**2023 ANNUAL CONGREGATION MEETING REPORTS**

MINUTES OF ACM 2022 – s*ent in a separate file*

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**OPENING REMARKS**

Prepared by Council President Claire McIlveen

Fellow church members,  
  
I hope 2023 finds you and your loved ones well and happy and that you are able to cope with the current inflationary cycle.  
Unfortunately, our congregation is moving into a new era. Although we have faced and overcome many financial challenges as a congregation, this year we are looking at steep cost increases due to inflation and a shortfall in donations.

We anticipate more than $22,000 in fuel costs alone for our properties (about 15% of our annual budget this year) in conjunction with an aging membership, declining donations and rising costs in all areas, and are projecting a deficit of more than $25,000 for 2023.  
Because of the pandemic, church attendance is down and has not recovered to 2019 levels. One recent mild, sunny and snow-free Sunday, 12 congregation members were joined in the sanctuary by four visitors, although a number of other members watched online.

You will hear more details of our financial situation at the annual meeting, but it is clear that we are entering a new phase in our congregation’s life after more than a century of service.

I recently spoke with Rev. Jennifer Hoover, who heads up congregational redevelopment for the Eastern Synod of the ELCIC.  
Her ministry encourages churches to face their financial problems head-on and plan for a future that will likely involve change. She is available for a Zoom meeting with council and interested members of the congregation.  
Pastor Hoover said about 30 of the 175 churches in the synod face similar problems. One of those is Grace Lutheran in Cole Harbour.

In the months ahead, we will have difficult decisions to make.

Do we try to maintain our church as it is, upgrading aging buildings and trying to further cut costs?  
Do we reimagine our mission and our church using some or all of our property to create something different and valuable?  
Do we try to join another congregation in metro or ask another congregation to join us?  
Do we sell our property, or part of it, and rent either parsonage or worship space elsewhere?  
There are many possibilities.  
None is ideal and the church needs the input and ideas of all its members as we face new challenges together, trusting in God to help us find our way.

Despite our financial challenges, we continue to benefit from Pastor Kimber’s inspired leadership and focus on our spiritual health, both collectively and individually, and Tim’s musical talent and leadership, both during worship and online.

Particular thanks to our financial team, Sandra Powell, Sheri-Lynn Polvi, Tim McNabb and Peter Crouse, our treasurer Terry Norman, Karen Wheeler for her work in property, council secretary Carolyn Humphreys and vice-president Kevin Stanton, Bob Polvi, Tom Crouse, Paul Terrio and Kyle Jackson for their work in property upkeep and our custodians Shuwa Alayu and Ariet Okwier.

We continue to work for some diversity on church council and have formed a couple of subcommittees: heating/property, finance and stewardship and a new committee, social outreach, to try to bring more people into the church, raise funds and let community groups know that our spaces are available, through donation, for use. Some of those committees could use new members and suggestions for the creation of other subcommittees are most welcome.

We also plan, with help from all our members, to explore creative options as our finances and demographics change.

None of us knows what the future holds but I hope that the resourcefulness and faithfulness of our founding members will be reflected in the evolution of our ministry in the next few years.

Yours in Christ,

Claire McIlveen

President, Church Council

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**COMBINED MINISTRY REPORT**

prepared by Pastor Kimber McNabb

COUNCIL

Much thanks to the 2022 church council!

In January, each council member articulated how they wanted their work to be remembered. Through the year council members completed their work with these descriptors in mind: dependable, forthright, living in present, creative, loving, flexible, outreaching, responsible, welcoming, responsive, inclusive, courageous, compassionate, kind, working together (for/with Jesus). This exercise was an activity from the devotion and leadership enhancement time that begins each meeting.

Council meetings in January and February were conducted via Zoom; a practice that remains into 2023 as it saves heat costs and safety (driving/parking conditions due to weather). Throughout the year, Zoom was used to bring in members unable to get to the in-person meeting. In warm weather, council met in the parsonage yard.

Pastor Kimber publicly wants to acknowledge that council members worked diligently and were supportive and encouraging. Thank you for being willing to make devotions an important part of your meetings – and for participating so readily.

