



# FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH

MAKING DISCIPLES OF JESUS CHRIST  
FOR THE TRANSFORMATION OF THE WORLD.

ANNUAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING  
JANUARY 28, 2018 12:30 PM

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**AGENDA**  
**ONE HUNDRED FORTY-EIGHTH ANNUAL**  
**MEETING FIRST EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN**  
**CHURCH**

**Lincoln, Nebraska**

**January 28, 2018**

**12:30 p.m.**

- I. Call to Order and Establishment of Quorum (Steve Eicher, President)
- II. Opening Devotions (Pastor Dan Warnes)
- III. Approval of the agenda (Steve Eicher)
- IV. Approval of the minutes and ratification of the actions of the 147th Annual Congregational Meeting on January 29, 2017 (Steve Eicher)
- V. Nominations and Elections (Verdell Bohling, Nominating Committee chair)
  - a. Congregation Council
  - b. Endowment Fund Board
  - c. Nominating Committee
  - d. Synod Assembly
- VI. 2017 Membership Report (Pastor Warnes)
- VII. Staff and Leadership Recognition (Steve Eicher)
- VIII. New Business (Steve Eicher)
  - a. Motion to approve the Ministry Budget for 2018 (Matt Peters, Treasurer)
  - b. Motion to contract with architectural firm RDG to develop Contract Documents for First Lutheran Church's building project
  - c. Motion to contract with Walsh and Associates to conduct a capital campaign for funding First Lutheran Church's building project
- IX. Old/Unfinished Business (Steve Eicher)
- X. Q & A regarding Reports of President, Staff, Committees and Boards (All)
- XI. Open Comment Period (Steve Eicher)
- XII. Closing Prayer (Pastor Dan Warnes)
- XIII. Adjournment (Steve Eicher)

MINUTES OF THE ONE HUNDRED FORTY-SEVENTH ANNUAL MEETING  
FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH  
Lincoln, NE  
January 29, 2017  
1/29/2017

**1. CALL TO ORDER AND ESTABLISHMENT OF QUORUM:**

The 147<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting of First Evangelical Lutheran Church was called to order at 12:36 by President Steve Eicher. Church members signed in as they arrived. It was determined that a quorum (5% of members) was established. There were 1019 confirmed members as of December 31, 2016. (5% x 1019 confirmed members = 51 members is a quorum).

**II. OPENING DEVOTIONS:** Pastor Dan Warnes led the opening devotions.

**III. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA:** Robert's Rules of Order was used for the meeting. Priscilla Hayden-Roy served as Parliamentarian and Recorder. It was moved and seconded that the agenda be approved. It was approved by consensus.

**IV. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING ON JANUARY 31, 2016.** It was moved and seconded that the minutes be approved. They were accepted by consensus.

**V. NOMINATIONS AND ELECTIONS:**

Steve Eicher explained the voting system at First Lutheran Church and asked for nominations from the floor for each of the positions. None were made, so Steve declared the nominations to be closed by unanimous consent.

Sandy Latshaw, Chair of the Nominating Committee, thanked the current Nominating Committee and then read the names:

**A. of the Council Nominees for 2016 (vote for 6):**

Wendy Bonaiuto, Juliana Ehlers, Barry Graham, Paul Gronbeck, Barb Johnson-Frank, Jennifer Nelson, Brian Niebuhr, Madalyn Popken, Mary Rogge, Brandon Wiebelhaus.

**B. of the Nominating Committee nominees for 2016 (Vote for 3):** Linda Carlson, Lisa Culbertson, Molly Goninan, Kari Hoeft, Jim Sandman, Mitch Snyder.

**C. of the Delegates to Synod Assembly Nominees for 2016 (Vote for 5 – at least 2 men and 2 women):** Lanny Carlson, Bev DeGeorge, Bill Hammelmann, Jeanne Hellerich, Anna Marie King, Elaine Kruse, Arlene Nelson, Len Nelson, Neal Simley, Don Westerhold.

**D. of the Lincoln Mission Cluster Representative Nominees for 2016 (Vote for 2):** Faye Doolittle, Clay Ehlers, Kay Rockwell, Karen Statham

**E. of the Endowment Board Nominees for 2016 (Vote for 1):** Peggy King, Tim Maack.

**VI. 2016 MEMBERSHIP REPORT**

Pastor Dan Warnes presented the Membership Report for 2016.

A. There were 1246 baptized members as of December 31, 2016, of whom 1019 are confirmed.

B. There were 15 persons baptized in 2016.

C. The names of those who entered everlasting peace in 2016 were read:

Randy Lynn Bailey	Darrell Clinton Troutman
Denis Kerry Applebee	Warren Eugene Mickelson
Ronald Joseph Reineke	Delores Jean Penfield
Adelaide B. Sasse	Janet G. Mills
Shirley A. Clopeck	Carol Avis Nelson
Virginia L. Heinke	Donald Anton Holm
Harold Edward Schuster	Ruth Beulah Swanson
Norma Thomsen	Bernice May Peterson

**VII. STAFF LEADERSHIP AND RECOGNITION.**

Steve Eicher gave thanks to all church staff and lay leaders:

**Church Ministry Staff:**

Pastor Dan Warnes	Lead Pastor
Pastor Justin Eller	Associate Pastor
Bonita Johnson	Director of Worship and Music
Sunni Richardson	Director of Discipleship
Heidi Widner	Director of Youth and Family Ministries
Vicar Kelsey Fitting-Snyder	Gettysburg Seminary Intern
Pastor Marsha Anderson	Visitation Pastor

**Office Staff:**

Judy Batterman	Parish Coordinator
Kathleen Simley	Communications Coordinator
Rebecca Simley	Church Office Assistant
Judy Bailey	Church Office Assistant
Cyndi Crouse	Parish Coordinator
Bryan Hanson	Church Accountant (23 years)

**Facilities Staff:**

Blaz Knezevic	Building Superintendent
Greg Fisher	Weekend Custodian
Dennis Schuster	Kitchen Coordinator

**Preschool Director and Staff:**

Annette Watts	Preschool Director
Jane Reynolds	Preschool Staff
Stacy Carper	Preschool Staff

**Music Assistants:**

Christine Carmen

Jan Mares

Erin Niebuhr

Kristina Hanson

**Those who are completing their 3-year term on the Congregation Council:**

Sandy Latshaw, Jeff Greunke, Barb Johnson Frank, Gordon Youngquist, Mike Hansen

. Steve Eicher presented a gift in the name of the Congregation to these members.

**Council members who have served with Steve Eicher on the Executive Committee this year:**

Vice-President – Wendy Hunt

Secretary – Priscilla Hayden-Roy

Treasurer – Matt Peters

Pastor Dan Warnes

Pastor Justin Eller

**Those continuing to serve on Council in 2015:**

Verdell Bohling, Kim Hall, Kim Harper, Priscilla Hayden-Roy, Wendy Hunt, Terry Kruse, Natalie Mares, Slate Mathes, Matt Peters and myself (Steve Eicher); Pastor Dan Warnes; Pastor Justin Eller, Ann Carlson (recording secretary)

**Those who are completing their 3-year term on the Endowment Board:**

Tim Maack

**Those who will be continuing their term on the Endowment Board are:**

Steve Dickey, Jon Peppmuller, Linda Bogenreif, Al Williams

**Those who are completing their 2-year term on Nominating Committee:**

Brian Niebuhr, Norman Kempf, Nancy Hoppner

Steve Eicher thanked Sandy Latshaw for serving as Council Representative to the Nominating Committee

**Those continuing their term on the Nominating Committee:**

Brook Glenn, Bob Rauner, Paul Scheel

**Those who are completing their 1-year term on Synod Assembly:**

Linda Hinkle, Karen Kuhn, Susan Myren, Chris Simley, Harold Sutter

**Those who are completing their 1-year term as Lincoln Mission Cluster Representative:**

Kay Rockwell

**Those serving on the Transition Team during our Associate Minister Call Process:**

Bev DeGeorge, Priscilla Hayden-Roy, Kim Harper, Cindy Lilleoien, Mike McDannel (chair), Brian Niebuhr, Pastor Dan Warnes

**Those serving on the Call Committee during our Associate Minister Call Process:**

Courtney Anderson, Jeff Gruenke, Donice Kaspar, Warren Luckner (chair), Natalie Mares, Aaron Ward, Pastor Dan Warnes

**Those serving on the Welcoming Statement Implementation Task Force**

Barb Johnson-Frank, Barry Graham, Slate Mathes, Michelle Sitorius, Sunni Richardson, Pastor Dan Warnes

**Those serving on the Visioning Teams**

Worship and Accessibility:

Susan Myren, Doug Lind-Olson, Karen Lind-Olson, Jennifer Wemhoff, Brandon Wiebelhaus, Priscilla Hayden-Roy; Staff: Sunni Richardson, Pastor Dan, Bonita Johnson

Learning:

Gina Seebohm, Cindy Lilleoien, Patrick Hayden-Roy, Jerry Tharpe, Wendy Hunt, Barb Monson, STAFF: Pastor Justin, Heidi Widner, Sunni Richardson

Serving:

Karen Lenzen, Randy Nitz, Shari Sorensen, Brooke Glenn, Kim Hall, Carl Kramer, STAFF: Sunni Richardson, Pastor Justin

**VIII. NEW BUSINESS**

**A. Motion to approve 2017 Budget**

Matt Peters thanked members of the Finance Committee and Bryan Hanson for their work on the budget and presented a brief overview of the budget, mentioning the following points:

- . the Finance Committee began meeting in October, and had the final budget ready by early January;
- . 2016 ended with a surplus;
- . we are looking to put this surplus into Fund II for a potential capital campaign;
- . First Lutheran Church continues to double-tithe, with a slight adjustment to the percentages: 15% to Synod Benevolence, 5% to special benevolences and social ministry;
- . cost of the vicar is lower in 2017 because we budgeted in 2016 for a full year of having a vicar on staff; since we had several months without a vicar, we were able to forward the savings from 2016 into this year's vicar budget;
- . the 2017 budget has a line item to transfer \$8,200 from the Thrivent Choice Funds (Fund II transfer), if needed (this backup has been used the past few years, although to date we have not needed to avail ourselves of these monies);
- . the budget for First Lutheran Church will be \$1,004,700 in 2017;
- . the total amount pledged for 2017 increased, although the total number of pledges decreased.

It was moved and seconded that the Congregation of First Lutheran Church in Lincoln, Nebraska, approve the proposed 2017 budget. There was no discussion. The motion passed.

## B. Motion to Adopt ELCA Model Constitution Amendments under Protest

Steve Eicher read and explained the motion that First Lutheran Church, Lincoln, NE, adopt the amendments (both required and optional) to the *Model Constitution for Congregations of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America* which were adopted by the 2016 Churchwide Assembly, but to do so under protest.

As stated in the "Background Statement" in the motion, the amendments to the Model Constitution are primarily designed to merge the three lay rosters (Associates of Ministry, Deaconesses, and Diaconal Ministers) into a roster of Ministers of Word and Service, an action supported by the Executive Committee of First Lutheran Church and the full Council. However, the amendments refer to Ministers of Word and Service throughout as "deacons," although "deacon" historically has designated only men. The Executive Committee believes revisions to the Model Constitution should contain the wording of Deacon/Deaconess, or another suitable title, when referring to Ministers of Word and Service, thus eliminating the exclusive gender reference. A letter of protest has been drafted and submitted to the Nebraska Synod of the ELCA.

The motion was moved and seconded. Discussion followed:

- . Steve Eicher explained further that the NE Synod should take a look at the language that they use, rather than using just the term "deacon," since there are also many female Ministers of Word and Service.

- . a question was raised as to what the consequences of the protest would be: will it lead to change, or will the protest simply be duly noted? Pastor Dan Warnes answered that by adopting the motion we are changing our constitution to be in accord with the ELCA model constitution; by doing this under protest, we are asking that a conversation be opened, which we feel is an appropriate action. The letter has gone to the Nebraska Synod with the hope that they will carry forward the idea of further conversation.

The motion passed.

## C. Visioning process highlights and development of timeline

Pastor Dan Warnes presented an overview of the Visioning Process:

- . we have been working on the visioning process for about a year and a half; about a year ago five goals were formulated; the Council divided them into Phase 1 and 2 goals, assessments were also recorded for each goal;

- . for last couple months Phase 1 teams have been conducting the assessments; their written reports are available on the Church website.

- . the Learning and Serving teams will begin implementing the recommendations as we move forward;

- . Worship and Accessibility team recommended to form a Building Committee;

- . the Building Committee will consult with architects in an attempt to find solutions to inaccessibility issues in the facility and theological issues in the worship space.

- . by May-June we hope to have an idea of how to address these issues.

- . we will then begin with the Phase II goals, which relate to resources:

- 1) feasibility study for a capital campaign in late spring/early summer

- 2) assess current resources as they relate to programming and building;

- . in the fall we will be bringing some concrete ideas to the Congregation;
- . we will be prioritizing the issues raised in the reports by the Welcoming Statement Implementation, and Worship and Accessibility Task Forces; not all issues will be able to be addressed; we will be deliberate in prioritizing them.

Discussion followed:

- . question was raised as to how the assessment conducted previously when the RDG plan was drafted will fold into the current discussions; Pastor Dan said that all the work done at that time, which included very helpful assessments of the facility and First's needs, is being and will continue to be evaluated in the new process. This does not mean that we will end up with the same plan as what RDG put forward, but the work done then contributes significantly to the current process; there was no time or money wasted then.

#### IX. Old/Unfinished Business

##### A. Closure of First Lutheran Preschool

Steve Eicher presented a brief overview of the history of First Lutheran Church's Preschool and the decision taken in 2016 to close it.

In 2015 we put an extra \$16,000 in the budget, noting that the school was in decline, but hoping that with some support, the school could be revitalized. We found that:

- . demographics in Lincoln have changed; the group we once served with a half day preschool, has shrunk. Nebraska has about 77% dual working parents (one of the highest in the nation), so that the demand for a half-day program has greatly decreased;
- . we considered cost: we would have had to go to an all-day session, offer transportation, and update the facility. Given the dwindling numbers, we did not feel the investment could be justified at present.
- . the preschool ran for 45 years; it was a hard decision to close it after such a long time. Annette Watts was hired as Director and worked diligently in her role, but at the end there was consensus that the decision to close the preschool was necessary.

##### X. Reports from Council, Staff, Committees, Boards

Steve asked if there were any questions with regard to these reports. There were none. They stand as submitted.

##### XI. Open Comment Period

A. A request was made to give an example of the challenges in the facility that we're looking to investigate this spring:

Pastor Dan replied that accessibility is a problem:

- . if you wish to sing in the choir, you need to be able to climb the steep stairs to balcony;
- . the choir loft is also too small;
- . we do not have any bathrooms in the building that are accessible for people in wheelchairs; we would like to have at least one fully accessible bathroom on each floor;
- . the sidewalks out to the parking lot are too steep and dangerous;
- . there are issues with lighting, sound.



