

CONGREGATIONAL ANNUAL REPORT

Year Ending December 2022

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SAINT JOHN LUTHERAN CHURCH

Congregational Council And Appointed Positions

Name	2023 Position	Term Expires
JoEllen Poll	President	January 2025 (2nd term)
Daniel Braet	Vice President	January 2025 (2nd term)
Jo Ernst	Treasurer	January 2025 (2nd term)
Joannie Kilburg	Council Member	January 2024 (1st term)
Shannon Abbott	Council Member	January 2024 (1st term)
Terry Dempewolf	Council Member	January 2024 (2nd term)

Pastoral Leadership & Staff

The Reverend Paul Gammelin	Pastor
Ann Skoff	Office Administrator
Curt Zeimet	Choir Director
Kathy Ohlert	Church Custodian
Jessica Bormann	Retreat Center Lodge Custodian

Mission Statement

Growing and Responding Every Day as Disciples of Jesus

OPENING LITANY

Responses

P: Pastor C: All

P: The peace of the Lord be with you.

C: hear our prayer

P: Let us pray for the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America that it will remain united as one in proclaiming the good news of God's unconditional love and forgiveness for all people. Gracious God,

C: hear our prayer

P: Let us pray for this congregation that it continue to be passionate in following the teachings of Jesus Christ. Continue to bless this congregation with devoted members and participating partners who are committed to growing in their faith and supporting the mission and ministries of this church.

C: hear our prayer

P: Let us pray for God to provide a clear vision for our congregation and give us wisdom to discern what is right for our future. Gracious God,

C: hear our prayer

P: Let us pray that guided by the Holy Spirit our church will continue to foster an openness of inclusiveness that welcomes and accepts all people. Gracious God,

C: hear our prayer

P: Good and loving God, bless us with your presence as we begin the vital work on behalf of Saint John Lutheran and its ministry with this community. All this we pray in the name of Jesus Christ.

C. Amen.

AGENDA FOR ANNUAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING

JANUARY 29, 2023

Needed for a Quorum: 17 voting members (10% of eligible Voting Members per the constitution. A voting member is defined as a confirmed member with a record of giving and having communion at least once withing the year.)

Call To Order

Opening Litany - led by Pastor Paul
Video: "Where does Your Offering Go"

Acceptance of Agenda

Approval of Minutes

- 1) Annual Meeting - January 30, 2022

Acceptance of Financial Reports

Acceptance of Financial Secretary's Report

Acceptance of Reports

- 1) Pastor's
- 2) President's
- 3) Ministry Teams'

Old Business

- 1)

New Business

- 1) Recommendation 1: Selection of Council Members
- 2) Recommendation 2: Selection of Nominating Committee for 2023
- 3) Recommendation 3: Selection of Synod Assembly Representatives for 2023
- 4) Recommendation 4: Approval for the Repair and Resurface of the outside steps of the church
- 5) Recommendation 5: Approval of Mission Support to the Synod for 2022
- 6) Recommendation 6: Approval of 2023 Mission Budget
- 7) Recommendation 7: Approval of Covering Possible Deficit in General Expenses - 2023
- 8) Recommendation 8: Approval of Cemetery Committee Members
- 9) Recommendation 9: Approval of the 2023 Cemetery Budget
- 10) Voluntary Annexation of Saint John Cemetery - Discussion only, but no vote

Recognitions and Thank You

Adjournment

Closing Prayer and Lord's Prayer

MINUTES OF ANNUAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING

JANUARY 30, 2022

Meeting called to order at 11:34am with 29 voting members present.

Opening Devotion led by Pastor Paul Gammel.

Agenda—MSC to approve, with one addition under New Business—"Cemetery Plot Fees".

Approval of Minutes Motion made, Seconded, and Carried (MSC) to approve the Annual Congregational Meeting minutes of January 31, 2021. MSC to approve the Special Congregational Meeting minutes of June 20, 2021.

Acceptance of Reports -

MSC to accept the Financial Reports.

MSC to accept the Financial Secretary's Report.

MSC to accept the Pastor's report and Congregational Profile Report.

MSC to accept the President's Report and Ministry Teams Reports.

OLD BUSINESS

Church Sign

The church has the sign; and the goal is to have it installed in early spring.

NEW BUSINESS

Recommendation 1: Council Members

To affirm the calling of Shannon Abbott, Terry Dempewolf, and Joannie Kilburg to serve on the church council for a two-year term beginning February 2022 through the end of the annual meeting in January 2024.

Recommendation 2: Selection of Nomination Committee

MSC to approve the following members to serve on the 2022 Nominating Team: Ryan Humphrey, Diane Dempewolf, and Beth Rogge.

Recommendation 3: Selection of Synod Assembly Representatives

MSC to approve Mark & Beth Rogge to serve as our voting delegates for the 2022 Synod Assembly, which will be held on Friday, May 20 through Saturday, May 21. The cost of the assembly and lodging will be covered by Saint John.

Recommendation 4: Replacement of the Church Copier & Folding Machine

To approve the expenditure up to \$8,000 for the replacement, or lease of, a new church copier; and the purchase of a new folding machine. The funding for this expenditure will come from the George Wagner Estate.

Recommendation 5: Replacement of the Church Gutters and Down Spouts

To approve the expenditure up to \$7,500 for the replacement of the church gutters and downspouts. The funding for this expenditure will come from the George Wagner Estate.

Recommendation 6: Overseeing the Trust

MSC by unanimous vote to approve that the church council will replace the financial team of the Trust; and will have the responsibility of overseeing/managing the Trust in accordance with the current rules/guidelines that have governed the Trust over the past years. The Treasurer will be the primary signature with a council member being a secondary signature, and the pastor be an emergency signature. It was suggested and strongly agreed upon that the council should consult Thrivent Financial to assist in the management of the investment monies.

Recommendation 7: Mission Support to the Synod

MSC to approve for 2022 our Mission Support to the synod of ten (10%) of our general offerings; and that in the following years we continue to be a tithing congregation.

Recommendation 8: 2022 Mission Budget

MSC to approve the 2022 Proposed Mission Budget as printed in this report for the year beginning January 1, 2022 through December 31, 2022.

Recommendation 9: Covering the Possible Deficit in General Expenses

MSC, by unanimous vote, to give the authority to the council to direct the release of funds, as needed, from the Reserve Fund in the Designated Funds Account, and if additional amount is needed from the Saint John Trust - Un-designated Fund so that the general operating expenses that were approved within the 2022 Mission Budget may be paid in a timely manner; and that the total amount authorized is not to exceed \$5,000 for the year.

Recommendation 10: Cemetery Committee

MSC to approve Todd Giesemann, Lorrie Both, Karen Osar, Mark Guenther, and Jim Eggers to serve on the Cemetery Committee for 2022.

Recommendation 11: 2022 Cemetery Budget

MSC to approve the 2022 Cemetery Budget as printed in this report for the year beginning January 1, 2022 through December 31, 2022. There were concerns expressed on the appearance of the cemetery as it pertains to lawn care. The committee will address these concerns.

Recommendation 12: Increase in Cemetery Plot Fees

MSC to approve the increase of cemetery plots by \$50. The new price for a plot will be \$900 for non-members, and \$650 for members of Saint John.

Meeting adjourned at 12:53 pm. Closed with prayer.

Respectfully submitted,
Ann Skoff
Office Administrator

The meeting was attended by the following 29 voting members:

Gary Feuerbach
Fran Feuerbach
Ann Skoff
Kathy Ohlert
Mary Hinke
Jo Ernst
Daniel Braet
Kelly Humphrey
Ryan Humphrey
Linda Nudd
Barry Nudd
JoEllen Poll
Mark Guenther
Sara Guenther
Jace Ohlert

Beth Rogge
Mark Rogge
Joanie Kilburg
Terry Dempewolf
Diane Dempewolf
Mike Dempewolf
Todd Giesemann
Deb Giesemann
Diane Norpel
Donna Duvall
Pastor Paul Gammelin
Diane Carson
Sue Bevan
Linda Ries

FINANCIAL REPORTS

GENERAL FUND

Beginning Balance—January 1, 2022	\$29,274.61
Total Receipts	\$169,958.29
Total Disbursements	- <u>183,345.22</u>
Ending Balance—December 31, 2022	\$15,887.68

Budgeted Receipts

General Offerings.....	\$143,953.54
Eucharisteo Grant	4,000.00
Farmland Rent	12,000.00
Lodge Rentals.....	1,250.00
Gifts Received.....	380.00
Funerals.....	950.00
Weddings.....	305.00
Building Use.....	350.00
Interest Earned & Misc.	149.94
Cemetery Custodial.....	6,000.00
World Hunger/Disaster Relief.....	<u>619.81</u>
Total Receipts	\$169,958.29

Budgeted Disbursements

Building & Property Ministry	\$21,937.85
ELCA Mission Ministry.....	15,415.17
Parish Admin. Ministry.....	52,947.73
Pastoral Ministry.....	83,784.12
Retreat Center Ministry.....	5,791.39
Worship & Music Ministry	<u>3,468.96</u>
Total Disbursements.....	\$183,345.22

(Detailed breakdown of budgeted disbursements can be found within the proposed budget on pgs. 37-38.)