RESURRECTION IN THE NEIGHBOURHOOD

1. **Love notes** – In January 2022, the 32 households living closest to the church received cards with a message of hope and encouragement. Each card included a gift of a $25 grocery card. Neighbours were invited to use it themselves, to share with someone they knew needed help, or give it to a charity of their choosing. Grocery cards were purchased as people contributed donations specifically for this project. Feedback from neighbours was a sincere thank you, and an expression of being deeply touched.
2. **Walk with Me** – a weekly neighbourhood walk leaving from the church, 11am Wednesdays; in partnership with WalkNS. Pr. Kimber is a trained walk leader. This weekly 2.5 km walk encourages people to be active and make social connections. Each walk ended with a moment of gratitude. The group had 13 people participate.
3. **Community Story Circle** – a group started in November to engage the wider community. Facilitators Bonnie Petersen and Pr. Kimber led activities to grow story-telling ability and provided themes for individual story time.
4. **Suicide prevention kiosk**- a table of resources was provided on Windsor St. for Suicide Prevention Day in September. Resources included: homemade hearts (by congregation members) to remind people they are loved, a document on making a safety plan, a brochure to help those supporting people with mental health issues, and a children’s story book on the theme of courage. The message “YOU ARE NOT ALONE. YOU ARE LOVED” was painted in bold white letters on the risers of the Windsor St. stairs.
5. **Collection projects** – congregation members provided homemade quilts/shawls for ICU at Victoria General; Phoenix House food/items; Parker St. Food bank Back-to-School project; Dalhousie University Food Bank + Winter Clothing for International student center; Mission to Seafarers Christmas boxes for sailors.
6. **Garden interaction** – Neighbours were welcomed to interact with the church via a dog library (a sign with a pile of sticks), free Bibles from Bible book box, and changing items around two fairy doors. Via social media, neighbours were invited to add their prayer intentions to the Prayer Garland that congregation members made and hung above the Windsor St. door. As an act of stewardship of creation, the church participated in “No Mow May,” a global effort to protect bee and pollinator populations.

Note: neighbourhood events are posted on Next Door App.

FAITH WORK

1. **Bible Book Club** – Meeting once a month via Zoom, participants discussed the book of the month. The books read: Ruth, 1st 2nd 3rd John, Micah, 1&2 Peter.
2. **Confirmation** – Two years of students (4) and their parents gathered outside at the parsonage to study Catechism and Lutheran identity. The books used: Luther’s Small Catechism and “*Baptized We Live*” by Daniel Erlander.
3. **Engaging Death** – This was a three-week study and conversation about medical assistance in dying and end-of-life. The series included learning about MAID (from nurse co-ordinator), Bible Study, and the ELCIC statement on MAID. The dozen participants recommend that each summer people have an opportunity to talk about death and end-of-life.
4. **Children’s resources** – traditional Sunday school did not resume in 2022. Bible and seasonal puzzles and colouring pages are provided for children to pick up (before or after church). September – December, story time was offered after church on Sunday mornings when there were children present. Via email and social media, a children’s Bible app was passed on to parents.

LITURGY “Work of the PEOPLE”

1. ***All Creation Sings* (hymnal supplement)**- the church was gifted 50 copies from a retired Lutheran clergy couple from Pennsylvania who worshipped with us online during COVID and participated in Bible Book Club. The books were a thank you to the congregation. Two liturgies in the book were used in 2022 and the congregation heard new hymns as the prelude pieces and integrated new hymns into worship.
2. **Music Ministry** – Music director, Tim McNabb, via FB provided a post of the daily lectionary readings that included a themed hymn. All the hymns from, *All Creation Sings,* were record for YouTube. This resource was used for Resurrection’s weekly church by email service and used by congregations across the ELCIC and ELCA. The resource helped teach the music to worship leaders, were used in places were there is not a musician, and in electronic forms of worship. Thank yous and notes have been received from across North America.
3. **Arpillera** – Pentecost Sunday through and into 2023 the congregation created an arpillera; Chilean protest art that represents the coming of the kindom of God. Puppet Suzy and Pr. Kimber had conversations during ‘Kid’s Corner’ about the new item added each week. Items related to the readings for that Sunday. The arpillera hangs over the front of the altar and continues into 2023.
4. **Church at Northwood** – As of November, Resurrection returns to offering church services, once every eight weeks for the residents of Northwood - Gottigen St. campus. Services are Thursday afternoons with 75 residents in attendance.
5. **Christmas services** – there was a return to in-person Christmas Eve service. There was one service at 7pm with 80 people in attendance (in the building) and more joining via FB live. Christmas Day (it fell on a Sunday), a dozen people joined in person (more online) for an intimate and quiet service of carols and prayers.

