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McFARLAND LUTHERAN CHURCH

**McFarland Lutheran Church
Annual Congregation Meeting
Sunday July 23, 2017
9 am**

Agenda

Call to Order

Devotion and Gathering Song

Attendance Check

Old Business

- Approval of Minutes from July 24, 2016 Annual Meeting

New Business

- Call for Congregational Council Nominees
- Reports from Pastors and Staff
- Treasurer's Report including approval of 2017/2018 Budget

Closing Prayer

Adjourn

SHARE GOD'S WORD | SHOW GOD'S LOVE | SERVE GOD'S WORLD

Report from the Congregational President

"In this the love of God was made manifest among us, that God sent his only Son into the world, so that we might live through him. In this is love, not that we have loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins. Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another."

(1 John 4:9-11)

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

I particularly like this verse from John. This encapsulates what our faith is really based upon. It is a constant reminder that Jesus Christ died for us for all of our human failings. This is a gift and a promise that we will have eternal life after death. Thanks be to God!

Year in Review

As a congregation, we truly had a successful and productive year. McFarland Lutheran has been blessed by the unbounded talents and selflessness of its members. We have so many very positive areas that are prospering. For example, the Bread Delivery ministry has become an integral part of the Welcome Committee. A devoted team continues to work very hard with delivering bread to our visitors who have recently attended a McFarland Lutheran Church service (see the Welcoming Committee article in this report). This is the Welcome Committee's second year as a permanent standing committee of McFarland Lutheran Church.

Thank You

I also would like to thank all the other church committees that perform "inreach" to McFarland Lutheran members and outreach to the broader McFarland and Madison-area communities. They also continue to provide numerous key church functioning decisions. I would like to give a special "shout-out" to our office staff that has kept my required presidential tasks in order and on time.

Council Retreat

The council along with Pastors Tim and Kelli held our annual church council retreat back in January. For this year's retreat, we used the theme "What Are We Seeking?" to help guide us through a discussion about the current and future needs of the church. The council focused on a review of Child Life Ministries (CLM) with the help of Debbie Nygaard and Sara Phelan who were instrumental with some great insight. They both provided crucial insight on how to continue these successful education programs. Finally, we set short and long-term goals for CLM. I have asked the council to continue to review and act upon these mutually identified goals in 2017-18.

150th Anniversary

The taskforce for the 150th church anniversary is providing a plethora of activities. All the special historical talks have been so interesting. Additionally for this special occasion, Pastor Tim has challenged us all to donate 150 minutes of time to a unique cause outside of the church. I look forward to participating in the Habitat for Humanity home build in Fitchburg. 150 minutes is only 2.5 hours, but if 300 members participate, our congregation will have spent 750 hours serving neighbors in our community.

This is my third year and final year of being on the Church Council. Being the president of the council this past year has been humbling and rewarding. I am so thankful for all the committees and programs offered by this congregation. Belonging to MLC is so much more than just worship, and I have been so pleased to see so many members, especially new ones, deeply involved in service and fellowship activities.

I must add, each time I am in the worship space, I continue to be amazed and yet so grateful for this beautiful and multifunctional space. This has worked out so much better than I could ever have imagined. I particularly would like to thank our very gifted Pastors Tim and Kelli, our very talented church staff and CLM teacher staff for a continued job well-done! We are truly blessed to have these special individuals helping this congregation do God's work. Thanks be to God!

Yours in Christ,

Joe Schwartz, Congregational President

Finance Committee Report

The Finance Committee would like to thank all members of the McFarland Lutheran Church for their generous giving of their financial resources this past fiscal year which has enabled us to remain financially secure. We are continually blessed by the generosity of our members in supporting the day to day operations of the Church, but more importantly the activities which enable us to carry out the various missions in sharing God's word, showing God's love and serving God's world. The Finance Committee would also like to thank the members of MLC for the trust placed in the committee members to manage the finances of the Church.

2016/2017 SUMMARY

For the fiscal year just completed (July 1, 2016 – June 30, 2017) total revenue was \$1,266,601. This was \$12,912 less than our budgeted revenue of \$1,279,513.

Actual expenses were \$1,260,900 which was \$18,613 less than our budgeted expenses of \$1,279,513.

Actual expenses were less than actual income resulting in a net income of \$5,702. This income is carried over into the next fiscal year and used for July expenses.

The MLC again contracted with the McFarland School District to provide 4 year old kindergarten classes, one in the morning and one in the afternoon. The classes were funded entirely by the school district. Total revenue received from the school district was \$111,619 while total expenses to operate the classes were \$80,478 resulting in a net income of \$30,141 for the Church.

The Church's operating reserves began and ended the year at \$150,000. The mortgage reserve began and ended the year at \$30,000. (*Thrivent Financial requires that three months of mortgage payment be maintained in reserve.*)

The two mortgages for the remodeled sanctuary totaled \$1,480,638 at the beginning of the fiscal year. The principal balance at the end of the fiscal year was \$1,343,032. Monthly payments for the two mortgages were \$7,833. Capital Campaign funds are used to make the principal payments, and the interest payments are made using general revenue budgeted under the Finance Committee.

Though the Capital Campaign ended (December 2015), some members have chosen, on a regular or periodic basis, to continue to contribute toward the new sanctuary. These contributions are applied each month to further reduce the principal amount of the mortgage. MLC is blessed and thankful for their continued generosity. From July 1, 2016 through June 30, 2017 the principal was reduced \$66,093 by these additional contributions. In February \$50,000 from Capital Campaign savings along with a bequest of \$10,000 from the estate of Corrine Niedenthal were added to the additional contributions received in December and January to make a \$75,000 payment that was directly applied to reducing the principal amount of our mortgage. This payment enabled us to re-amortize our loan and reduce our monthly payment by \$607 to \$7,226. However, we continued to make the same monthly payment as in the past before the reduction, with this savings being applied to further reduce the principal amount of our mortgage each month.

The lower level remodel of the church was completed at a cost of \$192,345 which was more than the contractual amount of \$172,000. This additional cost was covered using funds from our savings account. The additional costs resulted from some unanticipated expenses such as new architectural work required by the Village of McFarland and added work related to the ongoing water seepage issues unrelated to the new construction. We wish to thank Sub-Zero for their generous donation of a refrigerator/freezer, electric cooktop, oven, dishwasher and microwave for the lower level kitchen that was a part of the remodel (as well as a new

refrigerator for the main kitchen), with special thanks to Joe Schwartz who arranged and facilitated this donation.

The building maintenance/repairs savings account started the year at \$19,356. During the year, \$73,503 was added to this account which ended with a balance of \$92,859. Notable expenses incurred during the year included: repair of the Church's steeple bell system at a cost of \$1,500; removal of the broken grease trap in the kitchen for \$2,250; and work to remedy the leak in the lower level (quilt room) at a cost of \$2,946.

