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**McFarland Lutheran Church
Annual Congregation Meeting
Sunday July 26, 2015
9:15 a.m.**

Call to Order

Devotion and Gathering Song

Attendance Check

Old Business

- Approval of Minutes from July 27, 2014 Annual Meeting

New Business

- Call for Congregational Council Nominees

- Reports from Pastors and Staff

- Treasurer's Report including approval of 2014/2015 Budget

Closing Prayer

Adjourn

Sending Song

Report from the Congregational President July 2015

Dear Fellow Members of McFarland Lutheran Church,

This has been a year of significant change in our worship community. This year we have been truly blessed to see the completion of the new worship space. Thank you to the Building Committee and all our members who gave so much of their time and talents to achieve this wonderful result. Beyond the building itself it was amazing to see so many folks step up to the plate and continued to furnish the new space with all of the special appeals fund such items as pews, the sound system and the Baptismal Font. It was wonderful to be able to invite the community in on December 6th to share our hospitality and see the work of so many with God's guiding spirit.

In preparation for the annual council retreat, Council members held listening sessions to hear what the membership felt was important and where we should be heading. At the retreat, after validating our mission of Share God's Word, Show God's Love, Serve Gods World, we reflected on what we heard from the membership and concluded that we need to focus on **reaching in** to our current members who are not very active and **reaching out** for new members. This work is moving forward with the energy of a number of the Welcoming Committee. This group is planning several activities which include baking bread and delivering it to visitors to our church, a specific outreach to people moving to McFarland with a welcoming postcard and package, and delivering the church directories to folks who haven't picked them up yet. We will hold a rally picnic in September and will invite not only all congregation members, but the entire community. Anyone interested in getting involved in these activities let the Pastors or Huldah know!

Through study of thoughtful feedback gathered by the Worship Committee and with their recommendation, the Council decided to modify our Sunday worship schedule. Keeping the three services we had in two spaces would be difficult to manage in one worship space. We wanted to keep the times convenient for as many people as possible. So we concluded on an 8:00 and 10:00 Sunday services. We knew not everyone would be happy with this decision, but we trust that it was the best for the majority of people.

With all of the changes this year it is important to recognize the work of all of the ongoing committees and volunteers that promote our mission in so many ways. Thanks also to our pastors and lay staff whose energy and reflection of God's will moves us forward. They all helped to keep everything running smoothly during this significant time of change. For this we are truly blessed. Thanks be to God.

Yours in Christ,
Sandy Hall
Congregational President
McFarland Lutheran Church

Financial Report

The Finance Committee would like to thank all the members of McFarland Lutheran Church for their generous giving of their financial resources this past fiscal year. We are continually amazed at the generosity of the members of this congregation, both to the operations of the Church and to the Capital Campaign.

2014/2015 SUMMARY

For the Church year just completed, our revenue was \$1,058,097. This was \$123,367 less than our budgeted revenue of \$1,181,464.

Actual expenses were \$1,062,645. This was \$118,819 less than our budgeted expenses of \$1,181,464.

For the third year, McFarland Lutheran Church had contracted with the McFarland School District to conduct an age 4 kindergarten program – a class in the morning and a class in the afternoon. This program was completely funded by the school district. Total revenue received from the school district was \$97,453. Total expenses to conduct the program were \$74,783. This gave the church net income of \$22,670.

The Church's operating reserves began the year at \$150,000 and finished the year at \$150,000. We added \$6,000 to the Mortgage Reserve this past fiscal year. The balance now stands at \$30,000. Thrivent Financial requires us to maintain three months of mortgage payments in a reserve. Also during the year we added \$6,000 to the Building Maintenance & Repairs savings account. The Building Maintenance & Repairs savings account ended the fiscal year with a balance of \$71,519. During the course of the fiscal year, we replaced a boiler at a cost of approximately \$19,500 and a HVAC rooftop unit at a cost of approximately \$14,000. The roof over the Great Hall has been replaced; however we are waiting for the skylights to be replaced. Once this is done, the total cost of these repairs will be \$62,000 and this will reduce the savings account by this amount.

In the first quarter of 2015 we finalized the mortgage for the Sanctuary remodel. The total amount borrowed was \$1,543,258. We have two notes – one with a monthly payment of \$4,176 and the other with a monthly payment of \$3,657 for a total of \$7,833. The monthly mortgage payments began on April 1.

Toward the end of the fiscal year, Broyles and Company CPAs, LLC, performed procedures listed below, which were agreed to by the Finance Committee with respect to the accounting records of McFarland Lutheran Church:

- 1) Evaluate the Church's cash balances as of March 31, 2015.
- 2) Evaluate credit card activity for the three month period of January 1, 2015 through March 31, 2015.
- 3) Evaluate payroll disbursements for the six month period of October 1, 2014 through March 31, 2015.

2015/2016 BUDGET

The proposed 2015/2016 budget is \$1,078,177 for McFarland Lutheran Church.

The proposed 2015/2016 budget is \$96,840 for the 4K program.

We will be using the Capital Campaign funds to pay the principal portion of the mortgage payment each month. This arrangement is reflected in the 2015/2016 budget.

The Building Maintenance & Repair savings account will have \$500 a month deposited into it during the 2015/2016 fiscal year. This account would be used for any large unexpected expenses that may occur in the future.

For this fiscal year the budget reflects a 2% raise for the lay staff and a 3% for the pastoral staff.

I would like to thank the many committees of McFarland Lutheran Church for their efforts in putting together next fiscal year's budget. Their thoughtful consideration helped to make possible another balanced budget for next fiscal year.

I would also like to thank Pastor Tim and Kelli, the MLC Finance Committee, the Church Council, Rita Jenkins, and Dennis Knutson for their input and assistance this past fiscal year.

Finally, a "Thank You" to the congregation of McFarland Lutheran Church for the opportunity to serve you as Treasurer these past three years.

Yours in Christ,
Mike Devine, CPA
MLC Treasurer/Finance Committee Chair

McFarland Lutheran Church - Annual Congregational Meeting July 27, 2014 Minutes

Snacks and beverages were furnished by MLC hospitality team.

Call to order: Meeting was called to order at 9:20 a.m. by President Jeff Gehrke.

Devotion: Pastor Tim shared devotion.

Verification of Quorum: A quorum was verified. 96 members were in attendance.