B. There was a question regarding the model constitution: are the changes limited to the merging of the three lay rosters under "Minister of Word and Service"? Steve Eicher explained that there were a number of other changes regarding:

- . Ministers of Word and Service and their call process,
- . the position requirements for Ministers of Word and Service,
- . policies for removal and reinstallation of Ministers of Word and Service,
- . deacon requirements,
- . clarification of bylaw changes,
- . definition of call parameters, and how a parish termination might take place.

#### XII. Election Results

Steve Eicher announced the election results:

Congregational Council 3-year term: Barb Johnson-Frank, Barry Graham, Jennifer Nelson, Brian Niebuhr, Mary Rogge

Nominating Committee: Molly Goninan, Jim Sandman, Mitch Snyder

Synod Assembly: Bev DeGeorge, Bill Hammelmann, Anna Marie King, Elaine Kruse, Don Westerhold

Lincoln Mission Cluster: Clay Ehlers, Faye Doolittle

Endowment Board: Peggy King

XIII. Pastor Justin Eller closed in prayer.

XIV. Meeting was adjourned by Steve Eicher at 1:50 PM.

## MEMBERSHIP REPORT 2017

<u>MINISTERIAL ACTS</u>	
Baptisms	8
Confirmations	9
Weddings	5
Funerals	8

<u>MEMBERSHIP SUMMARY</u>		
	Baptized	Confirmed
Membership, January 1, 2017	<u>1246</u>	<u>1019</u>
Additions:		
Baptized	15	2
New Members Received	25	18
Confirmation		9
Return to Active		
Other		
Total	<u>40</u>	<u>29</u>
Subtractions:		
Deaths	7	7
Transfer	39	27
To Inactive	5	3
Other	<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>
Total	52	38
Membership, December 31, 2017	1234	1010

We give thanks to God for the new birth of everlasting life into which each of the following was baptized in 2017:

Owen Daniel Meyer	Monroe Renae Long
Elliot Kellyn Mitchell	Maverick Fayne Gross
Jax Tyler Mencl	Sophia Benell Long
Milo Brandon Wiebelhaus	Harper Alivia Mannschreck

And we give thanks for the blessed rest of everlasting peace, into which each of the following entered in 2017:

Bernice Peterson	Thomas Tipton
John Nguth	Shirley Heier
Tom Kaspar	Edwin Miller
LaJean Price	Dorothy Ekblad

MEETING DATE: January 28, 2018

SUBJECT: Fiscal Year 2018 Budget

PROPOSED ACTION: The Church Council of First Evangelical Lutheran Church in Lincoln, Nebraska approve the proposed 2018 Ministry Budget.

BUDGET HIGHLIGHTS: The 2018 Ministry Budget recommended by the Finance Committee is based on total receipts and expenditures of \$1,011,150.

Projected offering receipts of \$997,550 represents a 1.4% increase over 2017 actual results (\$983,384).

Total Benevolence/Serving giving of \$199,510 represents a 20% double tithe of projected offering receipts, with 14% to the ELCA & Nebraska Synod (\$139,657) and 6% to local benevolences (\$59,853).

Program expenses (Worship, Learning and Hospitality/Care) total \$45,490; a 7.3% increase over 2017 actual expenses (\$42,380).

Support expenses total \$766,150; a 0.9% increase over 2017 actual expenses (\$759,175).

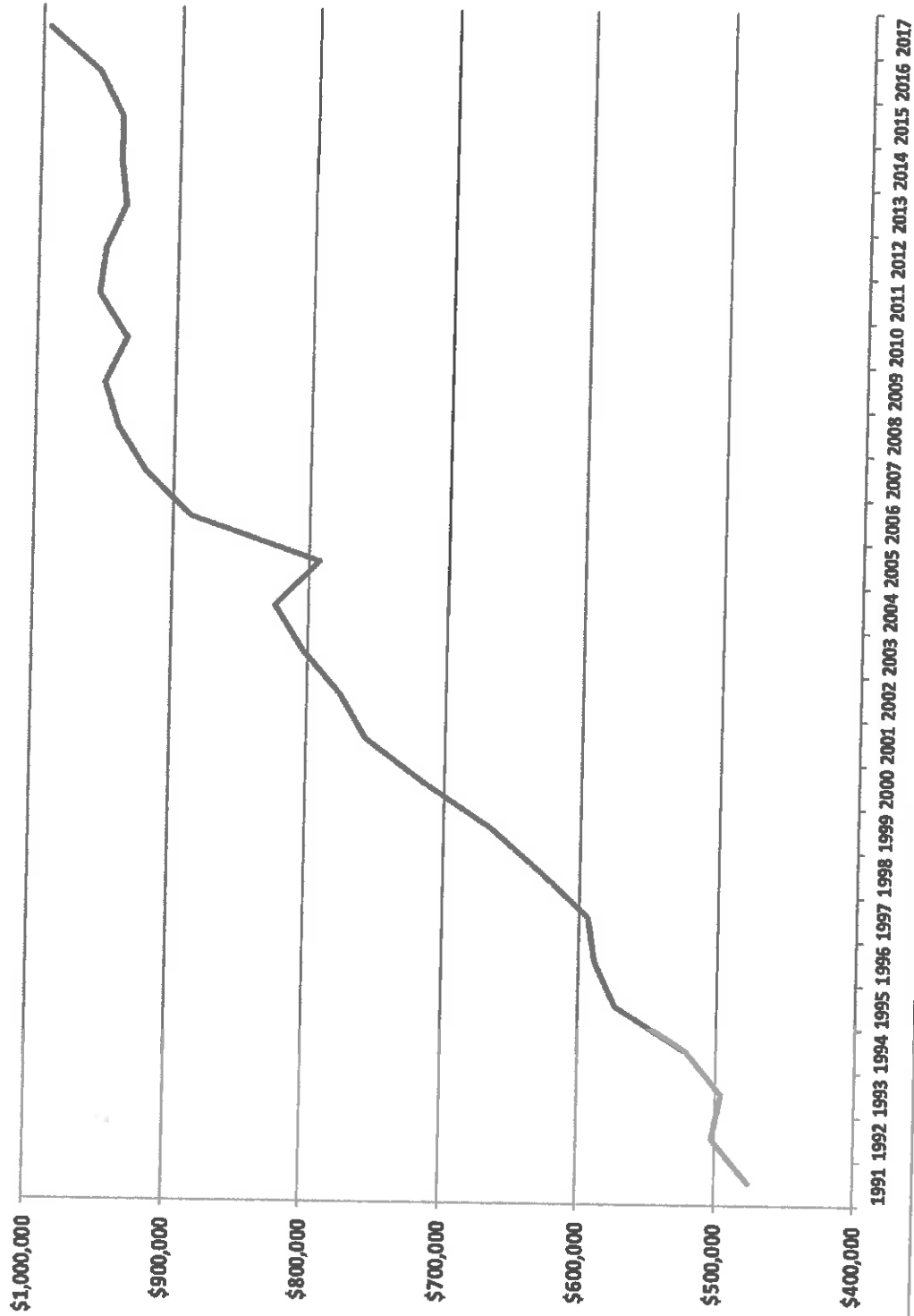
SPONSORS: Matthew Peters, Congregational Council Treasurer on behalf of the Finance Committee, supported by the Executive Committee members Pastor Dan Warnes, Pastor Justin Eller, Steve Eicher, Wendy Hunt, Priscilla Hayden-Roy (in addition to Al Seagren and Ann Carlson, Finance Committee members)

### Pledge / Envelope Receipts History

	# Pledges	Amount Pledged	Additional Envelope Receipts Received - Not Pledged	Total Envelope Receipts	
2012	291	\$798,599			
2013	305	\$842,508	\$118,587	\$917,186	
2014	303	\$860,459	\$71,903	\$914,411	
2015	261	\$789,086	\$70,182	\$930,641	
2016	269	\$806,896	\$139,650	\$928,736	
2017	260	\$823,041	\$134,802	\$941,698	
2018	258	\$830,780	\$159,720	\$976,761	Budgeted

	#	2017	2018	Incr / (Decr)	
Pledged 2017 & 2018					
increases	70	\$322,118	\$346,532	\$24,414	7.6%
decreases	22	\$72,615	\$52,890	(\$19,725)	-27.2%
no change	141	\$377,158	\$377,158	\$0	0.0%
Pledged both years	233	\$771,891	\$776,580	\$4,689	0.6%
Pledged 2018, not 2017	25		\$54,200	\$54,200	
Pledged 2017, not 2018	27	\$51,150			
<b>GRAND TOTALS</b>		<b>\$823,041</b>	<b>\$830,780</b>		

# FLC Total Receipts 1991-2017



**FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH  
2018 Budget**

<b>RECEIPTS</b>	<b>2015 Actual</b>	<b>2016 Actual</b>	<b>2017 Actual</b>	<b>2018 Budget</b>
Envelope Receipts	928,736	941,698	976,761	980,500
Loose Receipts	6,107	5,811	6,356	6,750
Sunday School	194	216	267	300
<b>Offering Receipts</b>	<b>935,037</b>	<b>947,725</b>	<b>983,384</b>	<b>997,550</b>
Misc & Building Use	6,850	7,525	5,818	6,600
Special Appeal - Pastor Search/Relo	-	3,345	-	-
Thrivent Choice Funds (Fund II transfer if needed)	-	-	6,357	7,000
<b>Other Receipts</b>	<b>6,850</b>	<b>10,870</b>	<b>12,175</b>	<b>13,600</b>
<b>TOTAL RECEIPTS</b>	<b>941,887</b>	<b>958,595</b>	<b>995,559</b>	<b>1,011,150</b>

<b>EXPENSES</b>	<b>2015 Actual</b>	<b>2016 Actual</b>	<b>2017 Actual</b>	<b>2018 Budget</b>
<b>ELCA &amp; Nebraska Synod Benevolence</b>	<b>144,931</b>	<b>146,897</b>	<b>147,508</b>	<b>139,657</b>
<i>% of Offering Receipts</i>	<b>15.50%</b>	<b>15.50%</b>	<b>15.00%</b>	<b>14.00%</b>

<b>Benevolence / Serving</b>	<b>2015 Actual</b>	<b>2016 Actual</b>	<b>2017 Actual</b>	<b>2018 Budget</b>
Vicar Program (1/2)	17,200	11,750	3,618	-
Lincoln Area Mission Cluster	2,370	2,480	-	-
World Hunger	8,000	8,000	8,000	8,000
LWR Disaster Relief	500	500	500	500
BackPack Program	1,561	2,300	6,300	5,400
Lutheran Food Pantry	1,000	1,500	1,500	1,500
Food Net	500	500	-	-
Bread For The World	500	500	500	500
Global Mission in Action (GMIA)	1,250	2,650	4,000	3,000
Lutheran Family Services	1,500	2,500	3,800	3,000
Matt Talbot Kitchen	2,000	1,700	1,500	1,700
Fresh Start	-	1,000	2,500	2,000
Tabitha (Meals on Wheels)	2,500	3,000	5,000	4,000
Prison Ministry / Bridges To Hope	2,000	2,000	2,800	2,250
UNL Lutheran Center	700	1,000	4,000	1,000
UNL Capital Campaign	-	-	-	20,000
UNL Intern Support	-	-	-	5,000
Nebraska Campus Lutheran Ministries	700	700	1,000	1,000
LMIA Discretionary	472	500	1,478	1,003
<b>Benevolence and Social Ministry: Total</b>	<b>42,753</b>	<b>42,580</b>	<b>46,496</b>	<b>39,853</b>
<i>% of Offering Receipts</i>	<b>4.57%</b>	<b>4.49%</b>	<b>4.73%</b>	<b>6.00%</b>

<b>ELCA/Nebraska Synod Benevolence and Social Ministry</b>	<b>187,684</b>	<b>189,477</b>	<b>194,004</b>	<b>199,510</b>
<b>Grand Total</b> <i>% of Offering Receipts</i>	<b>20.07%</b>	<b>19.99%</b>	<b>19.73%</b>	<b>20.00%</b>

<b>FUND II Benevolence Giving 2017</b>	
Gifts of Hope	\$ 10,208
Food Pantry/World Hunger	\$ 1,609
Goat fund (Kay Rockwell)	\$ 4,575
Pastor's discretionary fund	\$ 5,677
Immigrant fund	\$ 1,060
Lenten & Advent meals	\$ 1,385
BackPack program	\$ 8,655
Disaster relief (floods/hurricanes)	\$ 5,720
Endowment fund	\$ 15,245
Trees for Tanzania	\$ 1,480
Kicks for Kids	\$ 1,462
Others...	\$ 2,349
	<b>\$ 59,425</b>

<b>Worship</b>	<b>2015 Actual</b>	<b>2016 Actual</b>	<b>2017 Actual</b>	<b>2018 Budget</b>
Devotional Materials	227	319	278	300
Worship Supplies	4,757	4,126	6,115	5,500
Celebration/Speakers	250	-	-	150
Music Honoraria	525	525	1,150	500
Worship Decorations	150	28	43	75
Music/Choir	3,423	3,637	2,692	3,950
Music Conferences/Workshops	695	-	510	500
Organ/Piano Maintenance	2,244	3,285	763	2,750
Choir Fellowship	180	270	156	200
Drama Ministry	-	-	-	75
<b>Worship: Total</b>	<b>12,451</b>	<b>12,190</b>	<b>11,707</b>	<b>14,000</b>
<i>% of Offering Receipts</i>	<b>1.33%</b>	<b>1.29%</b>	<b>1.19%</b>	<b>1.40%</b>

	2015 Actual	2016 Actual	2017 Actual	2018 Budget
<b>Learning</b>				
Early Childhood	-	-	-	1,300
Elementary	3,013	3,934	2,805	2,950
Middle School	1,770	1,776	1,751	4,330
High School	10,240	10,976	10,367	7,000
Adults	(45)	926	1,073	1,050
First Learning Center Pre-school	7,667	9,135	-	-
Library & Media	321	312	279	300
The Lutheran	4,140	4,090	4,018	4,010
Advocacy	118	100	-	100
Creation Care	-	576	12	400
Scientists In Congregations	-	-	22	100
<b>Learning: Total</b>	<b>27,224</b>	<b>31,825</b>	<b>20,327</b>	<b>21,540</b>
<b>% of Offering Receipts</b>	<b>2.91%</b>	<b>3.36%</b>	<b>2.07%</b>	<b>2.16%</b>

	2015 Actual	2016 Actual	2017 Actual	2018 Budget
<b>Hospitality / Care</b>				
Hospitality	5,925	5,544	7,196	6,500
Stewardship	1,471	2,622	1,280	1,250
Fellowship	33	373	250	250
Funeral Lunches	(594)	23	(186)	100
Stephen Ministry	2,111	2,448	1,270	1,500
God's Work Our Hands	-	180	536	350
<b>Hospitality/Care: Total</b>	<b>8,946</b>	<b>11,190</b>	<b>10,346</b>	<b>9,950</b>
<b>% of Offering Receipts</b>	<b>0.96%</b>	<b>1.18%</b>	<b>1.05%</b>	<b>1.00%</b>