DISCIPLESHIP WORK

1. **Devotion projects** – all shared via Pr. Kimber’s blog and linked to social media and delivered by email:
   1. **Lent** – 14 writers (from the congregation) provided a devotion based on items from Jesus’ passion: cross, whip, stone, linen, donkey, etc.
   2. **Lord’s Prayer** – 9 days in May people were invited to consider one line of the Lord’s Prayer and write their version of the line. At the end of the 9 days, participants had rethought the Lord’s Prayer in their own words.
   3. **Online Summer Camp** – 4 weeks (Mon-Fri), the first weeks of June- September with themes of Earth, Air, Fire, and Water. Devotions included: photos and poems by Rev. Rick Pryce (Mondays) and Rev. Lidvald Haugen-Strand (Fridays); Bible Study Tuesday; Word search and social action engagement on Wednesdays; nutrition themed Thursdays by Meredith Lapp, RD. Camp weeks were shared with the whole Atlantic Ministry Area.
   4. **Advent** – “*Caroling through Advent*” was a series of 15 devotions. The congregation was invited to share what their favourite Christmas Carol was and why. Pr. Kimber wrote devotions around the stories shared by participants, included was a link to Tim’s version of the carol on YouTube.

REFUGEE SPONSORSHIP WORK

1. **Broadview project** – an intentional effort to be proactive in antiracism. This included: praying for all places of war (Tigray, Yemen, etc.) not just Ukraine, providing social media updates on events in Tigray Region of Ethiopia, constantly remembering ‘extended family members’ (refugees yet to come to Canada through Resurrection), promoting events and educational opportunities to learn about Indigenous People and BIPOC communities. Pr. Kimber used continuing education money to take a course from University of Alberta on Indigenous Canada. Church liturgy crafted with various forms of land acknowledgement, sermons during Black History month included examples highlighting Black theologians/preachers, and an effort to use language/images not equating ‘dark’ with negative.
2. **Resurrection’s family** – if not for COVID, the Selomon family would have arrived in Feb. 2022. The application awaits processing in the Nairobi Immigration Office. At the end of 2022, applications were being processed, so hopefully arrival in 2023. For the first year, the congregation is financially responsible for this family with prescribed allocations of funds.
3. **South-Grey Parish family** – Pr. Pam McNeil worked with the people of her parish, and they are financially supporting (money sitting in trust with CLWR) the Alayu family, who will arrive in Halifax to be reunited with family members.

PASTORAL CARE WORK

1. **Visiting** – 93 face-to-face and phone visits that included nursing home and hospital visits by request. Institutions were cautious about who was allowed to visit and when. In addition, much pastoral care was offered through text/messenger/email check-ins. Written prayers were electronically sent to people to use as they addressed situations in their lives.
2. **Christmas cards** – 150 cards with a personal handwritten note in each were sent to the membership list. This year none were returned due to invalid addresses.
3. **Pocket Cross project** – members knit and crocheted small squares with crosses on them. Pocket crosses were handed out for Ash Wed. service to go along with the sermon and directed action. Crosses with notes of thanks and blessing were sent to National/Synod office staffs and to military personnel via MSLU student. The pattern was passed along to ON congregations who wanted to participate.
4. **Fellowship Fridays -**Through the summer congregation members were invited to the parsonage yard for conversation. Some weeks a conversation sharing question was asked, for instance – tell of a time you experienced God in creation.
5. **Homelessness + precariously housed** – a few instances in 2022 brought housing issues to members and others connected to the church. Resurrection helped by providing temporary living in parsonage for renovicted; emotional/spiritual support and check-ins; access to phone, charging station, storage space, wash station, and hot drinks; and putting together and handing out ‘comfort-care kits’ for homeless (Care-kits were researched as to what items are most helpful for those living on the streets.)
6. **Campus Ministry** – In Sept. Resurrection marked Campus Ministry month with prayers for post-secondary students and faculty of University/Colleges. Each Sunday a student was invited to read the lessons. Pr. Kimber continues to be an affiliate chaplain at Dalhousie and attends meetings of the multifaith centre. The centre continues to reimagine its presence on campus.

WIDER CHURCH WORK

**MLUC (Martin Luther University College)**- Hosted a placement student Jan-April (started Sept 2021). This placement was virtual and focused on worship and pastoral care. Seminarian Victoria Featherstone participated in FB Live worship, writing devotions and prayers, and preparing two liturgies focused on mental health. Pastoral care was done by case study in conversation with Pr. Kimber.

**ELCIC National Church Council** – Pr. Kimber was elected to a second term on National Church Council. The council meets twice a year, both times in 2022 were via Zoom. Pr. Kimber also prepares two sermons a year for the ELCIC’s ‘Sermons by Email,’ a service for congregations without pastors.