DESIGNATED FUNDS

Beginning Balance—January 1, 2022.....	\$320,186.01
Total Receipts.....	45,460.45
Total Disbursements.....	- 255,909.38
Ending Balance—December 31, 2022.....	\$109,737.08

<u>Building Improvements</u>	\$926.74
Receipts	\$12,061.38
Disbursements	-\$11,028.64
Current Balance	\$1,959.48

\$11,861.38 from Goetz/Blitgen/Wagner Estates

<u>Donations Beyond Us</u>	\$244.09
Receipts	\$1,582.91
Disbursements	-\$450.00
Current Balance	\$1,377.00

<u>EWALU Scholarships</u>	\$1,673.39
Receipts	\$0.00
Disbursements	\$0.00
Current Balance	\$1,673.39

<u>Funeral/Kitchen Fund</u>	\$666.13
Receipts	\$9,347.05
Disbursements	-\$31.15
Current Balance	\$9,982.03

\$9,347.05 from Blitgen Estate

<u>Lodge/Retreat Center</u>	\$10,221.38
Receipts	\$300.00
Disbursements	\$0.00
Current Balance	\$10,521.38

<u>Men's Group</u>	\$749.05
Receipts	\$0.00
Disbursements	\$0.00
Current Balance	\$749.05

<u>Non-Designated Memorials</u>	\$7,752.19
Receipts	\$45.00
Disbursements	-\$449.79
Current Balance	\$7,347.40

<u>Payroll Taxes</u>	\$1,319.64
Receipts:	\$8,227.49
Disbursements	-\$8,047.13
Current Balance:	\$1,500.00

<u>Christmas Star</u>	\$1,066.47
Receipts	\$395.00
Disbursements	-\$327.00
Current Balance	\$1,134.47

<u>Education Ministry</u>	\$2,949.92
Receipts	\$714.84
Disbursements	-\$1,026.96
Current Balance	\$2,637.80

<u>Flower Fund</u>	\$656.05
Receipts	\$468.85
Disbursements	-\$448.85
Current Balance	\$676.05

<u>Good Samaritan Fund</u>	\$659.39
Receipts	\$0.00
Disbursements	-\$120.00
Current Balance	\$539.39

<u>Memorial Scholarship Fund</u>	\$1,151.51
Receipts	\$0.00
Disbursements	\$0.00
Current Balance	\$1,151.51

<u>Music & Chimes</u>	\$1,328.70
Receipts	\$0.00
Disbursements	\$0.00
Current Balance	\$1,328.70

<u>Office Equipment</u>	\$721.87
Receipts	\$18,000.00
Disbursements	-\$7,833.29
Current Balance	\$10,888.58

\$18,000 From Wagner Estate

<u>Prayer Shawl Ministry</u>	\$301.23
Receipts	\$0.00
Disbursements	\$0.00
Current Balance	\$301.23

Reserve Fund	\$34,077.37
Receipts	\$1,249.77
Disbursements	-\$1,501.41
Current Balance	\$33,825.73

Senior Quilts	\$473.83
Receipts	\$600.00
Disbursements	-\$16.00
Current Balance	\$1,057.83

TV/Worship Technology	\$3,775.83
Receipts	\$10,000.00
Disbursements	-\$663.40
Current Balance	\$13,112.43

Thanksgiving Dinner	\$500.00
Receipts	\$1,675.00
Disbursements	-\$910.22
Current Balance	\$1,264.78

\$10,000 from Wagner Estate

Thrivent Choice Receipts	\$1,429.07
Receipts	\$646.00
Disbursements	-\$250.00
Current Balance	\$1,825.07

Vacation Bible School	\$2,109.29
Receipts	\$0.00
Disbursements	\$0.00
Current Balance	\$2,109.29

Wallace Scholarship	\$72.00
Receipts	\$900.00
Disbursements	\$0.00
Current Balance	\$972.00

Worship Enhancement	\$475.76
Receipts	\$0.00
Disbursements	-\$475.76
Current Balance	\$0.00

Youth Bible Fund	\$1,248.28
Receipts	\$725.00
Disbursements	-\$867.11
Current Balance	\$1,106.17

Bud Knake Scholarship	\$0.00
Receipts	\$28,692.55
Disbursements	-\$28,000.00
Current Balance	\$692.55

Moved \$28,000 to Trust Fund

Estate - Blitgen (2019)	\$11,347.05
Receipts	\$0.00
Disbursements	-\$11,347.05
Current Balance	\$0.00

Estate - Brandt (2008)	\$12,000.00
Receipts	\$0.00
Disbursements	-\$12,000.00
Current Balance	\$0.00

Moved to Bldg Imp \$2,000 & Funeral/Kitchen \$9,347.05

Moved to Trust Fund

Estate - Goetz (2018)	\$2,361.38
Receipts	\$0.00
Disbursements	-\$2,361.38
Current Balance	\$0.00

Estate - Wagner (2021)	\$217,928.40
Receipts	\$0.00
Disbursements	-\$217,928.40
Current Balance	\$0.00

Moved to "Bldg Improvements"

Moved \$7,500 to Bldg Fund; 18,000 to Computer Fund; \$10,000 to TV Fund; and \$182,428.40 to Trust

BREAKDOWN OF DESIGNATED FUNDS FINANCIAL ACCOUNTS:

Checking Account:

Bellevue State Bank \$ 89,025.31 *(Earns 0.15% interest)*

Certificates of Deposit:

CD - #2778 \$ 20,060.05 *Matures 8/24/22 (0.3%)*

CD - #2682 \$ - *Cashed on 2/17/22*

CD - #2372 \$ - *Cashed on 2/17/22*

Investments:

Concourse Financial \$647.75

TOTAL: **\$ 109,733.11**

CEMETERY ASSOCIATION

Submitted by Lorrie Both

CHECKING ACCOUNT

Beginning Balance—January 1, 2022	\$18,701.88
Total Receipts	\$15,084.06
Total Disbursements	- <u>8,464.92</u>
Ending Balance—December 31, 2022	\$25,321.02

Receipts

General Fund

Lot Sales	\$6,400.00
Registration Fee	1,100.00
Interest & Dividends	
BSB Checking Account.....	9.06
BSB Stock Dividends	<u>7,575.00</u>
Total Receipts	\$15,084.06

Disbursements

Custodial Care	\$6,459.00
Bank Fees.....	20.00
Repairs & Maintenance	951.00
Supplies	681.83
Equip. Purchased (pro sweeper)	<u>353.09</u>
Total Disbursements	\$8,464.92

SUMMARY OF CEMETERY FINANCIAL ACCOUNTS

Checking Account\$25,321.02

Certificates of Deposit

Bellevue State Bank—#1829	\$14,474.93
Bellevue State Bank—#2379	23,863.51
Bellevue State Bank—#2380	2,617.13
Bellevue State Bank—#2588	<u>2,908.63</u>
Total Certificates of Deposit	\$43,864.20

Shares of Stock

 15 shares Bellevue State Bank Stock @ \$8,500.00 \$127,500.00

Total Value of Accounts s as of 12/31/22**\$196,685.22**

Total Value of Accounts as of 12/31/21\$180,173.90

The total gain in Accounts for 2022 was..... \$16,511.32

WOMEN OF SAINT JOHN

SUBMITTED BY ROSIE WILLIAMS

Beginning Balance—January 1, 2022.....	\$1,970.83
Total Receipts.....	\$42.50
Total Disbursements.....	- <u>582.25</u>
Ending Balance—December 31, 2022.....	\$1,431.08

Receipts

Refund from Bellevue Herald Leader	<u>\$42.50</u>
Total Receipts.....	\$42.50

Disbursements

Lutheran World Relief	
Supplies	\$331.63
Cash for Driver to deliver quilts and school kits	60.00
Christian Women's Fellowship	
Ad in Bellevue Herald Leader.....	120.00
Gift for Speaker.....	<u>70.62</u>
Total Disbursements.....	\$582.25

SAINT JOHN YOUTH MINISTRY ACCOUNT

Bellevue State Bank
Submitted by: Pastor Paul

Checking Account

Beginning Balance - January 1, 2022	\$9,628.38
Receipts	\$5,687.07
Less Disbursements	- <u>\$5,467.68</u>
Ending Balance - December 31, 2022	\$9,847.97

Checking: Income

Pizza Suppers	
From Students	667.07
Lenten Soup Suppers	
Toward Mission Trips.....	990.00
Toward World Hunger.....	110.00
Omelette Breakfast.....	.00
Mission Trip	
Student Registration Fees	1,500.00
Donations	375.00
Youth Ministries	
Donations	845.00
Saint John Trust -	
Mission Trip Support.....	1,200.00
CD - Travel Support.....	.00
Other	<u>.00</u>

Total Receipts **\$5,687.07**

Checking: Disbursements

Mission Trip	
Registration Fee	2,609.50
Van Rental.....	1,500.00
Gas.....	290.93
T-shirts	276.60
Omelette Breakfast.....	.00
Lenten Soup Suppers	
milk, & misc. supplies42.00
ELCA World Hunger (from Lenten Soup Suppers).....	110.00
Rite of Confirmation	
Banquet, Pictures	178.65
Pizza Suppers	
(Ingredients needed to make	
the pizzas, and pop)448.50
Other	<u>11.50</u>

Total Disbursements..... **\$5,467.68**

* **Next Step Ministry Credit from 2020 Cancelled Trip** **\$2,967.50**
Was applied toward 2022 Mission Trip

SAINT JOHN TRUST REPORT

Brief History:

In 2004 the members of Saint John voted to establish the "Saint John Lutheran Trust" with investment monies that came from several estates, including the Shipper estate. The purpose of this Trust was to provide a better vehicle and discipline for managing our investment monies. Any disbursements from the Trust or changes to the Trust directives require a 'super majority'(75%) approval of the voting members present at a congregational meeting

Saint John Trust does allow for additional gifts to be directed to all for "sub funds". These "sub funds" may be established upon the approval of the church council with consideration given to the donor's designation or upon the affirmative vote (super majority) of the congregation to a redistribution on the Trust assets.

