



Shepherd
OF THE PRAIRIE
LUTHERAN CHURCH

Annual Report

January 27, 2013

*“Caring for God’s Children of all ages, by growing disciples
who make disciples.”*

Shepherd of the Prairie Lutheran Church

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Rev. A: Audit Report Added
March 18, 2013

Shepherd of the Prairie Lutheran Church

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

Annual Meeting

January 27, 2013

I. Call to Order

II. Quorum Call

III. Opening Prayer

IV. Looking Back

1. Approval of Minutes from January 22, 2012
2. Approval of Committee and Ministry Reports
3. Approval of 2012 Financial Reports
4. Recognition of Outgoing Council Members
 - Rebecca Fulcer
 - Kathy Pizarro

V. Celebration of Ministry - Video

VI. Looking Ahead

1. Purpose Statement and Guiding Principles
2. Staffing Introductions
3. January 12 Leadership Retreat Update
4. Approval of Sabbatical Policy Resolution (page 42)

VII. Elections (Nominating Report on page 44)

1. Election of Audit Team Member
2. Election of 2013 Nominating Team
3. Election of Voting Members to the Northern IL Synod Assembly
4. Election of New Council Members

VIII. Approval of 2013 Budget

IX. Closing Prayer

X. Adjournment

Shepherd of the Prairie Annual Congregation Meeting Minutes

January 27, 2013

Called to order – 11:40am

- Quorum required is 121. In attendance 126
- Teller – Bud Hansen
- Parliamentarian – Jessica Panella

Opening Prayer – Pastor Mark Boster

Looking Back

- A motion to approve the minutes from the 2012 annual meeting was made by-Rich Willie, 2nd Kira Friendris.
- Jessica Panella asked for the following corrections: Mission statement needs to be corrected, Kristy Warnke's name is misspelled, Jill Gillming name is misspelled. Under 2012 budget discussion, related to Pastor Mark's loan, the word should be loan not land.
- Motion to approve as corrected made by Sandy Hupert, 2nd Donna Kelly. Voted on and approved as corrected.

Committee and Ministry Reports

A motion to accept the reports was made by Donna Sorensen motion, 2nd Carol Waxenberg. A motion to approve was made by Chris Solem, 2nd Chuck Peterson. Voted on and approved.

2012 Financial Reports

Financial Update by Devin Burg

Devin recognized and thanked the finance team for assistance during 2012.

General Fund Update

- We closed 2012 with income exceeding expenses by \$4,747. Our unrestricted cash in the general fund now approximately \$50,920.
- Total income to the general fund increased 5% over 2011.
- Expenses for the year ended very close to budget. Please review the actual vs. budget comparison on page 19 and 20 in the annual report.
- We were able to fulfill our commitment to the Northern Illinois Synod by providing \$54,000 in mission support.
- We were also able to appropriate \$4,456 of our regular member contributions to local mission. This does not include special offerings which also support local mission.
- The provisional accounts were fully funded through our operating budget designation. The provisional accounts are designated savings for non-recurring expenses.

Building Fund Update

- During 2012 we were able to reduce our loan principal by \$229,690.45. \$124,690.45 was from regular payments and \$105,000 was from additional principal payments.
- Interest expense for the year totaled \$39,397.55.
- We were able to send additional principal payments every quarter last year. We always maintain a 3 month payment reserve.

Ralph Wehnes motioned to approve the 2012 financial, 2nd by Sandy Hupert. Motion voted on and approved.

Outgoing council members recognized – Rebecca Fulcer and Kathy Pizarro

Looking ahead

- We watched a video highlighting 2012.
- Reminder of our mission statement—*We care for God’s Children of all Ages by growing disciples who make disciples.*
- **Guiding Principles reviewed**
 - Listen to God – *Proverbs 16:3*
 - Welcome enthusiastically – *Matthew 10:40*
 - Teach the life and love of Jesus – *Matthew 14:36*
 - Encourage and equip everyone to make a difference in God’s world – *1 Peter 2:5*
- Current staff members asked to stand and were recognized
- New team is being developed -Strategic Planning Team for Mission. Jeff Cordle was introduced as the leader of this team.
- Mother’s Day – Bishop Mark Hanson will be visiting SOTP
- June 8-16, 2013 – Kentucky Mission Trip will take place
- We are working with Peter Eide to be here for Reformation weekend. The plan is a concert on Saturday evening and participation in worship on Sunday at 10:45am service.
- SOTP congregation selected for Orion Samuelson’s TV show- Taping will be December 7, 2013 and all are encouraged to attend.

SOTP Leadership Retreat Highlights

Pastor Bill presented on Stewardship-to include discussion of selected bible verses.

SWOT analysis was the focus of the retreat – 4 groups each worked on one area (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats). The top 5 priorities were identified as a result of this exercise. Council will use this information to determine 2013 goals. The number one area identified was Caring for Members.

Sabbatical resolution (see page 39 of 2012 annual report)

Carol Waxenberg motioned to approve the resolution 2nd Ferdie Kimminau, no discussion. Voted on and approved.

Election of Audit committee

- Rich Juergensen – He has been member 3 years, member of finance team since it began. No nominations from floor.

Motion to elect made by Wayne Schmidt, 2nd Sandi Stewart. Voted on and approved.

Election of Nominating Committee

- Outgoing Council Members – Rebecca Fulcer and Kathy Pizarro
- Sharon Little, Steve Conway, Bonnie Bayser

Motion to close the nominations made by Victor Pizarro, 2nd Ron Knudsen. Motion to elect made by Chris Solem, 2nd Kathy Dahl. Voted on and approved.

Election of Synod Assembly Voting Members

- Steve Brown and Jodie Dowell

Motion to close the nominations by Alice Hallett, 2nd Sandi Stewart. Motion to elect made by Chuck Peterson, 2nd Kristy Warnke. Voted on and approved.

Election of Congregation Council Members

- Adam Adams – 1st three year term
- Amy Brittain – 1st three year term
- Larry Newbanks – 2nd three year term

Motion to close the nominations made by Richard Dahl, 2nd Sue Wehnes.

Motion to elect made by Chris Solem, 2nd George Sebastian. Voted on and approved.

2013 Budget

Devin Burg provided comments/summary of 2013 budget

2013 Budget Highlights

- The 2013 budget has been reviewed and approved by the Finance team and the Council.
- The budget represents an approximate 5% increase over the 2012 year end results.
- The largest increase in the budget is in staffing. The budget provides a 3% increase in staff salaries. There are two areas to note with the salary projections.
 - Pastor Mark's increase is based upon a combination of salary and housing allowance which together make up his total salary. We placed the entire increase in salary as the 2013 housing allowance designation had not been made prior to creation of the budget.
 - The Office Manager's salary increase is based upon an updated job description. This resulted in an increase in hours and hourly rate rather than a simple 3% increase.
- The Northern Illinois Synod contribution for 2013 is 10% of our projected member giving. In the past, we have always operated with a reasonable operating surplus allowing us to be more aggressive with our pledge. As our budget is considerably tighter than in the past, we would like to be more conservative with our pledge and give more as we are able. When we make a pledge to the synod, they are counting on those funds for their budget. If our giving doesn't reach our projected goal, it would be difficult to reduce our contribution.
- The finance team and the council believe this is a supportable budget with sufficient contingencies built in.

A motion to approve the 2013 budget made by John Bohler, 2nd Carl Hupert.

Comments from floor

Ron Knudsen - regarding salary increases for staff. Social Security only gave 1.6% and some was taken away by Medicare increases. Many people have not had raises in many years. There is concern about the increase percentages for the staff. If the budget is tight, we cannot keep going back "to the well".

Devin commented that our congregation is doing well and that we have an excellent staff that is performing well. They should be rewarded accordingly.

George Sebastian – Average salary increase in the country this year will be 3%.

Ralph Wehnes – Not opposed to increase, we have an excellent staff. Is 3% enough? We do not want staff looking elsewhere.

Alice Hallett – Office manager hours –what are the increased hours? Response – Increased from 15 hrs to 18 hrs.

Dottie Bobzin – Regarding the AV coordinator-Did the salary go up? No, the \$1800.00 is for the portion of the year in 2012 when we contracted for this position. The \$7200.00 is for the complete year 2013.

Warren Brody - Why is there no reserve fund for the building (i. e. roof etc.)? Building team and finance team is working on this.

Kris Fleener – What are the balances for the provision accounts? (listed on page 17 of annual report)

Following discussion the approval of 2013 budget was voted on and approved.

Miscellaneous

There were no miscellaneous items discussed

Pastor Mark closed with prayer.

Meeting adjourned – 12:40pm

Respectfully submitted,

—*Kathy Pizarro*

Shepherd of the Prairie Annual Congregation Meeting Minutes

January 22, 2012

Called to order – 11:55am

- Quorum required is 110. In attendance 110.
- Tellers – Deb and Bud Hansen
- Parliamentarian – Jessica Panella

Opening Prayer – Pastor Mark Boster

Looking Back

A motion to approve the minutes from the annual meeting, January 30, 2011 was made by Wayne Schmidt, 2nd Sandy Hupert. Voted on and approved.

A motion to approve the Committee and Ministry reports as submitted in the annual report was made by Kelvyn Walker, 2nd by Bob Zimmermann. Voted on and approved.

2011 Financial Reports

Financial update provided by Jerry Warnke

Jerry called our attention to pages 13 through 17 of the annual report

General Fund update

- We closed the year with income exceeding expenses by \$9766. When added to the previous year's income of \$36,481, we currently have \$46,247 of unrestricted cash in the general fund.
- We received pledges for 2011 of \$414,000 of which \$387,900 was actually received. This meant that we did not receive approximately 6.3% of what was pledged. (Improvement over last year which was about 10 %.)
- In general, expenses were in line with what was budgeted. Real picture of how the money was spent is outlined in the annual report. If you look at reports from various ministry groups, you will see the many programs that were funded by the General Fund.
- We have fulfilled our commitment to the ELCA Northern Synod by sending donations of \$52,260.
- The "Providing for the Future" accounts were fully funded and we have \$56,925 in the Provision accounts.
- We transferred \$75,000 from the General Fund to the Building Fund for principle reduction which was approved by the Congregation at the last annual meeting.

Building Fund update

- We reduced our principle this year by \$290,514 with interest payments for the year of \$46,754.
- We currently have three months of loan payments in the bank.

Ron Mudge motioned to approve the 2011 financials and 2nd by Sandy Hupert. Motion was voted on and approved.

Recognition of outgoing council members – Jerry Warnke, Steve Brown

Looking Ahead

Our mission statement says - We care for God's Children by growing disciples who make disciples. We do a good job in the first part but it was felt that we needed to work on the second part of our mission statement. In answer to this need, we hired Pastor Bill Waxenburg to help with fulfilling our mission.

Pastor Mark introduced all staff members.

The Early Learning Center is a great community outreach program - Kristy Warnke and Jill Gillming recognized for running this program.

We watched a video presentation of the year of the many ministries in 2011.

Election of 2011 Nominating Committee

- Outgoing council members – Jerry Warnke and Steve Brown
- Ralph Wehnes, Jodi Dowell, Jim McGuine, Sandy Hupert

Motion to elect made by Bob McDuffee and 2nd by Jan Koerner. Motion voted on and approved.

Election of Audit committee

- Jim Henley

Motion to elect made by Sue Wehnes, and 2nd by Sandy Hupert. Motion voted on and approved.

Election of Synod Representatives

- Marian Mesenbrink and Mike Yndestad

Motion to elect made by Carl Hupert, and 2nd by Tom Polson. Motion voted on and approved.

NOTE: It is recommended that a report from the delegated be written and submitted for annual report.

Election of Congregation Council members

- Devin Burg, Kathy McGuine, Wayne Schmidt (3 year terms)

Motion to elect made by Alice Hallett, and 2nd by Ferdie Kimminau. Motion voted on and approved.

NOTE: A list of council members and what is left of their terms will be listed in next annual report.

2012 Annual Leadership Retreat

Devin Burg reviewed results from January 7, 2012 retreat. SWOT analysis was done. Brainstorming resulted in list of potential goals for the coming year. The new council will meet in February to finalize goals for 2012. These will then be shared with the congregation.

2012 Budget Discussion

Pastor Mark's loan – Congregation requests to forgive Pastor Mark's loan in full. Motion made by Sandy Hupert and 2nd by Jan Schuff to forgive the loan in full. Motion was then amended to provide Pastor Mark with the discretion as to when the loan would be forgiven over the next two years. Motion was amended to provide discretion to Pastor Mark on when the loan would be forgiven, over the next 2 years. Motion was made by Chris Trodahl and 2nd by Darlene Soest to accept the amended motion. The amended motion was voted on and approved.

Don Petelle asked about Pastor's salary and why we reported the housing allowance separate from salary last year and combined it this year. This was done to simplify reporting.

Bob Zimmerman asked about the budgeting of pledges versus actual income. Jerry explained that the pledge amount used was from early December. We recognize that not all pledged amounts are actual income. We make up much of this difference in un pledged contributions.

Ron Mudge asked about building expansion. Is the thought process that we should pay the loan in full before we consider expansion? We have a new ministry team in place to help with that decision. The pay off date is October 1, 2022. Original date was 2027. We have reduced the time period by 5 years in the last year. We have a balloon mortgage that will need to be refinanced October 2, 2015. Therefore, the motivation to reduce the debt is strong. The new team will review all options and provide recommendations accordingly.