Gathering song: Chris Malueg led us in singing.

Old Business: Approval of the minutes from the Annual Congregational meeting on July 21, 2013.

Motion to approve: Deb Hettrick, Seconded: Jon Landen. Motion passed.

Approval of minutes from Congregational meeting on October 6, 2013. **Motion to approve: Ernie Thieding, Seconded: Susan Brodd. Motion passed.**

New Business:

Call for MLC Council Nominees: The Nominating Committee consisted of Scott Potts, Jon Landen, Deb Wellman, and Eileen Brost. The nominees were presented to the membership: David Nelson, Joe Schwartz, Carol Munch, and Brent Odell. No other nominees were offered from the floor. **Motion to accept the nominees: Sandy Hall, Seconded: Sheri Gehrke. Motion passed.**

Reports:

Building Committee: Bill Langel, Building Committee chair, announced that the building project is on schedule and on budget. Bill thanked Dennis Knutson for keeping track of the costs which kept the project on budget. We will possibly be worshipping in the new sanctuary by October 1, 2014. Bill also thanked the congregation for their generous giving to the Capital Campaign and to the special appeals. Due to the generosity of the congregation we have accomplished many things to make the new sanctuary beautiful and functional for all types of worship. Bill mentioned that we still need funds for new carpeting in the gathering space.

Pastor Tim Dean: Pastor Tim spoke of his excitement for this coming fall, beginning with Rally Day on September 7, 2014. Rally Day will use a theme of "Rising Up Together". He will participate in planning for a dedication weekend for the new sanctuary which will include an open house and a blowout worship service along with the actual dedication. Pastor Tim introduced President Jeff Gehrke, Vice President Holly Heuer, Treasurer Mike Devine, and Secretary Betty Showers, and thanked them for their strong and healthy leadership as officers of the MLC Council. The reports for the ministry staff are printed in the annual report. Pastor Tim thanked the staff of MLC for their work and for their cooperation during the construction. Pastor Tim introduced Pastor Kelli by sharing with the congregation that he and Pastor Kelli work very well together, they are on the same page, they support each other and they have fun working together.

Pastor Kelli Schmit: Pastor Kelli agreed with Pastor Tim's assessment of their work relationship and also thanked the staff. Pastor Kelli shared that she feels it is great to work at MLC and thinks that the numerous ministries, locally and worldwide, offered by MLC is incredible. She also feels it is a joy to be a coworker with the congregation of MLC in the kingdom of God.

Treasurer: The financial status for MLC is printed in the annual report in detail so Mike Devine gave only the highlights of the financial statement. There is \$572,000 in savings accounts. After projecting the expenses for June 2014 (last month of the fiscal year) \$38,000 was moved from the checkbook

balance to the Maintenance and Repairs account. The funds in this account are to be used when unexpected repairs are needed such as the new HVAC unit which was recently purchased for the FLC. Mike then announced that the Finance Committee was presenting a balanced budget of \$1,181,000 approved by MLC Council. He also shared that the budget included a 2% wage increase for all staff and a contribution to the Mortgage Reserve Fund for the first 6 months of the fiscal year. \$9,100 is the estimated monthly mortgage payment. Question: from Ginny Dodson: Where is the Maintenance and Repair account listed in the financial report? Answer: page 1 of 13 on the colored pages. Ginny also asked Mike to explain the difference between the Building Fund and the Maintenance and Repair account. Answer: the Maintenance and Repair account is for unexpected repairs like the HVAC, water heater, etc. while the Building Fund pays down the mortgage. **Motion to approve the proposed budget for the fiscal year July 1, 2014 –June 30, 2015: Dennis Knutson, Seconded: Bill Langel. Motion passed.**

Thank yous! Pastor Tim asked the 4 Council members who have completed their terms; Amy Lawrence, Betty Showers, Brady Showalter, and Dave Waller to come forward. Congregation thanked them all with applause. Pastor Tim presented each of them with a book from himself and Pastor Kelli which pertained to something they knew about each person.

President Jeff G. reminded all of the current and new Council members to meet in room 210 to elect officers and decide on an August meeting date.

Pastor Tim announced that the sanctuary would be open for viewing on Sun. Aug. 10 from 9:00 a.m. – noon.

Closing Prayer: Pastor Kelli led us with a closing prayer and the congregation joined in the Lord's Prayer.

Sending: Chris Malueg led us with a closing song.

Motion to adjourn the MLC 2014 Annual meeting: Tom Wellman, Seconded: Marla Grover.

Motion passed. Meeting adjourned at 9:55 a.m.

Respectfully submitted, Betty Showers, secretary

MCFARLAND LUTHERAN CHURCH COUNCIL

Members completing their Council term:

Jeff Gehrke	Holly Heuer
Bill Gross	Kathy Westby

Members beginning their 3rd year:

Deb Alber	Sandra Hall
Tom Blau	Keith Voelker

Members beginning their 2nd year:

Carol Munch	Brent Odell
Dave Nelson	Joe Schwartz

PASTORAL ACTS 1/1/2014 - 12/31/2014

Based on ELCA Parochial Report year ending December 31, 2014

	<u>Baptized</u>	<u>Confirmed</u>
Members at the End of 2013	2180	1435
Baptism	16	
Members Received	23	
Confirmation Class		10
Transferred in / Reinstated	11	
From other sources and statistical adjustment	0	
Deaths	12	
Transferred out / Removed	16	
Statistical Adjustment	<u>0</u>	<u> </u>
Members at the End of December 2014	2202	1445

Senior Pastor's Report

**“Now you are the body of Christ and individually members of it.”
(1 Corinthians 12:27)**

By God's grace, we are members of the body of Christ. By God's grace, McFarland Lutheran Church is part of the body, the world-wide church, that is rooted and growing in Jesus Christ. We are part of a community that is greater than each of us individually, yet each of us brings gifts to make the body a healthier, stronger entity.

I am so thankful to serve as the Senior Pastor with you as members connected to Christ's body! I see so many different gifts at MLC that empower our mission to share, show and serve in the good news of Jesus Christ. I see the Spirit of God at work in you by the ways you give of yourselves, by the ways you support and encourage ministry. You invite others to worship. You care for those who are hurting. You offer to God financial gifts to support God's mission. You study and are open to God's Word. You support new ways of reaching others.