At the 2014 annual meeting, the members approved the current designations for our Funds along with sub funds under the Fund.

Summary of Activity in 2022:

At the 2022 Annual Congregational Meeting, the voting members decided to have the council oversee the Trust Fund instead of a financial committee. Further discussion was held at the annual meeting regarding investing some of the monies with Thrivent Financial.

In June, \$3,900 of the interest earned in 2020 and 2021 was distributed to the following: Mission Trip Fund, Education Fund, Donations Beyond Us Fund, and the Wallace Scholarship Fund.

There was money from the George Wagner Estate and the Bud Knake Estate that was transferred from the Designated Funds Account to the Trust Fund. The total amount was \$225,023.76.

In July, the council invested \$127,000 with Thrivent Financial, with another \$28,000 being invested in September. This investment with Thrivent Financial is to be viewed as a long-term investment (endowment) that would provide annual earnings from four of the Restricted Trust Funds of: Education, Wallace Scholarship, Knake Scholarship, and Perpetual Offering, and from a portion of the designated Mission Trip Support. A breakdown of this initial investment is as follows:

Education Fund	\$20,000
Wallace Scholarship Fund	\$30,000
Bud Knake Scholarship Fund	\$28,000
Perpetual Offering Fund	\$37,000
Mission Trip Support Fund	\$40,000

With a fluctuating market in 2022, we experienced a 1.8% decline in the value of our investment with Thrivent Financial. We are hopeful and are expecting the value of this investment to increase in 2023. Our long-term goal with this investment is to realize a yearly return of at least 4%.

The value of the Riverview Development stocks have also decreased in this past year.

Saint John Trust Fund

Beginning Balance – January 1, 2022	\$324,957.50
New Gifts or Additions*	225,023.76
Interest Earned from CDs & Money Market	2,725.86
Investment Gains/Losses**	- 6,591.68
Funds Allocated for Use	<u>- 3,930.42</u>
Ending Balance – December 31, 2022	\$542,185.02
<i>*Money received from George Wagner and Bud Knake estates.</i>	
<i>**Riverview Development Stock value decline of (\$3,797.76). Thrivent Financial Investment value decline of (\$2,793.92)</i>	

LISTING OF TRUST ASSETS

CHECKING/SAVINGS

Fidelity - Checking	2,834.22
Fidelity – Money Market (.05%)	<u>90,321.84</u>
Total Checking/Savings	\$93,156.06

CERTIFICATE OF DEPOSIT

Fidelity CD – 389 (Matures 9/16/25 at .277%).....	155,545.81
Fidelity CD – 325 (Matures 9/16/25 at 2.77%).....	15,234.85
BSB CD – 2899 (Matures 1/18/24 at 2.9%).....	55,125.84
ELCA Mission Fund CD – 8199 (Mat. 5/11/24 at .648%).....	<u>33,188.38</u>
Total Certificate of Deposit	\$259,094.88

STOCKS & OTHER INVESTMENTS

Thrivent Financial.....	152,206.08
Riverview Development***	37,728.00
[32 shares @ \$1,179.00]	
Total Stocks & Other	\$189,934.08
<i>***Two shares were received from George Wagner Estate in 2022</i>	

TOTAL VALUE OF TRUST ASSETS \$542,185.02

LISTING OF THE TRUST FUNDS and SUB-FUNDS

RESTRICTED FUNDS: The principal of the sub-funds with this Restricted fund must remain invested and interest earned is to be distributed for the purpose designated. The principle may be added to by additional gifts.

Total Restricted Funds\$146,120.88

RESTRICTED – Brinker/McClearn Education Fund	
Beginning Balance – January 1,2022	\$15,000.00
<i>(Includes historic gift total of \$15,000)</i>	
New Gifts or Additions (George Wagner Estate)	5,000.00
Investment Gains/Losses	- 363.21
Funds Allocated for Use	<u>- 0.00</u>
Ending Balance – December 31,2022	\$19,636.79

Money invested with Thrivent Financial

The interest earned from Brinker/McClearn Education Fund is to support the educational ministries such as ARK and Confirmation. The interest earned will be paid out to the Designated – Education Ministry of the Now Account. The balance of this fund should not be less than \$15,000.

RESTRICTED – Wallace Scholarship Fund	
Beginning Balance – January 1,2022	\$30,000.00
<i>(Includes historic gift total of \$30,000)</i>	
New Gifts or Additions.....	0.00
Investment Gains/Losses	- 530.84
Funds Allocated for Use	<u>- 0.00</u>
Ending Balance – December 31,2022	\$29,469.16

Money invested with Thrivent Financial

The interest earned from Wallace Scholarship Fund is to support the awarding of a scholarship to an individual who applies and meets the qualifications for this scholarship. The pastor will recommend, and the council will approve, the recipient. The award will be sent directly to the institution. The balance of this fund should not be less than \$30,000.

RESTRICTED – Bud Knake Scholarship Fund	
Beginning Balance – January 1,2022	\$0.00
New Gifts or Additions (Bud Knake Estate)	28,000.00
Investment Gains/Losses	- 502.91
Funds Allocated for Use	<u>- 0.00</u>
Ending Balance – December 31,2022	\$27,497.09

Money invested with Thrivent Financial

The interest earned from Bud Knake Scholarship Fund is to support the awarding of a scholarship to individuals who are attending a trade school. Recipients must apply and meet the qualifications for this scholarship. The pastor will recommend, and the council will approve, the recipients. The award will be sent directly to the institution. The balance of this fund should not be less than \$28,000.

RESTRICTED – Perpetual Offering Fund	
Beginning Balance – January 1,2022	\$0.00
New Gifts or Additions (Brandt & Wagner Estates).....	37,000.00
Investment Gains/Losses	- 670.54
Funds Allocated for Use	<u>- 0.00</u>
Ending Balance – December 31,2022	\$36,329.46

Money invested with Thrivent Financial

The interest earned from Endowed Offering Fund is to support the expenses of the Mission Budget of the General Account. The balance of this fund should not be less than \$37,000.

RESTRICTED – ELCA Mission Fund	
Beginning Balance – January 1,2022	\$33,059.97
New Gifts or Additions.....	0.00
Investment Gains/Losses	128.41
Funds Allocated for Use	<u>- 0.00</u>
Ending Balance – December 31,2022	\$33,188.38

The interest earned from ELCA Mission Fund is to support requests from non-profit organizations, benefits for individuals, or special projects that aid others within the Bellevue community or our synod. The interest earned will be paid out to the Designated – Donations Beyond Us Fund of the Now Account. The balance of this fund should not be less than \$30,000. Interest earned in March through December (\$233.11) was deposited into the 'Designated Funds/Donations Beyond Us' Account

RESERVED FUNDS: The monies allocated to these sub-funds have been approved for specific projects and available upon completion of the project and the directive of the council to release the approved amount to the General Fund for payment.

Total Reserved Funds.....\$47,760.71

RESERVED – Parsonage Maintenance/improvement Fund	
Beginning Balance – January 1,2022	\$7,760.71
New Gifts or Additions (George Wagner Estate)	40,000.00
Funds Allocated for Use	<u>- 0.00</u>
Ending Balance – December 31,2022	\$47,760.61

This sub-fund was initially approved for \$15,000.00 in 2008. In 2009, \$1,324.00 was expended for electrical upgrading. In 2015, \$5,915.00 was expended for a new air conditioner/heat unit.

DESIGNATED FUNDS: The monies allocated to these sub-funds have been approved for specific projects and available upon completion of the project and the directive of the council to release the approved amount to the General Fund for payment.

Total Designated Funds..... \$149,860.82

DESIGNATED – Mission Trip Support Fund	
Beginning Balance – January 1,2022	\$40,000.00
New Gifts or Additions (George Wagner Estate)	5,000.00
Investment Gains/Losses	- 726.42
Funds Allocated for Use	<u>0.00</u>
Ending Balance – December 31,2022	\$44,273.58

Money (\$40,000) invested with Thrivent Financial

The purpose of this sub-fund is to aid the mission trips taken by the youth. Interest earned from this sub-fund would be paid out to the Saint John Youth checking account.