2012 Budget Highlights

The budget represents an increase of 3.3% over 2011 budget.

We continue to support the ELCA Northern Illinois Synod by pledging 11% of our income and we also budget 1% of our income for local missions.

The largest increase in the budget is in staffing. We increased staff this year by adding the Director of Adult Education and a Pianist/Organist. We approved small merit increases to current staff.

This is not a conservative budget. Pledges to the general fund are less than last year. There are many reasons for the decline including current state of the economy. We saw an increase in "pay as we can" versus making a pledge. There was also some increasing of the building fund and decreasing of the general fund. Council does feel that we have done a good job of promoting the "Debt reduction leads to Mission expansion drive" but at the expense of the General Fund.

There were some requests for monies that were not included in this year's budget due to decreased pledges:

- Music ministry requested \$3,000 for Worship Arts. This could be paid out of the provisional accounts.
- Property committee requested \$2,500 for tree replacement. This will be paid out of the provisional accounts.
- We reduced the "Providing for the Future" accounts.
- We discussed increasing our commitment to the ELCA by 1% but felt that we could not increase our commitment this year.

A motion was made by Ferdie Kimminau to approve the 2012 budget and 2nd by Bob Zimmermann. Motion was voted on and the 2012 budget was approved.

Miscellaneous

Council has approved the purchase of the organ that was originally rented for Christmas services. We will be purchasing the organ for \$5000 - \$6000.

Jan Schuff asked if there are plans to expand the parking lot. It is under consideration.

Pastor Bill - Thanked the congregation for a warm welcome to himself and Carol.

Pastor Mark Boster closed with prayer.

Meeting adjourned – 12:58pm

Respectfully Submitted,

--*Kathy Pizarro*

Pastor's Report to the Congregation

January 2013

Dear Friends in Christ,

Welcome to the beginning of a new year. Did you know that New Year's Day is the one holiday that is almost universal? It is the world's most observed holiday.

As I write this report I am aware of many of you making some resolutions to better yourself into this New Year. I would encourage you to consider at least one of those having a spiritual component to it. Consider using a mark of discipleship to grow in your relationship with Christ. Praying daily, Worship weekly, Reading the Bible daily, Serving in and through the church, Relating to one another in small groups (servant groups, Bible Study groups, ministry groups), Giving generously to the work of Christ in the world.

Pick one of these areas of discipleship and make a commitment to grow.

The late Erma Bombeck made some memorable resolutions over the years:

1. I will go to no doctor whose office plants have died.
2. I'm going to follow my husband's suggestion to put a little excitement into my life by living within our budget.
3. I'm going to apply for a hardship scholarship to Weight Watchers.
4. I will never loan my car to anyone I have given birth to.

Resolutions are good, especially if there are changes we need to make in our lives.

Thank you for being a part of a wonderful community of faith which emphasizes caring as a major component to ministry. ***“Caring for God's Children of all ages, by growing disciples who make disciples.”*** This is our statement of purpose and the word “caring” stands at the forefront of all we do. We don't do it perfectly but in all we do to show care it should lead to an introduction to the One who exemplified care for us in being our Shepherd. Jesus is the one who laid down his life that we might live. What a privilege it is to be the ones called to bear the love, mercy and grace of God in our lives.

A number of years ago I attended a confirmation retreat at the Lutheran Outdoor Ministry Center in Oregon, IL. During the retreat the leader invited all who were gathered to write down on a sheet of paper a regret that we wish we would have acted on or did act upon that we should not have done. We wrote those regrets on a scrap of paper, then they set a match to them and turned them to ashes in an adjacent canister. Literally, our regrets went up in smoke. At least, that's the general idea.

We could do that. We could write our regrets for those things we wish we would have done in ministry or wish to have accomplished but didn't on a piece of paper and bring them to the altar and watch them go up in smoke. That might be very therapeutic for some of us as we begin a new year.

Here is another idea however. The beginning of the Gospel of John puts the emphasis not on our past, but on our future. Not on our regrets, but on our possibilities. Here are a few selected verses from this magnificent passage:

“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning. Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made . . . He was in the world, and though the world was made through him, the world did not recognize him. He came to that which was his own, but his own did not receive him. Yet to all who received him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband's will, but born of God.”

What a positive theme for this New Year of ministry! The prologue to John is focused not on what we have been, or even what we are now. Rather it focuses on what we can yet be: *“Yet to all who received him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God . . .”*

Isn't what you really want as you begin this New Year to know deep in your heart that you can be more than you are today that you have a right to become a child of God? Isn't that what you really want to know that you can live the next 365 days confidently aware that your life matters to know that God is with you and that you can do all things through Christ Jesus who strengthens you? *“To all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God.”*

All of us have unrealized potential, as individuals and as a church. That's the first thing these words say to me. We are children of the dust who have the potential to be children of the Divine. When each of us came into this world, we brought with us an amazing amount of potential.

There is something more our text is saying to us, however. We also have enormous untapped spiritual potential. Now this is a concept that many of us will not quite grasp, but it is so vitally important. Notice, the text doesn't say that Christ came into the world so that we can improve our I.Q. or that we will be able to run the 400 in record time. It says that whoever receives Christ and believes in his name has the potential to become a child of God. What does that mean? It means that you and I have the potential to be like Christ. We have a potential within our hearts and souls for peace, a potential for joy, a potential for hope, a potential for love, a potential for forgiveness that is greater than we can possibly imagine.

Try to grasp the significance of that truth. We no longer have to live lives filled with inner conflict, anger, resentment, fear, hatred, guilt or rejection. By the power of God's Holy Spirit we can become new people, God's people. Sometimes this happens to people in a dramatic way.

Sometimes it happens just that dramatically. Someone is converted and immediately they begin to follow Christ. Sometimes it happens very slowly over time. But you and I can be more than we are. And it doesn't depend on our background; it doesn't depend on our physical or mental limitations. It doesn't depend on our age. Many older people may find themselves slowing down physically, and sometimes even mentally. But there need be no slowdown in our ability to be children of God. This is a gift that never fades nor ever fails.

And it is a gift. The right to be children of God is not something we earn. It is a gift from a loving, merciful God. Note again John's words: *“To all who received him, who believed in his name, he GAVE the right to become children of God.”* It's not a matter of how often we come to God's house, it's not how often we read our Bibles, it is not how often we pray. We don't earn the right to be children of God. It is a gift.

God has placed within each of us enormous potential, mental potential, physical potential, but the greatest of all is spiritual potential, the potential to become children of God.

We have an incredible year of ministry before us. We will have placed before us so many possibilities to touch lives for the sake of Christ and his mission in the world. I would encourage each of us to ponder and pray over this wonderful piece of Scripture. As individuals and as a church we are encouraged down the path of “becoming.” We are not about a destination (Christ secured that for us) we are about being faithful on the journey. This is a journey that includes you as a vital component of our mission together at Shepherd of the Prairie.

A little baby named Charles Philip Arthur George was born on November 14, 1948 in London, England. This little 7 lb. 6 oz. boy was born to a couple named Philip and Elizabeth. When Charles was just 3 years old, his grandfather, King George VI, died. His mother then became Queen Elizabeth II. What that meant for Charles was that he would never live as a regular child. Charles instantly became “Prince of Wales” and “Heir to the Throne,” not because of anything he did but because of who his mother was. When Queen Elizabeth dies, Charles will become King Charles. From his birth, Charles possessed the title “Heir to the Throne.” And from his earliest days, it was drilled into him who he was by birth, and what he was destined to become. Every day he awakens to the reality that he is “Heir to the Throne.”

I hope you begin this New Year also with the realization that you are an heir to the throne, not because of anything you have done, but because of what Christ has done in your behalf. You have enormous potential physically and mentally. You have even greater potential spiritually. You have the right to become a child of God, and, indeed, by your baptism, you are a child of God. That's something powerful to live up to. The right to live like Christ, the right to have God as our Father, our Counselor, and as our Shepherd.

We give thanks for what has been in this past year but go forth into this New Year better aware of who we are, and to Whom we belong.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Pastor Mark". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the typed name.

—*Pastor Mark*

Director of Adult Education

My first full year among you has been such a blessing to Carol and to me. Thank you for the opportunity to serve as Director of Adult Education. It has been a privilege to grow together in Christ as we explore the various dimensions of our Christian faith.

Our Bible studies have continued on Sunday mornings, Tuesday evenings, and Wednesday mornings. The Gospel according to Mark, Martin Luther's *Small Catechism*, a study of selected Psalms, all comprised the first eight months of the year. Beginning in September others were invited to lend their teaching skills to adult education and did so with great enthusiasm! Chuck and Sharon Little led a four week presentation on Egypt, and in October Pastor Ken Pohlmann taught a series on Islam. Dr. Joseph Morton, retired history professor from Northeastern Illinois University, talked to us about religion and our presidents. Pastor Mark Boster exercised his teaching skills with class on Martin Luther, exploring the Reformer's triumphs and passions. The year concluded with a study on the Gospel of Luke, our primary Gospel for 2012/2013.

In addition, since September, I have been meeting with parents of those young people who are in our confirmation program. We reflect on the same topics that our young people are studying so that, hopefully, there is some good discussion at home about the matters of the faith.

I also met with congregational leaders four times during the year for leadership development and plan to continue this series during 2013.

The first weekend in November saw 14 couples coming together for a marriage retreat. This was planned in conjunction with Rachael Yndestad, Steve and Lori Conway, and John and Jeannette Shannon, all of whom did a terrific job! Couples were young and old, married just seven years and married for fifty-five. It was a blessing to watch those committed couples renew their wedding vows during the Saturday evening service.

As we move into a new year of ministry together, I look forward to broadening our adult education offerings. The continued development of potential leaders within our congregation will be a focal point for 2013. And I'm always open to your suggestions of what we could be doing together to deepen our journey with the Living Christ.

My deep appreciation to the other staff here at Shepherd of the Prairie who have been so supportive of adult education: Pastor Mark Boster, Greg Dowell, Patty Driscoll-Shaw, Renae Greene, Dennis Lilla, Jane McMullen, and Mickey Waal. I am blessed to be in ministry with each of them. Thanks be to God!

—*Pastor Bill Waxenberg*

Lay Ministry Coordinator

Yes, as the rain and snow come down from the heavens and do not return without watering the earth, making it yield and giving growth to provide seed for the sower and bread for the eating; so the word that goes from my mouth does not return to me empty, without carrying out my will and succeeding in what it was sent to do.
—Isaiah 55: 10, 11

I'd like to reflect through this Word, as rain and snow are as diverse as is the many presentations and calls to me in ministry with SOTP during 2012.

In January and February, 13 ministry leaders watered the earth and yielded growth of leadership to their colleagues, yet stayed on to accompany their integration in accepting that role in their ministry.

Through the year new ministries provided rich seed for future services. New sowers presented to accept God's call to be discovering future needed SOTP fruits. They are: Decorating Group, Space and Facility Planning Team, InReach Team, Finance and, as well, new leadership in caring for our Property.

Seeking members for the new InReach team was fun, extending call to invite those who will identify the internal needs to specifically care for our own members through: Carrying Communion from the Assembly to homebound, hospitalized even prisoners; individual pre-preparing for one's funeral service; or a telephone call during every quarter year to each members' home; and... other ministries that may develop from the above. There are two other ministries germinating and hopefully will spring forth with life in the coming year. Watch! I have been blessed to work with these giving and gifted people freely moving into greater commitment.

Now, it's no surprise that SOTP continued to welcome many new members in four New Member Gatherings. Pastor Mark continues to extend an invitation to me to partner with him in these. I'd love to do that.

With Dennis and Renae, we elaborated an online MIF (Ministry Interest Form) last year. The new members have taken to heart the Word that God gives to each of us in a call to Ministry. We've not had a great response from the rest of the congregation. Go Now! Listen to God's call/or check off that in which you are already participating. Go to www.sotp.org/MIF Your responses go to the ministries' leaders who will call you and invite your participation.

I was also blessed to be small group leader for 1/2 of the 7th Grade girls moving toward Confirmation. I witnessed their beautiful thinking and being "girls," changing into responsible young women last year.

Common Meeting Night continues to facilitate communication and collaboration – and an opportunity for Pastor Mark and me to visit the various groups.

Pastor Bill called on me to reflect on the Word and guide his classes some five times. It is always a privilege to be invited to contemplate a little deeper in one book or some passages from the Bible. I learn so much, and I pray that the 'Word that goes from my mouth in the above three ministries does not return to our God empty'.

A February Blood Drive called upon Carol Roth's experience and patient organizational skills. Congregational members, and others, saved many lives through their generous donation, though they know not the recipient.

We all await the new Pictorial Directory. The company we chose may be a bit slow but they were professional to deal with. I asked Michelle Rankin, Renae Greene, Paige Cordle, Sheri Ott, Gail Quam, Sue Blotch, Sandy Martin, Beth Mudge to accept major coordinating roles for the directory. They guided the process through from beginning the publicity, all the way to the layout. Hence, all carried out God's/our will and were successful.

The yearly Synod Congregational Resourcing Event was held on March 10th. While I sent the invitation through each of the Ministry leaders to their members, and included it in weeks' worth of announcements, only nine people responded. We each came back with personal enrichment and fruitful information. Next time, however, there must be a way to share that experience and living Word with all.

On August 25 and 26 Pastor Mark invited me to address and celebrate all our ministers at each of the services. First, the leaders stood for a confirmation applause, and then active members of any ministry stood and were appreciated as well. Finally, all those who would "like" to be in ministry – but just haven't applied, were supported. That same day we had the yearly Ministry Fair after each service.