As we gather in our annual meeting in 2015, as we seek the Spirit's guidance for the year ahead, let us remember the good news that we have been included in the body of Christ, made participants in his healing and grace, and called to serve in his name.

**“There are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit.”
(1 Corinthians 12:4)**

1. A New House of Prayer

The first ministry I will highlight from the past year is the gift of a new Sanctuary. What an incredible blessing, not just for our worship now, but for generations to come! We had a festive dedication of the new worship space on the Second Sunday in Advent, Dec. 7, 2014, and have enjoyed worshipping there for the first time during the festival seasons of Christmas and Easter.

This was a wonderful community effort! The Building Committee, under the faithful guidance of Bill Langel, provided great energy and leadership to this effort. We were also blessed by the many generous donations for our special appeal items and during the Capitol Campaign. We are planning to complete a dedication booklet very soon, which will give thanks for the many people who have contributed toward the new Sanctuary. The Spirit is working among us in a powerful way!

We will be adding new dimensions to the Sanctuary in the years to come. First up, we will be adding communion kneelers and a platform to raise the pulpit/lectern. We have had some unexpected delays with the builder, but I expect these pieces to be in place very soon. The next step is an up-to-date video recording system, which would give us the capability to record worship services and put them on our website as podcasts, etc. We are doing this right now, as an audio link on our website (mcfarlandlutheran.org). I hope at some point in the near future we can videotape our worship services, and share them with others.

2. New Members of the Body

We are welcoming and adding new people into the body of Christ at MLC! In 2014, we received 34 new members, and another 16 new members through Holy Baptism. In addition, we welcomed 10 young people who affirmed their baptism after a period of confirmation instruction. Let's rejoice in these new members who are joined to the mission we share!

I believe our worship time schedule will help our mission to reach new people as well. Based on all the written feedback forms and listening sessions, the Worship and Music Committee reached the consensus for a new Sunday morning schedule: 8 a.m., traditional; 9:15 a.m., faith formation for all ages; and 10 a.m., contemporary. Many people, including young families, expressed a desire for an

early time for the contemporary service. I am hopeful that this earlier time will help us to continue to draw new families into our worship life and other ministries.

3. Growing Faith for All Ages

The Adult Faith Formation Hour continues to be something I enjoy. The class has an average of 30-35 participants, and the topics have ranged from the bible to the liturgical calendar to music to Dietrich Bonhoeffer. The past year was bookended with a close reading and study of the Book of Acts, which I think is key for mission in the 21st century. With the help of N.T. Wright's study guide, "Acts for Everyone," we discussed questions about faith and witness as the Spirit guides us into ministry in many diverse contexts.

We also began a small group for young parents called "Face Time." We had a consistent group of about 10 to discuss faith formation, parenting and daily life. I hope this group continues in the fall. It is a wonderful opportunity for parents of young children to build relationships and nurture one another's faith journey.

The Adult Faith Formation time will be shorter with the change in our worship schedule, so we will promptly begin the class at 9:15! However, we will still have time to reflect together on God's Word and how the Holy Spirit is leading us to grow as God's people. The Spirit is strengthening our shared witness and work in Jesus' name!

4. Gifted Staff

Another highlight for me is working with a staff that reflects so many diverse gifts of the Spirit. Huldah Ellestad, our Coordinator of Lay Ministry and Adult Education, brings gifts of patience, faith and spiritual openness in all her ministry tasks. She is doing a wonderful job coordinating all the topics for the adult Sunday morning class, and also leading some of the teaching.

I am also grateful for the work of Chris Landerud, our Youth Ministries Coordinator. Besides organizing our confirmation and high school ministries, Chris spends good quality time building faith relationships with our young people. One of the gifts Chris brings to these ministries is helping connect youth to leadership roles in worship and other ministries. He is a good organizer and an even better faith mentor for our young people!

Chris Malueg offers his music, energy and dedication each week as our Director of Music. He has a wide range of musical abilities that is a great fit with our diverse worship styles. This Lent, Chris even helped us to sing global music in many languages! We are sad to say goodbye and godspeed to Jess Salek, our organist and pianist, who is resigning to allow more time for his full-time teaching and other music groups. His last Sunday will be August 30, 2015. We wish him God's blessings, and hope that he can return every once in a while and dazzle us with his musical talents!

This summer we recognized and gave thanks for two staff members who have served here for 25 years: Rita Jenkins, our Office Manager, and Renae Feldner, our Administrative Assistant. Thanks be to God for both of them! They have both served faithfully and loyally over the years, through many changes. Our "ship" would not sail so smoothly without Rita and Renae attending to all the details. If you get a chance, please thank them for their faithful ministry!

We are also blessed with the gifts of our Lead Custodian, Ken Brost, and our Part-time Custodians, Dick Kohl and Sharon Strattan. They are incredibly helpful, cheerful, and keep the facility ready to do God's work.

In addition, I am very grateful for all our teachers and staff in the Child Life Ministries. This is an important outreach ministry of MLC that embodies God's steadfast love to children and their families. We had a major transition this year with the departure of Becca Ziety, our Administrator, but fortunately, our Program Directors, Deb Nygaard and Sara Phelan, have stepped up in the interim to

keep the programs going full speed ahead! We need to give Deb and Sara many thanks for their solid efforts of leading CLM in this interim time.

The CLM and Personnel Committees have been working closely to hire a new Administrator, and we believe that a 60% position gives us the necessary leadership to move our CLM ministry forward. I am happy to say that we are nearing a decision for hiring a new Administrator!

Finally, our MLC “body of Christ” is strengthened and enlivened by our Associate Pastor, Kelli Schmit, and I am grateful to share the joys, challenges and calling of the pastoral office with her! She is a gifted theologian and preacher, and offers wonderful organization and energy to the various ministries and committees that she helps to lead. It is a gift to me to have a colleague in whom I can trust and share the adventure of ordained ministry. Thanks be to God!

5. Strong Lay Leadership

Our faith community is blessed by the leadership gifts of many people. I believe one of the factors that help a community to be active and mission-oriented is strong lay leadership. Thanks be to God—we have this gift at MLC!