2017/2018 BUDGET PROPOSAL

The proposed 2017/2018 budget is \$1,208,703 for the McFarland Lutheran Church and \$105,120 for the 4 year old kindergarten program for a total budget of \$1,313,823. This budget allows MLC to continue all programs and activities we currently have.

The personnel budget for this year reflects a 2% raise for all staff, including the pastors.

Mortgage payments of \$7,226 will be made using a combination of Capital Campaign funds and budgeted revenue. We will continue using the existing Capital Campaign funds to pay the principal of the mortgage payment each month with the interest portion of our monthly payment paid using general revenue budgeted under the Finance Committee. In addition, the \$607 saved from re-amortization of our mortgage loan will continue to be paid and applied directly to further reduce the principal amount of our mortgage. Any new contributions identified as "Capital Campaign" or Building Fund" will continue, along with the mortgage savings, to be used to further reduce the principal. We should be mindful of the fact that one of the two notes of our mortgage is for a 7 year term with an interest rate adjustment to be made in 2021. Thus, it is important that we pay down the principal of this note as much as possible before that rate adjustment goes into effect.

It is anticipated that funds from the building maintenance/repair savings account will be used add security doors for CLM, to upgrade CLM lavatories, and reseal the parking lots. This account will also be used for any large unexpected expenses that may occur during the year. To the extent funds are available during the 2017/2018 fiscal year, additional money will be deposited into this savings account for future fiscal year projects. Future projects include, among other things, replacing the kitchen flooring and replacing the carpet in the gathering space/narthex, hallway and possibly the Family Life Center.

The Finance Committee would like to thank the many committees and ministry teams of McFarland Lutheran Church for their work in putting together next fiscal year's budget. Their thoughtful deliberations and considerations helped to make possible another balanced budget for next fiscal year. Special thanks to Susan Brodd and the Properties Committee, and to Sara Phelan and Deb Nygaard of CLM.

On a personal note I'd like to thank Cheryl Scharine (past MLC Treasurer) and all Finance Committee members for their assistance and encouragement as I took over as Treasurer. I would especially like to thank Rita Jenkins for her boundless patience and understanding as well as her tutelage in answering my endless questions about the bills, budget and accounting to help me understand the finances of the Church. I would also like to thank Pastor Tim for his guidance and support, as well as that of the Church Council this past year.

Brent Odell

MLC Treasurer and Finance Committee Chair

Committee Members: Mike Devine; Jeff Gehrke; Cheryl Scharine; Tom Wellman; Pastor Tim Dean (ex-officio); and Rita Jenkins (ex-officio)



MLC ANNUAL CONGREGATION MEETING – MINUTES

July 24, 2016

11:15 am, McFarland Lutheran Church

Snacks and beverages were provided by the MLC Council members and MLC Hospitality Team.

Meeting was called to order at 11:25 am by Sandy Hall, Pres.

Devotion: Pastor Tim led us in devotion and prayer.

Gathering Song: Chris Malueg led us in the song, “What a Fellowship, What a Joy Divine, Leaning on the Everlasting Arms.”

Attendance Check: 85 church members were in attendance. A quorum was verified.

Old Business: The July 26, 2015, annual meeting minutes were approved. **Motion to approve: Jeff Gehrke, seconded: Linda Othrow. Motion passed.**

New Business:

-Approval of By-Law Revisions: Brent Odell gave a brief summary of the By-laws revisions. The By-laws needed to be updated to match the required sections in the church constitution, reflect current practices in the Church, and improve the clarity and guidance to implement church policies. 12 of the 18 chapters in the constitution are required by the ELCA. We can be flexible in how we implement the requirements as long as we do not change the requirements. Brent explained a couple of the changes in the By-laws and the Continuing Resolution. **Len Lane made a Motion to approve the By-laws, seconded by Betty Showers. Motion passed.** Thank you, Brent Odell, for all your hard work on this project! John Berg mentioned how much work Brent put into this project and how everyone appreciated it.

-Call for Congregational Council Nominees: Amanda Gevens is stepping down from council and Norma Kohl will fill her term on Council. Sandy Hall, Pres., Deb Alber, Sec., Keith Voelker, and Tom Blau have finished their 3 year terms on council. Sandy Hall, Pres., presented the nominees for Church Council to the membership: Randall Hansen, Sharon Mylrea, Steve Schoch, and Diane Wells. No other nominees were offered from the floor. **Bill Langley motioned to approve the new Council members, seconded by Jeff Gehrke. Motion passed.**

Pastor Tim requested all Council members to attend a brief meeting following the annual meeting in Room 210.

-Reports: Staff updated or highlighted key aspects of their complete written reports published in the annual report.

Pastor Tim Dean: Pastor Tim said working with the members of this Church is a blessing! He thanked everyone for all they do! He is excited about the 150th anniversary of MLC! The theme is “Renewed in Christ to Serve: 150 years of God’s Grace in Action.” MLC started on the corner of Holscher and Broadhead in a log cabin. A large celebration event will take place on Oct. 29, 2017, Reformation Sunday with one service at 9 am followed by a brunch and program in the FLC. Bishop Mary Froiland will be the guest preacher. Ron Larson is helping to contact former pastors and their families to be part of the event. All members will be asked to serve in some capacity outside the congregation such as helping to build a house for Habitat for Humanity. Ron Vandeberg is organizing a pre-anniversary event, a bus trip to the Minneapolis Institute of Arts on Nov. 12-13, 2016. “Martin Luther: Art and Reformation” will be on display which is partially sponsored by Thrivent. Pastor Tim is grateful to the leadership of the congregation. He thanked Sandy Hall, Pres., Carol Munch, Vice Pres, Deb Alber, Sec. and Cheryl Scharine, Treas. for their leadership as officers on Council. He is also thankful for the growing congregation and outreach programs.

Pastor Kelli Schmit: Pastor Kelli said who we are and what we do start in worship. She enjoyed the annual reports and helping with all the ministries. It is a joy to work with all the members! She is excited about what the next 12 months will bring. Pastor Tim and Pastor Kelli discussed changing the age of First Communion from 5th grade to 2nd grade with the Council. The decision was to change to 2nd grade. The plan is in the fall, 2016, 4th and 5th graders will attend first communion classes, in the spring, 2017, 2nd and 3rd graders will be invited to attend classes, and spring, 2018, 2nd graders will be the advertised age for first

communion class. She is very excited about the change! She said the MLC staff provides good support, cooperation, flexibility and laughter. Thank you for your encouragement and help!