On September 25th Pastor Mark held an Orientation Update for all the Communion Stewards. Brigitte Pelka and I planned, extended the invitation and welcomed each attendant. The folks seemed to be pleased with the clearer explanation of their ministry.

Now, I'll mention one last ministerial endeavor of which I was blessed to organize. Pam Fender, a congregant, has a half-hour radio program on the new little Huntley Radio Station through Deicke Park. She invited SOTP to introduce our Faith Community. Four of us, representing all ages, shared what SOTP means to each of us.

To me, as I leave my position of Lay Ministry Coordinator, I am so very touched and grateful to all the members of SOTP who called on me, who entrusted me with their life story, who trusted me to speak God's word, believed in my skills, and most importantly loved me. We each, and all as a congregation, look to our God with our gift of faith that 'we're carrying out God's will and succeeding in what we have been sent to do'. What a privilege to be the hands and feet and heart of Jesus, our Shepherd, teaching His life and love by being Missioned through SOTP.

Many blessings of prayer, care and love from,

—*Patty Driscoll-Shaw*

Lay Ministry Coordinator

Youth and Family Ministry

Shepherd of the Prairie's Youth and Family Ministries continues to hold to 5 basic principles:

1. Faith is formed by the power of the Holy Spirit through personal, trusted relationships.
2. The church is a living partnership between the ministry of the congregation and ministry of the home.
3. Where Christ is present in faith, the home is church, too.
4. Faith is caught more than it is taught.
5. If we want Christian children and youth, we need Christian adults.

Summary of 2012 Accomplishments

- 18 Students confirmed in Rite of Affirmation of Baptism
- 70 Students enrolled in Confirmation
- Held Confirmation classes in Sanctuary
- Used every room in church (including sanctuary and kitchen) for small groups
- 34 Confirmation students attended 2011 Fall Confirmation Retreat at Lutheran Outdoors Ministries Center in Oregon, Illinois
- Attended "Feed My Starving Children" to package food to send to areas of hunger
- Began a **re:fresh** lesson plan to study through the entire New Testament
- Held Fall Family Night at Richardson Corn Maze
- Youth collected and packed 180 boxes for Operation Christmas Child
- Brought Peder Eide to SOTP for Christmas concert
- 16 students and 3 adults attended Creation Restoration Mission Trip to Wilmore, Ky
- 150 young people attended Vacation Bible School

Looking forward to

- Attending "Feed My Starving Children" in April
- Creation Restoration 2.0 mission trip in June
- Confirming 27 8th grade students in Rite of Affirmation of Baptism
- 30 Hour Famine
- Monthly "Parent Nights" to educate and inform parents on current youth culture issues
- Additional volunteers to lead our high school students and host re:refresh in their homes. At our growth rate and lack of space, this is a much needed solution.

—*Greg Dowell*

Director of Youth & Family Ministries

Congregation Council Report

Last January, Shepherd of the Prairie leaders (council members, staff members and key ministry group chairs) met for a half-day to chart the direction for Shepherd of the Prairie for 2012. Results of that meeting became the basis for specific goals developed by the Council to guide Shepherd of the Prairie for 2012. These goals were shared with the congregation via Temple Talks and the March Newsletter. The goals and results are summarized below.

2012 Congregational Goals

Goal: Enlarge the culture of involvement in Christ-like ministry in and through His Church. Because we care for God's children of all ages we encourage Shepherd of the Prairie members to be blessed by and bless others with Christ-like service.

Shepherd of the Prairie has been blessed with a congregation that actively seeks to apply our Statement of Purpose: "Caring for God's Children of All Ages by Growing Disciples who make disciples." As our congregation grows our ministry should also grow. This goal includes tasks that help continue and encourage Shepherd of the Prairie's culture of ministry to others.

The essence of this goal is to "grease the skids" for members to become involved by making it easy for them to participate. A key form of involvement and caring is through intergenerational ministry with 2012 events such as the Green Tree landscaping event, the church picnic, Mission Ministry Night, the LOMC Swing Choir event and the Peter Eide concert. To make it easier for members to participate, emphasis was placed on both new and current members to complete the Ministry Interest Form and for the appropriate ministry to follow-up to welcome new members to their team. This is a challenge for all congregations and while we experienced some start up issues, we also had successes with adding ministry members and finding ministry leadership this year through these efforts. Yet more still remains to be done.

Goal: Encourage and equip current and future Shepherd of the Prairie leaders by providing training and resources that grow leadership capabilities.

With the growth Shepherd of the Prairie is experiencing, the Retreat highlighted the need to further encourage and equip current and future leaders to support day-to-day operations as well as our statement of purpose.

Pastor Bill gave short but instructive presentations on Christian Leadership on four different Ministry Meeting Nights (2nd Monday of each month) to ministry group members. To strengthen ministry team leadership, ministry groups with council liaison were asked to identify a vice chair to fill in when the chair is absent and to have agendas and minutes for their meetings. Ministry group members were encouraged to attend the Northern Synod's Congregational Resource Event in March and to plan for the 2013 event this coming March. Pastor Mark also accompanied an interested high school student on a seminary day trip. Pastor Mark hopes to make this an annual opportunity.

Goal: Ensure good stewardship of the existing human and physical resources at Shepherd of the Prairie.

Stewardship encompasses many aspects of Christian living. The Retreat identified one aspect of stewardship that can easily be overlooked: stewardship of existing human and physical resources. This goal seeks to strengthen Shepherd of the Prairie processes that define our congregation and take steps to ensure these processes continue in the future.

A key concern for the council was how to support Saturday night services with only one called pastor. Pastor Mark has been faithful in his commitment to both Saturday night and Sunday worship services. This is an unrealistic commitment to expect of only one called pastor. The Council approved up to three additional weekends off per year for Pastor Mark until an additional called, ordained pastor is hired. Before proceeding the Council confirmed that both human and financial resources were available to cover pulpit supply for these additional weekends.

There are many activities performed by dedicated members at Shepherd of the Prairie – some are visible and others are “behind the scenes” but essential. The question is: would someone else be able to step in and perform these activities? So, we asked each responsible ministry group to start documenting their processes (visible or not) to provide continuity in our ministries. One particular need identified was audio/visual resources to support worship services and special events. Following a review of needs and other discussions, the Council passed a motion to contract part-time technical services to support volunteers and to ensure Shepherd of the Prairie has high quality sound and visual experiences to support meaningful worship and special events. Greg Dowell was hired part-time to fill this role for one year. When the year is complete, the council will reassess the situation and determine what is required going forward.

To oversee congregational support ministries such as Home Communion, Helping Hands, Hospital Visitations, Prairie Guides, Visitor/newcomer follow-up, Prayer Ministry, Coffee Hour, Sports, etc., an In-Reach Ministry team was formed under the leadership of Donna Kelly. Initial areas of focus in 2013 will be Caring Call Ministry and Home Communion.

Goal: Begin the process to develop a long-range plan (3-5 years) for Shepherd of the Prairie.

Several themes raised at the retreat led to the conclusion that Shepherd of the Prairie needs a long-range plan to give direction to our congregation over the next 3 to 5 years. A long-range plan will help us make appropriate decisions on staffing, future construction, training required, plan for a potential sabbatical, etc. To develop this plan, we anticipate a 3 to 6 month process to gather information, seek input from the congregation, share what is found with the congregation and finally formulate a Shepherd of the Prairie plan to present to the congregation for approval. Jeff Cordle has agreed to lead this team and while some preliminary work has started, most of this effort will occur in 2013.

The Council also asked the Mutual Ministry team to develop a sabbatical policy based on ELCA guidelines. The policy is documented in the Mutual Ministry report elsewhere in the Annual Report and will be voted on at the January 27th, 2013, Annual Meeting. Under the policy, only Pastor Mark would currently be eligible for a sabbatical as a full-time, ordained pastor called by Shepherd of the Prairie. If the congregation approves the sabbatical policy, Pastor Mark may consider taking one in 2014.

The goals and results above reflect specific tasks the Council and ministry groups focused on in 2012, but so much more is happening at Shepherd of the Prairie as we continue to grow our congregation and expand its ministries. Shepherd of the Prairie is truly blessed with a congregation who are sincere in seeking to apply our Statement of Purpose: “Caring for God’s Children of All Ages by Growing Disciples who make disciples.” So let’s continue to encourage each other to bless others and be blessed with this Christ-like service in 2013 and beyond.

Respectfully submitted,

—Larry Newbanks

President, Congregational Council

2012 Treasurer's Report

I am pleased to report that Shepherd of the Prairie ended 2012 in a very strong financial position. I would like to provide some history behind our budget and also provide some financial highlights for the 2012 fiscal year.

As a reminder, Shepherd of the Prairie has an Operating Budget which manages the everyday operating expenses of the church, and a Building Fund Budget which manages our Mission Investment Fund Loan.

First, I will start with our Building Fund. After spending many years worshiping at Chesak School, and at then at the Cosmon Center, we constructed our Church Building in 2009. In order to construct this building, we borrowed approximately \$1,980,000 from the Mission Investment Fund of the ELCA. The high balance of \$1,980,000 was reached on November of 2010. We have been raising funds through our building fund to pay down this debt. In addition to making our regular payments, we were able to apply an additional \$82,000 in additional principal payments to our loan this year. As of December 31st, 2012, we have reduced the balance to \$1,177,696.35. It is exciting to see how fast we are paying off this debt. As we pay down this loan, we will open up other possibilities for growing our ministry. Our Building Fund pledges for 2013 total \$210,286 and our annual debt service is \$164,088. We are anticipating another strong year of paying down our debt.

In regards to the Operating Budget, we are in a slightly different position than we have in the past. As we were preparing to move into our new building, we recognized that we need to increase staffing to accommodate our projected growth in membership. In 2011, we increased our staffing, and in 2012, we experienced our first full year under this staffing structure. Historically, Shepherd of the Prairie has finished most years with a reasonably large surplus. During most of 2012, we fluctuated between small surpluses and small deficits. With strong end of the year giving, we were able to meet all of our obligations, fund our provisional accounts, and still finish with a surplus of \$4,747. When we fund our provisional accounts, we are intentionally funding our designated savings. So, our true surplus for 2012 was closer to \$13,047. We were also able to give approximately 12% of our operating income to the Northern Illinois Synod and local charities.

Our budget for 2013 is projecting an approximate 5% increase in member giving. The Council and Finance Team agree that this is a reasonable projection as we experienced a 5% increase in giving in 2012. It was exciting to see how the financial generosity of our members supported such excellent ministry in 2012, and we are in great shape to continue supporting this great work in 2013.

Feel free to inquire about the church's financial condition at any time. You can contact me or a member of our finance team with questions. We also provide the financial reports as part of the monthly council report which is available to all members.

Yours in Christ,

—*Devín Burg*

Financial Reports

**Shepherd of the Prairie - Huntley IL
Balance Sheet as of December 31, 2012**

Saturday, January 05, 2013

Page 1 of 1

Account Name	YTD Balance
Assets	
Building & Grounds	1,980,000.00
Citizens First National Bank	143,555.04
Mission Plus	96,665.15
Total Assets	\$2,220,220.19
Liabilities	
MIF Commercial Loan Payable	1,177,696.35
Total Liabilities	\$1,177,696.35
Fund Balances	
AV Ministry Balance	480.81
Disaster Relief Fund Balance	370.00
Endowment Fund Balance	5,030.00
Evangelism/Outreach Fund Balance	2,352.79
Faith Item Fund	9,386.40
General Fund Balance	50,919.86
Good Samaritan Fund Balance	4,398.98
Grant Donations	255.00
Heifer Fund Balance	362.78
Little Lambs Fund Balance	8,798.88
MIF Loan Fund Balance	87,278.75
Misc. Fund Balance	2,049.29
<i>Music Ministry Fund Balance</i>	
Bell Maintenance Balance	500.00
Childrens Music Ministry Balance	1,700.00
Misc. Music Donations Balance	3,293.48
Music - Hymnal	434.20
Music Bells Balance	3,502.41
<i>Total Music Ministry Fund Balance</i>	<i>\$9,430.09</i>
Net Bldg & Grounds Fund Balance	802,303.65
Prairie Crafters Fund Balance	2,263.00
Prayer Shawl Ministry Balance	12.60
Provision for Bldg & Grounds Balance	17,288.72
Provision for Equipment Balance	8,648.68
Provision for Inreach Balance	1,340.00
Provision for Maintenance Balance	20,500.00
Provision for Outreach Balance	5,250.00
<i>Youth Ministry Fund Balance</i>	
Confirmation Retreat Fund Balance	3,070.00
Operation Christmas Child Balance	38.94
Youth - KCK Balance	588.53
Youth & Family Ministrey Balance	1,507.90
Youth Mission Trip Balance	(2,004.81)
Youth Retreat/Scholarship Balance	453.00
Youth Summer Camp Balance	150.00
<i>Total Youth Ministry Fund Balance</i>	<i>\$3,803.56</i>
Total Fund Balances	\$1,042,523.84
Total Liabilities and Fund Balances	<u>\$2,220,220.19</u>

MIF Loan Report (2012)

Shepherd of the Prairie - Huntley IL		
Treasurer's Report as of December 2012 for MIF Loan Fund		
Saturday, January 05, 2013		Page 1 of 1
Account Name	YTD Balance	Budget YTD
<i>Income</i>		
Debt Reduction Contributions	25,959.01	
Loan Fund Contributions	255,782.02	
Memorial Contributions	1,650.00	
Mission Plus Interest Income	585.51	
Prairie Crafters Contributions	8,439.61	
Total Income	\$292,416.15	
<i>Expenses</i>		
Loan Interest Payments	39,397.55	
Loan Principle only Payments	82,000.00	
Loan Principle Payments	124,690.45	
Total Expenses	\$246,088.00	
Difference	<u>\$46,328.15</u>	<u>\$0.00</u>

MIF Loan Report (2012)

MIF loan balance as of 12/31/2011	\$	1,407,386.80
Principal Reductions thru loan payments	\$	124,690.45
Additional Principal Payments	\$	105,000.00
Total Principal Paid In 2012	\$	<u>229,690.45</u>
MIF Loan Balance as of 12/31/2012	\$	1,177,696.35
Interest Paid on loan for 2012	\$	39,397.55

* **Special Note:** The "MIF Loan Fund" report indicates we applied \$206,690.45 toward the principal of our loan in 2012. This report shows that we reduced our principal by \$229,690.45 in 2012. SOTP received building funds in 2011, and applied a \$23,000 principal payment in January of 2004. Therefore, the "MIF Loan Fund Report" reflects how the 2012 building fund receipts were applied, and this report reflects the total principal reduction during 2012.