Thank you to the out-going Council members, who have finished their three-year terms: Jeff Gehrke, Bill Gross, Holly Heuer and Kathy Westby. These servants of Christ have brought many gifts around the Council table and committee tables, and our mission has grown because of them! Thank you also to the officers who have served this year: Sandy Hall, president; Holly Heuer, vice-president; Deb Alber, secretary; and Mike Devine, treasurer.

I want to make a special “shout-out” to Mike, who is completing his third and final year as treasurer. He has brought a great sense of humor, steadiness, and faithfulness to his tasks as the “money man” of MLC! The congregation has benefited immensely from his service!

**“There are varieties of activities, but the same God who activates all of them.”
(1 Corinthians 12:6)**

1. Telling the Story

As I look ahead to our coming year of activities, I believe we need to put special emphasis on outreach and evangelism. At our synod assembly in May, I was captivated by the keynote address shared by the Rev. Dr. Stephen Bouman, Executive Director of Congregational and Synodical Mission of the national ELCA. He talked about evangelism with the image of “love songs from the kitchen table.” He shared how he first learned the faith from the songs that his grandmother taught him.

We have such good news to sing and to tell—the redeeming, healing, eternal love of God in Christ Jesus (Romans 8). My hope is that we see our faith community and ministries as ways of sharing the story of Jesus’ love.

The newly-formed Welcoming Committee has already started some activities toward this goal. First, we are promoting our MLC Facebook page with the goal of reaching 500 “friends.” Invite your Facebook friends to like us! Secondly, the committee is planning to have a cookout/potluck for the congregation and the wider Village of McFarland on Rally Day, Sept. 13, at 11 a.m. Thirdly, the committee is looking at some new ways of contacting guests in worship. I am excited about these and other initiatives, and am thankful for Brian Rodeck (outreach) and Tom Scharine (in-reach) who have agreed to help coordinate this committee’s activities.

2. Small Groups

I continue to see a need in our congregation for strengthening our small group ministry. We have a number of small groups currently meeting and providing effective ministry, such as the men’s and women’s Saturday bible studies, women’s circles, and the hunters’ group, “Hunting for God.” Small

groups not only provide “in-reach” care, but they also help equip people for evangelism, for telling others the story of Jesus’ life, death and resurrection. Scott Potts is putting together a special brochure for highlighting our current small group offerings. Share the Word!

Pastor Kelli, Huldah and I have been exploring one model of small groups called “Unbinding the Gospel.” This model focuses on prayer, bible study, and encouraging people to find ways of sharing their faith. Eventually in this process, the whole congregation is invited to participate in a small group. There are other models of small group ministry that may work in our setting, but the important part is giving people opportunities to discuss their faith and explore ways of serving with others in the congregation.

3. 150 Years of God’s grace

We have a wonderful milestone to celebrate in 2017: the 150th anniversary of McFarland Lutheran Church! Our faith community was established in 1867 by a Norwegian missionary, the Rev. J.A. Otteson. Our local anniversary happily coincides with another important milestone: the 500th anniversary of the Protestant Reformation, begun by Martin Luther and his 95 Theses in 1517.

We will celebrate God’s grace made known through the Lutheran reforming movement, and this same grace made known in our life together at MLC. Even though this is two years away, we will need to organize a committee to plan some anniversary celebrations. Our national ELCA has developed a theme which we may want to use for our 150th: “Freed and Renewed in Christ: 500 years of God’s Grace in Action.” (www.elca.org/500years)

I see this as a tremendous opportunity to not just look back on the past 150 years, but to look forward to where God’s is calling us to service and mission in the present and future. Please let me know if you would like to help organize our anniversary celebration of God’s grace in action!

**“Faith, hope and love abide, these three; but the greatest of these is love.”
(1 Corinthians 13:13)**

God is abundantly blessing us and others through the MLC community, the body of Christ at Marsh and Broadhead. The life-blood that flows through all of our activities, ministries and work together is the love of God in Christ Jesus. Christ’s love binds us together as sisters and brothers, empowers our serving, and leads us to share his love beyond the walls of the congregation. If we don’t have his love abiding in us, we are a noisy gong or a screeching horn, as Paul reminds us in 1 Corinthians. It all starts and ends in the love of God in Christ Jesus.

As we go forward into another year of God’s work together, let us give God thanks and praise for the abundant blessings that rain upon us. Let us give thanks that we are joined to the body of Christ, filled with his love, and empowered to share the good news of his life, death and resurrection.

Joyfully serving Christ with you,

Pastor Tim Dean

Associate Pastor

“For the love of Christ urges us on, because we are convinced that one has died for all; therefore all have died. And he died for all, so that those who live might live no longer for themselves, but for him who died and was raised for them. [...] So if anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation; everything old has passed away; see, everything has become new!” (2 Corinthians 5:14, 15, 17 NRSV)

Witnessing Christ Making Things New

Because of Christ there is a new creation, everything has become new! This has been a year of things taking new shape, of being made new! I can't help but think of our new sanctuary when talking about “new creations” of the past year. Great excitement danced through this place as we watched the building take shape piece by piece. The Grand Dedication weekend was filled with fellowship, friendship, and spectacular music. We thoroughly enjoyed our new creation as we lived through our “firsts” in the new space – as we waited during our first Advent, celebrated our first Christmas, observed our first Lent, rejoiced on our first Easter, and all days in between. I am grateful for the call to worship with you, especially in such a lovely sanctuary.

A new creation was born from some time spent reading for Continuing Education. With the hope of equipping families to talk to their youngest disciples about God, the Bible, or prayer, we kicked off a new ministry called “Growing Disciples – Growing Faith.” Each week a few lines were posted (on Facebook and in the News You Can Use and newsletter) about a Bible story or a prayer with actions. Its goal is to offer something brief to help open the door to talking about “God-stuff” with young ones. Generating new topics and distilling them down to their Gospel-core continues to be a fun and creative challenge. Each week certainly feels like a new creation!

We celebrated Christ making things new with familiar milestones of faith. Our 3-year-olds received story Bibles on the first day of Sunday School and eleven 3rd graders received their full NRSV Bible later in the fall. One of my favorite milestones is the First Communion class. Nine students spent a morning making communion bread and learning about the promises God makes to us in bread and wine. Since the students sit together on the day of the celebration, it is a joy for me to watch the excitement and wiggles build as we get closer and closer to that part of the liturgy.