	2015 Actual	2016 Actual	2017 Actual	2018 Budget
<b>Support</b>				
Compensation	399,163	400,654	448,355	467,340
Pension/Health Insurance	121,787	116,684	137,588	134,517
FICA Payroll Tax	29,737	29,699	37,396	37,908
Continuing Education	4,500	4,333	4,750	5,000
Pastors Professional Expense	459	432	468	400
Staff Professional Expense	-	-	150	300
Vicar Program (1/2)	17,200	17,500	3,618	-
Staff Hospitality	583	1,003	722	800
Staff Development	439	239	709	300
Conferences/Workshops (staff)	1,917	1,535	1,587	1,650
Synod Assembly (non-staff)	914	1,675	1,734	1,700
Auto & Travel	8,486	8,453	10,998	11,100
Call Committee	-	5,602	-	-
Call Relocation	-	5,667	3,717	-
Postage	3,056	3,758	3,029	3,100
Background Checks	239	156	16	600
Office Supplies	4,321	4,920	5,945	5,505
Banking Fees	739	846	1,357	1,680
Communications	3,345	2,265	3,698	2,350
Printer Expense	4,805	5,217	5,737	6,000
Computer Needs	2,651	3,770	3,406	1,300
Insurance	16,780	18,112	18,239	18,600
Utilities/Telephone	34,219	30,938	32,159	33,000
Janitorial Supplies	2,424	4,034	1,883	2,200
Repairs & Maintenance	15,467	15,810	18,012	19,000
Maintenance Reserve Fund	1,600	5,000	7,500	6,000
Service Contracts	2,304	2,517	4,634	3,600
Lawn Care/Snow Removal	2,889	3,201	1,768	2,200
<b>Support: Total</b>	<b>680,024</b>	<b>694,020</b>	<b>759,175</b>	<b>766,150</b>
<b>% of Offering Receipts</b>	<b>72.73%</b>	<b>78.28%</b>	<b>77.20%</b>	<b>76.80%</b>

<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>916,329</b>	<b>938,702</b>	<b>995,559</b>	<b>1,011,150</b>
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<b>TOTAL RECEIPTS</b>	<b>941,887</b>	<b>958,595</b>	<b>995,559</b>	<b>1,011,150</b>
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	2015 Actual	2016 Actual	2017 Actual	2018 Budget
<b>RECEIPTS LESS EXPENSES</b>	<b>25,558</b>	<b>19,893</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>
	<b>SURPLUS</b>	<b>SURPLUS</b>		

<i>all to maintenance reserve fund</i>	<i>potential capital campaign expenses</i>
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12/31/2017

**FUND II -- ACCOUNT ANALYSIS**

		<u>BALANCE</u> <u>12/31/2016</u>	<u>RECEIPTS</u>	<u>EXPENSES</u>	<u>INTEREST</u>	<u>TRANSFER</u>	<u>BALANCE</u> <u>12/31/2017</u>
<b>Housing</b>	Checking Acct	637.21	1,500.00		0.23	-2,000.00	137.44
	Money Mkt Acct	1,299.38			1.06	2,000.00	3,300.44
	Housing Loan - Pastor Eller	14,500.00		-1,500.00			13,000.00
<b>Designated</b>	Checking Acct	18,169.09	105,578.34	-135,524.12	1.59	10,000.00	-1,775.10
	Money Mkt Acct	147,928.61			118.03	-10,000.00	138,046.64
<b>Memorial Fund</b>	Checking Acct	346.84	5,080.00	-8,422.02	0.34	4,000.00	1,005.16
	Money Mkt Acct	33,268.19			26.55	-4,000.00	29,294.74
<b>Flowers</b>	Checking Acct	192.08	2,395.08	-2,261.98			325.18
	Money Mkt Acct	1,714.98			1.39		1,716.37
<b>Music</b>	Checking Acct	306.03	570.00	-154.43	0.01		721.61
	Money Mkt Acct	2,242.14			1.78		2,243.92
<b>Youth</b>	Checking Acct	468.63	17,971.80	-19,795.18	0.49	3,000.00	1,645.74
	Money Mkt Acct	17,506.41			13.16	-3,000.00	14,519.57
<b>Capital Campaign</b>	Checking Acct	269.69	12,130.00		0.19	-4,000.00	8,399.88
	Money Mkt Acct	9,227.75			7.40	4,000.00	13,235.15
<b>Maintenance Reserve</b>	Checking Acct	24.05	8,189.59	-4,134.03	0.42	-4,000.00	80.03
	Money Mkt Acct	49,789.24			39.68	4,000.00	53,828.92
<b>Sabbatical</b>	Checking Acct	106.17		-1,734.53		2,000.00	371.64
	Money Mkt Acct	12,871.23			9.86	-2,000.00	10,881.09
<b>Ministry Initiative Fund</b>	Checking Acct	207.43		-9,150.96		10,000.00	1,056.47
	Money Mkt Acct	21,578.11			16.02	-10,000.00	11,594.13
<b>Fair Trade</b>	Checking Acct	1,502.09	4,408.75	-3,837.93	0.27		2,073.18
<b>Seminary Scholarship</b>	Checking Acct	12.05					12.05
	Money Mkt Acct	12,722.18			10.09		12,732.27
		<u>346,889.58</u>	<u>157,823.56</u>	<u>-186,515.18</u>	<u>248.56</u>	<u>0.00</u>	<u>318,446.52</u>

## Annual Report of Congregation Council President Steve Eicher

I would like to say thank you for the privilege of serving as president of the First Lutheran Church (FLC) Congregation Council for the past 2 years and to express my gratitude for our very talented and dedicated staff. Much like 2016, 2017 was another year of staff transition for FLC with new Co-Directors of Music and Worship and a new Director of Youth Ministries. Our vision, *Making disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world* is gathering momentum through the three focus areas of Worship, Learning and Serving and will continue to be defined and brought to life as we progress through 2018. 2017 also represented the "kick off" to our potential building process and the coming year will challenge us as we prepare for the next chapter of the First Lutheran "history book". We are a congregation striving to fulfill our vision while listening intently to the voice of Holy Spirit. I hope you will take the time to read the reports and consider the calling to continue or increase your personal involvement in our ongoing ministries.

I would also like to recognize the elected council members who volunteer numerous hours of service to First Lutheran: Verdell Bohling, Kim Cordonier, Steve Eicher (president), Associate Pastor Justin Eller, Barry Graham, Kim Hall, Priscilla Hayden-Roy (secretary), Wendy Hunt (vice president), Barb Johnson-Frank, Terry Kruse, Natalie Mares, Slate Mathes, Jennifer Nelson, Brian Niebuhr, Matt Peters (treasurer), Mary Rogge, Pastor Dan Warnes, Minister, Word and Service Sunni Richardson (has voice, but not vote).

### 2017 Council Highlights:

- Approved the use of approximately \$19,900 from 2016 surplus funds for the purpose of potential capital campaign expenses
- Approved FLC becoming the first AMMPARO (Accompanying Migrant Minors with Protection, Advocacy, Representation and Opportunities) Congregation in the Nebraska Synod
- Approved the development of a new website, logo design, newsletter and collateral support materials utilizing StoryHook as the contractor
- Established a Building Committee and approved membership for assessing potential building modifications, based on recommendations from the Worship and Accessibility Vision Team
- Appointed members to the Audit, Finance, Nominating, Compensation, and Columbarium Committees throughout the year
- Conducted a Council Retreat to review the Visioning Process and assess the actions developed for each goal, gained endorsement and formulated next steps
- Approved Lenten Services offerings for use by the Fellowship Committee, South Sudan Relief and Lincoln Lutheran Family Services
- Approved a complete upgrade to our Wi-Fi system from a consumer grade to a mid-range commercial grade Wi-Fi system with thanks to Brian Niebuhr and Lyle Peterson for their expertise and assistance. In addition, our Internet provider was changed from Blue Stem to Allo Communications for cost savings and performance improvement
- Supported the prayerful and tactical development of Vision and Mission Goals for 2020 for each leg of the three-legged stool; Accessibility and Worship, Learning and Serving
- Supported the installation of the Director(s) of Worship and Music, Masako and Boyd Bacon through interaction/coordination with the Hiring Committee and through the approval of a compensation and benefit package
- Met with representatives of Dimension's and Prosper Lincoln's Early Education programs to assess the possibility of partnering with them for an on-site early educational joint venture
- Approved the appointment of FLC's new Director of Youth Ministries, Sharon Hardel
- Recognized Pastor Dan for his 30 year ordination anniversary



- Agreed to establish an Emergency Action Plan utilizing a team to develop and implement the plan. Actions include the drafting a formal Emergency Action document, approving expenditures for calibration and maintenance of the AED device and the purchase of an Emergency Action App (CRISIS GO) for first responders
- Approved architectural firm RDG via Letter of Agreement to conduct a facility and program review in preparation for master building plan development
- Approved a Feasibility Study by Walsh and Associates to determine the level of funding support for a potential FLC Building Project
- Approved revisions to the Building Use Policy for groups using FLC facilities, including Emergency Action and audio/video training as well as more responsibility for set up/ tear down including time use limitations requiring 9:30 p.m. closure
- Approved the use of an outside investment manager for the purpose of managing FLC's investment portfolio currently being managed by the FLC Endowment Board. The future investment manager will be held accountable to stated objectives by the Endowment Board
- Replaced Building Superintendent position (Blaz Knezevic) with Greg Fischer, November 2017
- Participation in the Farwell Event for Vicar Jean McCartney

Faithfully Submitted,

*Steve Eicher*, Congregation Council President

## **2017 Annual Report of Pastor Dan Warnes**

Thank you for the privilege of serving Christ with you through the ministries of First Lutheran Church and the ELCA. Thank you for your partnership in the gospel of Jesus Christ. 2017 has been a year of transition on our staff. It has been a year of planning and preparing for the safety of our faith community. It has also been a pivotal year for the implementation of our goals and vision for the future.

### **Staff Transitions**

1. In January, Judy Batterman retired after 8 years of faithful service as Parish Coordinator. We're very grateful for Judy's ministry. We were fortunate to hire Cyndi Crouse as our new Parish Coordinator. We appreciate Cyndi's unique gifts for this important role on our ministry team.
2. In June, Bonita Johnsen retired after 34 years of shepherding our worship and music ministries. Her impact on our worship life is immeasurable. Again, we were very blessed to hire Boyd and Masako Bacon as our Directors of Worship and Music. They have already made a large impact on our worship life.
3. In July, Heidi Widner resigned to pursue a Master of Divinity degree at Wartburg Seminary in Dubuque, IA. Heidi guided our work with children and young adults for 8 years. We are grateful for her ministry and excited for her future service in the church as an ordained pastor. We were blessed once again to hire Sharon Hardel to serve as our Director of Youth and Family Ministry. Sharon began her service in October. She and her husband, Kent, come to us from Chambersburg, PA.
4. In December, Blaz Knezevic, our Building Superintendent for the past 8 years, resigned to accept a position at UNL. Again, we've been blessed by Blaz's skills for building maintenance and repair. At the same time, we were fortunate to transition Greg Fisher from Weekend Custodian to the full time Building Superintendent position. As an appliance repair person by training, we are already benefiting from Greg's service.
5. In December, Vicar Jean McCartney completed a unique seminary internship with us. Jean and her family live in Omaha and Jean commuted to Lincoln for the year. We anticipate her great career in ministry as she is soon assigned to a synod in the ELCA.

### **Safety and Security**

1. At the 2016 Annual meeting, it was suggested that First Lutheran develop an Emergency Action Plan. In May, Al Williams, Jen Nelson, Kim Hall, Norm Kempf, Bill Hammelmann and I began work on the plan. The plan was presented to the congregation in November. The plan features a phone app called CRISIS GO which facilitates communication and offers direction in a variety of emergencies. Training in our emergency procedures will commence in 2018.

### **Discipleship: Learning, Serving, Worship/Prayer**

1. We continue to explore how our congregation will implement our vision statement, *Making disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world*. We've made great progress! Pastor Justin Eller guided the development of our Life Long Learning Plan. He teamed with congregational leaders and with Deacon Sunni Richardson to begin implementing the plan for all ages. Justin and Sunni oversaw the creation of new curriculum for these age groups.
2. Deacon Richardson also worked with serving ministry leaders to create guiding principles for the serving work we do within and beyond the congregation.

3. Now that the Bacons have firmly established their presence at First, similar principles and guidelines will be developed for our worship life.

### **Welcome Statement**

1. In the effort to “live out” our welcoming statement, the Council appointed a Building Committee to secure the services of an architectural firm to develop solutions to our accessibility issues. Members of the Building Committee are: Jim Handeland, Brianna Brass, Brian Niebuhr, Cindy Timperley, Robin Westhoff, Dara Troutman, Steve Janssen, Steve Eicher, and Pastor Dan Warnes. Seven firms were invited to provide bids on the project. In the end, RDG, the firm we used in the development of a Master Plan in 2012, seemed the best fit for our needs. We began with the program statement from the 2012 effort. In November, Randy Milbrath of RDG presented some preliminary designs to the congregation which offers solutions to these accessibility concerns. Congregational feedback was received and incorporated into the proposed design presented to the congregation on January 21 of this year. The motion before the congregation at the January 28, 2018 Annual meeting authorizes RDG to move into the actual design phase of the project.
2. At the same time, in May, the Council authorized a Capital Campaign Interview Team to interview various Capital Campaign firms for the purpose of conducting a feasibility study. Information from the study would give the Council and congregation feedback on the congregational response to the proposed building design, and the financial capacity of the congregation to fund such a project. Six firms were invited to offer bids on the study. Walsh and Associates’ data driven approach to campaigns made them the clear choice for this feasibility study. Susan Stellmacher of Walsh and Associates conducted 32 interviews on December 3 and 4. Her report will be presented in person to our Congregation Council on January 9. This information will provide data we need to make a wise and prudent decision regarding the future of the Building project. A motion at the Annual Meeting will authorize the Council to hire Walsh and Associates to conduct a capital campaign for the purposes of funding the building project.
3. In an effort to make our welcome clear to immigrants and new Americans, we became the first AMMPARO congregation in the Nebraska Synod. This public declaration makes it clear that we will provide ministry and access to resources to immigrants in our city.
4. Our “welcome” also spurred on the need to redesign our website and church logo. Our deepest thanks to Kathleen Simley and *Storyhook* for their creative efforts on these communication tools.

### **Thank You**

*Marianne and I thank you for joining us in ministry. I am indeed proud to serve this congregation. Thanks also to our caring and supportive staff, my teammates. And, special thanks to our Council, Executive Committee, and especially Congregational Chairperson, Steve Eicher, for their guidance and support.*

Your brother in Christ,  
Rev. Dan Warnes

## 2017 Annual Report of Pastor Justin Eller

### MINISTRY

I can't believe all the exciting changes with my ministry at First Lutheran in just one year. Major movements within the year are directly connected to our understanding of discipleship: learn, serve, worship, and pray.