DESIGNATED – Retreat Center Fund	
Beginning Balance – January 1,2022	\$100,587.24
New Gifts of Additions	0.00
Funds Allocated for Use	<u>- 0.00</u>
Ending Balance – December 31,2022	\$100,587.24

The gifts received were designated by the donor for the sole purpose of the maintenance and improvements needed at Saint John Retreat Center. Distribution of approved monies from this fund cannot exceed \$5,000 in any given year unless the expenditure was approved by the congregation with a super majority vote.

DESIGNATED – Television Fund	
Beginning Balance – January 1,2022	\$5,000.00
New Gifts of Additions	0.00
Funds Allocated for Use	<u>- 0.00</u>
Ending Balance – December 31,2022	\$5,000.00

This sub-fund was established when the city was contemplating having us help with upgrading some of the cable equipment. We were never asked to pay for any upgrading.

NON-DESIGNATED FUND: The monies within this fund have not been designated for any specific project or ministries of the church. Distribution of this fund cannot exceed \$5,000.00 in any given year to cover the deficit in the approved Mission Budget for the operating expenses of the church

Total Non-Designated Fund \$198,442.61

TOTAL VALUE OF THE TRUST FUNDS \$542,185.02

FINANCIAL GIVING REPORT

Offerings	2022	2021	2020
General Offerings	\$143,953.54	\$163,971.52	\$154,941.40
World Hunger/Disaster Relief	<u>\$619.81</u>	<u>\$320.10</u>	<u>\$387.20</u>
Total	\$144,573.35	\$164,291.62	\$155,328.60

General Fund Recorded Contributions

Weekly Giving	Yearly Giving	2022 Confirmed Members	2021 Confirmed Members	2020 Confirmed
70.01 and above	\$3,641 and above	14	10	12
60.01—70.00	\$3,121 – \$3,640	2	6	3
50.01—60.00	\$2,601—\$3,120	3	7	2
40.01—50.00	\$2,081—\$2,600	9	9	12
35.01—40.00	\$1,821—\$2,080	9	8	11
30.01—35.00	\$1,561—\$1,820	8	10	9
25.01—30.00	\$1,301—\$1,560	6	4	9
20.01—25.00	\$1,041—\$1,300	19	23	16
15.01—20.00	\$781—\$1,040	9	5	12
10.01—15.00	\$521—\$780	13	17	18
5.01—10.01	\$261—\$520	25	16	19
2.01—5.00	\$105—\$260	14	19	10
.01—2.00	\$1—\$104	35	26	26
0.00	0.00	230	217	217
Total Confirmed Members		396	377	376

Of the 230 confirmed members who do not have a record of giving, 65 (29%), are age 25 or younger, 37 (16%) do not live in Bellevue but retain their membership at Saint John; and 7 (4%) are shut-ins.

BREAKDOWN OF 2022 GIVING by AGE

Age Group	No of Giving Units	% of Total Giving Units	Total Giving	% of Total Giving
25 years and under	80	25.2%	\$94.13	.06%
26 to 35	38	12.0%	\$240.00	.20%
36 to 50	56	17.7%	\$13,364.45	10.75%
51 to 65	52	16.4%	\$22,235.88	17.54%
66 and older	84	26.5%	\$83,648.23	68.52%
Shut-Ins	7	2.2%	\$3,435.00	2.92%
Totals	317	100.0%	\$123,017.69	

Average per Giving Unit based on 52 weeks

Age Group	No of Giving Units	Giving Units with No Record of Giving	Total Giving	Average Yearly Giving per Unit	Average Weekly Giving per Unit
25 years and under	80	79	\$94.13	\$0.93	\$0.02
26 to 35	38	35	\$240.00	\$6.31	\$0.13
36 to 50	56	34	\$13,364.45	\$221.86	\$4.44
51 to 65	52	28	\$22,235.88	\$397.13	\$7.94
66 and older	84	26	\$83,648.23	\$971.40	\$19.43
Shut-Ins	7	3	\$3,435.00	\$492.86	\$9.86
Totals	317	205	\$123,017.69	\$317.22	\$6.34

65% of our giving units have no record of giving for 2022

What if?

- Every giving unit 25 and under would have given \$.50 per week, we would have received \$2,080 compared to \$94.13.
- Every giving unit 26 to 35 would have given \$2.00 per week, we would have received \$3,395 compared to \$240.
- Every giving unit 36 to 50 would have given \$10 per week, we would have received \$29,120 compared to \$13,364.45
- Every giving unit 51 to 65 would have given \$15 per week, we would have received \$40,560.00 compared to \$22,235.88.

Our offerings would have been \$39,777.54 higher than we received.

PASTOR'S REPORT

THE REVEREND PAUL W. GAMMELIN

Sisters and brothers in Christ: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

A "Pastor's Report" could be received by the members as the *Pastoral State of the Congregation* address in which the pastor shares his/her assessment of the congregation and presents a vision or agenda for the congregation. So, I offer this "2023 – *Pastoral State of the Congregation.*"

At the end of 2021, I like many other pastors, were hoping to experience a continual growth in our worship attendance for 2022. Here at Saint John, we did experience a 11% growth in our average weekly attendance over 2021. Even with this 11% growth, our average weekly attendance was only 75% of what we experienced in 2019 (pre-pandemic). [2019 AWA = 119; 2022 AWA = 89]

One could spend endless hours trying to figure out why our attendance has not returned to the level prior to the pandemic. To be honest with you, I have not spent endless hours, but I have given some time pondering the questions of 'Why aren't the pews full?' or "Why aren't the people returning to worship?" Here are some of my thoughts.

Prior worship practice has not been re-established: With the pandemic and its fear, along with the cancellation of in-person worship services, a new routine was established. When in-person worship resumed and the fear of Covid diminished, many found it difficult to make the change and re-establish their prior practice of faithful participation in worship.

Convenience and Comfort of Worshiping at Home: As a result of the pandemic and the cancellation of in-person worship, people took advantage of watching our service live on our cable station or watched the recording of the service at their convenience via the cable or on our YouTube channel. Some found it more convenient and comfortable to stay at home with a cup of coffee and sitting in their comfy chair or on the sofa. These people too, have not been able to re-establish the prior practice for worship. Even though the initial intent of recording and broadcasting of our services was to meet the spiritual needs of those who were deemed to be 'shut-ins,' I believe that we, like so many other churches, have created a new group of 'stay at home' worshipers during the pandemic and thereafter. It would appear to me that for the 'stay at home worshipers' it is more about personal convenience and comfort rather than personal sacrifice. Here is an interesting side note: When we first considered making the investment in the equipment to broadcast our services, I recall some people lifting up their concerns that this might encourage people to stay home and not come to church for worship. Even though at first that concern was not validated, it now appears it was a valid one. However, I continue to believe our TV ministry is needed.

Shifting in Our Priorities: Even prior to the pandemic we were experiencing a gradual decline in our worship attendance, just like so many other churches. This decline may be attributed to a shifting in the priorities of the families. There was a time when church was a higher priority. With the advent of stores being open on Sunday and youth sports exploding with weekend tournaments year-round, honoring the Sabbath Day has taken a backseat.

Needs are not being Met: The decline in worship participation has been happening over the past decades. We know that churches have experimented with various types of worship styles, such as 'praise bands.' The 'traditional' liturgy and hymns were not meeting the needs of the worshipers. They were wanting more 'upbeat' – feel good services and messages. It appears that 'meeting my needs' has diminished the central meaning of worship. Worship should not be about me and my needs, but rather it should about worshiping and giving honor and thanks to God. Worship isn't about what I get from the service, but rather about what I bring and give to the service. When we come with a humble and grateful heart, then our focus is turned toward worshiping God. With that attitude, we become open even more to the Spirit moving us in ways that we might never had considered.

People seek to bring about change not by voice, but through their absence: This is true throughout many churches. People who are disgruntled with the leadership of church, especially the pastor, will express their dislike by choosing to be absent rather than being in conversation that seeks to bring about improvements. I must admit that I have questioned that the absence of some of our faithful might be sending me a message that it's time to move out – to retire.

No matter what the reason might be, the one thing is certain. Saint John can only control, what we can control. And what we can control is to be faithful in offering meaningful worship services, along with inviting and encouraging people to be more faithful in their worship attendance and participation in 2023.

Enough about worship. Financially, we experienced a decline of 9.8% in our general offerings. This is a bit disappointing when we consider the generous giving that we experienced in 2021. However, even with this decline in giving, we were able to meet our financial obligations and goals without dipping in our Reserved Fund. One of the concerning things in regards to our giving is the fact that we had 205 giving units (out of 317) with no record of giving in 2021. [A giving unit is defined as a confirmed individual or married couple.] Our challenge for 2023, is to decrease the number of giving units without a record of giving as well as to challenge each giving unit to work to giving a tithe or more.