It was fun to team up with our Confirmation students and talk about being a worship leader. With Chris Landerud's help, I led a “101-course” on distributing communion and being a lector; and new this year we added how to be an usher. Our youth filled these roles during our midweek Advent and Lenten services. It is an honor to join them as they take on the responsibility of that leadership role and participate in the worship life of this congregation.

The Global Mission team was able to witness Christ making things new throughout the year. Team chair, Ron Vandeberg, wrote an incredible report and I encourage you to check it out. I would still like to share a few moments that I found particularly exciting. The team hoped to raise \$2300 to help mission partners in Uganda buy land so they could build a piggery. The generosity of this congregation not only met the goal but exceeded it by over \$300. Thanks be to God! Also, our midweek Lenten theme focused on MLC's global mission efforts so we were able to hear from local and global ministry partners. It was incredible to hear how God is making things new throughout the world.

The Health & Social Wellness team was inspired to try new things this past year. Our monthly focuses covered a variety of topics including domestic abuse, diabetes, nutrition, and depression and suicide. Our very own Kristin Hildebrandt led a hands-only CPR class in February. We updated our AED machine located in the Grand Hallway and participated with the McFarland Police for their Christmas program “Shop with a Cop.”

The Family & Children's Ministry team partnered with Chris Landerud to create a Student Ministries Calendar which combines all ministries for those under 18 years of age. Our Sunday School program was a delight with just shy of 100 kids registered. I lead the Bible Rotation and have enjoyed getting to know our school-age students better over the course of the year. We had a great VBS week last July with 60+ kids participating. And no autumn is complete without the team's annual Pumpkinfest. All three of these key children's ministries would not be a success without our devoted leaders. It is an honor to witness their dedication to the children of MLC and of the greater community.

It is a joy to participate in the ways Christ is making things new, but it wouldn't be possible without the incredible staff MLC has assembled. Sharing the responsibilities of the pastoral office with Pastor Tim continues to be a joy. I appreciate his focus on the Gospel and the care he has for the people of McFarland Lutheran. We are all blessed by the entire staff's collaborative and supportive spirit. People's flexibility and understanding continue to be a gift to the day-to-day details but also to the big-picture ministry of McFarland Lutheran Church.

Excited for Christ to Make Things New

There's no way to know how, exactly, Christ will make things new, but I have a few suspicions of which I am particularly excited. There is a new Student Ministries calendar available at the Welcome Desk. One side highlights what will be happening this summer and the other side gives a rough outline of what we expect for the 2015-2016 program year. It is nice to have a few established ministries but to also have the flexibility to tweak programs and dream new ideas.

There is a new element to the 2015 VBS program. Last year we had four school-age groups and they were nearing capacity, so we added a fifth group! We are very excited to open and close each day in our new worship space. We are also looking into ways to better equip our Sunday School leaders in the fall.

The Global Mission team, along with the Faith Formation team, is cooking up an Adult Education opportunity this fall where we will invite people of other faiths to come and share with us about their experiences. Also, the Health and Social Wellness team will be bringing new topics to you each month including possibilities like Summer Hunger and Breast Cancer.

I am looking forward to a continuing education event hosted at Luther Seminary entitled "The Courage to Preach." The keynote speakers are wonderful and I am excited to learn from them and do some extra reading in this area. I thoroughly enjoy the sermon preparation process and often gather more information than I am able to share in the sermon. It truly is a spiritual practice in and of itself for me.

Finally, I am excited to see how God will make things new in our congregation. Pastor Tim and I have planned to take a morning together to discern where the Spirit may be leading the ministries of this congregation. I am very much looking forward to this time to collaborate, bounce ideas, reevaluate, and dream. It will be great fun to see how the Spirit moves during this time and this whole upcoming year.

Excited to be part of the new creation with you,
Pastor Kelli

Coordinator of Lay Ministry & Adult Education

*²³ Let us hold tightly without wavering to the hope we affirm, for God can be trusted to keep his promise. ²⁴ Let us think of ways to motivate one another to acts of love and good works.
Hebrews 10:23-24*

Because of Jesus Christ, we are assured that God hears us, answers us, and works within us to deepen our relationship with God and with each other. As members of His holy body, the people of McFarland Lutheran Church, continually seek and find ways to reach out in love for one another and the wider community. Every day, I am blessed to witness the many ways that you act in love and with good works.

This year, many trained Befrienders engaged in acts of Christian love by providing transportation, friendship, support and care. Befrienders have been a positive force within our congregation, this community, and neighboring communities. I am both humbled and blessed to facilitate the connecting of Befrienders and Befriended, and to see what an impact is made by these mutually beneficial relationships.

New Member sessions were held at 3 points during the past year and 55 people entered into the mission of MLC. It will be exciting to see how their diverse spiritual gifts and willing hearts impact this congregation in the months to come.

It has been an inspiration to witness the many people who participate in the Adult Faith Formation Hour on Sunday mornings. I am truly thankful for the hard working members of the Faith Formation Committee and a wide group of teachers and facilitators who presented growth opportunities including, but not limited to: study of the book of Hebrews - Understanding the Cross, the book of Acts, the life and writings of Dietrich Bonhoeffer, biblical video tours/learning, story behind beloved hymns & songs, and many other diverse topics to foster spiritual growth.

It was a long time coming, and very exciting, to see the photos of 295 families and individuals that are included in the McFarland Lutheran Church directory. The new photo directory is a useful tool, as well as a visual record, that will be utilized by the congregation, staff, and future new members.

I want to thank Michaela Richter for her faithful and loving service in the nursery the past few years. The consistent presence of a well-staffed Nursery is important in that it: enables parents to focus on a meaningful worship experience, is utilized by visiting families with young children, offers the opportunity for children to gradually integrate into the worship experience. A strong need for the coming year is to fill the Sunday morning nursery attendant position with one, or more, qualified individuals.

The times I am privileged to participate in Child Life Ministries' worship continues to be both an inspiration and motivation. The children have a clear and unique view of what it means to be a disciple and I value their insights.

I continue to be awed by the many ways the people of MLC provide witness of our loving God through the ministries of Home Communion, the Prayer Chain, Sunday morning hospitality, Fair Trade, prayer shawls and newborn blankets, among others. It is a blessing to witness these acts of loving service to our Lord.