Lay Ministries and Adult Education Report: Huldah Ellestad thanked and felt very blessed for all the people that are part of the church ministries. She mentioned 2 items not in the annual report: A new ministry, Lutherans United Assisting after Disaster (LUAD), who responded to a disaster in Stoughton this year and the MLC library in the basement. Carolyn Grede has put the library back together after the renovation. She has created a wish list on Amazon for the MLC library. Book donations for the library can be made through this list.

Youth Ministries Report: Chris Landerud said this year has been eventful. 24 people went on the Puerto Rico Mission Trip. Almost half were youth. 15 students attended Pine Lake camp for a week. 14 students attend the HS Summer Festival Gathering in Minnesota. He thanked the Wolff, Damon and Slattery families for their generous donations providing the money so students could attend these events. The renovation in the basement is going to be a wonderful resource for the youth, quilters, banner ministry and music ministries. It is over 5000 sq. feet. He thanked all the parents, high school students, college students and retirees for their leadership with the youth.

Pastor Tim thanked Chris for his help as an architect in the basement renovation! He also thanked Joe Schwartz and Mark Winter for their help in the renovation. On Rally Day, Sept. 11, 2016, members will be able to tour the finished basement and the library as part of Open House.

CLM Report: Deb Nygaard filled in for Sara Phelan. Deb thanked all the volunteers that helped replace the **deteriorated** playground equipment with new equipment! She also thanked Pastor Kelli, Pastor Tim, Chris Landerud, and Huldah Ellestad for helping with CLM worship 4-5 times a week! Thank you to Chris Malueg for filling in at the last minute to help with a CLM program! CLM also would not be able to function without the help of Dick Kohl, Ken Brost, and Sharon Strattan in their maintenance of the Church. Thank you! Thank you to Dennis Knutson for help with the CLM computers and the congregation for their support! This year CLM enrollment is the largest it has ever been with a long waiting list. She is proud of the CLM staff!

Music Ministries: Chris Malueg thanked all the volunteers for the Music Ministries! There are over 60 volunteers. He enjoys working with the MLC staff. He thanked Chris Landerud for helping to create a beautiful music area in the basement. Several music events are planned for the 150th Anniversary year. He asked members to please fill out the MLC music interest surveys. There is no obligation associated with the survey. He needs members to help whenever they can. He thanked everyone again for their commitment to the music ministries!

Sandy Hall, Pres. thanked all the committee chairs who wrote annual reports.

Treasurer's Report including approval of 2016-2017 budget: Cheryl Scharine presented some of the highlights of the budget. Expenses exceeded income last year by \$797.00. The budget for next year is increased by \$104,000.00. This is largely due to an increase in students in CLM. The increase in the income from CLM should cover the increase in the budget. There is a typo in the financial report on page 5. In paragraph 5 the mortgage total should be \$1,533,956.10 not \$1,503,956.10. The mortgage is now \$1,480,638.02 due to the regular mortgage payments and additional contributions made by members. Cheryl asked for questions. A member asked what the increase in CLM students is. Deb Nygaard said there are 20-30 more students this year. **Deb Hettrick made a motion to approve the proposed 2016-2017 Church budget, seconded by Sarah Schutt. Motion passed.**

Pastor Tim thanked the outgoing Church council members for their service: Sandy Hall, Pres., Deb Alber, Sec. Cheryl Scharine, Treas., Tom Blau, and Keith Voelker. Pastor Tim and Pastor Kelli presented each of them with a book relating to the unique spiritual gifts of each person.

Pastor Kelli led us in a closing prayer.

Meeting was adjourned at 12:30 pm.

Respectfully submitted by: Deb Alber, Sec.

MCFARLAND LUTHERAN CHURCH COUNCIL

Members completing their Council term:

Carol Munch Brent Odell
Dave Nelson Joe Schwartz

Members beginning their 3rd year:

John Berg Tiffany Kvalheim
Norma Kohl Lee Thorson

Members beginning their 2nd year:

Randall Hansen Sharon Mylrea
Steve Schoch Diane Wells

PASTORAL ACTS 1/1/2016 - 12/31/2016

Based on ELCA Parochial Report year ending December 31, 2016

	<u>Baptized</u>
Baptized Members at the End of 2016	2248
Baptisms	21
Members Received	49
Confirmation Class (22)	
Transferred in / Reinstated	2
From other sources and statistical adjustment	10
Deaths	8
Transferred out / Removed	3
Statistical Adjustment	22
Baptized Members at the End of December 2016	2297



MCFARLAND
LUTHERAN CHURCH

SHARE | SHOW | SERVE

Senior Pastor

“But God, who is rich in mercy, out of the great love with which he loved us even when we were dead through our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ—by grace you have been saved.” (Ephesians 2:4-5)

The simple truth is that we are saved by God’s grace, not by our own virtue, righteousness, or good deeds. This is the truth that Martin Luther recognized after wrestling with the Scriptures, theology, and his own experience in 1517. God reaches us with a steadfast love that is deeper and stronger than we can ever imagine! Even though we struggle with sin and brokenness in all its forms, God continues to enter our world and sets us free to live in the love of Jesus Christ.

We first receive this grace in the “living waters” of Holy Baptism (see John 4). We are reborn through water and the Word as God’s children—sealed by the Holy Spirit and marked with the cross of Christ forever. Throughout our lives, throughout our faith journeys, we are refreshed and renewed with this life-giving water. Through this congregation, through the mission God has given us, we offer this life-enhancing grace for all people.

Renewed in Christ to Serve

It has been a wonderful year of life and work at McFarland Lutheran Church! I have been energized as our faith community remembers and celebrates our 150th anniversary with the theme “Renewed in Christ to Serve: 150 Years of God’s Grace in Action.” I have enjoyed seeing the pictures, hearing the stories and giving thanks for our spiritual ancestors, as our congregation has grown from its humble origins in a log cabin on the corner of Broadhead and Holscher.

The emphasis in our anniversary year is to serve our neighbors outside of our walls, and the Anniversary Task Force is encouraging each member of our congregation to spend 150 minutes of service in ministries that reach people in need. Serving is central to our baptismal calling. In baptism, God calls us to “serve all people, following the example of Jesus, and to strive for justice and peace in all the earth” (Affirmation of Baptism, *Evangelical Lutheran Worship* hymnal, p. 236).

The “cornerstone” servant event of the anniversary year is our Habitat for Humanity Faith Build in Fitchburg, which we officially kicked off with a May 13 house blessing. We are building a home with owner Rosario Odegard (and her son Grant), and 5 other congregations (2 other Lutheran, and 3 Methodist).

Please sign up for our congregational work days this summer and early fall! The sign-up process through Habitat is easy, and the links have been put on our website, Facebook page, and in the newsletter. A special thank you to Ron Vandeberg, who is serving as our MLC coordinator for the Habitat build!