Our educational ministry with youth continues to be a valuable ministry. At Saint John, we experience the joy of our elementary youth gathering again for ARK on Friday afterschool. The average number of students participating in ARK for 2021-22 has declined from 2019 (pre-pandemic). In the fall term of 2022, we had on a average 53 youth (compared to 72 in 2019). Actually, the smaller number of youths made our groups more manageable with the number of adult volunteers.

Regarding our confirmation ministry (6th – 8th) we continue to have approximately 30 youth participating every Wednesday. As I journey about this community, I often hear affirmation by others for our ministry with elementary and middle school youth. I know that there is a concern that we don't have a ministry for our high school youth.

Our congregation continues to reach out to meet the needs of others. I am grateful for the dedication of the few women who meet on Thursday to prepare quilts and school bags. Within these quilts the love of God and our neighbors is stitched and those who receive them are wrapped up in that love. Once again, the Christmas Star and the Community Thanksgiving Dinner demonstrated our concern for our neighbors. The above outreaching ministries is our witness to our community and beyond of our faith in and love for God.

For many churches throughout the nation, the focus of their leadership has been on surviving or simply maintaining status quo. At Saint John, I believe our focus continually needs to be on how God is calling us to flourish as we remain connected to God and our neighbor. The vitality of this congregation will always depend upon: (1) our openness to allow God's Spirit to guide us, (2) our willingness to stay connected in worship, fellowship, and service; and (3) our desire to be an inclusive community of faith that embraces and share the grace and love of God.

As far as my future goes for serving as the pastor of Saint John and within this community, I can only say, "Only God knows my future." I am certain that there are individuals who are wondering how much longer I will remain at Saint John. In July, I will be celebrating my 74th birthday. This past October, I completed 23 years of serving at Saint John. There are only two other pastors who have served this congregation longer than me – Reverend Lenz (32) and Reverend Busch (25). I am quite certain that I will not overtake Reverend Lenz.

I do know that within the ELCA there is a shortage of pastors. Within Jackson County there are nine ELCA congregations and only three of these churches have a pastor. Some of these churches have been without a pastor for nearly a year. What this has meant for those without a pastor is that the lay members needed to step up so that the ministries of the church may continue.

For 23 years I have been blessed to be your pastor and to serve within our community. My morning prayer always includes asking God to help me be the best pastor I can be for people you have called me to serve. I also ask that God would continue to bless me so that I may be a blessing to others. And I ask God to let me know when would be the best time for me to retire. The one thing is that I don't want to hinder this wonderful congregation from growing and being a viable congregation in the community and our synod.

I want to thank Ann Skoff for her valuable partnership in serving this church as our Office Administrator. I also want to thank the members of the council for their leadership. And I want to thank all the faithful members and participating partners who participate and support the mission and ministries of Saint John. Together, 2022 has been a good year of shared ministry and I am looking forward to 2023.

May God continue to bless Saint John Lutheran
and all its members and participating partners!
May God bless the Church on earth and unite us as one in Christ!

Pastor Paul

PASTORAL ACTS & RITES

BAPTISMS

Brody Vincent Hankemeier	March 20
Attalas Donald Steines.....	March 27
Lucille Sue Medinger	May 29
Stetson John Ploeger	June 25
Zayn Gray Koranda	August 27
Huxtlin Blake Wilson.....	October 8
Cam Allan Reeg.....	October 9
Cal Jacob Bonifas.....	October 15
Trace Peter Bonifas	October 15
Bryce Isaac Bonifas	October 15
Noah Isaac John Schlie	October 17
Malachi Isaiah Jacob Schlie.....	October 17
Noelle Rachel Faith Schlie.....	October 17
Graham Dustin Smith.....	October 23
Evie Amie Daugherty	November 26
River John Ruggeberg.....	November 27

RITE OF CONFIRMATION: OCTOBER

Spencer David Abbott	Addysen Marie Felderman
Rayne Marie Anderson	Kadance Morgan Michels
Cal Jacob Bonifas	Owen Dean Portz
Adrianna Arielle Budde-Heiar	Owen David Putman
Kaden Bruce Burzlaff	Caleb Lee Rowan
Cameron Joseph Casel	Noah Isaac John Schlie
Carter Allan Dierks	Gavin John Schroeder

MARRIAGES

Michelle (Schwager) Kieffer and John Stephany	May 20
Adrienne Ploeger and Michael Presley.....	October 8

FUNERALS

Willard R. Kress (<i>died 1/17/22</i>).....	January 22
Violet Ann (Kress) Jennings (<i>died 3/10/22</i>).....	March 19
JoAnn Edith (Wenzel) Schlecht (<i>died 4/20/22</i>)	April 25
Albert 'Bud' Louis Knake (<i>died 6/27/22</i>).....	June 30
Richard 'Dick' George Dagitz (<i>died 8/27/22</i>).....	September 3
Donald Arthur Goepfert (<i>died 9/10/22</i>).....	September 15
Richard Lee Osar (<i>died 12/16/22</i>)	December 20

CONGREGATIONAL PROFILE

	<u>Baptized</u>	<u>Confirmed</u>
Membership, January 1, 2022	534	377
Changes to Membership during 2022		
Received By baptism	16	
Received By affirmation of faith or transfer	21	14
Baptized youth confirmed in 2022		14
Removed By death	-7	-7
Removed By transfer	-3	-1
Placed on "Inactive" List	-3	-1
Statistical adjustment		
Membership, end of 2022	558	396

Average Worship Attendance not including Easter

	2022	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017
Combined Weekly	89	77	Before Covid-19 = 109 After Resuming In-Person = 45	119	113	122
Saturday Only	31	27	Before Covid-19 = 44 After Resuming In-Person = 18	42	41	45
Sunday Only	63	53	Before Covid-19 = 65 After Resuming In-Person = 20	77	73	76

2020 - In-person worship was suspended due to Covid-19 on March 22. In-person worship resumed on May 30 with Covid-19 restriction of mask wearing and physical distancing and continued through end of year. There were 10 weeks without in-person worship which included Easter Sunday.

2021 - Covid-19 was still active and in-person restrictions of mask wearing and physical distancing within the pews continued through May. There were no Midweek Lenten services, but we did have Ash Wednesday, Maundy Thurs. and Good Friday along with the Sunrise Service outside at the Retreat Center and the Festival inside at the church with restrictions. On Christmas Eve we had our normal three services with no restrictions.

Members Received by Affirmation or Transfer

Billi Schroeder, Donna Duvall, Michelle Abernathy, Chris Roling,
Eric, Sami, Jack*, Archer*, and Kielyn* Pitts,
Jason, Marla, and Aleyha* Mootz, Chris & Carli LaCoursiere,
Pete, Allysen, Cal*, Trace*, & Bryce* Bonifas
Garry Arensdorf, Laura Schuster

Members Removed or Transferred

Henry Crist* Charles Crist* Jacob Ohlert

Members Placed on Inactive List

Twila Tennant Floyd Tennant, Jr.* Lucus Tennant*

* baptized member

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

With being asked to present a president letter to reflect on the past year, it had me reflecting on the last 10+ years that I have been attending Saint John's. I have been presented with many opportunities to be a part of Saint John's church family. It all started when a friend from my childhood church reached out to me asking if my son would be interested in being part of confirmation, as her son was attending. From there I remember being a silent sitter in the church pew, to asking to be a member and being accepted into Saint John's family, to slowly introducing myself and 2 children into the different areas to assist during worship (usher, assisting in communion, to video) to being a 2x confirmation leader, sitting on the council and as of today the 2022 council president. Wow, God has truly blessed me in the past and continues to bless me day to day. Sometimes we need to take time to reflect on the blessings we have received.

It has been an honor to serve as your council president the past year. I am very grateful, and would like to thank the council members Daniel, Jo, Joanie, Terry, and Shannon, for a year of open conversations to view different ideas and coming to the best conclusions for our congregation. A couple of items this year include: the lifting of the wearing mask, new church sign installed, 13 students to be confirmed, ARK back in action, to the 1st year being the overseers of the trust, with many more. Thank you, to our vice president Daniel, and Paster Paul for stepping in when I was unable to attend meetings due to caring for my dad or had no voice.

I want to thank our wonderful congregation members for believing in us. We have been truly blessed this year with the commitment and generosity of the members of the church. Without your continuous support the council would have had to make some difficult decisions about the budget.

The last couple of years have been, what I have been told, much easier to run on the council for many different reasons. For the former council members, I am truly grateful, the position of the church would not be here if it was not for the hard work and dedication from the years of former council members, Paster Paul and Ann.

As we have a few challenges for 2023, I believe with Paster Paul, the council, and the members of the church that we will have a successful year! What action we take today will determine our church family's future!

JoEllen Poll

Council President



MINISTRY TEAMS REPORTS

BUILDING & PROPERTY

In 2022, our focus was to complete the approved projects of putting up a new outdoor church sign and replacing our gutters and down spouts on the church. The final cost of these two projects were:

- New Sign \$6,600.00
- New Gutters/Down Spouts \$4,428.64.