2012 Operating Budget Report

	Actual 2012		Budget 2012
Income			
Member contributions	\$461,235	Member contributions	\$452,500
Misc. Contributions	\$28,121	Misc. Contributions	\$38,900
Flowers	\$2,826	Flowers	\$3,000
Interest income	\$460	Interest income	\$600
Total Income	\$492,641	Total Income	\$495,000
Mission Ministry			
ELCA NI synod 11%	\$54,000	ELCA NI synod 11%	\$53,900
Local mission 1%	\$4,456	Local mission 1%	\$4,900
Good Samaritan	\$1,178	Good Samaritan	\$750
	\$59,635		\$59,550
Outreach Ministry			
Outreach/Evangelism	\$6,967	Outreach/Evangelism	\$8,000
Advertising	\$4,089	Advertising	\$6,000
Misc. Outreach expenses	\$783	Misc. Outreach expenses	\$1,000
	\$11,839		\$15,000
Christian Education Ministry			
Adult Discipleship	\$1,012	Adult Discipleship	\$4,000
Small group ministries	\$98	Small group ministries	\$400
Retreats	\$515	Retreats	\$1,000
Confirmation	\$4,754	Confirmation	\$1,500
Sunday School	\$1,334	Sunday School	\$3,500
VBS	\$3,318	VBS	\$3,500
Misc. Christian Ed.	\$141	Misc. Christian Ed.	\$0
	\$11,172		\$13,900
Youth Ministry			
HSYG (DUIJ)	\$360	HSYG (DUIJ)	\$2,500
The Well	\$194	The Well (Kool Christians Kids)	\$1,500
Youth (K-5)	-\$544	Youth (K-5)	\$600
Retreats	\$3,360	Retreats	\$1,250
Misc. Youth expenses	\$1,138	Misc. Youth expenses	\$1,000
Other	\$1,071	Other	\$0
	\$5,578		\$6,850
Music Ministry			
1st Service music	\$35	1st Service music	\$250
2nd Service music	\$261	2nd Service music	\$250
Adult bell Choir	\$1,748	Adult bell Choir	\$1,000
Children's Music Ministry	\$632	Childrens Music Ministry	\$1,000
Adult Choir	\$1,209	Adult Choir	\$1,000
Special Music	\$3,548	Special Music	\$0
Piano Maintenance	\$300	Piano Miantenance	\$500
Bell maintenance	\$250	Bell maintenance	\$250
Licensing fees	\$601	Licensing fees	\$750
Misc. Music expenses	\$404	Misc. Music expenses	\$3,000
	\$8,986		\$8,000
Worship Ministry			
Flowers	\$3,391	Flowers	\$3,000
Altar guild	\$338	Altar guild	\$1,500
AV ministry	\$2,961	AV ministry	\$1,500
Pastoral assistance	\$900	Pastoral assistance	\$1,000
Worship supplies	\$986	Worship supplies	\$750
Misc. Worship expenses	\$388	Misc. Worship expenses	\$0
	\$8,964		\$7,750

2012 Operating Budget Report (cont)

	Actual		Budget
Facilities		Facilities	
Cleaning service	\$7,929	Cleaning service	\$7,200
Utilities	\$7,006	Utilities	\$16,000
Waste removal	\$1,338	Waste removal	\$1,100
Lawn care/snow removal	\$8,440	Lawn care/snow removal	\$7,600
Maintenance/Cleaning supplies	\$517	Maintenance/Cleaning supplies	\$1,200
Fire system monitoring	\$1,530	Fire system monitoring	\$1,500
Misc Facilities expenses	\$5,165	Misc Facilities expenses	
	\$31,925		\$34,600
Office expenses		Office expenses	
Office supplies	\$9,757	Office supplies	\$8,000
Office equipment	\$2,483	Office equipment	\$800
Web/software expenses	\$2,064	Web/software expenses	\$1,500
Telephone expense	\$2,546	Telephone expense	\$1,900
Postage	\$1,223	Postage	\$1,905
Dues & subscriptions	\$317	Dues & subscriptions	\$1,000
Equipment rental	\$6,380	Equipment rental	\$7,500
Misc. Office expenses	\$359	Misc. Office expenses	\$500
	\$25,129		\$23,105
Staffing Ministry		Staffing Ministry	
Pastor salary	\$49,340	Pastor salary	\$49,300
Pastor Housing allowance	\$32,000	Pastor Housing allowance	\$32,000
Lay Ministry Coord.	\$16,550	Lay Ministry Coord.	\$16,550
Youth Ministry Coord.	\$35,306	Youth Ministry Coord.	\$35,306
Director of Music	\$30,375	Director of Music	\$30,375
Organist	\$12,000	Accompanist	\$12,000
Tech Support Manager	\$24,655	Tech Support Manager	\$25,366
Office manager	\$8,649	Office manager	\$8,275
Director of Adult Education	\$32,825	Director of Adult Education	\$32,825
Staff training. Cont' ed	\$4,059	Staff training. Cont' ed	\$4,000
Social security	\$12,881	Social security	\$12,048
Pastor health insurance & S.S.	\$36,884	Pastor health insurance & S.S.	\$40,000
Misc staff expenses	\$3,525	Misc staff expenses	\$2,500
AV Coordinator	\$1,800		
	\$300,849		\$300,545
Other Church expenses		Other Church expenses	
Scholarships	\$650	Scholarships	\$1,200
Committee expenses	\$1,722	Committee expenses	\$3,000
Insurance	\$7,327	Insurance	\$6,300
Automobile expenses	\$4,828	Automobile expenses	\$3,000
Human resources	\$536	Human resources	\$2,500
Bank/Legal expenses	\$455	Bank/Legal expenses	\$400
Misc expenses	\$0	Misc expenses	\$1,000
	\$15,518		\$17,400
Providing for the future		Providing for the future	
Provision for Outreach programs	\$750	Provision for Outreach programs	\$750
Provision for Inreach programs	\$550	Provision for Inreach programs	\$550
Provision for Equipment	\$1,000	Provision for Equipment	\$1,000
Provision for Maintenance	\$3,000	Provision for Maintenance	\$3,000
Provision for Bldg. & Grounds	\$3,000	Provision for Bldg. & Grounds	\$3,000
	\$8,300		\$8,300
	\$487,895		\$495,000
Net Income	\$4,747	Net Income	\$0

Statistical Report

Statistical Report						
Year	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Baptized Members	421	478	531	711	849	962
Worship Attendance	229	241	362	392	426	446
Ministry Income	\$304,068	\$321,632	\$371,390	\$422,028	\$469,630	\$492,641
Baptisms		21 Children 4 Adults	8 Children, 3 Adults	9 Children 4 Adults	14 Children 6 Adults	12 Children 5 Adults
Weddings		4	2	7	4	3
Confirmations		6	2	9	11	18

2012 Ministry Reports

Youth & Family Ministries

GEMS

The mission of GEMS (Girls Everywhere Meeting the Savior) is to help bring girls into a living, dynamic relationship with Jesus Christ. Our goal is to grow bigger hearts. Together, we are learning how to love and care for one another, other people, ourselves, and our relationship with God. We do this by learning about Jesus Christ, what He has done for us, and His plans for each of our lives. We meet on the second and fourth Wednesday of the month from 6:00-7:30 p.m.. Our small group has grown from about 7 girls to now just under 20. GEMS is open to 4th and 5th grade girls. Brandi Lorenzo and Jenn Huston are the leaders.

—*Jenn Huston*

LITTLE LAMBS

Our Little Lambs Early Learning Program has grown again this year! We have a total of 23 different children enrolled for the 2012 – 2013 school year (several of them are enrolled in 2 different classes). We have a T/Th class with eleven 3 & 4 yr. olds, a W one-day class with ten 2 – 4 yr. olds and our new F one-day class has four 2 – 4 yr. olds. Classes meet from 9:00 am – noon. During this time we enjoy: circle time, math/language lessons, letter and letter sound recognition, Bible stories, crafts, music, snack, free play and more! These activities help children develop Kindergarten readiness skills, a love for Bible stories and the knowledge that God loves us all!

About the teachers:

Kristy Warnke was an elementary school music teacher and then a substitute teacher for Dist. 300. In addition she is a certified Musikgarten pre-school music teacher. She directed church children/adult vocal and handbell choirs for over 30 yrs. And, she directs the Prairie Ringers Adult handbell choir at SOTP. Kristy lives in Del Webb with her husband. They have 2 grown daughters, a son in law and a grandson. This is Kristy's fourth year teaching at Little Lambs.

Jill Gillming graduated from Illinois State University with a degree in Education. She has taught in the Huntley school district, and, as an aide for kindergarteners with special needs. She has also served as a Director of Education at a Sylvan Learning Center. Jill lives in Huntley with her husband and two children. The Gillming family are charter members of SOTP. This is Jill's fourth year teaching at Little Lambs. Kristy & Jill alternate the Lead Teacher/Assistant Teacher jobs.

Jeni McCann is our Aide. She helps out all morning in the one-day classes, when we reach 8 or more in a class, and from 9:45 – 11:15 in the two-day classes, when we reach 9 or more in class. Jeni is an active member of SOTP. She has helped with many of the children's choirs, often plays flute for our worship services and is a member of the Prairie Ringers. Jeni lives in Algonquin with her husband and two daughters. This is Jeni's first year as our Aide.

Last spring, we were able to purchase a lamb, for Heifer Project, with Little Lambs funds.

We will be starting early enrollment for the 2013 school year in February. Children between the ages of 2 and 4 yrs. (by Sept. 1st) are accepted into our program. They do not need to be potty trained and do not need to be members of SOTP. Enrollment is limited, so, if you are interested in signing up your child, or, if you know someone who is, please contact us at littlelambs@sotpmail.com.

We see the smiling faces on our students and parents, every week, and feel the program has been a great success! With God's blessing, we'd like to see the program continue to grow!

—*Kristy Warnke, Jill Gillming, Jeni McCann*

SUNDAY SCHOOL

2 Timothy 3:14-15

But as for you, continue in what you have learned and firmly believed, knowing from whom you learned it, and how from childhood you have known the sacred writings that are able to instruct you for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus.

Diana Reincke continues in her role as Sunday School Director for 2013. Over 100 preschool through 5th graders are enrolled in Sunday School. The same Sunday School curriculum is offered during both the 9am and 10:45 worship services. Preschool through 1st graders begin worship seated with their parents, and remain through the children's message with Pastor Mark. Afterward, they are directed by their teachers to their Sunday School classroom. 2nd through 5th graders attend Sunday School in their classroom for the full hour.

Sunday School is staffed by 16 teachers. Each teacher typically teaches about twice per month. There are also teenage helpers who assist in the younger grades with more of the hands-on type of activities. A huge thank you to all the volunteers for their time and commitment to the SOTP youth!

Faithweaver continues to be used as the curriculum for the 2012-2013 school year.

Faithweaver unites families by teaching the same Bible truth across ALL age levels. Each week, no matter which class is attended, all ages explore the same scripture. This facilitates wonderful family conversation, and unification.

Lessons are designed to encourage faith development beyond Sunday so faith grows all week long.

Once again, we were able to present Bibles to all of the incoming 2nd graders during worship services one Sunday in September. It is wonderful to be able to get a Bible in the hands of each of our youth. We plan to continue this program annually with each new 2nd grade class.

In 2013, Sunday School will continue to follow its theme of "Transforming Kids' Lives". We are always looking for helping hands to make a difference in the lives of the SOTP youth. I invite anyone having an interest in children and/or Sunday School to contact Diana Reincke 847-659-8699 or dreincke93@gmail.com

—*Diana Reincke*

Sunday School Director

Mission Ministries

GRAFTON FOOD PANTRY

This year the Grafton Food Pantry moved into a new home. We are right around the corner from where we were last year at 11481 Allison Court. We also have new hours. We are open on Monday evening from 4:00 to 7:00 p.m. and Wednesday and Friday from 1:00 to 4:00 p.m.. We gave out a full meal for Thanksgiving and Christmas this year as well as our regular offerings.