Other serving opportunities abound! There is an updated sheet with opportunities on the glass table in the Gathering Space. I give thanks to the Spirit for empowering our community to use our gifts for the well-being of neighbors—both local and across the globe!

The other anniversary highlight for me was the Drawn to the Word worship on May 7, “Living Waters of Grace.” It was a memorable experience of worship with artist and Lutheran pastor, Paul Oman. The painting has now been mounted on the wall near our baptismal font—to remind us that the ever-flowing waters of Christ’s grace surround us as we go forward together in mission.

Faith formation has also been a highlight for me this year. In our baptism, God calls us to make disciples, and a prominent way we do this at MLC is through our Sunday morning Faith Formation ministries. From age 3 to adult, we engage God’s living Word in the bible, and how we are to embody and live out God’s way of light and life. I have enjoyed the opportunity to teach several of the Adult Faith Formation classes, especially the Reformation, Paul’s Letter to the Romans, Lutheran-Roman Catholic ecumenical dialogue, and Luther’s Small Catechism as part of our 150th anniversary year.

Thank you to the Adult Faith Formation Committee, for their work in scheduling topics for the class. Thank you also to Aaron and Amanda Geisinger, for leading the “Face Time” class for parents with young children. Parenting is a calling that also springs out of baptism, and provides many moments for spiritual renewal and faith growth.

God's Grace in Action

As we look ahead to the rest of our 150th anniversary year, one of the keynote events will be taking place on Reformation Sunday, October 29, 2017. We will have one service at 9 a.m. this day, and it will be a festive worship to celebrate not only the heritage of the Reformation, but also our 150th anniversary as a congregation! We are blessed to have Bishop Mary Froiland with us that day to preach! Following the worship service, the Anniversary Task Force is putting together a brunch in the Family Life Center, with a special program featuring former pastors of MLC. It promises to be a grand celebration!

The rest of the anniversary year will feature a "birthday party" for Martin Luther in November. (He was born on November 10, 1483.) We will also be dedicating the archives.

The Anniversary Task Force has worked very hard on a number of events and ministries, and I am so grateful for their partnership in celebrating this 150th year. Those serving on the task force are: Sheri Gehrke, Ron Larson, Renee Rodeck, Gudrun Sindermann, Donna Thompson, Ron Vandeberg and Keith Voelker. Many thanks to all of them for the gifts of time, energy and dedication they have shared!

Of course, the anniversary is not just about looking back, but also asking God to continue to bless us as we move forward together in mission. The Risen Christ calls us to make disciples and teach in new ways, and promises to be with us in our future (see Matthew 28:16-20).

The Church Council has started looking into developing a new strategic plan for MLC for the next several years. It is time again for us to enter a discernment process by asking, "How is God calling us to be and serve in ministry in the future?" The last strategic planning process we undertook was in 2010, and this eventually led to the "Called to Grow" Capital Campaign and the construction of the new Sanctuary.

This type of visioning process energizes me! I think we have some wonderful outreach ministries, such as our Child Life Ministries (CLM) preschool, our Bread Ministry, and our Habitat Faith Build, upon which we can build. We have a number of families of diverse ages and backgrounds who are moving near our church. How can we meet our neighbors in McFarland, Madison and other parts of Dane County? How can we engage our neighbors in relationships of support and care, and together share the love of God in Christ?

In the next year, I am also hoping to start a small-group ministry here at MLC called "Unbinding the Gospel." Recently, I had a chance to hear of two nearby ELCA congregations who have initiated this ministry, and are very excited about it. At its heart, "Unbinding the Gospel" is an opportunity for faith formation in small groups, as members learn to share their faith journeys with prayer, Scripture, and conversation.

God's Grace through People

I believe that God's grace is embodied through people who support and encourage us in Christian community and in our various calls to ministry. Over and over, I have experienced God's renewing grace in the staff, leaders and people of the body of Christ at MLC. As Paul writes in Philipians, "I thank my God every time I remember you!" (1:3)

The office staff continues to be anchored by Rita Jenkins in her 27th year! Rita brings an amazing stability and a willingness to support the mission of MLC in her Office Manager role. We wished Shelley Nerothin "farewell and godspeed" in February, and then hired Parker Vander Ploeg in March to serve as Administrative Assistant. Parker has brought new gifts to this position, and the staff enjoys her warmth, presence and style in the front office.

I am grateful for the dedication of our Lead Custodian, Ken Brost, and our two other Part-time Custodians, Dick Kohl and Sharron Strattan. They are incredibly helpful, go about their tasks in a cheerful way, and see their work as a ministry to support the work of the congregation. I love that!

CLM Administrator Sara Phelan provides excellent, dedicated leadership for our CLM ministry, along with CLM Program Director Deb Nygaard, and all the CLM staff. The CLM staff and teachers provide Christ-centered care and love for all the children and families who come through our doors. Everyone enjoys all the "joyful noises" that float through our rooms and halls during the week!

Our Director of Music, Chris Malueg, leads our music ministries with passion, spirit, and great care. I am thankful for his leadership in leading our praise of God in song. Our organist and pianist, Jeff Rowley, has been with us for almost 2 years, and we are blessed with his gifts to support all of our worship services. A special thank-you to Jeff for his anniversary organ recital on Pentecost Sunday, June 4!

Chris Landerud, our Youth Ministries Coordinator, is a gift to our staff and congregation, as he coordinates many ministries involving confirmation and high school youth. I especially give thanks for his leadership and empowerment of confirmation students during our Advent and Lenten Wednesday worship services.

In addition, our Coordinator of Lay Ministry and Adult Education, Huldah Ellestad, enhances our congregational life in ways that I cannot even begin to count! She helps to coordinate the Befriender Ministry, arranges the New Member Classes, and provides gospel-centered leadership for our Adult Faith Formation Classes—among many other tasks! She also regularly shares her gifts of discernment and prayer with the staff and congregation.

Finally, I continue to be thankful for sharing the pastoral office with Associate Pastor Kelli Schmit, who is approaching a 5-year milestone (2012) for being called to ordained ministry here at MLC. I am happy that she could be on maternity leave with her newborn son, Theo, and also happy that she is back! Besides her gifts for preaching, presiding and teaching, we are blessed by her organization, attention to details, and pastoral care skills. Thank you, Holy Spirit, for Pastor Kelli's first 5 years in Word and Sacrament ministry here at MLC!

We are also blessed with a healthy, thoughtful and caring Church Council! This year our congregation has been led by four very gifted officers: Joe Schwartz, president; Carol Munch, vice president; Tiffany Kvalheim, secretary; and Brent Odell, treasurer. The ways that they serve—seen and unseen—are truly amazing! Thanks be to God, for the gifts of leadership exercised by officers, council members, and many faithful people on committees and ministry teams!