**MEMBERSHIP STATISTICS – AS OF DECEMBER 31, 2022**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Baptized | Confirmed | Notes |
| Jan. 1, 2022 | **372** | **246** | *This is the figure reported in the 2021 Annual Reports.* |
| **Added:**  Baptism | 1 | **-** | Liam Creelman |
| Transfer  (child) | - | **-** |  |
| Adult  Baptism | - | - |  |
| Confirmation | - | 1 | Christina Teclemariam |
| Transfer  affirmation faith  (adult) | 2 | 2 | Rachel Habermehl, Mervin Norwood |
| **Subtotal** | **375** | **249** |  |
| **Removed:**  Death | 4 | 4 | Gunars Aleksis, Thea Allen, Lawrence Kitchen, Gordon Sawler, |
| Transfers,  removed by request,  inactive | 15 | 7 | (B)Jake Megaffin, Tommy Megaffin, Jacob Joudrey, Alexander Risley, Saxon Roren, Brooklyn Sexton, Zuan Trezebiatowski, Kyle Crawford;  (B+C)Virve Sanstrom, Kate Elliot, Shirley Robinson, Pamela Sexton, Jason Sigurdson, Stephen Schneider, Teri Crawford |
| **Dec. 31, 2022** | **356** | **238** |  |

Additional information for 2022 from our Parish Registers:

Funerals not affecting 2022 statistics:

Marga Sketris, Ralph Warner, Anne Saliste

1. **TERMS OF COUNCIL MEMBERS**

ARTICLE IX

Congregational Council and its Officers

Section 1. At its annual meeting the congregation shall elect a Congregational Council of not less than six nor more than twenty-four members for terms of three years each with approximately one-third of the terms expiring annually…

President Claire McIlveen Jan 2021-2024 2nd term

Vice Pres. Kevin Stanton Jan 2021-2024 2nd term

Treasurer Terry Norman Jan 2021-2024 1st term

Secretary Carolyn Humphreys Jan. 2022-2025 2nd term

Glen Scheuer Jan 2021-2024 1st term

Robert Polvi Jan. 2022-2025 2nd term

Achan Obang Jan. 2022-2025 1st term

Jason Phonchareon Jan. 2022-2025 1st term

Sandra Powell Jan. 2022-2025 1st term

We thank Isaias Gogne for serving a term on council and to Sabine Scheffler for serving two terms on church council.

A note that Dasiele Montiero resigned during 1st term.

1. **NOMINATING COMMITTEE**

The council acted as a nominating committee and actively sought out people to let their names stand to be on council. The following people are letting their names stand:

For second term:

Tom Crouse Jan 2023-2026 2nd term

For first term:

Shuwa Alayu Jan 2023-2026 1st term

COUNCIL WORK: ADDRESSING THE BUDGET

1. WORKING GROUPS – three sub-committees begin work in specific areas:
2. Heating (Property) – a group has met and begun with a heat audit and conversation.

*As information: all areas of the building have a resting heat of 55F (13C) note that each heating area has water pipes; heating times go to 68F (20C), turning off 30mins before the regular end time of an event; doors have been weatherproofed as much as possible; draft snakes and thermal curtains are in use.*

1. Social outreach – working on hosting social events and finding donors to use Conrad Room

*As Information: weekly users – Tues. upstairs GA, downstairs SA (6:30-9pm); Sat. downstairs GA step groups (9:30-11am), upstairs NA (10:30am-12:30); Contra dancing is wanting to return (once a month on Fri evening).*

*Sat. afternoon the cleaners usually come in. Along with Sunday afternoon, also the day funerals, weddings, birthdays, or other programing/workshops scheduled- generally members who use space and are generous in donations.*

1. Financial Stewardship
2. DISCERNMENT PROCESS – benefits paid to the pastor include Continuing Education Funds. This year funds are being used for Clergy Coaching, to assist Pr. Kimber -and the council/congregation, in discerning Resurrection’s place in the landscape moving forward.

*“Together We Know*” – the name for this congregational discernment process has already begun with council. As the year progresses everyone will be invited to participate. The process is not delineated at present as ‘next steps’ are determined as we discern step-by-step.

1. SYNOD REDEVELOPEMENT RESOURCES – council has been in contact with Rev. Jennifer Hoover, Synod’s re-development resource person. Possible future steps include Jennifer meeting with council and sharing a presentation with the congregation.