**Learning:** Early in 2017, accompanying the learning vision became a larger component of my ministry and throughout the year developed through various veins.

- 1. Lifelong Learning Plan Task Force (LLPTF).** The LLPTF was charged by the Council to begin drafting a plan that would help the congregation further understand how we understand, plan, train leaders, implement, monitor, modify, and evaluate our lifelong learning as growing disciples. Several guiding principles (a learning philosophy) were drafted, fine tuned, and became a filter for all future learning opportunities. When Heidi Widner departed for seminary, curriculum development transitioned to the LLPTF and was dispersed among sub-teams (*Early Childhood & Elementary: Emily Dorsey and Deacon Sunni Richardson; Middle School: Natalie Mares and myself; High School: Slate Mathes and myself; Adults: Patrick Hayden-Roy and Vicar Jean McCartney*) who took the responsibility of creating 2017-2018 lesson plans. The LLPTF paused as a task force for the fall semester while new curricula were implemented and performed a mid-year evaluation, producing suggested modifications for the spring semester. This was a stellar team to work with and I am excited to see how we will continue to support the creation of a Lifelong Learning Plan.
- 2. Middle School Learning (MSL).** Regularly writing lesson plans was a new endeavor for me, but I could not have done it without Natalie Mares who shared the curriculum development process with me. The curriculum is based on the relationships of our middle schoolers with the people and world around them and how their faith plays a role in their daily life. A team of 15 small group leaders accompanied the students throughout the fall. Many thanks to all of them for their great partnership and courage to embark on this experimental journey with me.
- 3. Confirmation = Dinner + Learning (D+L).** Confirmation of 7th and 8th graders now includes their parents as the primary teacher and conversation partner. In just a few months, we have all grown a little closer with the goal that teens and parents depend their relationship around questions of faith. Parents and students meet with me monthly for our sessions which include... dinner...and...learning (and games too)! Sharon Hardel has been a great asset to this program by leading the youth when I gather with the parents.
- 4. High School Learning (HSL).** Slate Mathes and I partnered to develop a new curriculum for high schoolers based on hard questions they ask. We have discussed war, terrorism, drinking and drugs, Luther's polemical writings, and the structure of our church from the congregation level to the Lutheran World Federation. HSL was also supported by a dedicated team of facilitators who partnered each Sunday.

**Serving:** Most of my serving opportunities were in connection to the wider Lincoln community.

- 1. 2017 High School Accompaniment Experience (mission trip).** I was blessed with the opportunity to be able to accompany the high schoolers on their summer mission trip to New

Mexico. There, we served at a homeless shelter and kitchen as well as a Christian school bordering the Navajo Reservation.

- 2. Accompanying Migrant Minors with Protection, Advocacy, Representation, and Opportunity (AMMPARO).** This year First Lutheran became the first congregation in the Nebraska Synod to join the Network of Welcoming Congregation to immigrants no matter their document status. Being part of this network keeps us abreast of immigration developments and encourages us to be trained juvenile immigration court observers to ensure that the defendant receive a fair trial and are accompanied spiritually, thus being the church in the courtroom.
- 3. Faith Coalition of Lancaster County.** This important organization strives to build stronger between different ecumenical and interfaith communities. I was elected in 2017 to serve as the Assistant Treasurer for Donor Relations.
- 4. Lincoln Early Childhood Network.** Throughout the year, Sunni and I regularly participated in conversations around early childhood as a community agenda of Prosper Lincoln. We have formed part of the non-profit team that hopes to connect and network early childhood providers with organizations to help share resources and reduce redundancy.

## **2018 GOALS**

- Continue regular preaching, presiding, facilitating Bible studies, teaching Middle and High School Learning, pastoral care of hospitalized and homebound
- Continue curriculum planning with teams
- Prepare and facilitate an in-depth evaluation of the 2017-2018 learning year
- Write a first draft of a First Lutheran Church Lifelong Learning Plan
- Attend and participate in Nebraska Synod events: AMMPARO - Guardian Angel Program, Synod Assembly, Theological Conference
- Prepare and shepherd two New Member Class groups (Spring and Fall)
- Continue exploring the intersections of: Christian education, critical thinking/consciousness, relationship, discipleship, linguistic relativity, literacy in the language of God, popular education, faith formation, and lifelong learning

## **THANKS**

I am grateful for the amazing team I am privileged to work with everyday. God has indeed blessed First Lutheran with not only a very capable staff, but also a hard-working and visionary staff who really has fun together! Also, my deep thanks to all the folks who have partnered with learning during this year of experimentation.

## **FAMILY**

What a year 2017 was! In hindsight, it was a year of continued “rerooting-ness,” of settling into life in Lincoln, Nebraska, and the U.S. We are a different family now than we were just a year ago with new goals, new desires, and new joys. We are filled with gratitude to God and First Lutheran for being part of this past year’s journey and I am grateful beyond words for Kari and Everette and their constant support.

## **Year End Report, 2017 - Vicar Jean McCartney**

Thank you for the opportunity to learn and to be a part of the fabulous community of First. This opportunity to learn here has been invaluable. I appreciate it so much. As I shared with the council, thank you:

- For letting me be part of the culture, the worship, and the community here at First Lutheran;
- For letting me pray with you and for you;
- For letting me learn and take risks;
- For being vulnerable and real with me
- And for letting me be vulnerable and real with you;
- For the many gracious and loving things you have done for me;
- And for all the unnamed niceties and opportunities!

### **January**

The start of internship. This is an important milestone in my journey.  
Began first draft of internship goals.

### **February**

My first sermon at First  
Learned about the responsibility of ordering palms and about the 3 page chant at Easter Vigil.  
Palms ordered

### **March**

“We are Church” Blessing Baskets — children’s sermons during Lent  
Final draft of internship goals submitted.

### **April**

Easter Vigil chanted. Whew. It’s Easter! He is risen indeed!

### **May & June**

Vicar Project on Immigration Conversation drafted. This felt like a better fit than my first idea. This is the intersection of the the congregation’s needs and a passion of mine.

### **July**

Vicar project held. There was great conversation and people shared important stories.  
Humbled and honored to be the pastoral presence the 10th - 16th while pastors were on vacation.

### **August**

Attended a fellow seminarian’s ordination at Ames. That was exciting to see.  
Attended candidacy Retreat at Camp Carol Joy Holling.  
Congregational picnic was a fun experience with FLC in an off-campus setting.

### **September**

Sunday school started. I was happy to be a part of the new vision and to try out the new curriculum.  
Faculty approval meeting resulted in positive approval.

### **October**

Pet Blessing service was held. It was my first and I was honored to plan and carry out this service.

### **November**

Cluster Internship Retreat at Camp Carol Joy Holling. Met fellow Lincoln-area vicars.  
Attended TheoCon at the Cornhusker — enrichment time with the synod’s pastors.  
Staff retreat — co-facilitated with Cyndi on Gallup strengths and the team.

### **December**

The quiet waiting of Advent was special as we heard personal stories. Compiled submissions and laid out the Advent devotional. It was my pleasure to work with Kathleen on this project.

Christmas Senior Potluck

My last worship service, Christmas Day.

Thank you for your partnership with me in this journey. Peace and joy in believing, Vicar Jean

*Whether you turn to the right or to the left, your ears will hear a voice behind you saying,  
"This is the way, walk in it." Isaiah 30:21*

The Isaiah verse serves as a reminder that God walks with us no matter where we are. Sometimes we get stuck debating the call or caught up in getting ready and we miss the opportunity to serve. There are times when we just have to jump in, do our best and evaluate carefully. I believe we are, as a congregation and individually, gaining skills that allow us to live in the present, with an honest assessment of the past, and an eye to the future. Thanks be to God!

#### An Overview...

- Learning – Working with FaithTrek added a big load to my work week but it is good. Getting to know the children, their families and helping them grow as disciples has been fun. The kid's simple answers and willingness to believe God loves them, no matter what, is amazing. Pastor Justin's leadership with Lifelong Learning and the principle of moving from knowledge acquisition to application to action has had an impact on FaithTrek curriculum development. ≈ Adult Learning - We are exploring new avenues and opportunities for adults. ≈ THANKS - I have to give a huge shout out to the amazing crew of Guides/teachers, subs and helpers and learning committee members that I have the honor of working with on projects. Thank you!
- Serving – FLC is fortunate to have so many people involved, in some way shape or form, with Serve projects! THANK YOU to all! I am not going to list all the projects/activities here as you can find details in other reports. Please take the time to read those reports carefully and see how God has equipped, engaged and empowered us to serve in the world. ≈ Serve leaders continue to find ways to connect three components of discipleship – learning, serving and worship/prayer. ≈ Striving to be partners through the accompaniment model is teaching us to see with new eyes and to focus on relationships.
- Worship & Prayer – We continue to explore ways to encourage spiritual growth through workshops, book discussions and general faith conversations. FLC is a congregation grounded in prayer and dedicated to being lifelong learners, but we hold back when it comes to talking about spirituality, leading prayer or talking about God outside the walls of the church. A focus on spiritual disciples/practices will stretch us in this area.
- Personal Growth – Staff changes often results in a few dropped balls but overall, we have adjusted, adapted, analyzed and kept things a float, in the transitions. I feel blessed to be working with such a talented group of staff and look forward to exploring new ministry opportunities with them! ≈ Again, thank you for the time set apart for sabbatical in May. You don't know it, but you are benefiting from the conference, readings, conversations and travels I had during that time away. I continue to explore the concept of adaptive challenges and discover leadership methods that can lead to change.

Looking ahead to 2018, bring it on!! Let's do it!! God has great plans for us!! I pray we have the wisdom, courage, energy, enthusiasm, insightfulness, theological grounding, compassion, resources and faith to continue growing as disciples and ready to transform the world in Christ's name. Amen!

## **Director of Worship and Music, Masako Bacon**

Glory be to God for blessing us through the past year. Thanks be to leadership of First Lutheran congregation. Boyd and I are grateful to take a part in serving God through this lively congregation.

### 2017 Review

Since July, we are still in the stage of learning, guided by staff and leaders. We have been blessed to have guidance from our predecessor, Bonita Johnsen. We continue to find wonderful talents to create opportunities to encounter God with new voices. Much of our time was used to arrange music for the groups and individuals.

Worship Committee: Susan Myren, chair, Richard Bouma, Jan Christensen, Patricia Hayden-Roy, Gordon Youngquist

- \* Altar Guild – Molly Goninan, chair, Paraments – Carol Mason & Bonita Johnsen, Worship Supplies Inventory – Madalyn Popken, Wine - Harold Sutter, Bread – Carol Mason, Robes – Gay Sutter, Baptism – Phyllis Frickel, Pew Duty – Chris Snyder (Cyndi Crouse & Jan Christensen)
- \* Visioning for future – worship space (sanctuary) renovation wish list was shared with building committee.

### Music Leadership:

- \* Saturday Pianists: Christine Carman and Kristina Hanson led worship services.
- \* Adult Choir: continues to lead the services. A few singers have retired due to health or family circumstances. A few singers newly joined.
- \* Children's Choirs: Chorister (grade 3-6<sup>th</sup>) Erin Niebuhr, director and Cherub Choir (K-2) Jan Mares, director led worship services. We are grateful for their leadership to praise God with new songs. Special thanks go to Erin and Jan who nurture the children's faith and music.
- \* Spirit Ringers continued to serve once a month. Their music connects with people spiritually.
- \* Jazz Team, Band, Brass Quintet, (Low Brass Ensemble) provided new energy in worship services.
- \* Cantors/Soloists: It has been a joy to find new talents.

### 2018 Goals

- \*Continue to seek energetic God-centered renewed worship experiences.
- \* Plan for services in the Activity Center to continue liturgically and spiritually nourished worship experiences.
- \*Create more opportunities for short-term commitment groups, especially for connecting with children and youth.
- \*Involving handbells in liturgy.
- \*Recruiting Worship Committee members.

*Soli Deo Gloria*



# Director of Youth and Family Ministry End of Year Report

Greetings Members of First Lutheran,

I would like to thank you for welcoming Kent and I into your family and for supporting us through some difficult transitioning. We have enjoyed meeting many new friends and feel loved and cared for here at First.

I have enjoyed my first 3 months here at First and have begun to feel like I'm getting a grasp on the ministries and my role as part of the staff. I have been able to help out with Sunday morning ministries, Confirmation, and planning a Congregational Christmas celebration. I have spent most of my time getting to know the Sr. High youth and their families and planning youth activities and fund raisers for our summer mission trips. I have also taken on the role of overseeing nursery staffing and updating the background checks for our volunteers. I want to thank all those who have shown me the ins and outs of the youth ministry here at First and for those who stepped up and made sure the ministries continued until I arrived.

My goal for 2018 is to meet more members, become more confident in my role as youth and family ministry director, and to start programming for middle school youth and elementary age children. I am excited to continue planning and brainstorming ideas with the staff and hope that you are as excited as I am to continue my ministry here with you!

I want to thank all who have volunteered as advisors, drivers, meal preparers, and schedulers for activities and nursery throughout the year. I also want to thank parents, youth, staff and members for prayers, open mindedness, and support as I began my ministry here at First. I look forward to many more years getting to know you and helping you serve Lincoln and beyond! Enjoy photos of my "year in review"!

In Christ's Peace,

Sharon Hardel



## Annual Report of the Adult Forum Committee – 2017

**Committee Chair:** Connie Kisling

**Committee Members:** Gene Brass, Patrick Hayden-Roy, Jim Kisling, Brian Niebuhr, Lyle Petersen, Sunni Richardson and Karen Statham

### 2017 Highlights:

- Topics specific to First Lutheran and Church Community: The Work of Local Mission in Action; Health 360; FLC's Caring Ministries; Refugee Resettlement Program at Lutheran Family Services; Lenten Series, "We Are Church"; LMIA on Backpack & Hunger in Lincoln with Food Bank; What do you say when you don't know what to say?; Immigration: Thinking Biblically, Confessing Publicly; The Vision for Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service; Series: A Congregational Discussion of Martin Luther's "On the Freedom of a Christian" at the 500<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Beginning of the Reformation; ELCA Good Gifts & Disaster Relief Programs; Emergency Action/Safety Plans; Building Plans.
- Videos: *Fish Eyes*; *A Broken Body Isn't A Broken Person*; Ted Talks: *Vulnerability and Shame*; *Purpose Driven Life*.
- Several presentations in cooperation with Science Café and Creation Care.
- Health-related topics: Brain Fitness; How Sensory Processing Issues Affect Kids; Post Traumatic Stress Disorder; ADHD.
- Community-related topics: The Forgotten People; Music Therapy; The Declaration of Human Rights, which All Faiths Have Agreed Upon; Sharing Experiences from the Base of Mt. Kilimanjaro in Tanzania, Africa; Arab League/United Nations Conference; Cuba 2016.