The donations brought to church on the first Sunday of every month have been very appreciated as well as the donations given each week from the Confirmation Classes. Also on Sunday when we are collecting the donations the Confirmation class has been a huge help. We also have other volunteers from SOTP who donate their time regularly. It is very appreciated. Thank you for all you do.

Blessings,

—*Alice Hallett*

MISSION TEAM

The Mission Team works toward accomplishing the goals of our own and the churches mission statements. We do this by Envisioning enabling, and supporting mission opportunities for SOTP.

The Mission Team has been blessed to be entrusted with identifying and designating 1% of the Congregation's budget as well as special offerings such as Lent, Easter, Thanksgiving and Christmas. Our emphasis is mainly local as you can see by the following 2012 list:

- *** Exodus World Service - Local and Global
- Faith in Action (McHenry County)
- Grafton Food Pantry Huntley)
- ***Green Tree Garden Work Project (Huntley)
- Home of the Sparrow (McHenry County)
- Hurricane Sandy (Thru ELCA disaster response)- Global
- Lutheran Social Services of IL
- Malaria Campaign (ELCA) - Global
- ***McHenry County Jail Detainees Ministry
- ***Northern IL Food Bank
- ***PADS (Crystal Lake)
- Pioneer Center (McHenry County)
- Place2BE- Rock Island IL (Northern Illinois synod in kind offering)
- SOTP Anniversary Celebration
- Stubbs Missionary Sponsorship in Tanzania (ELCA) – Global
- Syrian Refugee Program (Thru ELCA disaster response) - Global
- Turning Point (McHenry County)

The dollar amount collectively totaled over \$15,000!

*** **denotes that opportunities** were offered for SOTP members (usually intergenerational) to actively participate in that particular ministry.

Thanks to all of you at SOTP for making this possible and of course thanks to the wonderful people have been part of our Mission Team this last year: Greg Gillming, Rebecca Hennessy, Donna Kelly, Steve Legel, Theresa Molgren, Corinne Neukirch, Jules Pelka, Tammy, Sabie, Sid Sorensen, and Judy Spencer. We are always looking for new people and new ideas, please contact any team member if you might have some input or questions.

Respectfully Submitted

—*Sandy Hupert*

Mission Team Chair

PRAIRIE CRAFTERS

The Prairie Crafters have outdone themselves this year. We meet once a month but most of our work is done outside of our meetings. We are always looking for new members and new ideas.

With our usual Spring sale and Christmas Bazaar we also had a few other sales. This was our best sales year. Thanks to all who worked so hard making crafts, those who gave us wonderful ideas, those who sold everything we made and those who bought our crafts and brought their friends and neighbors to buy this year we were able to donate over \$11,000.00 to the debt reduction on our church.

This year when it was discovered there would be no Giving Tree for Christmas, the Prairie Crafters took it on at the last minute. With the cooperation and work of the crafters and all who took names off the tree it was done in one week and delivered on time for Christmas. A big thank you to all who made this possible.

God Bless all of you.

—*Alice Hallett, Joan Kiminau, Noreta Walker*

PRAIRIE POINT QUILTERS

The Prairie Point Quilters are especially blessed this year with space in the beautiful cabinets that puts all our supplies in the room where we work. No-more bringing sewing machines and a heavy rack of supplies from one end of the church to the other. While there is chatter and laughter and prayer, twelve to eighteen quilters working at home or at church, are cutting squares, laying out, sewing, ironing, layering and binding quilts to be a blessing to those in need. We thank all who have supported us with gifts of sheet-backers, material and thread, making it possible to send 85 quilts to Lutheran World Relief this year.

—*Elaine Brody - Ruby Haerle*

PRAYER MINISTRY

Jesus taught us to pray, "Our Father . . .", Paul instructs us to "Pray without ceasing." Believing there is power in prayer, we bring our joys and sorrows to God knowing that He hears and answers. You place your prayer requests on the usher's table in Crossroads or leave them in the church office. You phone or email prayer requests to Renae Greene at the church office or to Theresa Molgren. Everyday Theresa emails the new requests to the 66 members of the prayer ministry team. Each week the published prayer list is revised and printed in the weekly announcements. We encourage all members to use the prayer list in your private devotions.

If you have a prayer request, contact Renae at the church office ([847-669-9948](tel:847-669-9948)) or Theresa Molgren ([847-961-6876](tel:847-961-6876)).

If you wish to join the prayer team and receive prayer requests and updates via email, contact Theresa.

—*Theresa Molgren*

Prayer Ministry Team

PRAYER SHAWLS

This year we gave out well over 100 Prayer Shawls. The importance of these shawls is that they are knitted/crocheted, prayed over and delivered to someone who is in need of comfort. We give these shawls for both joyful events such as the birth of a child, or for those sad times when someone needs a little comfort.

We also began making baptismal blankets and gave out ten of them so far. Thrivent donated \$300.00 to help pay for all the yarn we use. Also others have made donations of yarn and/or money to help pay for our materials. We are very grateful to everyone. This is a very rewarding ministry and new knitters and/or crocheters are always welcome. We are willing to teach you how to make the Shawls.

—*Alice Hallett and Jeanne Henley*

STITCHIN' TIME

We have been meeting every Thursday evening at the church. We are a small group (all ages) who are learning to knit, crochet and read patterns. This year our students have made scarves, hats and afghans. New people are always welcome to join us.

—*Alice Hallett*

Worship Ministries

AUDIO-VISUAL

Introduction – This was a very busy and successful year for the growing Audiovisual ministry. An official recommendation was made to the SOTP Church Council by acting Audiovisual Lead Mike Yndestad to hire a part time Audiovisual Coordinator to help prepare visual elements for worship, support special events, maintain audio & visual equipment and help steward the future plan of the A/V ministry. Greg Dowell was hired for 10 hours a week to provide consistent and reliable leadership and technical support for the audiovisual ministry.

Costs

- Through sponsors and aided by SOTP funds, our A/V ministry acquired about \$8,000 of new and replacement equipment in 2012.
- \$7,000 was donated by sponsors and was used to purchase wireless microphones and a wireless audio monitoring system.
- We estimate spending another \$5,000 in 2013 to install another video camera and to secure additional wireless microphones that could be used for choir and dramatic presentations, along with other equipment and cabling needs.

Support

- We received more requests for event support and worship presentation services than ever before in the history of SOTP in 2012.
- Newly hired Greg Dowell was a very welcomed addition to the A/V ministry.
- Our volunteer group was spread very thin! Pastor Mark was assisting with the preparation of visual slides and audio equipment setup for worship and special events.
- Together our volunteer team along with Greg presently spends an average of 15 hours a week supporting the Audiovisual ministry.

Staffing Levels

- Nearly doubled the number of 8 active volunteer members.
- Presently, the ministry is supported by volunteers led by Greg Dowell.
- There are about 14 active members of the A/V Ministry which include: Greg Dowell, Jim and Joan Rice, Walter Roth, Brian Rojas, Sid Sorensen, Ferdie Kimminau, Mike Yndestad, Steve Conway, Tom Polzin, Ralph Wehnes, Henry Martin and Adam Adams.
- Even with all these members, there is not enough coverage to provide A/V support for the more than 200 worship services and events that take place at Shepherd of the Prairie each year.
- Continually searching to for volunteers to grow the A/V ministry

Looking Forward

- This was a very demanding year for the A/V Ministry.
- The addition of Greg Dowell as the new A/V Lead and staff representative was the key to our success in 2012.
- We are looking forward to meeting and exceeding the A/V needs of our church in 2013 by accomplishing even more to enhance the total worship experience in a manner that is inviting to our members and newcomers of all ages.

—*Greg Dowell*

Director of Youth & Family Ministries

ALTAR GUILD

We are very fortunate to have wonderful members who take great care in preparing the Eucharist for all worship services. Guild members are trained in proper etiquette for set-up and take-down and cleaning of all the vessels. The linens are laundered by guild members and they make sure assistant minister robes are cleaned and pressed. Altar paraments are changed to reflect the colors of the liturgical calendar. We assist the minister and Worship Planning committee for any special needs for all services.

The members work in teams of two or three each month for set-up and clean-up. Bread for communion is baked by volunteers. Thanks to Pat Fioree for coordinating the bakers for the past year and to all the bakers.

The members set-up for baptisms. Thanks to Carol Lilla for making the embroidered baptismal napkin and Gretchen Lane for making the banner that each child receives on their baptismal day.

Taking orders for flowers for the Easter garden and poinsettias for Christmas are handled by our Guild. We decorate the Christmas tree with the hand-made Chrismons.

The Altar Guild has a budget each year. Supplies are purchased as needed – wine, grape juice, gluten-free wafers, new robes for the assisting ministers and any new paraments or supplies as needed.

Membership in the Altar Guild is open to all members of SOTP. We would love to encourage all women and men to be a part of our membership. Thank you to all who serve so faithfully on Altar Guild.

Respectfully submitted,

—*Susan Wehnes* (Chairman)

BANNER GROUP

The Banner Ministry's purpose is to enhance the worship experience by providing visual symbols that reflect the message of the Gospel for a particular, or series of, Sundays. We currently have four active members, and welcome new members. We meet at the church once a month in the morning. Please join us.

Our goals for 2013:

- Increase membership.
- Complete four new banners.
- Update notebook that catalogs banners, their history, and appropriate usage schedule.
- Repair current banners as needed.
- Transfer leadership role to Pam Fender. We will work together through the first quarter of the year.

Respectfully submitted,

—*Mary Conti*

FAITH CHEST MINISTRY

The Faith Chest Ministry provides a hand made personalized wooden chest for each person baptized into faith at our Shepherd of the Prairie Lutheran Church.

The Faith Chest is intended to be a place where documents, mementos and keepsakes of one's journey to faith and adulthood can be stored and is presented by Pastor Mark immediately following the Baptismal Ceremony.

Currently the Faith Chests are being handcrafted by Chris Trodahl.

—*Chris Trodahl*

FLOWERS TO SHUT-INS

Any flowers that have been ordered for Sunday services and not wanted by the individual who ordered them are delivered to either someone in the hospital or who is ill at home. This is done by a member of this ministry.

—*Mary Trodahl*

WORSHIP GREETERS

This ministry is one that truly enables individuals to meet and greet current members and visitors prior to worship services at S.O.T.P. Anyone interested in helping in this ministry may contact our Lay Ministry Coordinator, who in turn will let me know if someone is willing to help. The commitment usually involves just one Saturday or Sunday per month and it is not only rewarding to the Greeter but gives the members and/or visitors a strong feeling that Shepherd of the Prairie is a warm, caring congregation.

Respectfully Submitted,
—*Joanne Klínger*

USHERS

Another year has passed, we have made some changes. The biggest of these was the rewriting of the Ushers Duties Document. Another change is that the ushers now pass out the bulletins by the sanctuary doors instead of the entry doors, which opens up the entry. I do believe that everything runs very smoothly. We are happy to be leading a group of dedicated men and women that are doing a great job. Thank all of you very much.

—*Ferdie Kimminau, Dale Johnson*

WORSHIP PLANNING

Much of the work of the Worship Team is to see that the day-by-day, week-by-week tasks are done smoothly and in a worshipful manner. Some is mundane, much is rewarding. Below is a listing of this year's endeavors. They are...

- An organ was purchased
- A different florist was selected
- Blinds were purchased for the windows in conjunction with the property committee
- A part-time coordinator was created for the AV Ministry
- The 10:30 a.m. service was changed to 10:45 a.m.
- An acolyte training program was suggested and being implemented
- Significant purchases were made of AV equipment
- A Worship Arts committee is being formed
- Outdated choir robes were disposed, and finally...
- ... nearly fifty fellow members helped each week to make the services possible.

Submitted by,

—*Carl Hupert* (Chairman)

WORSHIP PARTICIPANTS COORDINATOR

Assisting Ministers, Communion Stewards and Readers are all important and very necessary part of our worship services. Without them, Pastor Mark would be the only--and very lonely--person in the nave.

It has been such a privilege to have served as a coordinator securing volunteers for all these positions for each Sunday, and any other special Holiday worship services, throughout the year. Yes, doing this does involve many telephone calls, but they are all to people who have already volunteered to serve in these positions and they are more than willing to serve for a specific worship service. This report gives me the opportunity once again to say "Thank you so very, very much for your commitment and your generous in-spirit response whenever I call any of you. You are all such a blessing to the Ministry of our church, and I truly appreciate it.

Also, we wouldn't mind if the list of volunteers to serve as Assisting Minister, Communion Steward or Reader becomes longer! If you're at all interested in serving in any of these positions, you may contact me. Training will be scheduled on a regular basis by Pastor Mark throughout the year.

Again my heartfelt thanks to each and every one! Blessings to all

—*Brigitte Pelka*

Music Ministries

Rejoice Worship Band Jane McMullen, Director

Currently we have put together several teams to lead our contemporary worship service at 10:45am every Sunday. These teams work very hard to lead God's people in praise and worship, constantly preparing 8 to 10 songs per Sunday. We currently are being led by vocalists, piano, guitars, drums, keyboard/synthesizer with the addition of violin, flute, saxophone and other instruments on occasion. We are always looking for more team members. Please prayerfully consider joining the band if you have the gift of singing or instrumental music. Contact Jane McMullen if interested.

Youth Band Jane McMullen, Director

With so many extremely talented young people in our church family, the only thing to do was start a Youth Band. These young people lead worship several times a year and are a joy to participate in worship with.

Many of these kids also provided special music for our Christmas Eve services too.