As we celebrate our 150th anniversary year, I see the promise of Christ's grace renewing, uplifting, and empowering us to serve in familiar ways and along new paths. We are being made alive in Christ as we share God's Word, show God's love, and serve God's world. Thanks be to God, for the indescribable gift of grace in Jesus Christ!

In God's amazing grace,
Pastor Tim

Associate Pastor

“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it.” (John 1:1-5 NRSV)

“Again Jesus spoke to them, saying, ‘I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness but will have the light of life.’” (John 8:12 NRSV)

I love the beginning to the Gospel of John. This is John’s “nativity” scene – the story of Jesus coming into the world. John tells us that Jesus is the Word and in him is life and light. We hear that no matter what darkness we may experience, that the light will not be overcome. Jesus reiterates this himself a number of times throughout the gospel. He is the light of the world.

It is easy to get caught up in the darkness and negativity in the world. I love that Jesus stands in direct opposition to what holds us in darkness by bringing us life and light – a light that cannot be overcome. As I think about this past year at McFarland Lutheran, it is easy to witness where the light has shined and where the light has brought forth life.

Where I have seen the light shine...

The Sunday School ministry, through the Family and Children’s Ministry committee, continues to be a strong program. Over 100 students were registered and we had 30+ leaders who either helped every week or who were substitutes willing to fill in where needed. The students explored the stories of Ruth, Jesus stilling a storm, Jesus’ birth, his first sign at a wedding in Cana, his death and resurrection, and the Lord’s Prayer.

In addition to the annual Christmas Program (which is always a hit!), the committee also hosted the 10th Annual Pumpkin Fest! Over 200 people from the community came to MLC to jump in the bounce house, carve pumpkins, play games, try their luck at the cake walk, and enjoy a horse-drawn carriage ride. Pumpkin Fest continues to be a fun afternoon for the whole village.

We had a great week of Vacation Bible School last June with just under 60 kids and 36 helpers. Each year the kids collect an offering. This year they collected items that are not covered by food stamps for the McFarland Food Pantry. With the generous help of the congregation, over 500 items were shared with our neighbors.

The leadership committee can’t express enough appreciation to our great kids, amazing families, and committed leaders. The light of Christ continues to shine through these ministries thanks to the hands and hearts that are dedicated to sharing God’s love with our youngest disciples.

It was a joy to work with the Health and Social Wellness committee. Each month we focused on a different topic; this past year we highlighted themes such as: Alcoholics Anonymous, breast cancer, winter safety, and domestic abuse. Our very own Kristin Hildebrandt led a hands-only CPR training as a part of February’s Heart Month. As a committee we supported the McFarland Police Department’s Christmas program “Shop With A Cop” and coordinated MLC’s participation with the food pantry’s Giving Tree. MLC was responsible for 65 tags and it was incredible to run out of tags again this year! We learned that this program helped over 130 local families. I can see the light of Christ’s life shining through the ministries of this committee.

The light of Christ isn’t limited to ministries with kids or local outreach, but it also shines around the world. MLC’s Global Mission committee was busy again this year! MLC has a strong relationship with a village, Sesera, in Uganda. This committee has been blessed with opportunities to partner with them on various projects for the betterment of their village, and a summary of those projects (including before and after photos) was shared. As I write this, 10 members of MLC are currently in Uganda after an overwhelmingly successful fundraising campaign to build a latrine in Sesera. We all look forward to their safe return and hearing stories about their incredible trip.

The team also partnered with the Elizabeth Circle in December for the annual bake sale. All proceeds were shared with the food pantry, supported Frida Bagonza’s tuition, and given to the synod’s Refugee

Resettlement Mattress fund. I witnessed the light of Christ bring life not only to the members of this committee, but also to the people with whom God has called us to be in partnership.

The Health and Social Wellness committee and the Global Mission committee also teamed up to support the synod's Refugee Resettlement ministry. The teams organized and collected items for nine Welcome Boxes for people new to Dane County. Using a "tag system" like that of the Christmas Giving Tree, we ran out of tags again! See a theme?!? Not only that, but \$300 was raised for new mattresses. I cannot deny how the light of Christ is shining through this congregation's generosity and support, not only for in-house efforts, but also for local and global ministries.

I have the joy and privilege of leading a few of MLC's milestone ministries. After reflection, discussion with Pastor Tim, and the Council's approval, we decided to shift the age of First Communion instruction from 5th grade to 2nd grade. That meant I got to lead the class not only once but twice this year! In November, 30 of our 4th and 5th graders received communion for the first time, and in February 26 students in 2nd and 3rd grade received. The class continues to be great fun and I truly enjoy celebrating the meal of grace and forgiveness with even more of God's disciples. A big thank you to the Care of Creation team for your willingness to help our students make communion wafers for their big weekend!

I also have the privilege of leading a class on the scriptures with our 3rd graders. In October, 10 of our young people received a full NRSV Spark Bible. It's the same translation we use in worship and the same Bible used during Sunday School. Each year I feel the light of Christ around me as I spend time with our great students and families and celebrate these milestones with them.

I definitely see the light of Christ shining through the staff of MLC. I am blessed that God has called me to serve with these fellow disciples. Overlap between ministries is welcomed and offers great opportunity for fun collaboration. I am truly grateful for the camaraderie and sense of community that gathers at our weekly staff meetings. Being called to pastoral ministry comes with particular responsibilities and I am grateful to share the pastoral office with Pastor Tim. His love of scripture, care for the staff, and compassion for MLC's members is evident.

On a personal note, as Michael and I prepare to welcome our first child, we have been blessed by your overwhelming kindness and generosity. We have been "showered" with support by the office staff, CLM leaders, and congregation as a whole. All of your thoughtful comments, emails, and prayers have meant a lot to us. We are blessed that our little one gets to grow up in such a kind and loving congregation. Thank you.

Where I will look for the light to shine...

I have no doubt that the light of Christ will continue to bring life to people throughout the world. There are a few places in particular where I will be looking for Christ's presence. First of all: the amazing events planned throughout this year for MLC's 150th Anniversary. I am excited to see Christ shine through the Habitat for Humanity Faith Build and for the big anniversary worship service in the fall.

I truly enjoyed leading a three-part discussion on the Lord's Prayer with the Adult Faith Formation class last year. I am looking forward to participating in this ministry again in August. As with every effort, the Family and Children's Ministry committee is looking at how we do ministry and support our invaluable leaders. We are continuing to discern how to build upon our strengths and to work toward areas of possible growth. We are thankful for our strong and reliable programs but are always looking for ways that more kids and adult leaders can join in the fun.