The MLC Time & Talent flyer is a signpost for the many opportunities to put our "acts of love and good works" into service. What the flyer does not show, are the many, many people who offer their gifts quietly and faithfully, day after day in response to our loving God.

Thanks be to God for each and every one of you!
Huldah Ellestad

Youth Ministries Coordinator

'Worship with our Heart, Learn with our Head, and Serve with our Hands' - Our faith in Christ is founded on a commitment to worship, learn, and serve. In community with our youth, we aim to make this personal commitment to God. We believe that affirming our baptism is a daily pursuit; not just a one-time event.

Confirmation – Middle School Ministries

Our Confirmation Ministry is a three year program for 6th, 7th, and 8th graders. The first year is a 'Pre-Confirmation' aimed to establish a faith foundation before accepting the full commitment of Confirmation. The formal commitment of Confirmation begins in 7th grade. Confirmation prepares individuals to willingly be received as members.

Highlights of the Confirmation Program over the past year include:

- Sunday small group classes led by Karen Emerson, Chris Landerud, Chris Olson, Jim Summers, Don Schutt, Lee Thorson, Marty & Tiffany Kvalheim
- Monthly large group classes lead by Pastor Tim, Pastor Kelli, & Chris Landerud
- Weekly Wednesday events that include hands-on classes, projects, and games
- Synod Confirmation Extravaganza Event (Gordon Commons – UW Madison)
- Advent Wednesday worship sermon skit and worship assistants
- Lenten Wednesday Souper Supper hosts and worship assistants and tech support
- Winter Break & Summer Break 'Faith Talks' with confirmation students
- Shared Table Hosts – 3 tailgate themed grill-out dinners
- Crossways Pine Lake Summer Confirmation Camp Experience (Waupaca, WI)

Youth Group – High School Ministries

Our faithful Youth Group gathers every Wednesday morning for high school breakfast (open to all students) and every Sunday morning. Our weekly study hour is centered on the living word and weekly lectionary, but conversation and inspiration is often guided by the week's events and what is on student's hearts and minds.

Highlights of the high school ministries over the past year include:

- Sunday Morning Youth Group Hour
- Wednesday HS Breakfast
- Baccalaureate Service (in partnership with Christ the King Church and the UCC)
- Volunteer leaders for Vacation Bible School
- Tech training sessions and support team for sanctuary's AV equipment
- Holy Hill Basilica road trip with worship and tour
- Youth Group fall kick-off campfire event
- HS Girls Youth Group Summer Series led by Halle Siebert
- HS Summer Festival Gathering (Gustavus Adolphus College – St. Peter, MN)
- HS ELCA Youth Gathering breakfast fundraiser held in the FLC
- Synod pre youth gathering held at McFarland Lutheran (230+ students & leaders)
- 2015 ELCA Youth Gathering in Detroit, Michigan

Our building grew this past year, but the growth of our youth ministries and community is the more notable celebration! The growth and gifts that we share in God's house are life-giving. With passion, we continue our mission to worship, learn, and serve – both in this building and outside these walls. I am privileged to be an integral part of our youth ministries. With great excitement, I look forward to shaping our youth ministries in the year ahead!

<>< Chris Landerud

Child Life Ministries of McFarland Lutheran Church



Nationally Accredited 
Christian Preschool, Daycare, School Age
kidsofclm@hotmail.com

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“Drop a stone into the water, in a moment it is gone.
But a hundred ripples go on and on and on.”

This is the opening to a favorite song of mine, written by Cheryl Kirking. And it makes one realize that something big and long-lasting can grow from just a small beginning. Who would have imagined CLM growing from a one morning, three day class of 10 children, to a thriving, powerful ministry of this church and to the community and even beyond! I was here that first year, assisting with leading music, and I knew I wanted to a part of this ministry and its' growth. This past year, we have served over 135 children, and the program has grown from that one room preschool, to multiple preschool programs, from Tots to Pre-Kindergarten, School Age Care, full day preschool care at Rainbow Center, and also providing a 4K sight through the McFarland School District. In addition, we have thriving Lunch Bunch and Enrichment Programs, because children love to be at CLM!

It all works first and foremost by the leadership of Jesus and the constant reminder that He is our King, and causes those ripples to go on and on and on. Through the Lord, you have blessed this ministry with support and sustenance, and the firm conviction that the spiritual, along with the learning growth of children is highly valued in this congregation. Thank you for your continued support of CLM, its' staff, and to the children we serve. That WE serve...together!

We thank the CLM Staff for their constant devotion to the care and nurturing of each and every child and family who walk through our door. We are proud to have a staff that has remained with us for many years because they are devoted to this mission. They, along with our families, work together, play together, laugh together, and even cry together. This ripple catches up to the one that include the support from all of the staff at MLC, who help us each and every day.

Our CLM Committee has worked effortlessly to support and further grow the program. Their devotion and long hours in volunteer service have guided us through the year. Our gratitude is extended to Holly Heuer, Carol Munch, Rachel Nelson, Lisa Simpson, Willi Sindermann, and Karen Willems who all served on the committee this past year. We also thank the Council and all other committees who assist CLM in so many ways.

We are blessed to have a ministry team that supports CLM through worship leadership. Pastor Tim and Pastor Kelli, Chris Landerud and Huldah Ellestad have shared their faith and their stories in worship. Throughout the week, worship is held 4 times, so all children may attend worship. That is one very big ripple that flows throughout each and every week, all year long.

If it were not for the help of scholarships, some children would not be able to attend CLM. Thank you to all who have given through the Thrivent Program or by personal donation. And to those who have given gifts to CLM, or supported us through fundraisers, the funds have gone to provide equipment upgrades to the playground and programs.

It has been a year of change and movement for CLM, with the resignation of Becca Ziety and the leadership she provided. Yet we are looking forward to the future while still maintaining the high standards that you and the community have come to expect of us throughout the years. We promise to keep sending out the ripples of love to the children in our midst and asking you for your continued prayers and support, while Jesus keeps us throwing to create more ripples.

Deb Nygaard and Sara Phelan

Music Director

“O Come, let us sing to the Lord; let us make a joyful noise to the rock of our salvation! Let us come into his presence with thanksgiving; let us make a joyful noise to him with songs of praise!”
Psalm 95:1-2

I would like to begin with a huge “Thank You!” to all the musicians at McFarland Lutheran Church. We are blessed with incredibly talented and dedicated musicians. They volunteer their time and talent to help move our hearts and minds as we worship. They are an incredible group of people. I thank you all for what you do.