The Building & Property team took a walk-through of the parsonage in 2021 and determined that there is substantial updating/repairs needed.

- The flooring in the kitchen and bathrooms, along with the carpeting, all need to be replaced.
- The kitchen cabinets need attention.
- The ceiling of the parsonage office also needs attention as well as painting
- The walls in the eating area and kitchen need to be addressed.
- The dishwasher needs to be replaced.

Hopefully we can begin to address these concerns, get some estimates, and start some of the work in 2023. We don't want to wait until Pastor Paul retires.

There some of the projects within the church that need to be addressed:

- The carpet in the worship area that has created bubbles and presents a possible trip hazard
- The carpeting in the offices, library, back classroom, and flower/communion prep room needs to be replaced
- New lighting in the library, back classroom and flower/communion prep room. In 2022, we upgraded the lighting in the offices and the back hallway.
- New lighting in the kitchen
- Repairing and repainting the large and small gathering room under the church proper.

The Building and Property team oversees the maintenance and improvements of the church building and property, excluding the Saint John Retreat Center and the cemetery. Those who are currently serving on this team are Mark Guenther, Terry Dempewolf, and Pastor Paul. If anyone is interested in working with us to keep our facility in good working order, please let a member of the team know.

EDUCATIONAL MINISTRY

ARK Ministry is our Christian education for elementary youth (Kindergarten through 5th grade) that meets after school on Friday.

In September of 2022, the ARK students gathered again on Fridays. We averaged 53 youth each week, which was less than we had in 2019 (pre-pandemic). This fall, we were fortunate and very grateful that there were enough adults stepping up and volunteering to cover each of our groups. We are also fortunate to have several high school youth who have provided good leadership. With our numbers being lower, our group size isn't a large as in the past. Ideally, the group size should be 6-8 youth in a group to allow for meaningful learning/group discussions.

As we look toward the future of ARK, we need to have someone step up and take on the responsibility of leading this exciting ministry. We cannot continue to rely on the pastor to be responsible for the leadership and implementation of this ministry.

Confirmation Ministry is the next level of our youth education ministry for middle school youth (6th - 8th grade). As with ARK, we welcome all youth to participate with us on Wednesday evening.

In September 2022, we welcomed sixteen (16) 6th graders along with their group leader, Adrienne Presley. This is one of largest groups to begin confirmation. They came together with the seven (7) 7th graders whose group leader is Krisy Dempewolf, and nine (9) 8th graders whose leader is JoEllen Poll.

After canceling our mission trips in 2020 and 2021, we ventured out again to Milwaukee, WI with nine youth and three adult leaders. Our week was filled with working at a home to replace the kitchen floor that needed enforced floor joists, building and installing a beam to level the floor, and putting down a new sub-floor in preparation for a new floor. Our evening was a time for worship and to have free time with youth from other churches who were participating with us during this week. This year, we are looking forward to taking another group on a mission trip in July to either Milwaukee or Kansas City.

On Reformation Sunday, October 30, we celebrated the Rite of Confirmation for five (14) youth. This was the largest group to be confirmed in at least 25 or so years. Those who were confirmed were: Spencer Abbott, Rayne Anderson, Cal Bonifas, Adrianna Budde-Heiar, Kaden Burzlaff, Cameron Casel, Carter Dierks, Addysen Felderman, Kadance Michels, Owen Portz, Owen Putman, Caleb Rowan, Noah Schlie, and Gavin Schroeder. We want to thank Mike Dempewolf for serving as the class group leader and mentor for the past three years.

We thank the many who have donated toward our pizza meals and mission trips. We also want to thank Kathy Ohlert who has been faithfully making our pizza for so many years. Many of the youth will say that her pizza is the best in Bellevue and some have even commented that they wish they could return to confirmation for her pizza.

Presentation of Bibles

On the weekend of September 11, we present our 6th grade confirmation youth with the Lutheran Student Bible –“Collaborate.” This Bible also includes Luther’s Small Catechism. On Sunday, September 18, we gathered outside in the evening to present the “Spark Story Bible” book to eight (8) kindergartners. This story bible book contains 150 of the most popular bible stories. It is our hope that this gift will help our young children to learn the stories of God’s love for all people.

The gift of these Bibles is made possible by the generous donations that have been designated to the “Youth Bible Fund.” If you would like to give a gift to this fund, place your gift in an envelope and mark it “Youth Bible Fund.”

Vacation Bible School (VBS) – Once again, we did not offer VBS in the summer of 2022. We are hoping to offer VBS in July of 2023 if we have some individuals who will volunteer to plan and lead this summer educational ministry for youth entering kindergarten through 6th grade.

MEMORIALS & GIFTS

Memorials & Gifts is a way in which people can designate and support a variety of ministries within the church. All gifts and memorials received are deposited into the 'Designated Funds' checking account; and are never deposited into the 'General Fund', which is used to pay the church's budgeted expenses.

In 2022, we received total donations of \$2,815.00. These donations were allocated to the following funds:

Building Improvement	\$200.00
Christmas Star	\$395.00
Ark	\$250.00
Flower Fund	\$300.00
Lodge—Retreat Center	\$300.00
Non-designated Memorials	\$45.00
Senior Quilts	\$600.00
Youth Bible Fund	\$725.00

Expenditures this past year included donations to the Bellevue Fire Department and the Bellevue Community Cupboard. New Confirmation robes were purchased. Flowers were ordered for special events, such as Mother's Day and Father's Day. Computers, software, and other equipment was purchased for the office and the 'Lutheran Channel'. Bibles were given to Kindergarten and Confirmation students.

In 2023 we are encouraging people to consider the following funds:

Building Improvement – This fund is used to support improvements to our church. It doesn't support the general maintenance.

Christmas Star—Money donated to this fund is used to purchase groceries to prepare a holiday meal for families in need.

Education Fund—Donations are used to purchase materials and snacks.

Good Samaritan - This fund provides financial help for those who contact the church with an immediate need. This assistance often comes in the form of fuel for their vehicle, a hot meal, or a few groceries.

Senior Quilt Fund—The Quilt Tyers use this to pay for the materials needed to make quilts for our graduates each spring.

Youth Bible Fund - The Youth Bible Fund is used to purchase Bibles for both kindergarten and 6th grade confirmation youth.

The church has several other active funds, which are currently well-funded. Those funds include the Lodge—Retreat Center, the TV/Technology Fund, the Office Equipment fund, the Kitchen Fund, and the Music Fund.

RETREAT CENTER MINISTRY

Brief History: January 2000, the ownership of the Rickert farm was officially deeded over to Saint John Lutheran Church by Isabelle Rickert and Mary (Rickert) Wiegert. In 2001, a plan for a lodge was submitted to the congregation and the approval given to build when 50% of the total estimated cost was raised through gifts and pledges. Within 4 months, the goal of \$85,000 was exceeded and in late October of 2001, the construction of the Rickert Lodge began. The community gathered on June 9, 2002 for the dedication service.

Prior to Saint John receiving the property, Isabelle and Mary placed the land into a Conservation Easement with the Iowa Natural Heritage Foundation (INHF). The INHF is a statewide nonprofit conservation organization that works to protect and restore Iowa's land, water, and wildlife. Once the land was placed in an easement, this easement remains enforced regardless of ownership.

Over the years, Saint John Retreat Center and Rickert Lodge has been a place where we have gathered to worship for our Easter Sunrise services and for services throughout the summer. Many families have enjoyed using the lodge for family gatherings and graduation parties. Yearly, the Christian Women's Fellowship meet for their retreat, and the 5th and 6th graders travel out to the lodge for the week-long Vacation Bible School. Those who gather at our Retreat Center/Lodge are very impressed with this wonderful gift entrusted to us. Even though it is used by many, the Retreat Center team believes that it could be utilized more, especially by our church.

Review of 2022:

Virgil Kilburg continues to rent and farm the 50 tillable acres. The planting of these acres follows a crop rotation plan that was approved by the Iowa Natural Heritage Foundation who oversees the conservation easement.

As the spring of 2023 arrives, we await the two acres of wildflowers to grow further in their maturity (approx. 3 years from planting). These two acres that are south of the labyrinth and along the lane leading to the lodge will be a beautiful field that will attract butterflies. We want to thank Jason Gilmore and Daryl Parker for the maintenance work.

Our lodge continues to be used by individuals for family gatherings, and graduation parties. We also schedule a Saturday and Sunday worship service during June - August.

Our income from the farmland rental and from the lodge rentals continues to cover the expenses of operating the Retreat Center/Lodge, as well as providing financial support to the church's general operating expenses. A breakdown of income and expenses are listed below.

2022 Financial Summary

Farmland Rental.....	\$12,000.00
Lodge Rentals.....	<u>\$1,250.00</u>
Total Income	\$13,250.00
Less 2022 Expenses.....	<u>(\$5,791.39)</u>

2022 Support to General Fund .. \$7,458.61

SOCIAL CONCERNS MINISTRY

Christmas Star

The Christmas Star program this year included 16 families for a total of 32 children. In addition to the gifts of clothing and toys, 16 children received a quilt made by the quilt tyers. These children are in the program for the first time.