**2018 Goals** are to offer a continuum of learning through a variety of topics that are about service to God and our neighbors. This equips and empowers us with knowledge and skills to be better Disciples of Christ, to help us care for each other and for our neighbors, both here and around the world.

Submitted by Connie Kisling

## Creation Care Annual Report 2017

First Lutheran Church

*God calls us to care for all of creation, to be good stewards and protect the wonders of heaven and earth.*

### 2017

- Motion sensors were installed in hallways and restrooms. The sensors will help cut energy cost and are a major safety feature. Sensors, which have round buttons in contrast to the regular switch, can be left on at all times. Sensors will trigger as you approach hallways and stairways giving you light so you can find the regular light switches and turn on as needed. Please help us conserve energy by turning off lights when you leave a room and turn off the regular lights in the hallways.
- Recycling continues. A reminder that plastic containers, cans and boxes must be clean before putting in the recycle containers. The recycle bin in the kitchen has a list of items we can recycle posted beside the bin. Coffee grounds, fruit and vegetable trimmings can go in the compost bin located near the coffee pot and in the corner by the three tub sink. Thanks for helping us recycle.
- Tanzania Tree Project – FLC joined with the Nebraska Synod in response to the ask from our ELCT Northern Diocese partner in Tanzania for financial support in their quest to plant over 1.6 million trees a year. The ELCT Northern diocese grows the saplings in their nurseries and partners with confirmation students of local parishes for the planting. What does the gift of a tree mean? Trees absorb carbon pollution, reduce erosion, provide habitat for wildlife, create shade and cooler temperatures for humans, emit oxygen used by both wildlife and humans and play a big role in keeping the ecosystem in balance. Without trees land can quickly transform into deserts. In Tanzania, rapid deforestation and the melting of the glacier cap on Mt. Kilimanjaro is creating an environmental crisis. It is essential to replant trees now to offset the damage and provide a clean water supply to the thousands of people living on the slopes and nearby lands of Mt Kilimanjaro. Thanks to the many gifts from the congregation, we were able to send \$2500 to Tanzania, which will provide 5000 trees.
- Earth Day 2017 focused on trees. Committee members engaged with FaithTrek students, facilitated conversation at Adult Forum and hosted a congregation Celebration April 23. A special treat was the gift from Christiansen Tree of two large “tree cookies” that are now in our OutdoorClassroom. The larger one is from a cottonwood tree, over 100 years old, that was struck by lightning and you can see where it burned from the inside out.

### 2018

- Motions sensors will be monitored and additional units may be added as we see a need. Additional units would be a partnership project with the Property Committee.
- Earth Day will be celebrated with the congregation on April 29. Prior to that date, we will have an Adult Forum session, April 15, and will be connecting with FaithTrek children. The national Earth Day focus is plastic and is the focus for our FLC celebration.
- Plans for 2018 include offering hands-on workshops, Adult Forum sessions and possibly a field trip.

### Creation Care Team

Steve Janssen, David Pitts, Steve Lenzen, Shari Sorenson, Rebecca Pfabe, Jennifer Wernhoff, Cindy Lilleioen, Kim Janssen, Marianne Warnes and Sunni Richardson/staff

Anyone interested in helping with Creation Care projects should contact Sunni Richardson.

# Annual Report of the First Lutheran Endowment Board - 2017

## Committee Chair

Steve Dickey

## Committee Members

Linda Bogenreif (Secretary), Jon Peppmuller (Treasurer), Al Williams (devotional leader), Peggy King, Pastor Dan

## 2017 Highlights

- Peggy King was added to the board as its newest member
- The Board developed a new First Lutheran Endowment Fund brochure to provide information about the board, copies can be found at the Visitor's Center.
- The Board solicited applications for scholarships and conducted in person interviews with all applicants prior to awarding scholarships. We would like to thank all of those applicants for their time and sharing of their stories.
- The Board solicited Memorial Day & All Saints Day donations and remembrance notices were published in the associated Sunday Morning Bulletins.
- The fund earned \$9,072.06 in 2016 and was distributed as follows during 2017:
  - (13) \$500.00 scholarships were awarded to students attending college for a total amount of \$6,500.00.
  - \$500.00 was given to the Lincoln Food Bank to fund scholarships for past Back-Pack recipients planning to attend college.
  - \$500.00 was given to the People's City Mission for Thanksgiving Turkeys to be distributed to those in need in the community.
  - \$910.00 to the First Lutheran Church WELCA (for quilting materials).
  - \$662.06 was given to the Pastor's Discretionary Fund.
- The Board would thank all of those that have donated to the Fund this year
- See the Financial Report for the current principal, donations and earnings information

## 2018 Goals

- During this year Standard & Poor's discontinued their process of rating securities making the Board's Investment Policy invalid regarding the holding of securities.
  - As a result of this change all of the securities were sold pending a new policy
  - The Board has met with the Executive Council on (2) occasions to discuss the direction for the development of a new investment policy.
  - A preliminary version of new investment policy has been written.
  - Pending the results of a Motion by the Board presented to the Executive Council, the investment policy will be finalized with the goal to implement the policy and reinvest the Fund's principal according to this policy on or before March 31, 2018

## First Lutheran Endowment Fund Balance Sheet

	<u>December 31, 2016</u>	<u>November 30, 2017</u>
Cash	62,899.04	226,651.50
Investments, at cost	285,186.87	169,905.52
Accumulated Amortization of Premiums/Discounts	-1,213.99	0.00
Accrued Interest Receivable	1,136.30	591.56
	<u>348,008.22</u>	<u>397,148.58</u>
Undistributed earnings from prior years	0.00	-500.00
Earnings for the year	9,072.06	48,757.42
Endowed Principal	338,936.16	348,891.16
	<u>348,008.22</u>	<u>397,148.58</u>
	0.00	0.00

Submitted by: Jon Peppmuller

Date: 1/7/2018

**Notes:**

Undistributed Earnings is negative at 11/30/2017 due to change in college for scholarship recipient & returned check not deposited until December, 2017

	<u>2016 (12 months)</u>	<u>2017 (11 Months)</u>
Endowed Principal Increase	\$14,540.00	\$9,955.00
Distributions During Year	\$8,747.12	\$9,072.06
Totals Earnings *	\$9,072.06	\$7,322.6

\* Earnings were adjusted to exclude equity appreciation of \$41,434.87 as it is not available for distribution.

## REPORT OF THE GLOBAL MISSION IN ACTION COMMITTEE

Members: Barb Johnson Frank, Kristi Fisher, Mary Jensen, Karen and Terry Clementson, Elaine Kruse, Kay Rockwell, Clay Ehlers, Mary Rogge, Kathy Bruggeman and Marianne Schafer  
Staff Liaison: Sunni Richardson

### 2017 Global Missions In Action Committee Projects and Successes

- Continued to support our third and fourth nursing students in Tanzania, offering full scholarships and sending letters.
- 928 school kits were assembled and sent to Lutheran World Relief's Minnesota distribution center. Tracking information will allow the congregation to know where this year's kits were distributed. The 1900 kits assembled over the last 3 years reached students in Mauritania, Djibouti, Uganda, The Democratic Republic of the Congo and Nicaragua.
- Hosted the annual Gifts of Hope alternative giving fair. Forwarded more than \$10,000 to support Tanzanian Health projects, ELCA Good Gifts, the Food Bank's Backpack program, Trees for Tanzania and Lincoln Lutheran Family Services Refugee Support. Art handmade by Kenyan and local Karen artists was available for purchase. Fair trade products were offered at the Gifts of Hope fair and are available all year.
- Supported, mentored, prayed for, and loved refugees and immigrants.

### Plans for 2018 include:

- Publicizing the Nebraska Synod's Holy Land trip. Contact Mary Jensen for more information.
- Organizing the annual Gifts of Hope Market.
- Offering ongoing support for nursing students, Houses for Health and other Tanzanian health projects.
- Exploring opportunities to strengthen relationships utilizing the accompaniment model.
- Being open to alternative ways to impact people locally and globally.

New GMIA members are welcomed and needed!! Contact Sunni Richardson or Clay Ehlers for more information.

### Fellowship Committee

Chair: LuAnn Snyder & Cindy Schuster

Members: Carlene Falos, Judy Batterman, Linda Carlson, Judy Bailey, Ann Allen, Phyllis Frickel, Bill & Carol Tesar

### 2017 Highlights:

Organized and hosted the Annual Congregational Picnic.  
Provided Tailgate party and fellowship for the Salt Dogs baseball game.  
Coordinated and served Advent and Lenten meals.  
Planned and carried out the Annual Easter Egg hunt.  
Coordinated and served Easter Breakfast.  
Hosted and prepared Thanksgiving and Christmas dinner.  
Hosted and coordinated Thanksgiving Eve pie and fellowship.  
Got more people interested in helping us serve and bring food for events.

### 2018 Goals:

In addition to continuing current events;

Host Mother-Daughter Tea

Continue to involve more people in Fellowship events.

Find other groups or individuals to serve Advent and Lenten Meals.

## Annual Report of LMIA (Local Mission in Action) – 2017

**Chair:** Karen Lenzen

**Members:** Linda Bogenreif, Cindy Lilleoien, Sandy Latshaw, Kathy Dickey, Sunni Richardson, Brooke Glenn, Donice Kaspar

### 2017 Highlights

- Presented an Adult Forum in January to educate about all the service opportunities available at First Lutheran.
- Presented an Adult Forum in July with a speaker from the Food Bank of Lincoln addressing hunger issues in our community.
- Organized the Food Bank / LPS backpack ministry at Beattie, Pyrtle and Morley elementary schools, which now serves 47 families. Volunteers and funding is provided by First Lutheran members.
- Held a Waffleman fundraiser in February to support the backpack ministry. \$2,000 was raised and lots of good food was eaten!
- We support the Food Bank's food markets at Lincoln High School by providing a 3-person team on the 4<sup>th</sup> Wednesday of the month. They assist the patrons in selecting food.
- CROP Walk – 16 walkers raised \$1899.43, a 27% increase from the prior year.
- Monthly Matt Talbot meal served almost 1700 meals. Our meals continue to be a crowd favorite!
- Added a 3rd Meals on Wheels route for two Sundays a month in addition to the routes already being delivered. Several FLC members have also started delivering a route during the week. This continues to be a strong ministry at FLC.
- "Summer of Serving" in-gatherings were held for Bridges To Hope, Lutheran Food Pantry and Fresh Start Home. We collected items specifically requested by these agencies.
- Kicks for Kids – the 2<sup>nd</sup> year of this ministry to provide shoes and socks to elementary students in need exceeded expectations and served 165 children in six schools. With remaining donated funds we will pursue fulfilling more needs with the schools. What a blessing to these children!
- Coordinate financial support for a number of agencies / programs through allocation of benevolence monies in the FLC operating budget.

### 2018 Goals:

- Waffleman fundraiser event 02/13/18 for the backpack program. Come eat great food and signup to help out!
- Another successful year for Morley, Pyrtle and Beattie schools backpack program.
- CROP Walk – We begin hosting this city-wide event for a three year period. This requires additional support from FLC members and provides us good community-wide exposure. This can be a great family service opportunity in 2018!
- Kicks for Kids – expand this ministry with a goal of 200 pairs of shoes. We will research coordinating with other Lutheran churches to potentially grow this ministry and look at working with agencies such as Lutheran Family Services or Head Start.
- Continue serving a nutritious meal at Matt Talbot once a month.
- Look for additional short term serving opportunities to offer throughout the year.
- Continue to support local agencies through service events or in-gatherings of needed items.
- Allocation of FLC operating budget special benevolence monies to a number of agencies / programs.
- Incorporate prayer and more education about why we serve and who we serve into the ministries provided through the LMIA team.

Prison Ministry at First Lutheran Church

December 2017

A year with many changes is the only way to describe the last 12 months.

Our “guys” are moving through the CCCL process of job search, work release, passes, furloughs, release and parole.

Each job search, parole date set and release is a success, and a reason to celebrate.

We currently have five men who have succeeded in finding gainful employment, and one who is back in the search. Gainful employment means they now have real money, to save and to spend.

Five of the six have also been moved out of the CCCL building and into the new location a “next step” while they wait for their “jam” date or their next parole hearing.

One of these men has also gone back to school and is working on an associate’s degree at SECC while working full time and transporting himself to and from using a bicycle.

Two of the men will be leaving in the very near future; one at the end of December and one at the end of January. They are both going back to the support of family, which won’t necessarily be here in Lincoln.

In addition to the current group; we continue to keep contact with previous attendees, celebrating the engagement of one and the release of another.

As in most ministries, there is always room for more hands, more time more resources. Currently there are two transport sponsors, and if neither of them are available, the group is unable to attend worship or activities. Correctional politics continues to effect opportunities for the group to participate.

However, we also continue to make progress, with the CCCL staff, and the warden. We are no longer considered the “new” church, but one who has established a rapport and a history of good and responsible actions when it comes to “our guys”.

Karen Statham  
Harold Sutter  
Sonia Hixon



## 2017 Annual Report of Property Committee

**Chair:** Steve Lenzen

**Committee Members:** Bob Batterman, Jan Christensen, Richard Draper, Greg Fisher, Ralph Hayden, John Jenkins, Norm Kempf, Pete Kruse, Rod Johnson, Neil Simley, and Pastor Dan

### **2017 Highlights:**

- Completed painting most of the common areas.
- Work completed on upper room – removal of old shelving, installation of cabinets donated by Zins and mounting of white board.
- Completed move of quilters from 1<sup>st</sup> Floor.
- New carpet and painting completed in offices as staff turnover occurs. In 2017 this was Music and Youth Directors Offices.
- Extra attention was given to 5LL which gets extensive use by outside groups, including chair rail, painting and carpet cleaning. .
- Spring and fall annual congregational clean ups help. Provides an opportunity of members to see the wear and tear that occurs to the building.
- Filled parking lot cracks and did repair on two damaged parking spaces by front entrance. *Determined that large portion of parking lot surface is “floating” or detached from underlayment and subject to major breakup in next winter with a lot of moister with freezing and thawing.*
- With assistance of Jeff Culbertson, started process of replacing the ash trees on north side of office wing. Eventually emerald ash borer will kill the trees and Jeff felt the trees were getting too large for the space. The trees were aggressively trimmed to allow for planting of the new the Brandywine" Red Maple trees and for them to get established before the ash trees need to be removed.
- Purchased replacement of equipment to clean the hard floor surfaces that is smaller and faster.
- Removed concrete curb on north east exit from sanctuary to improve wheelchair accessibility.