Christ reliably and consistently brings light and life to God's people throughout the world. I am amazed to see how far the light of Christ is able to shine through the ministries and people of MLC. Witnessing so much of Christ's life-giving light, and I know I only see a small portion, brings me hope for both the present and the future of the world. I trust that any darkness will always be overcome by the light of Christ, which is the light of all people.

Basking in the light with you,

Pastor Kelli

Coordinator of Lay Ministry & Adult Education

“The apostles returned to Jesus from their ministry tour and told him all they had done and taught.” (Mark 6:30 NLT)

Just prior to their return from ministry and their report to Jesus, John the Baptist had been be-headed. Just after, Jesus and his disciples seek a quiet place to rest; instead, they encounter a crowd of 5000 needy people. He could have sent the people away, but he teaches them and tells his disciples to feed them. When the disciples have no idea how to feed so many, Jesus tells them what to gather, then provides bread and fish for all.

Just so, Jesus sends us out to minister, and to teach by example. When we fear our resources are inadequate, we turn to our Lord, and what we need is provided.

There are so many examples of people doing ministry here at MLC. Thank you for your ministry: Befrienders; Faith Formation committee, facilitators & participants; Facetime leaders and participants; New Member Sponsors and new members; Nursery care givers; Hospitality providers; Worship Assistants and all who serve through Time & Talent; Home Communion providers; Prayer Shawl and baby blanket makers; MLC library workers; In-reach & outreach committee members and the Bread Ministry participants. Those mentioned here are only a portion of the ministries that exemplify how the people of MLC respond, in love, to God.

I'd like to take a moment to highlight just a few of these ministries:

The Befrienders have continued to generously donate their time, and other resources, to people inside and outside MLC walls. Thank you for being a powerful expression of Jesus' love in this community!

Faith Formation is happening here at MLC in many ways and on many occasions. People meet to read scripture, to discuss life matters, and to deepen relationships with God and with each other. On Sunday mornings at 9:15, FaceTime provides parents of minor children the opportunity to connect and talk about faith and parenting. This past year, Faith Formation Committee organized a wide variety of opportunities for adults including “Luther’s Life & the Reformation,” a study on “Romans,” “Music & Scripture of Advent,” DVD sessions on “Death & Resurrection,” and an exploration of the Small Catechism. Next September, upcoming topics include: Reformation history, a look at the Large Catechism, a special advent devotion series, and more.

Under the care of a paid staff person, and many gifted volunteers, the nursery is a safe and loving environment for children while their parents/guardians worship or attend Faith Formation. Please thank Elisabeth Klumpyán and include her in your prayers as she heads off to college. We have been blessed by Elisabeth and by the many volunteers who steadfastly staff the nursery and care for the children. MLC seeks someone to take on the position of Paid Nursery Attendant as we head into fall.

91 people participated in New Member orientations this year. Please extend a warm welcome to them and give thanks for their spiritual gifts as we join in ministry together.

Having been blessed to witness many congregational ministries and events, I give thanks for you and your faithful love-filled service. Next year will be a year of ongoing ministry and new possibilities. It will be a year of deepening relationships and strengthening ties both within our faith community and out in the wider community.

May God’s Holy Spirit inspire us, lead us, and guide us as we follow our Lord in thoughts, words, and deeds!

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 Confirmation 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 takes place in 7th & 8th grade. Confirmation prepares individuals to willingly be received as members.

Highlights of the Confirmation Program over the past year include:

- Sunday classes led by Chris Landerud, Pastor Tim, Pastor Kelli, & Lee Thorson
- Weekly Wednesday events that include hands-on classes, projects, and games
- Advent & Lenten Wednesday worship sermon participation and worship assistants (ushers, communion assistants, AV operators, and lectors)
- Synod Confirmation Extravaganza Event (Bethel Lutheran Church)
- Winter Break & Summer Break 'Faith Talks' with confirmation students
- Shared Table Hosts (tailgate themed grill-out dinners)
- As part of our 150th anniversary, students conducted intergenerational interviews
- Crossways Pine Lake Summer Confirmation Camp Experience (Waupaca, WI)

Youth Group – High School Ministries Our 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; 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
- HS Summer Festival Gathering (Gustavus Adolphus College – St. Peter, MN)
- Volunteer leaders for Vacation Bible School
- Volunteer team served an Easter dinner meal at the Ronald McDonald House
- A team of students helped assemble the new CLM playground equipment
- Youth participation in the 1st Annual MLC Talent Show
- Students supported the December bake sale by making lefse & Rømmegrøt
- Students serve as worship assistants and operate the AV equipment
- Cascade Ski & Snowboarding Event in partnership with Christ the King Church
- Baccalaureate Service (in partnership with Christ the King Church and the UCC)
- Youth Group fall kick-off campfire event

We have lots to celebrate and give thanks for over the past year. One of the highlights was moving into our newly renovated youth space downstairs. Equipped with large classrooms, new AV equipment, a wonderful kitchen, and space for our youth to call their own, we are able to more effectively host our many youth ministry activities. We continue to make this space our own and we appreciate having this space to gather.

The growth of our youth ministries and community is worth 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. With great excitement, I look forward to shaping our youth ministries in the year ahead!

<>< Chris Landerud

Child Life Ministries

We love Jesus! We love our School!

This year was a big year for CLM filled with changes! We are so blessed with such wonderful families we were able GROW and spread our love! We now have two Rainbow Centers! One we call Rainbow Center South (or House) and the other we call Rainbow Center North (or Room). We were able to grow and still stay true to our philosophy and our beliefs of lower ratios so we can truly know our families and children in our care!

This year we were able to welcome over 100 families into Child Life Ministries (CLM) which is an outreach ministry of McFarland Lutheran.

- Mrs. Stube and Mrs. Barnes had 17 children in their Pre-K class this year which is 5 more than last year.
- Mrs. Stube, Mrs. Updike, Mrs. Phelan, and Mrs. Radloff taught 45 three-year children.
- Mrs. Jess and Mrs. Kate enjoyed their 11 children in the Tot Spot class.
- Mrs. Schaaf and Mrs. Miller had 40 4K children this year.
- Mrs. Rachel ended the year with 18 school-age children with the help of Mrs. Baum and Mrs. Kate.
- Mrs. Chris (who moved to the new Rainbow Center North this year) had 14 wrap around care children.
- Mrs. Patricia and Mrs. Tatiana had 10 children at Rainbow Center South for wrap around care.
- Mrs. Baum was the Lunch Bunch teacher again this year with the help of Mrs. Kate. Lunch bunch had another successful year and was full on most days!

Comings and Goings.....Staff changes

With the expansion of the two Rainbow Centers we added Patricia Jackson to the teaching staff. Following the departure of Heather Anderson, we also added Tatiana Brown to the CLM teaching team. In addition, Jessica Moen, Cora Stube and Alex McGraw have been added to our summer school staff.