We thank the congregation and Thrivent Financial for their contributions of cash. This year the basket of food for a family of 3-4 was approximately \$33.00. The committee thanks the church and community for their generous support of this ministry. Committee members are Gloria Sagers, Jo Ernst, and Eunice Schladetzky.

Thanksgiving Dinner

Thanksgiving 2022 marked our seventeenth (17th) year of providing a free Thanksgiving meal for those who were home alone or those who were unable to prepare a meal.

This year we served 140 meals which was our third highest number of meals served. Of the 140 meals, 61 were delivered, 34 were picked up, and 45 were eating at the church. These 140 meals represented 67 household.

Even though this meal is intended to be free, we have received generous donations from many of those who received the meals. It has been our policy to use the donations to cover the costs and the balance is given to ELCA World Hunger. Those who were fed are feeding those who are hungry. This year, we were able to send \$600 to ELCA World Hunger.

There have been many people involved in providing this meal over the years from peeling potatoes, making the dressing and salad, cooking the turkeys, and providing pies.

Quilt Tying Ministry

This year the quilt tyers have sent 124 quilts, 49 school kits, to Lutheran World Relief. We shipped in the spring and the fall. During the past year we have given 16 quilts for Christmas Star, 2 quilts to high school seniors, 1 to the Troy Norpel auction, and 2 quilts to Bread Basket families.

We are very grateful and thankful for all the material, sheets, and crochet thread that has been donated. Also to Thrivent Financial for money to purchase the batting.

A special thank you to Mary Puls, Deb Hutchcroft, and Eunice Schladetzky for sewing the tops for each of the quilts. We welcome anyone to join our group on Thursday mornings at 9:00. If you can tie a knot you can join our group.

WORSHIP MINISTRY

For 2022, worship returned to a somewhat “normal” services. Being without a full-time musician has changed our services in regards to music. We continued to use recorded liturgy during the service when we did not have Julie Bush playing (she played twice a month). Except on occasional services and Christmas Eve, we did not sing any hymns. We continue to struggle in having a regular choir.

Lent and Easter: We continued to gather at 4:00 and 6:15 for our mid-week Lenten services. On Maundy Thursday and Good Friday, we gathered at 6:15. For Easter we gathered at 7:00 for the Sunrise Service at the Lodge and 10:00 for the Easter Festival Service at the church.

During the summer, we gathered twice a month (once on Saturday and once on Sunday) for worship at our Retreat Center. Most of the services were held inside.

For Christmas, we had three services (4:00, 7:00, and 10:00). The total attendance was about 120 less than in 2019 with the 4:00 being about 100 less. In fact, this was the first year that the overflow room did not seat any worshipers.

Our weekly worship attendance continued to grow but remained about 25% less than in 2019. We continue to utilize our cable channel and our YouTube channel to bring the worship service to those who choose not to be present in-person.

We are grateful to Julie Busch who has offered to be our church pianist for at least two services a month and for all three Christmas Eve service. However, we are saddened that she has decided to assume the full-time duties again at Saint John - Saint Donatus.

2023 RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation 1: Council Members

To affirm the calling Daniel Braet, Jo Ernst, and JoEllen Poll to serve on the church council for a two-year term beginning February 2023 through the end of the annual meeting in January 2025.

[The council recognizes that the voting members have the option to place additional names of voting members on the ballot. Those added need to be presented and have consented to have their name placed on the ballot. Should there be additional names, a written ballot will be cast. If there are no additional names offered, the above recommendation will be voted on.]

Whereas: The members of the congregation affirmed Ryan Humphrey, Diane Dempewolf, Beth Rogge at the 2021 Annual Meeting to serve on the Nominating Committee for 2022,

Whereas: The constitution of Saint John directs the nominating committee to be “responsible for identifying and securing the approval of one faithful and participating voting member for each vacancy to serve on the Congregation Council. This team shall submit their recommendation to the Congregation Council by the December council meeting.” (C13.02), and

Whereas: Daniel Braet, Jo Ernst, and JoEllen Poll were identified and have indicated their willingness to serve on the council beginning February 2023 for two years and have received the approval of the council.

Therefore, the council moves to approve the adoption of this recommendation

Recommendation 2: Selection of Nomination Committee

To identify and approve three voting members from those attending the annual meeting to serve on the 2023 Nominating Team. If we are unable to identify all three members at the annual meeting, the council is given the authority to appoint as many individuals as needed.

Whereas: Our constitution (c13.02) calls for three voting members to serve on the Nominating Committee who have not served on the past year’s nominating team,

Therefore, the council moves to approve the adoption of this recommendation

Recommendation 3: Selection of Synod Assembly Representatives

To identify two members who will serve as our voting delegates for the 2023 Synod Assembly to be held on-line on Monday evening May 15, and Tuesday evening May 16. The voting members do need a level of tech competency with an email address, and a personal device (iPhone or android, tablet, or kindle) or computer to participate in this on-line assembly. If we are unable to identify two volunteers at the annual meeting, the council is given the authority to appoint our voting delegates for 2023.

Whereas: Our congregation is accorded two lay voting delegates (one male and one female) at the annual synod assembly, and

Therefore, the council moves to approve the adoption of this recommendation.

Recommendation 4: Repair and Resurface the front outside steps to the church.

To approve the expenditure up to \$7,000 for repairing and resurfacing our front outside steps to the church with a polyurea chip flake with added traction. The funding for this expenditure will come from any designated gifts or from the undesignated fund within Saint John Trust.

Whereas: The front steps had an additional step added to provide a safer landing and that cement didn't not match of original concrete steps,
Whereas: The original concrete steps have cracks that can lead to future problems,
Whereas: The resurfacing of the steps with a non-slip surface would enhance the appearance, and
Whereas: We have asked two companies for quotes and the Building and Property recommends the Schueller Restoration / Xtreme Clean and Coatings be the company to do the work who submitted a bid of \$4,240.00 (last summer)
Therefore, the council moves to approve the adoption of this recommendation.

Recommendation 5: Mission Support to the Synod

To approve that we continue to be a tithing congregation that gives 10% of its general offerings to the Southeastern Iowa Synod as our 2023 Mission Support offering.

Whereas: The congregation in 2004 approved being a tithing congregation that gives 10% of its general offerings to the Southeastern Iowa Synod of the ELCA; and
Whereas: The congregation has continued to strive to give a tithe (10%) of our general offering since 2004 even in times when the economic conditions resulted in cutting back our Mission support and freezing the compensation of our staff; and
Whereas: Our congregation approved an increase to 10% of our giving to the synod for 2019 and agreed that we should strive to remain at 10% - a tithe for the following years and have accomplished this goal,
Therefore, the council moves to approve the adoption of this recommendation.

Recommendation 6: 2023 Mission Budget

To approve the 2023 Proposed Mission Budget as printed in this report for the year beginning January 1, 2023 through December 31, 2023.

Whereas: The council has followed the directive of the members to present a Mission Budget for the general expenses of the church, and has reviewed
the proposed expenditures for 2023
the projected giving based on the 2023 Estimate of Giving cards returned by the members along with the past history of recorded giving by those who did not return a commitment card for 2023 and
the projected income from other sources beyond the general giving,
Whereas: the council is presenting a deficit budget that they believe would be manageable.
Therefore, the council moves to approve the adoption of this recommendation.

Recommendation 7: Covering the Possible Deficit in General Expenses

To give the authority to the council to direct the release of funds, as needed, from the Reserve Fund in the Designated Fund Account, and if additional amount is needed from the Saint John Trust - Un-designated Fund so that the general operating expenses that were approved within the 2023 Mission Budget may be paid in a timely manner; and that the total amount authorized is not to exceed \$6,000 for the year.

Whereas: The council does not expect any deficit, but wants to be prepared in case the projected income does not flow in as anticipated, and

Whereas: The council does not want the congregation to assume any future debt by taking out a loan to pay the approved general expenses for the coming year.

Therefore, the council moves to approve the adoption of this recommendation.

Recommendation 8: Cemetery Committee

To approve Todd Giesemann, Mark Guenther, Lorrie Both, Karen Osar, and Jim Eggers to serve on the Cemetery Committee for 2023, along with any other person who has expressed a desire to serve on this committee and appointed by the council.

Whereas: The constitution states that the members of the cemetery committee is to be approved by the voting members at the annual meeting, and

Therefore, the council moves to approve the adoption of this recommendation

Recommendation 9: 2023 Cemetery Budget

To approve the 2023 Cemetery Budget as printed in this report for the year beginning January 1, 2023 through December 31, 2023.

Whereas: The Saint John Lutheran Cemetery is owned by this congregation, and

Whereas: The members of the Cemetery Committee are approved by the voting members at the annual meeting.

Whereas: By-law 13.06.01 states:

“This committee shall maintain a budget and financial accounts that are separate from those of this congregation. A full financial report shall be made to the congregation at the congregation’s annual meeting.

a. A proposed yearly cemetery budget shall be presented in the Annual Report for the approval at the annual meeting by the voting members.”

Therefore, the council moves to approve the adoption of this recommendation.