Here is a breakdown of the musical elements at McFarland Lutheran Church:

- McFarland Lutheran Choir
- McFarland Lutheran Bell Choir
- Worship Band
- Sunday School Children’s Choir
- McFarland Lutheran Wind Ensemble
- Polka Band
- Saturday Evening Music Ensemble
- Summer Special Music

After a great deal of patience and anticipation, mid November 2014 saw the beginnings of our transition into the new sanctuary. Both the Choir and the Bell Choir enjoyed the new acoustics during rehearsals before we “officially” moved in. The large open space, wonderful acoustics and new sound system have greatly enhanced our music experience. We put all this to the test soon after moving in with our Advent Concert, held this year during our 10:30 am service. We were able to accommodate our Choir, Bell Choir, Worship Band and Wind Ensemble; almost 50 musicians!

We are still “living into” the new space. As we transitioned into the new sanctuary, there was a lot of unfamiliar ground to cover. There is always a learning curve with new equipment and new acoustics. I would like to thank our dedicated team of soundboard operators and power point presenters. Each of them has put in extra time as they have learned how to operate our new equipment.

Beginning last fall, we were fortunate to hire our current accompanist, Jess Salek. Jess has brought a wealth of talent and expertise to his accompanist role. Not only has he provided his keyboard skills, but he has also played percussion, rang in the Bell Choir and sung in the Choir and Worship Band. We are blessed to have him in our musical family.

The new Sunday service times this year provided a great flexibility in my Sunday morning schedule allowing me to rehearse with the Children’s Choir between services. I love working with the Sunday School kids and they always bring so much to worship when they sing.

All of our music groups have continued to broaden their repertoire and musicality. Worship Band saw the inclusion of a regular drummer this year; Tom Blau. Tom has added so much to the group with his musicianship. We are blessed to have him. New members Brian and Renee Rodeck jumped into Bell Choir (mid-season) with both feet, and none too soon. The last few months of Bell Choir saw each of them playing anywhere they were needed in the lineup. Thank you both for allowing us to take advantage of your enthusiasm. The Saturday evening musicians were also joined by Clarke Schroeder. Clarke, returning to McFarland Lutheran after some time away, lends his guitar and voice to that service. Thank you Clarke; it’s nice to have you back!

McFarland Lutheran Church should be very proud of its volunteer musicians and generous use of differing musical styles. Each of our services offers a unique musical “flavor” for worship. We are very blessed to have these wonderful musicians to help lead our singing or provide a song, an anthem or hymn for meditation.

“Next to the Word of God, the noble art of music is the greatest treasure in the world.” Martin Luther

Christopher Malueg
Director of Music

CARE OF CREATION COMMITTEE

Members - Dawn Bolstad, Kelsy Boyd, Ginny Dodson, Wes Licht, Barbara Voelker, Diane Wells

Our mission is to increase awareness of God's love for all of creation and recognize our call to participate in the care of His creation.

Last August we once again held our campfire/sing along. It was a beautiful night to sit around the campfire while we sang hymns, campfire songs and just plain fun songs led by a great group of musicians. Thanks to Chris Malueg we even had song books to help with the words of unfamiliar tunes. For the first time we held the Blessing of Pet service during a Saturday evening service in early October. It worked out well with many dogs attending as well as folks bringing photos of pets to be blessed. We thank Pastor Kelli for presiding.

Our community garden is in its ninth year of offering plots for organic gardening. This year we have 5 gardeners using the 20 plots. The COC team uses a portion of the garden space to plant vegetables and flowers that are brought to the McFarland Food Pantry. Last summer we brought in almost a ton of produce. The flowers from the garden space and prairies are always appreciated by the patrons according to the Pantry volunteers. We also hold the "Garden Market" during the summer where the congregation is welcome to bring in produce that others may be able to use. Any free will donations are given to the McFarland Food Pantry. We have maintained the rain barrels and compost bin.

The prairies and rain garden areas continue to become more diversified and beautiful. It's wonderful to see birds, dragonflies, butterflies and a multitude of other wild life inhabit the areas. We held a prairie tour last summer of our prairies as well as the prairie at the elementary school.

We continue to make communion wafers from the wheat that we grew several years ago. We still have a supply of wheat that we grind into flour and then use to make the wafers every second weekend of the month. We also have enjoyed working with the First Communion students to make wafers for First Communion Sunday.

GLOBAL MISSION COMMITTEE

The Global Mission Committee seeks to show Christ's love and understanding to others throughout the world. We do this in a number of different ways, with some of our projects described below. Our year started with a joint congregation / Puerto Rico youth picnic on July 13 with over 80 attendees from our congregation and several dozen Puerto Rican youth, adult chaperones, and members of Bethel congregation that also support Puerto Rican mission. In addition, our congregation raised \$1425 for the Caribbean Synod to purchase new mattresses for the synod camp where we stay during our Puerto Rican youth mission trips.

For the second year in a row, our biggest projects were support of ministries in Uganda. One of the ministries is a Prayer and Work group led by Pastor Alex which provides microloans to members and improves or provides housing for indigents in the community. This group was raising and selling pigs for a profit, but needed to move to expand the operation. You gave \$2655, which enabled the group to purchase 1 ¼ acre of land for their operation. The Prayer and Work group expressed profound appreciation to our congregation for the gift enabling them to expand their local ministry.

Two batches of pillow case dresses were made by members of our congregation and delivered to Uganda. A huge thank-you to all those who sewed and made so many girls very happy.

As a congregation, this past year we provided mission support to Pastor Brian Palmer. Brian typically teaches in Liberia at the Lay Leader Training Center, but due to the Ebola crisis he was temporarily moved to Cameroon.

Speaking of the Ebola crisis, we supplied \$500 for Ebola relief from the Global Mission budget, and congregational members donated an additional \$350 for Ebola relief. \$200 from the Global mission budget was used to support Chris Olson's trip to Haiti thru Christian Veterinary Mission and Equine Initiative. We also provided tuition assistance for Taines, niece of Pastor Phares from Tanzania. During Lenten services members of the Global Mission team presented ministries in which we are involved, including Puerto Rican mission trips, Pastor Palmer's work in Liberia and Cameroon, Chris Olson's veterinary mission trip to Haiti, Ugandan ministries including Hope-4-Kids and raising funds for piggery. Feedback we received from the congregation was overwhelmingly positive.

