis Brubaker

Travis Dunlap

Tara Hodgson

Don Freese

SOCIAL MINISTRY

Go in peace and serve the Lord!

The Social Ministry Committee's purpose is to serve the Lord by gathering items and funds to share with the needy. The generous response by Augsburg's people shows evidence of our faith.

Our Noisy Offering, designated to go to First Contact, gives financial assistance for our Porter County neighbors. Our offerings to Lutheran World Relief help those who live far from us.

The items we contribute to the Westchester Food Pantry provide food for members of our own community.

During Lent we gather towels, combs, toothbrushes, bars of soap and nail clippers, and then assemble Personal Care Kits to be sent to needy persons who are escaping terrorism, as well as to others who lack these necessities.

Throughout 2022 we collected and packed School Kits that were sent to children who need them in order for them to attend schools. Thanks to all the contributors of the pens, pencils, notebooks, crayons, erasers, scissors, and rulers, and especially to the two persons who manufactured all of the backpacks. It requires the generosity and combined efforts of many people to make this important mission to be a success.

As we are given our Daily Bread, we share with those who are Our Neighbors, no matter how close or far apart we may live. As God blesses us, God blesses others through our giving and sharing.

Thanks be to God!

For the Social Ministry Committee: John and Jeanette Baker, Marianne Ahrendt,
Jim Babcock, and Jim Fant

STEWARDSHIP AND FINANCE

As we started to pull out of the pandemic, 2022 became more like normal times. We were able to keep to one worship service inside for the entire year. We resurrected the annual stewardship event on December 4th. It was a very successful event. It was wonderful to be in fellowship as a congregation once again.

The most important part for us is the consistent cash flow to the church. Did you know that you can contribute electronically? There is a link on our website to get you there: <https://www.augsburglutheran.org/> Many banks offer electronic contributions as well. You can, also, mail in your contribution.

As a commitment to you, I have kept you informed monthly of our financial status. Some months were better than other months. For obvious reasons, our expenses were still lower than budgeted. I am beyond grateful that this congregation has been sending in your donations continually. Due to this support, we have been able to continue our ministries to First Contact (also known as Noisy Offering) and the Westchester Food Pantry. These organizations need our support to help those within our communities.

Thank you to all for your contributions. God Bless!

Sincerely in Christ,

Caroline Ward

WORSHIP AND MUSIC

Hymn selections made for services during meetings held throughout the year. Meetings attended by Pastor Bernth and Jane DeVries.

Some musical selections played by bell choir were selected as favorites of choir members. Additional favorite hymn recommendations welcome from other members of the congregation.

Some selections were made from a new hymnal called, "All Creation Sings."

Bell choir is always welcoming new members! We welcome all ages and ability levels. Training offered as requested.

New assisting ministers, lectors, and bell choir members participated in services.

Additional new lectors, assisting ministers, greeters and ushers, and communion assistants are needed. Training can be provided. Sign up sheets are in the Narthex.

Respectfully submitted,

Worship and Music Committee

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION REPORT

Sunday School attendance for pre-kindergarten through 5th grade ranged from 3-11 elementary aged kids. We are using Children's Worship Bulletins (www.childrensbulletins.com) as the main curriculum, plus various free online resources for crafts and game ideas.

In January, the Sunday School class met each Sunday at 9:00am (during the Eucharist) and continued with that schedule through May. Beginning in September, instruction took place on Wednesday evenings at 7pm, the same time that the Confirmation class was meeting. We have had success with this new schedule, and attendance has been steady. The elementary aged children resumed music with Jane as a part of their Sunday School instruction.

With Wednesdays becoming "Christian Education Night", the elementary aged students and the Confirmation class have worked together to play games, review, and teach each other various bible lessons.

Vacation Bible School was held in person during the week of June 6th. We had an "Deep Waters" theme. We had 9 participants throughout the week. We enjoyed bible lessons, crafts, games, and a water balloon fight!

The Christmas Pageant was also held on December 18th. We had 14 Confirmation and Sunday School participants.

Respectfully submitted,

Kaitlin Ferguson

OPERATING SUMMARY

Operating Summary Report - 2022
1/1/2022 through 12/31/2022 Using Operating Budget 2022

1/11/2023

Page 1

Category	1/1/2022 Actual	- Budget	12/31/2022 Difference
INCOME	233,768.79	276,659.04	-42,890.25
Contributions	227,107.85	267,799.00	-40,691.15
Miscellaneous Income	6,660.94	8,860.04	-2,199.10
EXPENSES	247,563.40	276,658.88	29,095.48
Administration	12,279.74	14,425.00	2,145.26
Benevolence	20,465.82	25,686.00	5,220.18
Building	34,908.42	38,799.92	3,891.50
Education	0.00	2,200.00	2,200.00
Evangelism	0.00	800.00	800.00
Miscellaneous Expense	0.00	500.00	500.00
Parish Life	135.29	500.00	364.71
Pastor Benefits	47,859.52	51,537.00	3,677.48
Payroll Expenses	110,862.98	119,901.00	9,038.02
Stewardship	819.56	800.00	-19.56
Utilities	15,558.45	13,500.00	-2,058.45
Vacation Supply	0.00	2,700.00	2,700.00
Worship-Music	4,673.62	5,309.96	636.34
Net Difference:	-13,794.61	0.16	-13,794.77

John Murphy 1-22-2023
Accounting Finance 1/22/23
John Murphy 1/22/23