Thank you to all McFarland Lutheran Church staff for their continued support of our ministry! Thank you to Pastor Kelli, Pastor Tim, Chris Landerud, Huldah Ellestad, Deb Nygaard, and Chris Cole for their help with weekly worship which is at four different times throughout the week. And we cannot forget about Ken Brost and Dick Kohl who are our life-savers when we need something fixed or hung! Sharon Stratton is appreciated as she continues in her weekly custodial position with CLM.

Thank you to all who have given to the tuition assistance fund through personal donation or Thrivent. This year 4 children were able to attend preschool due to these generous donations. This year's Jack Paul Heckel Memorial Scholarship recipient participated in our 3 year old program. This scholarship is funded by the Annual Scrap From My Heart Event, a scrapbook/ card making experience which is usually held the weekend before Valentine's Day.

Thank you to McFarland Lutheran Church for your continued support of this ministry. You've blessed this community with an outstanding program for families and children! Others support the CLM programs by serving on the CLM Board. The function of the board is to help set policies and goals. Thank you to Willi Sindermann, Cindy Splan, Amanda Geisinger, Norma Kohl, Lisa Simpson and Carol Munch for your time and dedication to CLM this past year!

Sara Phelan

Director of Music Ministry

“Beautiful music is the art of the prophets that can calm the agitations of the soul; it is one of the most magnificent and delightful presents God has given us.”

“My heart, which is so full to overflowing, has often been solaced and refreshed by music when sick and weary.”

“As long as we live, there is never enough singing.”

Martin Luther’s words inspire us to proclaim our love of God through music. McFarland Lutheran Church is so full of music and musicians, Martin Luther would be proud! “Thank You!” to all the musicians who fill our sanctuary with beautiful sounds every week! 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
- Saturday Evening Cantors
- Sunday School Children’s Choir
- McFarland Lutheran Wind Ensemble
- Polka Band
- Summer Special Music

There are many musical events throughout the year as well. Our Advent Concert, held during our 10 am service, continues to grow with the inclusion of several musical ensembles and music performed in a blended style. Our Polka Service is always a favorite and expands each year to include more performers and new pieces.

This year was also the kick-off of our First Annual McFarland Lutheran Talent Showcase. And what a remarkable show it was! There were over 40 performers and 20 + acts! It was a beautiful array of varied performances that truly struck at the heart of the wonderful and talented people here at McFarland Lutheran Church! People have already begun talking about what they would like to do next year. Thank you all for sharing your talent and imagination with us! I know I’m looking forward to next year’s Second Annual Showcase!

Unless we have proper sound and visuals, much of our work would not be heard, or seen, very well. I would like to thank our dedicated team of soundboard operators and power point presenters. They are the unseen engineers behind our musical amplification and power point presentations. Each of them has put in extra time as they have learned how to operate our new equipment. Thank you for being there each Saturday and Sunday.

Our 5 pm Saturday evening service now has a regular group of cantors. Each of them give up a few hours Saturday afternoons to provide musical leadership during this service. Thank you for your time, talent, and dedication to strong singing!

This Sesquicentennial Year has afforded us the opportunity to learn more about the musical life here at MLC. Our “Favorite Hymn and Song” sheets have been regularly filling the ballot box. We had over 100 respondents with almost 200 individual hymns and songs listed! Check out the bulletin board for our Top Ten lists. Also, as part of our year-long celebration, we have a Sunday hymn focus, including a brief history of a favorite hymn followed by a Choir performance accompanied by the congregation, or a Bell Choir anthem.

There are several special events still to come, and I encourage you to find a way to participate. Musically, that is very easy! As many of you know (or don’t know!) I have a revolving door policy with the MLC Choir. Many members have conflicts and are gone for rehearsals and performances. But they soon are back again with us as we continue to learn music and perform every other Sunday. And that’s just fine! If you are at all interested in joining us, but know that you will have conflicts occasionally, please try it out!

Rehearsals begin after Labor Day, every Wednesday at 7:30 pm. We had several new singers join us for special events this past winter and spring and I hope to see them again, and many new people, this fall!

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 Ministry

Care of Creation

“Let the heavens be glad, and let the earth rejoice; let the sea roar, and all that fills it; let the field exult, and everything in it. Then shall all the trees of the forest sing for joy.” (Psalm 96:11-12)

The rain garden and prairie areas are once again in bloom this summer. There are so many flowers and grasses that grace the gardens. We continue to see insects, birds and little critters enjoy the blooms. We have also been happy to see the benches near the prairies being used by folks for a relaxing rest. The flowers from these areas are cut and taken to the McFarland Food Pantry to brighten others' lives.

The plots of the “Garden of Eatin’” community garden are full of good things to eat once again. We have 7 gardeners that have filled 21 plots. We actually had more interest than plots available this year. This organic garden has given others the chance to grow their own vegetable and herbs. We have tried to educate and assist the gardeners with how to improve their gardens. The COC team cultivates several of the plots themselves and donates all the produce to the McFarland Food Pantry. Fresh produce and flowers are appreciated by the staff there. Every year we donate hundreds of pounds of produce. The fence around the garden needed some repair this last year. We would like to thank the “mowers” for taking the time to mow inside the garden fence, it is greatly appreciated by all who garden. Each year we also manage a “garden market” in the long hallway where members can donate or take produce for their own use. We maintain the rain barrel and compost bin as well.

We still have some of the original wheat we grew several years ago. We grind and use the flour to make communion wafers for the second Sunday each month. We may have to plant more wheat next year. We were privileged, this past year, to work with Pastor Kelli and the First Communion students twice. We assisted with their instruction and helped them make communion wafers with their families. We always enjoy these Saturday mornings.

Praise be to God for giving us this beautiful earth to care for. We are so happy that MLC supports our activities to care for His creation. Please take a look out behind church and see the rain garden, prairies and community garden.

Members- Dawn Bolstad, Ginny Dodson, Wes Licht, Barb Voelker

Global Mission Committee

The Global Mission Committee seeks to show Christ's love and understanding to others throughout the world. In the past year we saw great growth of our committee and several exciting projects come to fruition. Of course all of our activities are possible only because the Holy Spirit is working in all of us to share the many gifts we have been given. Highlights of our activities are described below.

In support of refugees being resettled in our area and with your donations, Global Mission and the Health and Social Wellness committees worked together to gather supplies for 9 kitchen kits and raise \$290 for the synod refugee mattress fund. The refugees getting these supplies are very grateful for your generosity and willingness to make their lives better.

In early December, Global Mission worked with Elizabeth Circle to help put on the annual bake sale. \$1372 was raised, with half of the proceeds going to Elizabeth Circle and half to Global Mission. Global Mission donated our portion of the funds to the synod refugee mattress fund. In 2017 Global Mission will coordinate the entire bake sale. We plan to donate half of the raised funds to the local food pantry and the other half to a cause to be selected each year.