Our committee is planning several projects for next year. These include a joint effort with the Faith Formation team to learn about other religions, working with the Coordinator of Youth Ministries on a Puerto Rican mission trip, and continuing efforts with Hope-4-Kids and ministers in Uganda to support their needs. We are also trying to determine how best to support start-up of a Moringa (tree with nutritional value) operation in Uganda.

Current members of the Global Mission Committee are Mike Catterall, Bonnie Dirks, Chris Preston, Jane Blank, Ron Vandeberg, Tom Blau as Council liaison, and Pastor Kelli Schmidt providing pastoral guidance. Please contact one of these committee members if you wish to join this committee or just get more information.

Submitted by Ron Vandeberg – Global Mission Committee chairman

PERSONNEL COMMITTEE

Members: Brock Chalmers (Chairperson), Bill Gross (3rd yr. Council Representative), Sandy Hall (2nd yr. Council President), Brent O'Dell (1st yr. Council Representative), Jane Licht, Jane Blank, Willi Sindermann (CLM Liaison) and Pastor Tim Dean

The Personnel Committee is responsible for securing lay staff to carry out the work of our congregation. We recommend salaries and benefits for all lay staff for approval by MLC Council. We ensure that staffing levels meet the needs of our church and remain within our budget. We also fulfill other responsibilities related to personnel matters. Accomplishments of our committee during this fiscal year include: Selection of an organist to serve the congregation · Ensured that performance evaluations were completed for all lay staff · Worked on revising and updating the MLC Employee Handbook to ensure benefits are equitable for all employees and that all policies are clearly stated · Recognized birthdays and special anniversaries for all staff · Recommended a wage increase for lay staff for 2015 – 2016 fiscal year. We are working to fill the vacant CLM administrator position.

Brock Chalmers, Chairperson

PROPERTIES COMMITTEE

The members of the committee are: Ken Brost (Lead Custodian), Dick Kohl, Jim Miller – resigned 2015, Vicki Holten, Bill Alber, Joe Schwartz (Council Liaison), Diane Wells – joined 2015. Susan Brodd (Chairperson). We wish to extend a huge thank you for the years of service to this committee by Jim Miller.

The size of the church property (inside and out) and the tremendous use of the property and grounds would not be possible without the dedication of the staff at MLC, CLM and the numerous volunteers. These volunteers tend the many flower beds (and indoor plants), the Boy Scouts and Care of Creation ministry take great care of the grounds keeping projects. The custodial staff and Properties Committee members wish to personally thank each and every one of you who help to set up/take down chairs, mow the lawn, shovel the snow, paint, clean, mulch around buildings, opening and closing the building and maintaining the cleanliness of the building. We also wish to thank the custodial staff: Ken, Dick and Sharon as they go about caring for the building and the people who are requesting assistance. We believe many members made numerous contributions that go unseen (such as when repairs were needed) and with the addition of the new sanctuary. We wish to thank Pastor Tim and Pastor Kelli and the MLC Church Council for all their assistance, communication and patience with maintaining the grounds and the building.

Tom Showers assisted this committee by taking on the challenge of all the heating and cooling for MLC: repairs, replacement, contracts and he physically used his tools to make many repairs and he was excellent at communicating time lines for all staff so that no programming was interrupted. Thank you for all that you have done!

We stayed within the funds budgeted for this fiscal year. The highlighted maintenance issues dealt with this year include: broken window, roof water runoff, new boiler, new HVAC, striping the parking lot (Thank you Chris L.) Purchased a new snow blower.

All are welcome to join us. We meet on the second Monday of the month at 6:30 pm. We do not have a meeting in July nor December.

Any person with a concern about the church property, safety issue or just to notify of a potential problem is encouraged to speak with a committee member or a custodial staff person.

Respectfully Submitted,
Susan Brodd, Chairperson

WORSHIP AND MUSIC COMMITTEE

The Worship and Music Planning team had a busy year dealing with the many factors involved in moving the contemporary service from the Family Life Center to the new Worship Center; eliminating one traditional worship service; changing the time of the contemporary service; and adapting to the new Worship Center.

A great deal of energy went into discerning the best way to present to the congregation the changing approaches to worship as we adjusted to the new space. Prayer and patience were the order of the days and weeks as we implemented change after change. There were listening sessions and surveys to which a remarkable number of you, our members, responded providing direction for the congregation leadership. Almost all communications from the congregation, written and oral, were positive in tone, including when there was difference of opinion.

Responding to the information gathered from the listening sessions and surveys, the Worship and Music Planning Team recommended to the Congregation Council to change the worship time for the contemporary service from 10:30 - 11:30 to 10:00 - 11:00. The Council approved the recommendation which will go into effect on the first Sunday of August, 2015.

Blessings abound!

Len Lane, for the committee

Team Members: Pastor Tim Dean, Carrol Vollmer, Daryl Rupnow, Deb Nygaard, Bonnie Dirks, Keith Voelker, Council Liaison, Marilyn Vandeberg, Len Lane, Chair

ELIZABETH CIRCLE

The Elizabeth Circle meets the second Tuesday of the month at 1:00 p.m. from March through December at members' homes. We have been using the Bible studies found in the "Gather" women's magazine.

Our circle annually sets up and decorates the Christmas tree in the sanctuary using Chrismons made and maintained by circle members. Our 21st annual December Bake Sale raised \$1,146 for the McFarland Food Pantry with Thrivent contributing \$1,000 in matching funds. We also collected additional funds for Skaalen in our "Change for Skaalen" cup at the bake sale. During this last year, we have continued to contribute funds to Shared Table along with providing food and serving.

Our circle members are Thelma Allen, Ginny Dodson, Marian Ellis, Carolyn Gehrke, Mary Grell, Heleen Hayden, Gayle Huston, Janet Knutson, Sandy Larson, Donna Leverentz, Iris Othrow, Barbara Porter-Quam, Judi Strauss, Nancy Vick, Barbara Voelker, Carolyn Wendorf, and Anona Zumstein.