In the fall Larry and Donna Newbanks generously bought new drums for our contemporary worship in honor of their grandson, Chad Juergensen. Chad has is our awesome drummer in the band ! What a difference this gift has made to enhance our worship!! Heartfelt thanks!!!

In addition to all these groups, we also have many small **instrumental ensembles** who have enhanced our worship at our services. These ensembles have included multiple combinations of: clarinet, flute, violin, cello, trumpet, trombone, baritone and saxophone.

Shepherd's Voices-- Adult Choir Jane McMullen, Director

Our Adult Choir is currently averaging 20 to 25 members in size. We welcomed several new people to our Christmas Choir in December. Thanks to all singers who have faithfully come to rehearsals and given their best. We have sung great music with and without vocal and instrumental soloists, and enjoyed great fellowship together. In January, we will be starting a new schedule, with longer, but fewer rehearsals each month. The hope is to attract new people that have a desire to sing but just cannot commit to every week. In February we will have an Easter Choir and invite more folks to join for 4 rehearsals and sing Good Friday and Easter Sunday.

My goal is to **integrate singers of all ages** into this choir in order to better lead God's people at our 9am Traditional worship services on Sunday mornings. Please prayerfully consider joining us, we welcome all new members enthusiastically!!

Blessings Choir Carol Waxenberg, Director

In September, I was given the honor and opportunity to lead the Blessings Choir for Shepherd of the Prairie. The age of the children this year ranges from 2nd through 5th grade. We meet on Wednesdays at 4:30, and we try to sing about once a month. So far, they have sung four times, including those who were able to participate on Christmas Eve. Our group has ranged in size from 6-12 singers. Our most exciting opportunity to serve was at the children's Christmas worship program at both services on December 16th. We sang three different songs accompanied by various musical instruments. Evidently, it was a departure from past years, but as one parishioner stated, "It was exactly what we needed today." The overall response was very positive.

I am trying to expand their understanding of the hymnal, reading music, and the church year, and I look forward to continuing with them until the end of the year.

Respectfully submitted,

—*Carol Waxenberg*

Cherub Choir (Ages 3-6)

Sandy Martin, Director

We are blessed to have 17 in our choir this year! We normally sing once a month, at the 10:45 service, with the exception of our Christmas "program" in which the cherubs participated in both the 9 and 10:45 service. This is an energetic group of children, who love to sing! I do try to incorporate a little learning into our rehearsals, and we always end our rehearsals with a prayer, in which the children like to take turns leading.

Many thanks to the parents who get these children here on Wed. evenings for rehearsals, and are always willing to help when we sing! We couldn't do it without you!

—*Sandy Martin*

Multi-Media Ministry

I would also like to heartily thank the sound and media ministry for their patience and perseverance in striving to get the most out of our worship experience through multi media. This fall, we hired Greg Dowell to lead and coordinate the ever growing and technically demanding ministry. Greg has done a wonderful job and continues to train and add new lay people to the audio and visual areas of the ministry. Also great progress has been made in being good stewards of all our sound and visual equipment. This team also spends much time setting up for worship, and attending the worship band rehearsals on Thursday evenings as well as overseeing the maintenance of all of the equipment we currently use in worship.

Heartfelt thanks to Mike Yndestad for his expertise and many years of faithful service to this important ministry.

HANDBELLS, HANDBELLS, HANDBELLS!!!

Prairie Ringers – Adult Handbell Choir Kristy Warnke, Director

The Prairie Ringers helped to lead worship services at SOTP, 11 times in 2012, including the 11:00 pm Christmas Eve service. We rehearse on Thurs. evenings, from 7:15 – 8:30 pm, in the sanctuary, Sept. through May.

We have 11 ringers and several substitutes that we call on regularly. We especially want to thank the Spirit Ringers. These talented and willing kids have helped us many times through the year.

I am so pleased to be a part of this caring supportive group. Many of our ringers have had health issues for themselves or family members, this year. The Prairie Ringers have really stepped up with cards, meals and especially prayers. God bless you all.

—*Kristy Warnke*

Director

Spirit Ringers Handbell Choir Youth Bells from 7th grade through 12th grade.

Our Spirit ringers have provided many musical offerings throughout the year in worship and will continue to have a great role in our worship services. We have 15 “energetic, funny, bright, talented” and devoutly faithful ringers in our group. Our rehearsals are filled with hard work, fun and great fellowship. In July, 9 of our ringers went to Cincinnati, Ohio for the The Handbell Musicians of America National Directors conference and played in the “Distinctly Teen” segment. We also played the National Anthem with 300 other ringers at the Great American Ball Park for the Reds and Brewers baseball game.

In late November, Jim and Marina Rhode generously gifted our bell ministry with 3 new LOW bells: C3, C#3 and G3. These bells are made to order and will be ready to ship in February 2013. Only 9 more bass bells to complete our 5 octaves. THANK YOU, THANK YOU, THANK YOU!! Make sure you listen for that BIG C3 sound!!

In early December these young people touched my heart in a special way that I will never forget. With the help of my dear friend and our wonderful organist at SOTP, Micky Waal, they played “*Jesus Loves Me*” for my Mom’s funeral service. Words cannot express how amazing it was to be surprised at such a difficult time with this lovely, fitting musical offering.

Also in December, we were invited to join the Sun City Chorus in their annual Christmas Concert. We played 2 solo pieces—“*Believe*” from the Polar Express and “*A Charlie Brown Christmas*” complete with power point presentations while we were playing. We also accompanied the chorus on 2 of their songs. Before the concert we were graciously invited to Larry and Donna Newbanks’ home for a beautiful lunch complete with a “**Spirit Ringers**” cake and tons of scrumptious food. We all had a great time!!!

Spirit Ringers have been recently meeting to practice on Friday late afternoons but also rehearse on Sunday afternoons, usually in the fall, through sports seasons.

HEARTFELT thanks to all the parents, grandparents and friends of Spirit Ringers for all their help, generosity and support !!

—*Jane McMullen*

Director

This is truly a “bell family”, these kids and parents have bonded beyond my wildest dreams and the Lord continues to bless all of us in so many ways!

The Joy Ringers Denise James, Director

The Joy Ringers are a group of children in grades 2 & 3. There are 8 children that play in the group. We focus on learning proper bell ringer techniques & learning to follow music. We currently use chimes & play songs using chords with accompaniment. The children played “*Away in a Manger*” for the Christmas season, while the Cherub Choir sang. We will continue to work on proper technique & begin to learn to play a simple handbell piece in the upcoming months.

Jubellation Ringers (Intermediate bells 3rd - 7th grade) Jane McMullen, Director

This group has 10 ringers with space for a few more. The Jubellation ringers have provided musical offerings throughout the year and also on occasion have accompanied our chime choir. This Christmas Eve, the Jubellation group accompanied a vocal soloist .

In order to be successful in this group we require better than basic music reading skills for each ringer. This group is a training ground for our Spirit ringers and young people will be moved when age and skill levels are appropriate. Please email Jane McMullen if your child is interested in joining this wonderful group of ringers.

Organist Michael (Micky) Waal

(*Or as the kids like to call him.....Mic Kay!!!*)

We are so BLESSED to have Micky with us. Not only is he a consummate worship leader on the organ and piano but he is an extremely generous person with his time and many other talents. It is an honor and joy to work with such a talented and faithful person!

Again, the possibilities are endless! I am excited to see where God is leading the Music Ministry of SOTP in 2013. Heartfelt thanks to all who have served and who continue in our mission to make Christ known and honor and praise His Holy name.

—*Jane McMullen*

Director of Music and Worship

Fellowship Ministries

SOTP BOWLING LEAGUE

The League is halfway thru the 3rd year. We have seen fantastic growth, growing from 5 to 10 teams. Thanks to Greg Dowell, and some enthusiastic parents, we include 2 teams from our High School Youth Group which has amped up the enthusiasm in the League. Everyone seems to have a good time even after crying over a "perfect" throw for a "strike", that somehow ends up as a "gutter ball".

The League is a wonderful opportunity for church members to get together socially and have some fun. We meet only once a month (the 3rd Friday) at Brunswick Zone on Randall Rd. in Algonquin at 6:00 P.M. There is no requirement to be a good bowler. It is open to all ages 18 to 100, men and women, married or single. Teams consist of 4 people, and we bowl 3 games. The cost is low, and a great way to have some fun, get together with friends, make new friends, get some exercise, and only commit to 1 night a month from September thru May.

We are always looking for new members to be a regular or substitute bowler. call me at (847) 659-1331 or E-Mail me at schmidtw12@comcast.net.

—*Wayne Schmidt*
League Secretary

CARING CARD

The Caring Card Ministry sends cards to shut-ins from Shepherd of the Prairie, Holiday cards to those in the Armed Forces, Congratulation cards to those baptized, those receiving their First Communion, Confirmation, High School graduation and Welcome cards to those who have joined Shepherd of the Prairie.

—*Elaine Neukirch and Helen Berry*

FFAA (FUN FOR ALL AGES)

FFAA just completed a very successful year at SOTP. God has showered our congregation with so many blessed members who give so freely of their time and talents to help out.

We had five very successful Lenten Soup Suppers on 2/29, 3/7, 14, 21 and 28. Several different groups, committees and individuals contributed soup, bread, and dessert to the meals. We had an average of 50-75 attend each night. Much thanks to Jodie Dowell and Tracy McDuffee for organizing all of this.

Our annual Church Picnic was held at the Cole Pavilion on August 19th. We had over 200 adults and children there. It was a joint effort with the Youth Ministry team lead by Greg Dowell. We especially thank Greg and all his chefs, Donna Brown and her gift bags for the children's games and then my committee of Mary Trodahl, Jodie McDowell, Tracy McDuffee, Helen Berry and the services of Chuck Little and Chris Trodahl. We had several volunteers move picnic tables, set up stations, organize the games and help with clean up. The Lord provided a beautiful sunny day and we all had a great time.

—*Sharon Little*

MEN'S FELLOWSHIP BREAKFAST

The Men's fellowship breakfast group have been meeting at Sammy's Bar & Grill Located on Rt. 47 north of Main St. at 9:00 a.m. on the first Wednesday of the month. All men are welcome to join us any time they want. We have no special topic of discussion just food and fellowship, and some times personal. Everyone seems to enjoy the time together, hope to see you there.

—*Ferdie Kimminau, Chris Trodahl*

HELPING HANDS/FUNERAL MEALS

The Helping Hands ministry has changed its focus to funerals only for the future. We did meet our goal for 2012 by adding many new members. In the fall we sent out 60 letters to current members updating them on the change in our focus and asked for suggestions to refine our current procedures. We received about a 25% return on our mailing and almost all were positive and very helpful. Mary Conti and I found this very encouraging and are meeting regularly to implement new and better procedures for funeral luncheons. We will continue to seek additional leaders and members and encourage anyone interested to contact us.

Respectfully submitted,

—*Carol Lilla*

OUTREACH/WELCOME

The Outreach Team continues to staff volunteers in the Welcome Center at all worship services to provide a warm welcome for first time visitors through the “Mugging Ministry.”

The Outreach Team organized the Shepherd of the Prairie booth at the Huntley Expo. Our booth included games, prizes, and information about the fellowship and ministries of our church family. The children enjoyed playing the BOZO bucket game and received prizes and coloring sheets of Jesus with the children. We created a “Welcome” brochure featuring pictures of many of the ministries offered at SOTP. We shared our love for Jesus by inviting the community to attend VBS this summer.

During the first Lenten service each family was given a wooden cross crafted by the Sun City Woodchucks. Each week another item (stole, nail spear) was given to signify the suffering and death of Jesus. We pray this keepsake will continue to be used for many years.

We continue to encourage worshipers to notice the signs at the exits of our church; they read, “You are now entering the mission field”. We hope they will be a gentle reminder to everyone as they leave our church to continue spreading the Good News of Jesus love and resurrection.

Summer was a busy time for us. With help from the members of SOTP, we assembled a float for the Huntley Memorial Day Parade. We presented each Outreach Team member and each parade participant with a white t-shirt. On the front of the shirt is a red stop sign with the letters SOTP. The shirts were a big hit and we will be ordering more shirts to be worn at our other community events. We all had a great time as we marched down Main Street.

We continued to Reach-Out to the community as we participated in the Huntley All American Family Fun Day at Huntley Towne Park. Our booth included information about SOTP worship services and ministries of our church. The children loved the face painting and we also had games and prizes. Fourth of July weekend is a great time to be outdoors and have fun with friends and family. Both events were great opportunities for our church family to work together to spread the Good News of Jesus’ love to our community. The community can see what a great church family we have as we work together to tell others about Jesus.

We continue to encourage those who worship at SOTP to be a good neighbor to the Huntley Library and support their ongoing newspaper recycling project, the collection bins have been full and the library is receiving the maximum amount of money for each bin. This fundraiser supports many programs and activities sponsored by the library.

We continue to distribute the blue SOTP recycle bags! The bags feature our new SOTP logo and can be used for shopping, carrying books, crafts, or as a gift bag filled with gifts for a friend. We also have SOTP mugs available and can be used by our members or be given as a gift to a friend.

The Outreach Team wanted to share the warmth and love of the Christmas season. Each family attending the Christmas Eve services received a lovely candle. We made the suggestion that each family take some

time before opening their gifts to read the Christmas story as found in Luke 2. We hope this will become a tradition and part of each family's Christmas celebration. We would like for everyone to sing Happy Birthday to Jesus followed by the poem "*Happy Birthday Jesus*" by Sue Towler.