Recently we switched our congregational missionary support from Pastor Palmer in Liberia to Pastor Kirsten Fryer in Cairo, Egypt. Pastor Fryer works at St. Andrews Refugee Services (StARS) in Cairo, supporting refugees with everything from basic schooling to legal aid. We look forward to working with StARS and Pastor Kirsten Fryer, showing the face of Christ to those who have so little.

Our biggest activity this year was raising funds for a latrine in Sesera, Uganda and the associated mission trip coordinated with Hope-4-Kids. Ten people from our congregation went to Uganda, including 5 from the Global Mission Committee.

With your generous support, \$7080 was raised for Ugandan ministries and dispensed as follows: \$2368 for land for the latrine, \$3000 for construction of a 3 stall latrine and shower area expected to last 15 to 20 years, \$1512 for famine relief, and \$200 (plus \$241.68 from GM budget) for Pastor Peter Obbo to complete the floors and walls of his home.

The mission trip deeply touched all who traveled, with activities including well dedications, attending church services, dress-a-girl, medical outreach and supply donations, foot washing of widowed women, helping paint Sesera church and latrine, learning first-hand about the Moringa plant and leaf powder production and how its nutritional value can improve lives, visiting schools and meeting sponsored children, and meeting Pastor Ruth and seeing the great ministry she runs called Smile Africa.

We also provided some tuition assistance for Frida Bagonza from Tanzania, who is getting her Master's Degree in Finance from St. Teresa College in St. Paul.

Current members of the Global Mission committee are Mike Catterall, Bonnie Dirks, Chris Preston, Jane Blank, Pete Ellestad, Janine O'Rourke, Wayne Corey, Beth Gilpin, Ron Vandeberg, Randy Hansen as council liaison, and Pastor Kelli Schmidt providing pastoral guidance. We typically meet the 2nd Monday of each month. Please contact one of the committee members if you wish to get more information or join us.

Submitted by Ron Vandeberg – Global Mission Committee chairman

Properties Committee

The members of the committee are: Ken Brost (Lead Custodian), Dick Kohl, Vicki Holten, Bill Alber (Council Liaison), Diane Wells and Susan Brodd (Chairperson). We begin by thanking all the MLC & CLM staff, congregation members and facility users for caring for the building and the grounds. We are all caretakers of McFarland Lutheran Church and working together brings a sense of community that extends around the world.

The size of the church property and the tremendous use of the property and grounds would not be possible without the dedication of the staff, the numerous volunteers and the many vendors that donate labor, materials and/or take the time to assess needs and provide estimates. Thank you to the leaders of the community that assist with their areas of expertise; such as McFarland Police Department and building inspector. Volunteers that tend the many flower beds, mow the lawns, remove the snow, paint and complete multiple grounds keeping projects (mulching). Opening and closing the building and maintaining the cleanliness of the building. We believe many congregation members made numerous contributions that go unseen. We wish to thank Pastor Tim and Pastor Kelli and the MLC Church Council and office staff for all their assistance, communication and patience to consistently maintain the grounds and the building.

Highlights: Security doors for CLM and bathroom remodel approved using delayed maintenance funds.

We stayed within the funds budgeted for this fiscal year. 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 who wishes to notify us of a potential problem, is encouraged to speak with a committee member or a custodial staff person.

Respectfully Submitted,

Susan Brodd, Chairperson

Elizabeth Circle

The Elizabeth Circle meets the second Tuesday of the month at 1:00 p.m. from April 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. After 22 years of holding the annual December bake sale, last year we co-sponsored the bake sale with the Global Mission Team. Their group will now assume the bake sale as a fundraiser for their projects. We thank the congregation for their wonderful support of the bake sale benefitting the McFarland Food Pantry. During this past year we have given funds to the Food Pantry and Shared Table. We also provide food and serve at Shared Table twice a year. We have continued to assist Frida Bagonza with living expenses as she nears her goal of earning her master's degree at St. Mary's University of Minnesota in Minneapolis.

Our Circle members are Thelma Allen, Ginny Dodson, Marion 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.

Welcome Committee

This new standing committee has a couple of different components that have been active for almost two years now. The purpose is to do both outreach to our community to promote new membership and “in reach” which includes activities to reach out to existing members who are not actively participating in our faith community. At this point there is the Newcomer Notes Team, the In-Reach Team and the Bread Ministry Team. In its first year (2015) the newly formed Welcome Committee also organized a cook-out on Rally day.

The Newcomer Notes Team sends handwritten invitations to fifty potential visitors each month, drawn from a monthly new resident list purchased by MLC for \$12.50/month to receive. This added up to about 600 invitations sent during the last year. Unfortunately, there is not a good way of measuring how many visitors who received an invite actually acted on it.

During this last year, church members who have not attended for quite a while were also contacted in a similar manner to that done by the Newcomer Notes Team. About 300 invitations were sent to absent members during two Easter "campaigns," as well as nearly 100 invitations for last Christmas. Nearly 20% of those invited to our last Christmas worship attended Christmas Eve or Christmas Day. But both Easter campaigns were much less successful. However, the committee feels that if even one member becomes active again, the effort is worth it.

The Bread Ministry is a group of thirteen dedicated and energetic ladies who bake and deliver bread to first-time address-sharing visitors. The objective is to convey McFarland Lutheran as a warm and inviting congregation by delivering visitors a loaf of bread (Christ) in a white bag (purity) tied with a red ribbon (blood), preferably the Sunday of their visit. Frequently, the bread arrives before they return home and the recipients are amazed.

New Members join for a variety of and cumulative reasons. The Bread Ministry is one of those cumulative reasons used by the Holy Spirit to show we are a friendly, God-loving community of believers. We hope the gift of bread says, “We care about you.”

Approximately seventy (70%) of the new members, joining McFarland Lutheran from the classes listed below, received bread. It’s estimated that approximately 35 to 40 loaves of bread were delivered during the past year.

Date Received into Membership	# of Families Joining	# Joining Received Bread	% Joining Who Received Bread
10/23/16	13	8	61.5%
1/29/17	9	6	66.7%
5/21/17	11	9	81.8 %
TOTAL	33	23	69.7%

This ministry’s success is only possible by the Holy Spirit working through the dedication of the members of this team: Ginny Dodson, Linda Ellestad, Jacqui Landerud, Carol Munch, Barbara Porter-Quam, Angela Schwartz, Betty Showers, Marilee Thoresen, Barbara Voelker, Carrol Vollmer, Deb Wellman, and Carri Wolff.

This report was compiled from contributions from Brian Rodeck, Sandy Franklin and Sandy Hall.