### **2018 Goals:**

- Tucking west brick wall of activity center. There are a number of spots where the mortar is falling out. Unless corrected water will get in and do damage.
- Need to have professional examine the stucco exterior of activity center. It is showing wear it may need to be replaced. Better to be proactive instead of having to fix water damage on the interior.
- Paint the hall from kitchen entrance to chapel door. This project was held up during 2017 because of major damage (wood decay) to the hallway that Blaz was able to fix.
- Complete removal of the oak, east yard, by street and the red bud tree by south wood fence per Jeff Culbertson’s recommendation.
- Property Committee has **major** concerns about the building project because if done “on the cheap” FLC will have major expenses down the road. The dormers will greatly increase the chances of water leaking, and may add maintenance costs. Based upon information learned when the roof on the education wing as replaced, we strongly feel the sanctuary roof needs to be replaced or at least funds set aside out of this project for that purpose.
- Property committee recommends that the parking lot be resurfaced as part of the Building Project, including the replacement of sidewalk. If parking lot and sidewalk are not resurfaced a part of Building Project, funds should be set aside out of the project for this purpose.
- Need to address the water leaking in the activity center and parking spots lost as part of the Building Project.
- Start a process to regularly clean carpets and paint walls. Work in 5LL highlighted the need to clean carpets and repaint the walls. Most of the carpets in FLC have not been cleaned after installation. Rooms can be refreshed by a coat of paint. Need a system to track when and what work is done.

## Annual Report of Science in the Congregation (SinC) Committee – 2017

Committee members: Gene Brass, Joan Johnson, Steve Janssen, Judy Batterman, Barb Monson, Sunni Richardson, and Cindy Lilleoien.

- Science Cafes
  - June 11 – “How Science Might Save the Innocent,” presented by Dr. Brian Bornstein, Director of the Law and Psychology program at UNL and Amy Miller, Legal Director of the ACLU of Nebraska. This presentation was offered as a tie-in to the ELCA Social Statement on Criminal Justice.
  - July 9 – “Drone Agronomy,” given by Dr. Dirac Twidwell, Assistant Professor of Agronomy and Horticulture at UNL. The presentation was tied to two ELCA Social Statements: Economic Life and Caring for Creation.
- Contribution to Trees for Tanzania Project

In August, the committee authorized a \$50.00 contribution from its funds toward the Trees for Tanzania Project in memory of Pastor Chuck Ruehle who passed away in 2016. Pastor Ruehle and his wife Sue, founders of the Telescopes to Tanzania program, headlined FLC’s Star Party in the summer of 2015.
- Collection of Eclipse Viewing Glasses

Following the Solar Eclipse of August 21, First Lutheran became an official drop-off site for viewing glasses. Approximately 80 units of viewing lenses of various types were sent to Astronomers Without Borders for use by people in other parts of the world who will have upcoming eclipse-viewing opportunities.
- Participation in Rally Day Activities

SinC staffed a table at which students were invited to make rockets from drinking straws. The activity was a big hit and offered the opportunity to promote upcoming fall SinC activities.
- Experiences with Community Science Offerings

The committee offered to cover admissions to fall programs offered by Morrill Hall on the UNL campus and for the Drone Expo offered by the Strategic Air Command and Aerospace Museum. Following promotion efforts for the “Sunday with a Scientist” at Morrill Hall and the Drone Expo, it became apparent that the events competed with sports and other activities already on families’ calendars.

While expressions of support continue from current FLC members and from some considering FLC as their church home, the committee seeks leadership for its 2018 activities. Faith and science learning opportunities should continue as a part of the lifelong learning plan of First Lutheran.

Respectfully submitted,

Cindy Lilleoien for the Committee

The Worship & Music Committee began 2017 mourning the June retirement of Bonita Johnsen. The committee ended the year rejoicing. We welcomed Boyd & Masako and enjoyed an easy transition. (Knowing Bonita is still available to answer questions we forgot to ask. One example: how does Joseph spend the rest of the year in the sub-basement? With his head down or to the side?)

We saw changes in the structure of volunteers for Sunday morning worship assistants. Many thanks to Carla Osberg for her many years of service in the past and continued willingness to train ANYONE who wants to serve in a position equal to their comfort zone (or a little outside of it). Thanks to Judy Bailey for researching and administering our new system. Thank you to all the congregational members continuing to assist and those of you new to assisting in our worshiping community.

And then the individuals who also serve in the background making sure bread is there for Sunday worship, clean glasses, crumb-free altar area, cleaner pews, etc. These are the individuals who set up for worship on Saturday, coordinate those who wash those little glasses after each service on Sunday, etc. Thanks to Carol Mason's longtime service and Molly Goninan's strong leadership with Altar Guild.

We also spent time with the Building Committee as we contemplate a more welcoming and inclusive worship space.

We know the congregation cherishes our worshiping tradition. We continue to grow and change, yet retain our traditions.

The list is too long and includes each of you in the congregation. Many thanks to each of you. Please join us as we seek ways to enhance our worship experience.

Susan Myren

## Stephen Ministry

The Stephen Ministry of First Lutheran Church continues to serve the family of First Lutheran Church. The Stephen Ministry currently has a membership of seventeen people. In addition to meeting with their care receivers on a frequent basis all members also meet twice a month for supervision and continuing education.

FLC has been serving Fair Trade coffee since 2008. This fall we switched from serving Equal Exchange coffee to LWR Farmer's Market coffee. This is a new partnership between farmers supported by LWR and THRIVE Farmers Coffee. Farmers receive a fair and predictable price for their coffee and support for improving their coffee crops.

Since November 2004, FLC has been offering Fair Trade products for sale, generally on the first Sunday of each month between services. Our goal is to tell the story of how our purchases benefit the farmers and their families. For the past 2 years, we have sold olive oil from the Holy Land to support Augusta Victoria Hospital in Jerusalem. The hospital serves all people, no matter their religion. An average Sunday sees sales of \$250 in coffee, tea, chocolate and olive oil. Income is reinvested in inventory.

This summer we got a cabinet to store the products. Thanks to the many people who support this project by writing articles, helping put the sales area and display together, and assisting during sales. Thanks also to those who purchase the products and tell others the reason you do so.

Contact: Faye Doolittle

Team Members: Barb Johnson Frank, Martha Tanner, Mary Rogge, Linda Sears, Kim Hall, Kathleen Simley, Rebecca Pfabe, Sunni Richardson.

Goals—

1. Continue to share the story of Fair Trade products.
2. Increase the number of people who are involved.

**First Lutheran Church – Lifelong Learning  
2017 Annual Report**

**Committee Chair:** Natalie Mares

**Committee Members:** Pastor Justin Eller, Sunni Richardson, Emily Dorsey, Patrick Hayden-Roy, Slate Mathes, and Vicar Jean McCartney

**Definition of Learning at First Lutheran Church:**

*Learning is a lifelong process of and commitment to integral growth in faith. With the help of the Holy Spirit, experience, practice and dialogue lead to change in knowledge, attitudes, and skills. This process equips us to engage the world around us, ask critical questions, and live lives that proclaim the gospel in word and deed.*

**2017 Highlights:**

- **FaithTrek**
  - Rejuvenated the curriculum for the Pre-K to 5<sup>th</sup> grades and created lesson plans that are age appropriate and different for each age group
  - Continued to have monthly blocks of learning with a theme and word for the month to focus on and bring alive in our daily living
  - Had a group of consistent teachers/lay leaders that work with a specific age group and helps with the learning process for the students
- **Middle School Learning**
  - Combined the 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, and 8<sup>th</sup> grades for the Sunday school learning hour and focused the learning around real life issues surrounding the 3 Relationship Spheres: Friends & Family, Oneself, and God & Neighbor
  - Provided students with tools needed for real life issues by teaching different prayer methods and continuing to visit other faith traditions, but in larger multi-grade level groups
  - Continued to get students input to make enhancements to their learning process
- **Confirmation**
  - Started *Dinner + Learning* (D+L) program for Confirmation students along with their parents. New model has the parents as the primary teachers and learning is done at home with guided conversations and questions about faith. Monthly dinner conversations is a debrief from conversations
  - 9 students were confirmed in October
- **High School Learning**
  - Focused lesson plans around current events and hard to discuss topics for high school students
  - Fall curriculum ideas came from recent a high school graduate and students offered up suggestions for the Spring semester
- **Adult Forum**
  - Started to have speakers that touched one of the three legs of the discipleship stool
  - Had Gospel of Matthew, Paul's letter to the Romans, and Letters of John weekly Bible studies
  - There was a two-part Immigration and Bible discussion with Vicar Jean McCartney
  - Initial Study with ELCA Gender Justice Social Statement Draft

**2018 Plans:**

- Continue to review and use Lifelong Learning to adapt to FLC learning needs for all ages
- Consider the learning opportunities in retreats for different age groups
- Adult Forum and High School Learning will move toward more multi-week lessons/topics for deeper conversations
- Begin drafting a Lifelong Learning Plan

## Serve Vision Team Annual Report

The Serve Vision Team includes Brooke Glenn, Kim Hall, Karen Lenzen, Shari Sorensen and Sunni Richardson as the staff representative.

The team met in the early months of 2017 to develop a process for the serving groups that would include the three legs of discipleship (worship, learning, serving) as well as reflection and storytelling. To start, the team developed an assessment tool with open ended questions, and then individually contacted each of the serving group leaders to gain their input regarding their groups' strengths and challenges.

The results of the assessment provided an opportunity to develop a service inventory of all the serving opportunities at First Lutheran Church, and determine priorities focused on engagement, communication, training, and invitation.

In early June the serve team met with the serve leaders to provide the results and recommendations from the service inventory. The key areas included:

1. Communication
  - a. Grouping service opportunities into like categories (Hunger & Clothing, Caring Ministries, Prison Ministry, Global, Projects at FLC, Special Events, Worship, Learning) to help members identify service opportunities that fit their passion or skill set.
  - b. Storytelling so others can learn about projects.
  - c. Share "why we serve" with others to show what is happening inside and outside of First and how we are transforming the world through Christ.
  - d. The website redesign will allow people to easily find information about the various serving opportunities and sign up online.
  - e. Partner on projects and across generations.
2. Training
  - a. Leader training to help members develop skills for intentionally inviting new members, training members about the activity, and raising up members who are equipped and educated about the project.
  - b. Provide an orientation checklist to leaders and all group members at the beginning of a new year and as new people join.
3. Intentional connection of worship/prayer, serving and learning
  - a. Develop tools such as devotions, information sheets on service projects, prayers to use for service groups such as Meals on Wheels recipients.
  - b. Make time for prayer before, during and after a service meeting, activity, project, etc.
  - c. At the end of the service activity/project, regroup and reflect on the service experience and lessons learned for the future.

The meeting allowed time for the serve leaders to better understand their role as a leader and learn that they are peers to each other, more importantly they aren't alone. This led to scheduling another meeting in November following the completion of the discipleship plans.

In September, sheets were inserted in the worship bulletin that listed all the serving ministries of First Lutheran Church by the categories listed above with a brief description. This allowed members to learn about the various serving opportunities as they completed their discipleship plan for 2018.

At the November meeting the serve leaders were given a folder with helpful information to start the New Year that included:

- First Lutheran's Vision and Mission Statement and a listing of all Serve Ministry Projects.
- An orientation agenda/checklist was provided to help develop clear expectations and orient new members.
- Communication opportunities through First's various resources (The Voice, First Things First, First Glance, Website News, Social Media) were provided, with due dates and who to contact.
- Discipleship Plans were distributed to each serve leader that listed the members interested in serving in their respective area.

The serve team encouraged the leaders to contact members right away even if they weren't meeting until 2018 so they could get connected. This would allow the serve leader to share information about their group/ministry, get contact information and learn what skills/interests the member brings.

Looking ahead, the serve team will continue to find ways to bring the serve leaders together throughout the year, continuing to connect worship/prayer, learning and serving.

As we continue to incorporate all three legs of the discipleship stool into our serve projects, it is important for us to understand how quickly the "donor-recipient" model can get in the way and limit our ability to build relationships and learn from each other. On January 22, a training session is planned for the leaders of our serve projects and others wanting to grow in their understanding of accompaniment.

Submitted by,

Kim Hall

## REPORT OF THE COLUMBARIUM COMMITTEE

The committee met twice this past year – April 24 and October 23, 2017. We have installed 40 new niches which brings the total of niches to 112. As of this date 71 of the niches have been reserved.

On Memorial Day (May 29, 2017), there was a Service of Remembrance held in the Memorial Garden with Pastor Justin Eller presiding. The church was opened for three plus hours for members of families whose loved ones are inurned in the Columbarium to attend the service and to visit the Columbarium to leave wreaths or flowers. Following the service the committee served cookies, coffee and punch and invited the families to visit with each other.

Dale Ripa and Dale Bowder were approved by the church council for another three year term ending in May 2020. Dale Bowder designed an up-date-chart for the Columbarium. A copy of the chart is kept in the church office and in the files of the chair person of the committee.

Our thanks to Lisa and Jeff Culbertson for taking care of the Memorial Garden. They have planted plants that can be found in the Bible. The committee is committed to providing the financial support for the garden.

Members of the congregation can reserve niches by going to the website of the church and downloading the necessary forms. They can also come to the church office and received the forms as well. The cost of each niche is \$1,000 payable upon being reserved. Checks are to be made out to the First Lutheran Church and designed to the Columbarium Fund.

The Committee consists of six members plus the lead pastor.

The members are: Dale Bowder, Jan Mares, Dale Ripa, Kay Rockwell (secretary), Tom Tiedgen, Bill Shaner (chair) and Pastor Dan Warnes.

If you have questions concerning the Columbarium, please feel free to contact any member of the committee.

Respectfully submitted,  
Bill Shaner, Chairperson



## **Annual Report of Stewardship Committee**

Committee Chair: Brian Kamler

### **2017 Highlights:**

The stewardship theme that was chosen was: "Heart Work".

It was decided to continue "Noisy Offering" which encourages children to participate in the offering and allows them to gather coins. It makes some noise and demonstrates how giving can be fun.

The committee and FLC staff recruited and trained callers once again who reached out to all members who had not responded to Consecration Sunday invitations. This outreach program attempts to make personal contact and invite all members to attend the Consecration Sunday events.

Consecration Sunday was celebrated on October 1<sup>st</sup> with rolls and juice after the first service, and a BBQ lunch after the second service. As usual, we are blessed by having Jeff Bielenberg and family prepare the delicious BBQ lunch. And we are blessed by having other church members who provide desserts.

Every year we seem to have noteworthy guest speakers and this year was no exception to the rule. We had Nebraska Synod Assistant Bishop, Megan Morrow, as our guest speaker.

Finally, our pledge summary shows that we have 258 pledges totaling \$830,780, which is almost 1.0% higher than the previous year. The percentage of total receipts received via the Simply Giving program increased was 32.1% in 2016 to 34.8% in 2017.

### **2018 Goals:**

Continue to tell our story of the ministry within our church and just as important, the ministry outside of our church walls.

Continue to try to increase the percentage of members who use electronic, automated giving to fund our mission.

Continue our annual stewardship appeal, which culminates in a commitment and a celebration that brings us together to break bread with one another.