The Reach Out to Help Others Member Business Directory is complete. We have distributed one per family and since the first printing; we have had more interest from businesses to advertise. The next distribution will be made with each Pictorial Directory early this year.

The main purpose of the Outreach Team is to invite people looking for a church home to worship at SOTP. Please continue to look for pictures in the Neighbor's Section of the Northwest Herald Newspaper featuring events of fellowship as we reach out to our community.

—*Barb Hoch*

PRAIRIE GUIDES

Prairie Guides is a unique social ministry in which members of the congregation serve by welcoming new members to the church. For most of the year, individual New Member Families were paired with individual Prairie Guide Families. Beginning in November, we made a change in the structure of the Prairie Guide ministry to encourage groups of Prairie Guide Families pairing with groups of New Member Families, based on the service attended. We have taken this new approach to facilitate communication not only between current and new members, but also among current members and new members. We encourage Prairie Guides reach out to the New Member families to make them feel welcome and provide them with a connection to the church. During 2012, Shepherd of the Prairie welcomed new members in February, April, August and November.

We are always looking for new Prairie Guides to join us in welcoming new members to the church. The expectations are simple. Prairie Guides attend the New Member Welcome (the weekend following the New Member Gathering) to meet and greet new (and current) members. Guides are also familiar faces for new members at church services. If you enjoy meeting new people, this is the ministry for you. Please contact either of us if you are interested in welcoming new members to our church!

—*Amy Brittain and Lisa Sova*

SCRAPHOOKING

We meet the second Friday of the month at the church, September to March, from 6-11 p.m. to scrapbook or make cards. We have anywhere from 5 to 10 people come and work on their project and share fellowship and food together. It has been fun to get to know one another and be inspired by everyone's creativity.

—*Rena Greene*

SPARKPLUGS

The purpose of the Sparkplugs is to experience Christian fellowship in a small group with an interest in classic cars, sport cars and motor sports. In addition to meetings focusing on automotive topics and participating in cruise nights, the Sparkplugs promote safe driving and basic car maintenance through congregational outreach programs.

If you have an interest in anything automotive and would like to learn more about the Sparkplugs, please contact Bob Malm at (847) 695-0368.

Respectfully submitted,

—*Bob and Carolyn Malm*

WELCA

For the year of 2012-2013, the officers of WELCA are: Judy Spencer, Chairwoman, Jeanne Henley, Co-Chairwoman, Susan Coe, Treasurer, Frances Wilson, Recording Secretary.

Shepherd of the Prairie Lutheran Church WELCA began our year collecting school supplies for the Grafton Food Pantry, and, oh, my, did our congregation come through! I hope everyone saw the pictures on the WELCA bulletin board right after the items had been delivered and displayed at the Pantry. What a heartwarming sight it was to see what our congregation had donated.

On September 22nd, WELCA held the Fall General Meeting followed by the “Brides of Yesteryear” Brunch and bridal fashion show. A number of members and guests modeled their bridal finery and shared the back stories. Many brought lovely mementos of their special day for display. Helen Berry gave us highlights of some ethnic and family wedding traditions, serious and humorous. We thank all who participated by sharing their gowns, headpieces, and treasures from their weddings.

On December 8, WELCA held the “Happy Birthday, Jesus” party for families and friends. Gifts of food were brought for donation to the Grafton Food Pantry in honor of Jesus’ Birthday. Sitting around the Christmas Tree, thanks to a group effort on the part of the church tree decorating committee, the children enjoyed Grandma Donna Kelly’s rendition of the Baby’s birth and welcome into the world, enjoyed by adults as well, as the children corrected Donna when she made “slips of the tongue” while she read and demonstrated the birth of Christianity. Hot dog lunch was enjoyed, and the families decorated “Rudolph” cupcakes, before getting their treat bags and Nativity story book.

WELCA is looking forward to our annual Retreat in April. All will be notified as soon as preparations are finalized.

—*Frances Wilson, Secretary*

FRIENDS BIBLE STUDY

This group of women meets on Monday from 12:30-2:00 p.m. The first part of the meeting time is used to get to know each other and to build a sense of trust as we share our life’s concerns and joys. We develop friendships and become a support team for each member of the group.

We share concerns of people in our lives that are in need of prayers and include these people in our closing prayer as well as our daily prayers.

This year we studied the Parables of Jesus and the 23rd Psalm. Our study book enables us to do the lesson before class and helps to strengthen our daily study of the Word. Each person is encouraged to share her thoughts and interpretation of the lesson.

We are having fun studying the Bible together! We have learned that God wants to be our Best Friend and not be left out of the happenings in our daily lives. As we search the scriptures together, we are developing a closer relationship with each other and also with our God.

*I’m eager to encourage you in your faith, but I also want to be encouraged by yours.
In this way, each of us will be a blessing to the other.—Romans 1:12*

*So encourage each other and build each other up, just as you are already doing.
—1 Thess. 5:11*

A Friend is a gift you give yourself! You are invited to join us at any time and make new friends!
—*Barb Hoch*

Property Ministries

The Property Ministry team is a group of amazing individuals that maintain our beautiful church and grounds. During the past year you may have seen some changes in our property. Changes were made in our prairie garden that more defined the areas of the garden and signage was added to inform our neighbors that our Garden was Under Construction: "**Watch us Grow.**" Storage cabinets were added for the many ministries serving Shepherd of the Prairie. Blinds were installed in the sanctuary. These are some of the most visible changes, but this amazing group of people are constantly doing the little things that allows all of us to meet, and worship in a safe clean and inviting environment. I have been truly bless to be a member of the Property Ministry team.

—*Jerry Christopherson*

Administrative Support Ministries

GIFTS & MEMORIALS

Memorial Fund Committee Report 2012

The purpose of this committee is to record and acknowledge all gifts received from our members and friends of SOTP. Unless otherwise specified, all monies received are allocated to the Building Fund. Family wishes for other purposes will be considered. Gifts may be made to SOTP in memory of loved ones; in celebration of a special occasion; or to honor individuals.

In 2012 the church received memorials totaling \$2,630.00 for the Building Fund, Children's Music Ministry and Debt Reduction.

The memorials were received in loving memory of the following:

- Ron Hoppensteadt
- Elmer Munson
- Gerry Musser
- Wayne Shule
- George Ridgway
- Edna Sinnett

—*Susan Wehnes*

For the Memorial Committee

Congregation Support Ministries

HUMAN RESOURCES

The Human Resource Committee in 2011 was tasked by the church council to create and fill a position for Director of Adult Education. A job description was developed, written, advertised and interviews conducted. We are pleased that Pastor Bill Waxenberg joined our staff in September of 2011. Also in 2011, Mitch Corso, unexpectedly, resigned his position as Director of Music. An extended replacement search was conducted and Jane McMullen was chosen to take over the music department at Shepherd of the Prairie. Also in 2011, Mike Waal was added to the staff as pianist/leader within the music department. Other duties of the HR committee during the year included security checks for staff as well as continual updating the Shepherd of the Prairie Policy and Procedure Manual for all staff members.

—*John Boehler*

FINANCE COMMITTEE

The Finance committee was created in the first quarter of 2012 to provide analytical and project support for the Church Council and the Church Treasurer. The committee is also responsible for reviewing the Audit Committee's report and ensuring that recommendations of the Audit Committee are implemented. The committee is comprised of individuals with a background in corporate finance. The current members of the Committee are:

- Devin Burg- Church Treasurer
- George Sebastian- Chairman
- Jon Coe
- Rich Juergensen
- Bud Hansen
- Gerald Warnke

In 2012 the committee worked on several major projects:

- Develop and implement a budgeting procedure for the congregation
- Develop an outline of a congregation financial policy and procedure manual
- Perform an inventory of key financial documents related to the congregation
- Transition from “quicken” to “Church windows” accounting systems

In addition several financial policy issues were researched and recommendations were given to the Treasurer and to the Church Council.

—*George Sebastian*

STEWARDSHIP

The Stewardship Committee met periodically during 2012. Our primary function was planning and overseeing the 2013 commitment program. We decided to run the program about the same as last year, utilizing several members with four temple talks. They were all from different perspectives and were well received. As of the end of December, 86% of our giving units have responded with 216 pledges for the General Fund and 182 pledges for the Building Fund. The dollar amounts are \$436,586.00 for the General Fund and \$210,286.00 for the Building Fund. The General Fund is +8% compared to last year and the Building Fund is -6%. Last year we received 39 on line pledges and this year it increased to 88. We also received over \$40,000.00 from the green debt reduction envelopes. For the year 2012 through the generous contributions of our Congregation our mortgage principal was reduced an additional \$82,000.

We offered a “Charitable Giving” workshop in June and will consider offering it again this year. We are encouraging more of our members to consider using the Electronic Funds Transfer for their Church pledge.

Presently there are 33 giving units using the EFT. This year with the upgrade of Church Windows we were able to start sending out financial giving statements via email. This will save the Church considerable time and money.

I also want to thank the members that volunteered to be offering counters. They spend 2-3 hours each Monday morning to make sure our contributions are counted, and deposited in the bank. I also want to thank the contribution secretaries that post the offerings to the correct accounts.

Respectfully submitted,

—*Ralph Wehnes*

Stewardship Committee Chairman

MUTUAL MINISTRY

Mutual Ministry is a small group of people who meet regularly with Pastor Mark to provide a safe and confidential environment for him to share new ideas, blessings and concerns he may have about his ministry at SOTP. This group also supports the pastor by making sure he has good work and family balance, he takes his vacation and is attending continuing education opportunities. Each year Mutual Ministry prepares and distributes a survey to the staff and the congregation on the pastor's performance which is used as a part of his annual performance evaluation. This group also helps Pastor Mark establish meaningful goals at the beginning of each year. Mutual Ministry members are also available to the congregation for feedback or concerns specifically about the pastor or his ministry.

This year the team has focused on creating a Sabbatical Leave Policy for Shepherd of the Prairie. Below is the policy for your review and will be voted on by the congregation at this year's annual meeting.

The Mutual Ministry team is made up of five members serving in staggered three year terms; one member is a Council Liaison. The current team members are Rebecca Fulcer (Council Liaison), Mike Hoch, Neal Mejdrich, Jessica Panella (Chairperson) and Sarah Wolf.

If there are any questions about this group please contact one of the representatives or Pastor Mark.

Prayerfully submitted,

—*Jessica Panella*

Resolution

Sabbatical Leave Policy for Called Full Time Pastoral Staff at Shepherd of the Prairie Lutheran Church, Huntley, IL

*But those who wait upon GOD get fresh strength. They spread their wings and soar like eagles,
They run and don't get tired, they walk and don't lag behind. —Isaiah 40:31*

Whereas the Evangelical Lutheran Church of America (ELCA) encourages all member congregations to provide a sabbatical for their called clergy and

Whereas the called full time pastor has served Shepherd of the Prairie Church for a minimum of 7 years and

Whereas the congregation desires an opportunity for their called full-time pastor to participate in spiritual and physical renewal; for enrichment and spiritual growth; for study, travel, skill development or special projects; and a time for prayer, rest and reflection, and

Whereas the pastor returns from this opportunity to serve a minimum of one additional year,

Therefore be it resolved Shepherd of the Prairie has created and approved a Sabbatical Policy for this specific purpose.

Humbly submitted,

The Mutual Ministry Committee

Sabbatical Leave Policy for Called Full Time Pastoral Staff at Shepherd of the Prairie Lutheran Church, Huntley, IL

The sabbatical leave provides an opportunity for spiritual and physical renewal; for enrichment and spiritual growth; for study, travel, skill development or special projects; and a time for prayer, rest and reflection. It is a gift to both the leader and God's people at Shepherd of the Prairie, providing an opportunity for new ideas, new possibilities, and the deepening of the life of each. A sabbatical leave is not intended to be a vacation, nor is it intended to be something routine in nature.

Shepherd of the Prairie provides sabbatical leaves with the following guidelines:

I. QUALIFICATION:

Sabbaticals shall be available to called full time pastors at Shepherd of the Prairie who have served at least seven years as a pastor at Shepherd of the Prairie. Individuals are expected to remain in the office at least one year following the sabbatical. Full-time ordained pastors are eligible to take additional sabbaticals every 7 years.

II. DURATION:

Sabbaticals shall be a minimum of one month and a maximum of four months. Since part of the purpose of a sabbatical is renewal, sabbatical time shall be taken all at once. A sabbatical is not to be seen as a replacement for vacation, but it can be taken in conjunction with vacation time.

III. PROCEDURE:

Only one called full time pastor shall be on sabbatical leave at any time. There will be no restrictions on the time of year, but the timeline will be approved by the church council.