2023 Cemetery Budget

Expenditures	2022 Proposed Budget	2022 Actual Expenses	2023 Proposed Budget
Custodial	\$6,459.00	\$6,459.00	\$6,500.00
Administrative (Bank Fees)	\$20.00	\$20.00	\$20.00
Equipment Maintenance	\$300.00	\$95.00	\$150.00
Lawn Treatment	\$0.00	\$856.00	\$875.00
Supplies	\$425.00	\$681.83	\$600.00
Equipment Purchase	\$350.00	\$353.09	\$350.00
Total Expenditures	\$7,554.00	\$8,464.92	\$8,495.00

PROPOSED MISSION BUDGET FOR 2023

2023 Mission Budget - Proposed					
	2022	2022	2023	Difference	
Projected General Income	<u>Approved</u>	<u>Actual</u>	<u>Proposed</u>		
Offering: General	\$140,000.00	\$143,953.54	\$143,500.00	\$3,500.00	3%
Offering: Eucharisteo Fund	\$4,000.00	\$4,000.00	\$4,000.00	\$0.00	0%
Offering: Trust Perpetual Offerings	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$1,200.00	\$1,200.00	
Retreat Center Income	\$13,500.00	\$13,250.00	\$14,000.00	\$500.00	4%
Other Income	\$8,000.00	\$8,134.94	\$8,100.00	\$100.00	1%
World Hunger/Disaster Relief	\$0.00	\$619.81	\$400.00	\$400.00	
Total Projected Income	\$165,500.00	\$169,958.29	\$171,200.00	\$5,700.00	3%
Ministry	<u>Approved</u>	<u>Actual</u>	<u>Proposed</u>		
Building & Property	\$22,900.00	\$21,937.85	\$24,358.00	\$1,458.00	6%
ELCA Mission Support	\$14,800.00	\$15,015.17	\$15,270.00	\$470.00	3%
Parish Administration	\$52,443.00	\$52,947.73	\$58,024.00	\$5,581.00	11%
Pastoral	\$85,731.00	\$83,784.12	\$84,531.00	-\$1,200.00	-1%
Retreat Center	\$6,200.00	\$5,791.39	\$6,300.00	\$100.00	2%
Worship & Music	\$4,800.00	\$3,468.96	\$5,025.00	\$225.00	5%
Total General Expenses	\$186,874.00	\$182,945.22	\$193,508.00	\$6,634.00	4%
Difference: Income - Expenses	(\$21,374.00)	(\$12,986.93)	(\$22,308.00)		
Beginning Balance - General Fund As of January 1	\$29,274.61	\$29,274.61	\$15,887.00		

Projected Surplus/Deficit **\$7,900.61** **\$16,287.68** **(\$6,421.00)**

	2022 Approved Budget	2022 Actual Expenses	2023 Proposed Budget	Difference
Building & Property Ministry				
Church Custodial	\$5,200.00	\$5,200.00	\$5,408.00	\$208.00 [a]
Church Maint/Supplies	\$1,200.00	\$1,493.85	\$1,400.00	\$200.00
Elevator Maintenance	\$1,500.00	\$1,504.72	\$1,500.00	\$0.00
Lawn Care	\$200.00	\$251.94	\$250.00	\$50.00
Sanitation Supplies	\$500.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	-\$500.00
Snow Removal	\$1,800.00	\$43.96	\$1,800.00	\$0.00
Utilities - Church	\$12,500.00	\$13,443.38	\$14,000.00	\$1,500.00
Total Building & Property	\$22,900.00	\$21,937.85	\$24,358.00	\$1,458.00

[a] based on a increase: to \$13.00/hour @ 8 hours per week (was \$12.50/hr)

	2022 Approved Budget	2022 Actual Expenses	2023 Proposed Budget	Difference
ELCA Mission Support				
Southeast IA Synod / Offerings	\$14,000.00	\$14,395.36	\$14,870.00	\$870.00 [b]
ELCA World Hunger/Disaster Re- sponse	\$400.00	\$619.81	\$400.00	\$0.00 [c]
Total ELCA Mission	\$14,400.00	\$15,015.17	\$15,270.00	\$870.00

[b]10% of projected total offerings (projection: \$148,700)

[c] bugeted amount is an estimate of donations to be received

	2022 Approved Budget	2022 Actual Expenses	2023 Proposed Budget	Difference
Parish Administration Ministry				
Cemetery Custodial	\$6,000.00	\$6,000.00	\$6,000.00	\$0.00 [d]
Copier Maintenance	\$1,400.00	\$1,414.88	\$1,400.00	\$0.00
Insurance	\$7,200.00	\$7,200.00	\$7,200.00	\$0.00
Newsletter	\$1,400.00	\$1,422.22	\$1,400.00	\$0.00
Office Administrator				
Wages	\$25,376.00	\$27,132.00	\$31,200.00	\$5,824.00 [e]
IRA Contribution	\$2,742.00	\$2,742.00	\$2,949.00	\$207.00 [f]
Vacation/Sick Days 18				
Payroll Consultant Fee	\$1,000.00	\$930.00	\$1,000.00	\$0.00
Payroll Taxes	\$2,200.00	\$2,149.84	\$2,800.00	\$600.00
Postage	\$600.00	\$377.50	\$400.00	-\$200.00
Stewardship - Fall Appeal	\$275.00	\$264.53	\$275.00	\$0.00
Stewardship - Offering Envelopes	\$200.00	\$190.45	\$200.00	\$0.00
Supplies	\$1,100.00	\$1,023.77	\$1,100.00	\$0.00
Synod Assembly	\$850.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	-\$850.00
Telephone/Internet	\$2,100.00	\$2,100.54	\$2,100.00	\$0.00
Total Parish Administration	\$52,443.00	\$52,947.73	\$58,024.00	\$5,581.00

[d] Cemetery Committee reimburses the General Fund for custodial pay

[e] based on \$20.00/hr for 30 hours a week;

[f] based on 1.5 % for 23 years of service

	2022 Approved Budget	2022 Actual Expenses	2023 Proposed Budget	Difference
Pastoral Ministry				
Auto Allowance	\$3,400.00	\$3,400.00	\$3,400.00	\$0.00
Education Allowance	\$200.00	\$0.00	\$200.00	\$0.00
Equity Allow.	\$1,400.00	\$1,400.00	\$1,400.00	\$0.00
Fall Conference	\$350.00	\$0.00	\$350.00	\$0.00
Pastoral Salary	\$54,831.00	\$54,831.00	\$54,831.00	\$0.00 [g]
Vacation Days 4 weeks & 4 Sun- days				\$0.00 [h]
Pastor's Social Security Allowance	\$5,150.00	\$5,150.00	\$5,150.00	\$0.00
Pension & Insurance	\$16,500.00	\$15,103.12	\$15,100.00	-\$1,400.00
Utilities Allowance	\$3,900.00	\$3,900.00	\$4,100.00	\$200.00
Total Pastoral	\$85,731.00	\$83,784.12	\$84,531.00	-\$1,200.00

[g] salary remains the same per pastor's request; should be \$63,3921 based on synod minimum guidelines

[h] based on letter of call

	2022 Approved Budget	2022 Actual Expenses	2023 Proposed Budget	Difference
Retreat Center Ministry				
Farm Maintenance	\$400.00	\$148.75	\$300.00	-\$100.00
Farmland Rental Tithe to World Hunger	\$1,200.00	\$1,200.00	\$1,200.00	\$0.00 [i]
Lodge Maintenance	\$950.00	\$1,024.67	\$950.00	\$0.00
Property Taxes	\$450.00	\$427.25	\$450.00	\$0.00
Rickert Lodge Custodial	\$600.00	\$681.00	\$800.00	\$200.00 [j]
Snow Removal	\$200.00	\$0.00	\$200.00	\$0.00
Utilities - Farm	\$2,400.00	\$2,309.72	\$2,400.00	\$0.00
Total Retreat Center	\$6,200.00	\$5,791.39	\$6,300.00	\$100.00

[i] 10% of Farm Rental Given to ELCA World Hunger

[j] based on \$20.00 per hour for approx 2 hrs per cleaning per rental (approx 20 rental in a year)

	2022 Approved Budget	2022 Actual Expenses	2023 Proposed Budget	Difference
Worship & Music Ministry				
Choir Director - Wages	\$375.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	-\$375.00 [k]
Organ/ Piano Maint.	\$325.00	\$0.00	\$325.00	\$0.00
Organist Wages	\$1,800.00	\$1,540.00	\$1,800.00	\$0.00 [l]
Pulpit Supply	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$600.00	\$600.00 [m]
Worship Supplies	\$2,300.00	\$1,928.96	\$2,300.00	\$0.00
Total Worship & Music	\$4,800.00	\$3,468.96	\$5,025.00	\$225.00

[k] based on 6 months

[l] based on 2 services per month plus 8 additional @ \$55.00 per service

[m] based on \$100 per 1 service & \$50 for second service (lay member)

(Synod guidelines for Supply pastor is min. \$200 for one service & \$50 for additional; plus mileage)