Continue to focus on reaching out to all of our members no matter what state of life they are presently in.

**MEETING DATE:** January 28, 2018

**SUBJECT:** Development of formal building plan documents in association with architectural firm RDG

**PROPOSED ACTION:** Contract with architectural firm RDG to complete Contract Documents for various renovations such as entry, worship space, restrooms, kitchen and educational areas; defining barrier-free access, construction/ mechanical requirements and facility updates per agreement with FLC Building Committee

**BACKGROUND:** Following the selection of RDG in September 2017 to conduct a professional facility and program review for First Lutheran Church, we conducted an expert evaluation of all existing facilities to identify deferred maintenance and other needs. In addition, conversations were conducted with committees, groups, staff and the congregation to identify concerns, hopes and ministry needs for our facilities in the years ahead.

With overwhelming support from our congregation, this contractual motion is being initiated for RDG to develop Contract Documents entitled, the Work, including labor, materials, equipment, and services required to fulfill their contract as defined below:

- The Drawings are the graphic and pictorial portions showing design, location and dimensions of the Work including plans, elevations, sections, details, schedules and diagrams
- The Specifications consisting of written requirements for materials, equipment, systems, standards and workmanship for the Work and performance of related services
- Instruments of Service include, studies, surveys, models, sketches, drawings, specifications, and other similar materials
- The Project is the total construction of which the Work performed includes bidding process management, construction observation and confirmation of plans and specifications during installation by contractors or sub-contractors, in full or in part

**COST:** *The cost of this action is 8% of the total cost of construction. Current estimated construction costs are \$4,000,000.*

**SPONSOR:** First Lutheran Church Executive Committee on behalf of the Building Committee members, Brianna Brass, Steve Eicher, Jim Handeland (Chair), Steve Janssen, Brian Niebuhr, Cindy Timperley, Dara Troutman, Pastor Dan Warnes, Robin Westhoff.

**MEETING DATE:** January 28, 2018

**SUBJECT:** Conduct a Capital Campaign for the purposes of funding First Lutheran Church's (FLC) Building Project

**PROPOSED ACTION:** Contract with Walsh and Associates to conduct a Capital Campaign to determine level of support for FLC's Building Project initiated with architectural firm RDG

**BACKGROUND:** In September of 2017, FLC selected Walsh and Associates to conduct a Feasibility Study for a potential Capital Campaign focusing on accessibility and living out our welcoming statement. Simultaneously with the Feasibility Study, a professional facility and program review was conducted by architectural firm RDG. Both the feedback from the congregation regarding the potential building project and the results of the Feasibility study, indicated very strong support for continuing pursuit of the building project. Feasibility input was gathered from a cross-section of the congregants and much information was determined through many conversations with committees, groups and staff, as well as a congregational meeting on 11/19/2017. In light of the overwhelming support for the project as demonstrated by the Feasibility Study and group meetings, this contractual motion is being initiated for Walsh and Associates to conduct a Capital Campaign January through June of 2018 in order to determine level of financial support for the proposed Building Project.

**COST/SOURCE:** \$49,500, plus administrative and printing expenses (up to, but not exceeding \$35,000). Funds would be withdrawn from finances raised during the Capital Campaign.

**SPONSOR:** First Lutheran Church Executive Committee members; Steve Eicher, Pastor Justin Eller, Priscilla Hayden-Roy, Wendy Hunt, Matt Peters, Pastor Dan Warnes

## NOMINEES

*In addition to biographical information, all nominees were asked to respond to two requests:*

- 1. How do you see your gifts and expertise being used in the position you may be serving?*
- 2. Share your thoughts on First Lutheran's mission and where you see God leading/calling us.*

*Those responses are included with their bios (edited for space).*

### CONGREGATIONAL COUNCIL (Vote for 5)

**Judy Bailey** – family includes: Two grown children - Sheri (Jeff) and Kevin (Bree) and five grandchildren

Occupation: Gallup (retired)

1. Since returning to First Lutheran a few years ago, I have worked as interim office assistant, I serve on the Fellowship committee, and am also a member of Lydia Circle. I lead the Grief group, and am working with scheduling Sunday Worship Assistants. I have served on church council many years ago, as well as having served on the building committee prior to adding the current activity center. I spend my time with a small embroidery business, volunteering 2-3 days a week at Bryan West and ushering at The Lied.

2. I feel we are all called to share God's love and the gifts He has given us - whether by saying it out loud or living it through our actions. I appreciate all the outreach programs we support throughout the world and that we aren't afraid to discuss even the tough current issues. I think we are on a great course with our welcoming statement, the new building plans, the many and diverse programs we offer, and the caring staff we have.



**Dawn Brock** - family includes: Corey Brock- husband, Kaitlyn Brock- child

Occupation: Hospital Administration

1. I have a passion for community and non-profit work. I believe that one of the key components of success is using your talents and abilities to impact positive change for those who may be less fortunate. I was raised in a family that believed you had two jobs: 1) to wake up every day and do the best you could on the tasks you were given and 2) to make it a priority to share the gifts that you were given with your neighbors, friends, and those in need. I went to a university with an embedded service-learning program designed to teach students the best way to serve others and their local community. Through that work I served on the board and leadership team of Haven Place an assistance program designed to be a refuge for at risk youth and young adults. I then received my Masters in Public Administration with an emphasis in Nonprofit Management and continued to work in various programs designed to educate children about social concerns. We've been in the Lincoln community for 2.5 years now. In that time I've become involved in First Lutheran through various roles. We have found a home here. I'm very interested in working with the pastors and other leaders to link and position the amazing work our congregation is doing to further the spread and reach in the community. I am confident that my involvement would make a difference.

2. We were attracted to this community because we believe strongly that God welcomes all. There is much to do in Lincoln to make an impact. I believe God is calling and leading us to continue to educate our children on how to serve Christ where we work and live, to support and speak up for those who are struggling, and to care for those who may not be able to care for themselves.



**Jones Koffa** - family includes: Youmondeh Koffa (spouse), nephew Benedict Barkpeh, Mother Anna Furkay

Occupation: Custodian

1. I am working on my GED through Southeast Community College. I have been employed with the Lincoln Public Schools as a custodian for three years. I work at Kooser Elementary School .

2. There a lot of people who need a church home. We are already welcoming, so



that's good. I would like people to know that there is a community here, that there is guidance and counseling available and that they can find a place to do God's work. I think I can help people do that, especially people who are new.

**Rebecca Pfabe** - family includes: : Maury Higgins, Children: Hannah and Clara Higgins  
Occupation: I am a family nurse practitioner at a local clinic. I see patients of all ages and a huge variety of health concerns. I like to think I'm a pretty compassionate caregiver, and educator, and a good cheerleader for my patients!

1. Years ago when I took the Strength Finders assessment, my #1 strength is Harmony. I think it still is. I like to try to make things work out as best as possible for everyone, and that can be a challenge. So, I'm also realistic. I like to look at things from different perspectives, even ones that might be different than mine.

2. I love the mission of First Lutheran and direction our church is headed. Our hearts are open to hearing the needs of our congregation, our community and our world, and acting on them. I don't think there is a challenge we aren't up to!



**Daniel Robles** - family includes: Verdell Bohling is my partner of four years. I have family residing in Seward, Lincoln, and San Diego, California . San Diego is my home town.  
Occupation: Disabled

1. I am willing to take the initiative as a individual coming from a very diverse background to offer insight and thoughts on how to be a progressive congregation. I am 36, and from San Diego California, then raised in Nebraska. I have a diverse ethnic background being native American, Scottish, and Spanish. I am the youngest of seven children. I have a Bachelors of science in psychology and speak Spanish. I have lived in the Eastern Caribbean and traveled to many places. My experience with many cultures and having lived on a underdeveloped third world country island, gave me a good contrast to American living, which has given me a worldly outlook on individual lives. I can relate to people that have struggled with terminal illness, and addiction issues. My compassion for people is very strong, and I feel that I can be of use to contribute to the church council in this way.

2. The mission at First Lutheran is to welcome and include people from all walks of life. My experience is that I have felt warm and welcome coming to First Lutheran Church since the first time of being here. Our church is the reason that I was baptized at age 35. I feel strongly that First Lutheran Church was where my spiritual journey began. It is important to share that with as many people as I can. I hope to do so by maintaining a strong congregation based on the principles of the First Lutheran Church mission statement, and to keep building on that.



**Natalie Mares** - family includes: Fiancé, Matthew Peters, and the rest of my clan includes: Jan, Elva and Nate Mares. Also Shari, Dale, Nate, Tonia, Andrew, Alyssa and Makayla Peters.

Occupation: I am a recruiter for the Capital One Recruiting team that supports the Cabela's CLUB Card. I support the team in Lincoln by sourcing and hiring the right talent to support our customers on a day to day basis both in phone and off the phone roles.

1. I have had the pleasure of serving on the council for the past three years. In these past few years I have had the pleasure of also serving on the call committee and on the leadership task force.

2. Our mission at First Lutheran is calling us to be disciples in Christ and to share the good news in all facets of life. It is our responsibility to love and support and help prepare his disciples for where life leads us. And in order to do so, it is first making First a community with a tool kit to help others across our community and the world.



**Gina Seebohm** - family includes: husband Scott Seebohm and daughter Emily Seebohm (2nd grade)

Occupation: Mathematics Instructor, Southeast Community College - I currently teach everything from beginning algebra to applied calculus.

1. Gallup Strengthfinders: Input, Adaptability, Strategic, Ideation, Empathy (will complete Spiritual Director certification June 2018)
2. I wholeheartedly agree that "our unity is in Christ" and that "each person is a unique creation of God and, through grace, a child of God." It is a joy to be a member of a church that welcomes all. I look forward to seeing and participating in God's continuing work at FLC... our work with and for others in our community as well as God's transformational work in our hearts and minds.



**Pam Sewell**- family includes: Husband Dean; grown children Andrew Sewell and Deana Swenson; grandchildren: Colton, Bailey and Moxon Swenson.

Occupation: Retired

1. Dean and I joined First Lutheran in May of 2014. While a member of previous churches I have been a member of Christian Education and Diaconate Committees, serving as Chairman of both. Highlights of those tenures included researching and selecting new Sunday School curriculum for both children and adult study, and assisting during process of realigning church governing boards. My working experiences have been in office management and banking.
2. We are entering an exciting time at First Lutheran preparing to redesign our physical church as we continue to make all persons feel welcome in our spiritual church. FLC members work to share their gifts and talents with one another, with the community and with the world. We are here to celebrate accomplishments and assist when there are needs and struggles around us.



**Elaine Kruse**>- family includes: I have two daughters, one in Davenport, IA and one in Evanston, IL; four grandchildren: two in Des Moines, one in Evanston, and one in Quantico, VA; I have nine great-grandchildren: three in Des Moines, two in Davenport, two in Evanston, two in Quantico.

Occupation: Retired NWU Professor

1. I was raised in a devout home and have maintained my church involvement throughout my life. In the thirty-two years I have been a member of First Lutheran I have served on numerous committees and thus have a good understanding of the church's workings. I see my gifts as wisdom, compassion, joyfulness, and loving relationships, which I would carry over into decision-making and service to the congregation.
2. First Lutheran is committed to service to local and global missions, as called by God. I would encourage the congregation to continue in serving the newest Americans among us. I am impressed with the growth in the congregation of young families and the wealth of opportunities for young, old, singles, couples, and families. I see us as warm, loving, disciples of Christ, growing in our understanding of God's kingdom within us.



**Madalyn Popken**- family includes:

Occupation: Payroll Administrator

1. I am organized and responsible and am willing to serve faithfully if elected. I have been a member of First Lutheran Church for over 40 years and care about the future of the church.
2. I would like to see First Lutheran Church continue to grow and be a welcoming place for all of God's children.



**Mike McDannel**-family includes: Robin is my wife. My step-children are Tom and Mary Rose. Pudge is our dog.

Occupation: I am an attorney. I work with the state of Nebraska Department of Banking and Finance. I assist in the regulation of financial institutions and I assist consumers with their questions.

1. My committee experiences at First Lutheran and my vocational skills will assist me as a member of First Lutheran's council.
2. First Lutheran ministers to the individual and the world. We are called to live out the love of Jesus at First Lutheran Church and everywhere else. Our present FLC mission makes this an exciting time. Participating in that mission work is a rewarding experience.



### **NOMINATING COMMITTEE (Vote for 3)**

**Bev DeGeorge** - family includes: includes son, Stephen, who lives in Las Vegas, Nevada, and sister, Dianne, who lives in Golden, Colorado. My parents were long time members of First Lutheran, and I have been a member since 2013.

Occupation: Before moving home to Lincoln, my career work was in mission, editorial, and marketing management roles for a Minnesota based publishing company. I worked with everyone in the company to reach strategic goals and serve our customers in the best possible way. I learned to listen deeply, communicate effectively, and be both a leader and a follower.

1. At First Lutheran, I have had the opportunity to meet many wonderful people, because I try to say "yes" to both smaller tasks and larger commitments; I think both are very important to the life of the Church. I try to learn and remember peoples' names; that is also important. I serve in Altar Guild, funeral lunches, greeting, and Esther Circle. I also served on the Transition Team calling Pastor Justin and as a delegate to Synod Assembly. I would be honored to serve on our Nominating Committee.
2. The greatest life changing gift we can give at First Lutheran is to serve those who need hope—God's people both inside our doors and beyond. Our Creator believes in us so much more than we believe in ourselves, and we must realize we are all called to serve—to be disciples. Imagine the difference we could make today and tomorrow if we open our hearts just a little more.



**Steve Eicher** - family includes: Wife Gloria, three daughters/sons-in-law: Shelly/Jason Laessig, Kim/Craig Vacek, Alison/Brian Morrow and 13 Grandchildren

Occupation: Retired regional Director of Human Resources for Lincoln and multiple sites at Pfizer, Inc. General responsibilities included employment, compensation, policy development, employee relations and training. I currently serve on the Lancaster County Personnel Policy Board and the Lancaster County Elected Officials Salary Review Committee.

1. I have served in numerous positions at FLC including Confirmation Coordinators, Usher, Reader, Greeter, Mutual Ministry Committee, GWOH Coordinator, Pre-school advisory committee, Budget committee, nominating Committee, Transition Team, Ombudsman, Stephen Minister, Church Council (twice), FLC Treasurer and most recently two years as President of the Church Council. I am currently on the Building Committee.
2. I think the mission of First Lutheran should be to represent "what is good in the world and the local community" through our acts of ministry, benevolence and caring. Our church continues to strive toward our vision of *Making disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world*. We continue to define what it means to be a welcoming church and strive to move in that direction which, I believe, is of God's calling.



**Marsha McKinsey** - family includes: While my household includes just myself, I have an extended family and group of friends who I enjoy spending time with.

Occupation: I am currently an Accounting Manager for ALLO Communications. I'm responsible for the accounting records and preparation of their financial statements.