- The individual applying for a sabbatical leave will bring a plan to the Mutual Ministry team at least six months prior to the sabbatical. The Plan will include a component of educational value with the following:
 - Time, length, and purpose planned for the leave and possible outcomes.
 - Suggestions for interim ministry during the leave period
- The chair of the Mutual Ministry team will present the plan to the Congregation Council for approval that same month.
- The staff, in conversation with the Mutual Ministry team and Congregation Council, will finalize a plan for the sharing of responsibilities during the time of the sabbatical leave.
- Within two months after the end of the leave period, the pastor shall submit a written Report and Evaluation of the leave outcome to the Mutual Ministry team, Council and the congregation.
- The Mutual Ministry team shall be responsible to follow-up on outcomes and actions resulting from the Report and Evaluation of the leave with periodic reports to the Council and congregation as appropriate.
- The Congregation Council will have final approval of the Sabbatical plan and budget

IV. BUDGETING AND COSTS:

- During the sabbatical time, the pastor will receive full salary and benefits.
- Annually accrued continuing education funds designated for the Pastor should be applied to the costs of the sabbatical during the Sabbatical year. The Congregation Council shall make arrangements with the pastor to support an additional portion of the education component of the sabbatical.
 - Matching funds or grants may be available from fraternal organizations, the Synod, or the ELCA. The pastor and congregation should explore the possibility of additional funding through support from organizations such as Thrivent.
- In support of future Sabbaticals, an Extended Study Leave Fund shall be established as a regular item in the congregation budget. The sum of \$100 per month shall be budgeted for this purpose to be accumulated from year to year.
 - These funds are to be used to provide for professional services in the congregation during the pastor's absence and/or to reimburse applicable sabbatical expenses incurred by the pastor on leave. Examples of reimbursable expenses would include items such as books, tuition, a percentage of travel expenses, etc..

NOMINATING COMMITTEE

The nominees for positions for 2013 at Shepherd of the Prairie are as follows:

CHURCH COUNCIL (3-Year Term ending January 2016)

- Adam Adams (*1st three year term*)
- Amy Brittain (*1st three year term*)
- Larry Newbanks (*2nd three year term*)

AUDIT

- Rich Juergensen

SYNOD ASSEMBLY VOTING MEMBERS

- Steve Brown
- Jodie Dowell

NOMINATING COMMITTEE FOR 2013

- Sharon Little
- Steve Conway
- Bonnie Baysen
- Kathy Pizzaro (*Outgoing Council Member*)
- Rebecca Fulcer (*Outgoing Council Member*)

CURRENT COUNCIL MEMBERS AND TERM

<u>1 Year Remaining in Term</u>	<u>2 Years Remaining in Term</u>
Bob McDuffee (1)	Devin Burg (2)
Theresa Molgren (1)	Kathy McGuine (1)
Mike McCann (1)	Wayne Schmidt (1)

The number next to member's name indicates current term of service. The length of council terms are three years and members are eligible to serve two consecutive terms.

2013 Budget

SOTP Budget 2013	Budget 2013		Actual 2012
Income			
Member contributions	\$470,000	Member contributions	\$461,235
Loose Plate & Growth	\$41,756	Misc. Contributions	\$28,121
Flowers	\$3,000	Flowers	\$2,826
Interest income	\$600	Interest income	\$460
Total Income	\$515,356	Total Income	\$492,641
Mission Ministry (Pastor Mark)		Mission Ministry	
ELCA NI synod 10%	\$47,000	ELCA NI synod 11%	\$54,000
Local mission 1%	\$4,700	Local mission 1%	\$4,456
Good Samaritan	\$750	Good Samaritan	\$1,178
	\$52,450		\$59,635
Outreach Ministry (Lay Ministry Coordinator)		Outreach Ministry	
Outreach/Evangelism	\$8,000	Outreach/Evangelism	\$6,967
Advertising	\$6,000	Advertising	\$4,089
Misc. Outreach expenses	\$500	Misc. Outreach expenses	\$783
	\$14,500		\$11,839
Adult Education Ministry (Reverend Waxenberg)		Adult Education Ministry	
Adult Discipleship	\$4,000	Adult Discipleship	\$1,012
Small group ministries	\$400	Small group ministries	\$98
Retreats	\$1,000	Retreats	\$515
Other. Adult Christian Ed.	\$100	Other Christian Ed.	\$141
	\$5,500		\$1,766
Youth and Education Ministry (Greg Dowell)		Youth and Education Ministry	
Youth Resources	\$2,500	HSYG (DUIJ)	\$360
Youth Curriculum	\$1,500	The Well	\$194
Trips	\$1,250	Youth (K-5)	-\$544
Retreats	\$500	Retreats	\$3,360
Software/Subscriptions	\$1,500	Misc. Youth expenses	\$1,138
Confirmation	\$3,500	Confirmation	\$4,754
Sunday School	\$1,500	Sunday School	\$1,334
VBS	\$3,500	VBS	\$3,318
Other Youth and Education	\$250	Other	\$1,071
	\$16,000		\$14,984
Music Ministry (Jane McMullen)		Music Ministry	
1st Service music	\$300	1st Service music	\$35
2nd Service music	\$300	2nd Service music	\$261
Adult bell Choir	\$1,000	Adult bell Choir	\$1,748
Children's Music Ministry	\$1,000	Children's Music Ministry	\$632
Adult Choir	\$1,000	Adult Choir	\$1,209
Youth Bell Choirs	\$1,000		
Special Music	\$4,100	Special Music	\$3,548
Piano Maintenance	\$700	Piano Maintenance	\$300
Bell maintenance	\$250	Bell maintenance	\$250
Licensing fees	\$750	Licensing fees	\$601
Misc. Music expenses	\$300	Misc. Music expenses	\$404
	\$10,700		\$8,986
Worship Ministry (Pastor Mark)		Worship Ministry	
Flowers	\$3,000	Flowers	\$3,391
Altar guild	\$1,000	Altar guild	\$338
AV ministry	\$1,500	AV ministry	\$2,961
Pastoral assistance	\$1,000	Pastoral assistance	\$900
Worship supplies	\$750	Worship supplies	\$986
Misc. Worship expenses	\$250	Misc. Worship expenses	\$388
	\$7,500		\$8,964

2013 Budget (cont)

Facilities (Facilities Team)		Facilities	
Cleaning service	\$7,200	Cleaning service	\$7,929
Utilities	\$12,000	Utilities	\$7,006
Waste removal	\$1,500	Waste removal	\$1,338
Lawn care/snow removal	\$9,700	Lawn care/snow removal	\$8,440
Maintenance/Cleaning supplies	\$750	Maintenance/Cleaning supplies	\$517
Outside Contract Services	\$1,700	Fire system monitoring	\$1,530
Misc Facilities expenses	\$150	Misc Facilities expenses	\$5,165
	\$33,000		\$31,925
Office expenses (Dennis & Renae)		Office expenses	
Office supplies	\$9,600	Office supplies	\$9,757
Office equipment	\$600	Office equipment	\$2,483
Web/software expenses	\$1,500	Web/software expenses	\$2,064
Telephone expense	\$2,400	Telephone expense	\$2,546
Postage	\$2,000	Postage	\$1,223
Dues & subscriptions	\$600	Dues & subscriptions	\$317
Equipment rental	\$7,000	Equipment rental	\$6,380
Misc. Office expenses	\$300	Misc. Office expenses	\$359
	\$24,000		\$25,129
Staffing Ministry (Council/Finance Team)		Staffing Ministry	
Pastor salary	\$51,780	Pastor salary	\$49,340
Pastor Housing allowance	\$32,000	Pastor Housing allowance	\$32,000
Lay Ministry Coord.	\$16,550	Lay Ministry Coord.	\$16,550
Youth Ministry Coord.	\$36,365	Youth Ministry Coord.	\$35,306
Director of Music	\$31,286	Director of Music	\$30,375
Organist	\$12,360	Organist	\$12,000
Tech Support Manager	\$25,395	Tech Support Manager	\$24,655
Office Manager	\$12,960	Office manager	\$8,649
Director of Adult Education	\$33,810	Director of Adult Education	\$32,825
Staff training, Con't ed.	\$4,000	Staff training, Con't ed	\$4,059
Social security	\$15,000	Social security	\$12,881
Pastor health insurance & S.S.	\$42,000	Pastor health insurance & S.S.	\$36,884
Misc staff expenses	\$2,500	Misc staff expenses	\$3,525
AV Coordinator	\$7,200	AV Coordinator	\$1,800
Pastor's Con't ed.	\$1,000		
	\$324,206		\$300,849
Other Church expenses (Pastor Mark)		Other Church expenses	
Scholarships	\$1,200	Scholarships	\$650
Committee expenses	\$3,000	Committee expenses	\$1,722
Insurance	\$7,600	Insurance	\$7,327
Automobile expenses	\$3,800	Automobile expenses	\$4,828
Human resources	\$1,000	Human resources	\$536
Bank/Legal expenses	\$400	Bank/Legal expenses	\$455
Misc expenses	\$1,000	Misc expenses	\$0
	\$18,000		\$15,518
Providing for the future (Council/Finance Team)		Providing for the future	
Provision for Outreach programs	\$750	Provision for Outreach programs	\$750
Provision for Inreach programs	\$550	Provision for Inreach programs	\$550
Provision for Equipment	\$1,000	Provision for Equipment	\$1,000
Provision for Maintenance	\$3,000	Provision for Maintenance	\$3,000
Provision for Sabbatical	\$1,200		
Provision for Bldg. & Grounds	\$3,000	Provision for Bldg. & Grounds	\$3,000
	\$9,500		\$8,300
	\$515,356		\$487,895
Net Income	\$0	Net Income	\$4,747

**Shepherd of the Prairie
Lutheran Church**
is affiliated with the
**Evangelical Lutheran
Church in America
(ELCA)**

Mr. George Sebastian
Finance Committee
Shepherd of the Prairie Lutheran Church
10805 Main Street
Huntley, IL 60142

Mr. Sebastian,

Below are suggestions and recommendations from the Audit Committee
comprised of Denis Minutillo, Charlie Powe, and Jim Henley for 2011 year end.

Audit suggestions:

Audit Committee Results

The church uses a computerized accounting system and the computer performs correctly. This Quicken system is currently scheduled to be replaced with Church Windows software. **(No definitive date for migration.) Set a definitive migration date.**

Audit Committee Results

Used checks are retained by the bank for seven years. Images of cleared checks are provided on the bank statement. We accounted for the entire numerical check sequence as being recorded or voided. Voided checks are kept in the church office in a voided check folder. Each voided check is clearly marked "VOID" and in many cases the signature portion of the check is torn off **(should be standard for all voided checks)**. Two signatures are required to write a check. **Confirm procedures to tear signature section from all voided checks.**

Audit committee Results

Coverage dates are Effective 08/24/2012 through 08/24/2015 insurance provider is Church Mutual Insurance Company (Company has been insuring churches since 1897) Series A Multi-Peril Policy premium is \$5,370.00 for the period covered unless modified at annual review.

Insurance booklet is in the insurance file. Extensive coverage on most imaginable perils. **I did not see any flood coverage if building should receive water damage from broken pipes or driven water. (Require flood insurance be obtained.)**

Church Mutual offers a Risk Control Representative for workplace health and safety consultation services at no additional charge on an annual basis. This individual will study worker's compensation loss history, site inspection, evaluation of potential hazardous conditions or practices and submit a written report. (Request and schedule review by Church Mutual.)

Recommendations and Follow Up Items

- 1. Suggested Reference For Church Financial Procedures Issue:** Shepherd of the Prairie Lutheran Church should follow ELCA guidelines of Congregational Audit Guide and adjust policy and procedures to concur with audit suggestions.

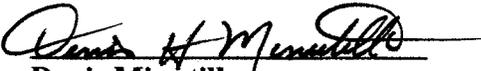
Recommendation: Review financial management procedures as described on the ELCA's website www.elca.org/treasure/congregations for latest version. Compare existing procedures to recommended procedures. Where deficiencies are identified, adjust existing procedures.

- 2. Standard clean up of files should be done annually and only latest years records maintained.**

Currently file systems have multiple years of documents in the folders. Each year should be purged and filed in banker boxes and stored offsite (ex:Iron Mountain) to free up filing space for current year records.

The Leadership Committee should assign any action items to responsible individuals. Completion deadlines should be agreed upon and the Leadership Committee should follow up after the completion deadline to ensure each item has been addressed in a satisfactory manner.

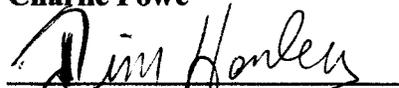
Respectfully submitted:


Denis Minutillo

Date: 1-12-13


Charlie Powe

Date: 1/21/2013


Jim Henley

Date: 01/06/2013

SOTP Audit Committee 2011 Year End

EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA
Certification of Financial Compliance Review of Congregation Records

Congregation SHEPERD OF THE PRAIRIE Synod ELCA
Address 10805 MAIN STREET, HUNTLEY IL 60142
Pastor MARK BOSTER For year ending DECEMBER 31, 2011
Review performed by: Dennis Minutillo, Charlie Powe, Jim Henley
(Name of persons or accounting firm)

Check appropriate items:

Review includes records of

- Congregational Treasurer
- Former Congregational Treasurer
- Building Fund Treasurer (if separate)
- WELCA
- Men's Organization
- Youth Organization
- Scout Troops
- Parochial Schools
- Church school
(if separate from cong. Treasury)
- Other – reviewed insurance to determine
adequate coverage

- Funds reviewed include:***
- Current or General
- Building or Capital
- Memorial
- Special
- Other
- Verification was made of:***
- Regular checking account (s)
- Investments
- Other

Funds excepted from Compliance Review:

NONE

CERTIFICATION

We hereby certify that the financial records of the congregation named above and all of its auxiliary organizations have been reviewed and that a proper accounting of all funds has been found.

Signed Mark Boster Title Pastor
Signed George J. Henley Title Finance Council Member

Certificate is to be signed by any two of the following: Pastor (or Associate Pastor), Congregation President, Vice-President, or Chair of Finance Committee. This certification is to be placed with the Congregation's Council or Board of Directors permanent files.

(Do not send this certificate to the ELCA churchwide office.)