1. I have been a longtime member of First and feel I have made a lot of connections with various members of FLC. I have served on Church Council and I am currently serving a second term on the Audit Committee. I believe these experiences would assist me in serving in this role if elected.
2. There are many things going on throughout First and I feel it's an exciting time to be a member. God is calling us to spread his love outside of FLC. We are also being called to welcome others and help make FLC more accessible for everyone.



**Susan Myren**> - family includes: Here in Lincoln, just me. My extended family is mostly on the west coast.

Occupation: I am a software trainer for Nebraska Book Co. on proprietary software for college stores.

1. I enjoy meeting and learning about people's lives and about faith journeys. We have a variety of experiences. As we learn about being more inclusive and grow, it is important that many serve and learn about this community of believers.
2. Our world is filled with challenges and calls by God for each of us individually and as a congregation. I think this time as a community is a great opportunity for many of us to listen, grow, and understand what God is calling each of us to do.



**Lucas Culberston**> - family includes: My mother Lisa, my father Jeff, and my brother Trevor Culbertson

Occupation: I am a Food Science and Technology major at the University of Nebraska in my Junior year. I am also a student worker in the Facilities and Mail departments at Memorial Stadium.

1. I enjoy working in small group settings, that involves step by step thinking processes. I was an active member in our Youth Group, this gives my perspective a different view on the topics at hand.
2. I believe one of the most important areas of faith which can improve our church is the Youth Group, it is the staple for many of our members' families. So, an always advancing Youth Group is an always advancing First Lutheran.



**Neil Simley**> - family includes:

Occupation:

- 1.
- 2.



**DELEGATES TO SYNOD ASSEMBLY (Vote for 5 - At least 2 men and 2 women)**

**Judy Batterman** - family includes: Husband, Bob; 5 grown children & spouses,  
11 grandchildren

Occupation: Currently retired. Formerly worked for Thrivent Financial as an office manager and at First Lutheran as Parish Coordinator.

1. I formerly served on Synod Council, Synod committees, as secretary of the Lincoln Area Cluster, and am currently serving on the Senior Leaders in Ministry Synod Task Force. I have attended Synod Assembly a number of times both as a voting delegate and as a visitor. I think it is important for First Lutheran to stay current on what is happening in the Synod and with other churches.

2. I love the direction First Lutheran is taking with regard to “making disciples for the transformation of the world”. We are not afraid to share our mission, take a stand and speak out when we are called to do so. We care about our world and one another.



**Verdell Bohling**-family includes:

Occupation: DHHS Social Service Worker Supervisor

1. As a member of the Church Council for the last years the Council and Congregation developed the Welcoming Statement. This has been a very important statement to me, both personally and for those I come into contact with in my occupation with DDHS Supervisor and previously as a Social Service Worker. I am familiar with the needs and availability of services in the public sector. I see on a daily basis the needs and discrimination that individuals face. The Welcoming Statement is a step in the right directions for those marginalized from others and from estranged from religion. I was welcomed at First Lutheran and want to pay this forward as representative at the Synod Assembly with an open mind and the ideas and concerns of First Lutheran.

2. First Lutheran shown itself to be a caring church that teaches us how to accept Christ in our lives and live the life that the Bible guides us to live. I see this continuing and First Lutheran continuing to grow within the ELCA, Lincoln and the community as a whole. We must not stop at this point, pat our selves on our backs and say, “we have a welcoming statement.” We need to live it as true Christians.



**Faye Doolittle**-family includes: Husband, Steve, 2 grown children, Cory and Kendra, their spouses and 3 grandchildren.

Occupation: I am a retired teacher who worked with students who were deaf or hard-of-hearing. I currently volunteer as a teacher for refugees who want to learn English.

1. I have been involved in various positions within our congregation—council, VBS teaching, fellowship and social ministry committees, Women of the ELCA and Stephen Ministry. I enjoy learning about our church’s social statements and discussing what it means for me to be a Christian and to be part of the ELCA. Worshipping regularly provides a foundation for living as a disciple. I am especially drawn to service, learning and advocacy areas. I would be new to participating in the synod assembly.

2. I think the mission statement says it so well—God is calling us to be disciples for the transformation of the world. That transformation can happen within our congregation, our community, state, nation or world.



**Kristi Fisher** - family includes: Husband Greg, children Dakota and Stephen.

Occupation: Fingerprints Childcare, Toddler Teacher

1. I have been a member of First Lutheran since I was 5 years old. I have taught Sunday school, music in Sunday School and VBS. I am a member of GMIA, the Adult Choir, and Spirit Ringers. I am also one of the chair people of the Casserole Caravan. In the past I have been a member of the Worship & Music Committee, and First Players. After taking the mission trip to the Holy Land in 2014 and helping my friend, Ann Taylor, with her battle with cancer, I have felt drawn to helping others in need, and welcoming new members into our congregation.

2. I love the new welcoming statement that First Lutheran has come up with. When I visited the Holy Land, I was so taken by how much faith and hope the children have. They want to go to college and become doctors, lawyers, teachers, etc., even though they have lived through bombings over there. We welcome all kinds of people to our church, no matter their color, sexuality, or even if they are experiencing tough times. I feel remodeling our church and making it brighter, and our mission statement will bring new members into our congregation. I consider First Lutheran Church my second family. They have seen Greg and I through the loss of our son, Nathan, to supporting us through becoming foster parents, and the adoption of our two wonderful sons, Dakota and Stephen.



**Patrick Hayden-Roy**-family includes: Wife Priscilla Hayden-Roy, children Anna Hayden-Roy and Peter Hayden-Roy

Occupation: I'm a professor of history at Nebraska Wesleyan, and also the Associate Provost. This involves me not only in teaching courses, but also in working with other faculty to develop our curriculum, help them with their professional development, and to make sure that students are gaining the education they expect.

1. I have been a member of First Lutheran since 1989, and take great deal of interest not only in our local church but also the greater church. I like working together with others, finding out what others are thinking, and am good at representing a community's views. I've served previously on the Council, as well as numerous committees of the church.

2. Our mission is to offer the love, grace and mercy of God to the world around us, not only those who are part of our congregation, but to those with whom we live in Lincoln and the world at large. At a time when there is a lot of fear, we need to be fearless in proclaiming God's embrace of us all.



**Susan Myren** - family includes: Here in Lincoln, just me. My extended family is mostly on the west coast.

Occupation: I am a software trainer for Nebraska Book Co. on proprietary software for college stores.

1. As a longtime FLC member I am aware I am one small part of a larger community. We learn from other congregations of our synod. Our synod is part of the national ELCA, and international agencies. Sharing what our community does and seeing what others do in our area is enlightening for me. Attending previous synod assemblies has opened my eyes to the bigger challenges and joys of being the church.

2. We are striving to include all. That starts in our congregation with connections to the larger church. We are called to be the church – sharing strengths, being inspired by people God has called to share their stories, their strengths. The synod is approaching an election and I am willing to prepare and study for that aspect of the assembly. I also hear great stories of joy. I also get to share what FLC is doing.



**Kay Rockwell**-family includes: Husband, Lee. Kent & Tracy Rockwell, and children Sidney, Alex & Kyle of Kansas City. Sue & Rick Downing, and children Shelby, Grace & Allison, and step-children Hanna & Benjamin. Keri Rockwell & daughter Athena and Eric Sudbeck and Silas, daughter Serena and guardian for Luna, a member of the Omaha Native American Tribe.



Occupation: Being retired, I enjoy taking the altar flowers to the homebound and elderly FLC members, and visiting with them. As a retired professor from UNL, I'm honored to volunteer in the *Farmer-to-Farmer Program (F2F)* in our Federal Government which improves production practices for subsistence farmers in Uganda, Kenya and Tanzania.

Through opportunities in F2F, I've partnered with the Simama Children Services of Voo, Kenya to give goats to needy HIV orphans.

1. As a FLC member since 1966 when the congregation moved to east Lincoln, I've been actively involved in FLC activities as well as Synod committees and one national convention. My passion is serving on GMIA (Global Mission in Action) to support humanitarian efforts locally in Lincoln and internationally in East Africa, specifically Tanzania and Kenya. Being privileged to traveled to East Africa numerous times, I've worked with a friend at Chuluni Inland Protestant Church on Sunday School curriculum, and helped establish the *Goats for HIV Orphans Project* at Voo. As a delegate to Synod Assembly, I'd bring historical perspectives, a vision for the future and a global mission emphasis.

2. God calls us as a spiritual community to celebrate his gifts that empower us to engage in life's struggles, to care for each other and serve Christ where we work and live. God calls us to go forth in Lincoln and our surrounding area, as well as internationally where the need is great, and someone's cross is hard to bear. God calls us into leadership roles among congregations in our Synod to go forth and share the good news.

**Rebecca Simley**-family includes: Kathleen Simley (Mother), Neal Simley (Father), and Chris Simley (Brother)

Occupation: Social Media & Marketing Manager at Hillcrest Country Club.

I manage all of the club's social media accounts and communications, as well as managing our advertising and marketing.



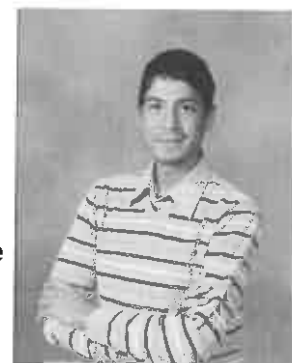
1. I have been an active member of First my whole life. In the past I have been involved in our youth groups and AWOL mission trips as well as volunteer opportunities, drama groups, choirs and small music ensembles. In recent years I have worked in the church office, taught middle and high school Sunday School, and continue to offer my musical talents in worship. I am proud to be an active and young voice in our church community.

2. First's mission makes me extremely proud of who we are and what we stand for. Living in a world that is so riddled with fighting and violence based on our differences, and often so in the name of religion, it is so inspiring to see this body of Christ striving to do just the opposite. I think our active mission in welcoming all because God welcomes all will set an example to our community and the world in what it really means to be a Christian, and that is something we can all be proud of. I hope that we can continue to be active in carrying out our mission in our lives every day so that we can be living examples of the love and grace of God.

**Daniel Robles** - family includes: Verdell Bohling is my partner of four years. I have family residing in Seward, Lincoln, and San Diego, California . San Diego is my home town.

Occupation: Disabled

1. I am willing to take the initiative as a individual coming from a very diverse background to offer insight and thoughts on how to be a progressive congregation. I am 36, and from San Diego California, then raised in Nebraska. I have a diverse ethnic background being native American, Scottish, and Spanish. I am the youngest of seven children. I have a Bachelors of science in psychology and speak Spanish. I have lived in the Eastern Caribbean and traveled to many places. My experience with many



cultures and having lived on a underdeveloped third world country island, gave me a good contrast to American living, which has given me a worldly outlook on individual lives. I can relate to people that have struggled with terminal illness, and addiction issues. My compassion for people is very strong, and I feel that I can be of use to contribute to the church council in this way.

2. The mission at First Lutheran is to welcome and include people from all walks of life. My experience is that I have felt warm and welcome coming to First Lutheran Church since the first time of being here. Our church is the reason that I was baptized at age 35. I feel strongly that First Lutheran Church was where my spiritual journey began. It is important to share that with as many people as I can. I hope to do so by maintaining a strong congregation based on the principles of the First Lutheran Church mission statement, and to keep building on that.

### ENDOWMENT BOARD (Vote for 2)

**Kathy Bangsund** - family includes: Myself

Occupation: I have been in the Medical Field for 45 years as an occupational therapist. I am presently semi-retired and have worked as needed. I have assisted people that have special needs and people recovering from orthopedic surgery. I have developed programs based on the individual as needed.

1. I have assisted with 4th grade FaithTrek/Sunday School. I have assisted with Sunday Morning Worship including being a Reader, Communion Assistant, Bible Presenter and Acolyte. In the past I was on a National Board to review forms and justification letters for scholarships and special awards.
2. Develop programs for young adults and singles. Continue outreach to the community. For example First Friday Concerts for young people, high school, etc.



**Nick Cordonier** - family includes: Kim Cordonier (Wife) & Deb Harper (Mother-In-Law)

Occupation: I work as a Constituent Liaison for U.S. Senator Deb Fischer in her Lincoln Office. My job mainly surrounds managing the day-to-day operations of the office. I provide constituent support with U.S. Government Departments and Agencies. I also perform administrative functions including phone, written and email communication. Overall my duty is to build relationships and rapport with constituents on behalf of U.S. Senator Deb Fischer.

1. I would have to say my education plays a key role in making me suitable for a position on the FLC Endowment Board. I hold a degree in Political Science with minors in Economics and Business from the University of Nebraska – Lincoln. I also have a Public Policy Certificate from UNL as well. This blend of public policy as well as business makes me uniquely equipped to understand the needs of our congregation while balancing the financial assets of our church. I would use my education to make sure our top priorities are being met in a reasonable fashion. Additionally, I have served on the Lincoln Chamber of Commerce Young Professional Group Public Policy Committee where I provided input on which legislative bills our organization would support to members. This provided great experience working as a council to analyze complex ideas and promote our organizations common goals of workplace fairness. I would bring this same experience to the FLC Endowment Board.
2. First Lutheran's Mission to me is stated all too clearly in the phrase: *"Making disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world"*. I believe this means that we must take a "hands on" approach to promoting God's word and teach others by example. Our congregation has always been a leader in the community and I see that continuing in the future, whether that be through the Backpack Program locally or through the Gifts of Hope, we are a congregation that cares. Overall I feel that FLC's mission is to make everyone feel welcome and loved. As a member on the endowment board I would carry this belief in reviewing and discussing where our congregation's priorities lie.



**Jon Peppmuller** - family includes: Karen (wife), Children: Mitch, Matt (wife Jordan) and Caden  
Occupation: CFO, American Laboratories (Omaha) responsible for all financial related decisions for a \$75 million nutrition/pharmaceutical ingredient manufacturing company.

1. I have 25+ years of financial management work experience and 3 years specific foundation financial investment experience
2. I have been at First Lutheran for 20 years this month and couldn't be prouder of our mission and to call this home.



**Kristy Weissling** - family includes: Husband Tom and children Emily and Justin who are in college.

Occupation: I am a faculty member at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln (UNL). I work with individuals who have special needs and coordinate a speech-language clinic at the Barkley Speech and Hearing Clinic at UNL.

1. I believe I have the gifts of organization and discernment. These gifts have led me across several years to assist in the building of programs that support and enhance the lives of people with special needs. I believe that I have a gift for cautious but bold thinking. While I believe in being a prudent decision maker, I also believe that programs are built by taking calculated risks.
2. First Lutheran has a beautiful mission to be Christ in the world. I believe that God will continue to call our congregation to be bold leaders in the Lincoln, Nebraska, National and Global communities. I believe that bold leadership requires resources (time, talent, and treasure). Our mission over time must remain spirit lead; and, prudent use of our treasure will result in the congregation making a significant impact in Lincoln, Nebraska, the United States, and the World.

