



the little church with a big heart!

Gloria Dei Lutheran Church

5872 E. Naples Plaza, Long Beach, CA 90803

VOLUME 61

JANUARY, 2023
ANNUAL REPORT ISSUE

NUMBER 1

THE ANNUAL BUSINESS MEETING OF THE CONGREGATION will be held on Sunday, January 22, 2023, following our 10:00 a.m. worship service. We ask every member to study the report and be present for the annual meeting.

MINUTES – CONGREGATIONAL MEETING – January 23, 2022

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order by President Karen Como at 10:37 am. The meeting was held on Zoom and a quorum was present.

Minutes: It was moved, seconded and carried (MSC) to approve the minutes of the Congregational Meetings of January 24, 2021 and May 16, 2021 as submitted in the Annual Report.

Prayer: Pastor Steve led the attendees in an opening prayer.

2021 Financial Report: Gary Bockman reported on GD's financial condition. There are few areas to make reductions in GD's budget other than Missions. GD's annual contribution to missions has decreased fifty thousand dollars when compared to 2017. In 2021 – 2022, expenses remain stable at \$14,000 to 15,000 per month. Income is projected to be \$190,000 of which \$42,000 is parsonage rent. It was MSC to receive the Annual Financial Report as submitted in the Annual Report.

Spending Plan 2022: Gary Bockman explained the proposed Spending Plan for 2022 and answered questions. After discussion, it was MSC to approve the Spending Plan for 2022 as submitted in the Annual Report.

The President thanked Gary Bockman for his work as Treasurer.

Adjournment: The meeting adjourned at 10:51 am.

Respectfully submitted, Robert Siemer, Secretary

MINUTES – CONGREGATIONAL MEETING – May 15, 2022

Call to Order: A quorum was present. President Karen Como called the meeting to order at 11:18 a.m.

Opening Prayer: Pastor Steve Beckham opened the meeting in prayer.

President, Karen Como began stating there are budget items of business to take care of which requires your vote. Special thanks were given to Gary Bockman for his great work as treasurer. Thanks also went out to Peggy Bockman for her work as editor of *Glorious Dei*, the church's newsletter. Karen announced that Bob Siemer, church secretary, and Stephanie Siemer, our vice-president, are out of town. Karen thanked everyone for being at the meeting, as we have council members to vote on.

Looking at the financials, there is a line item named Kitchen Remodeling -- a fund which has \$3400+. Because the kitchen remodel is over, and the money is specifically designated to that fund, she recommended we move the funds from Kitchen to Property Reserves. Marilyn Bittle moved and it was seconded by Twyla Karkut that we take the money and move it to Property Reserves. During discussions, it was mentioned that we need \$31,000 to go toward the HVAC/Roof Project, a cost of approximately \$71,000. The \$3400+ will help. No other discussions. All moved and it was carried that the funds be moved. There is also \$350 under Don Melin's name in the undesignated funds. The council previously agreed that this money be moved to the Among Us fund. Margie Brown moved, several seconded and it was carried. Requests concerning this fund will go directly to the pastor and kept private.

Karen thanked Bob and Stephanie Siemer for their financial contributions toward the cost to fix up our landscape in front of the church. New plants and ground cover were planted, a dead olive tree was replaced with a young olive tree, and some broken sprinklers and lighting fixtures were replaced.

Karen talked about the LSS Website regarding Noisy Offering. Synod Assembly decided to embrace the idea that all congregations consider having a special Noisy Offering to benefit LSS in Long Beach, Ventura, and Pasadena. Pastor Steve shared that it was Karen who suggested this idea to Bishop Brenda Bos. It will be presented at this coming June's Synod Assembly along with 100 plastic buckets.

We need two representatives to attend the June 11, 2022 Synod Assembly: It was moved, seconded and carried to approve Karen Como and Margie Brown as Gloria Dei's representatives.

Election of Council Members: The President noted that there are 15 seats on the council. Two members will be coming off: Karen Como, who is eligible for re-election, and Stephanie Siemer who has termed out. Marilyn Bittle, Margie Brown,

Karen Como, Vicki Gammer, Sandy Nelson and Beth Rotsel were nominated, however, Sandy declined. The President asked if there were any additional nominations. There was none; nominations were closed. Pr. Steve moved to accept and receive the nominees by acclamation. It was seconded and agreed by all to close nominations and elect each of the five nominees to a three-year term on church council. The President thanked the new council members.

Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 11:37 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Sandy Nelson (in absence of Robert Siemer, Secretary)

COUNCIL PRESIDENT REPORT for 2022, by Karen Como

Except for a few weeks early in 2022 we celebrated worship together in the sanctuary. For the first time in 2 years, Ash Wednesday services were held in our sanctuary and in 2023 we will resume our traditional Soup Supper to begin the season of Lent. Thanks to Bob Siemer and his 'zoom' expertise, worship was provided every Sunday as an option for those unable to attend worship in person. Throughout the year, even with the pandemic, our church family has cared for each other and made an impact on so many less fortunate within our community. Pastor Steve and Sandy Nelson (our in-house cheerleader) ensured and encouraged communication within and for our members to keep us connected and informed. We are so fortunate for their commitment to each of us.

'God's Work. Our Hands!' really sums up 2022 for our church family! Nearly every week throughout the year carloads of clothing, food, medical supplies and household items were delivered to various Mission partners.

LSS: In addition to the clothing and food items, our church family donated monetary support for its annual Easter and Christmas events. Our support provided 69 families a Christmas blessing of 1 week of groceries and gifts for 220 children. Kalani Caldwell organized the 11th annual Thanksgiving canned food run for the swim teams at Long Beach Poly. Each member of the team ran from Poly to LSS's location on Pine Street with a canned good in each hand. An amazing contribution and so meaningful for the participants and recipients! On November 11th our church family was presented with the 2022 H.O.P.E. Award (Help Others Pursue Empowerment) at the Hope Gala sponsored by LSSSC (Lutheran Social Service Southern California). The nomination stated "Gloria Dei Lutheran Church stood out as a leader exhibiting a long-term commitment to the most vulnerable in Southern California exemplifying our motto of - Embrace, Engage and Empower." Sandy Nelson and Twyla Karkut attended the Hope Gala and received this wonderful award.

Fe y Esperanza: In addition to clothing, food and medical supplies, we provided supplies in support of Fe Y Esperanza's Vacation Bible School in June. November was a big month for "turkeys"! The generous donations from our church family

provided 150 turkeys for the annual Fe Y Esperanza farmworkers dinner in Guadalupe, CA. We provided monetary support for the annual Los Posadas Christmastime event.

Maritime Ministry: 32 boxes of hygiene products were donated to Maritime ministry for the seafarers on the cargo ships. We also provided them with warm jackets and knitted caps. Thank you to Twyla Karkut and Nancy Sansum for their donations and to those who made their own boxes.

ELCW: Our small, but mighty group of women, under the direction of Margie Brown, began meeting again and prepared hygiene kits for LSS, bagged rice and beans for LSS and Fe y Esperanza, donated blankets to the Long Beach Police Department, cleaned out the upstairs Sunday School rooms and decorated (and undecorated) our beautiful Christmas tree with our traditional Crismon ornaments. Plus, through their donations, they purchased pigs and chickens in support of ELCA Good Gifts.

Long Beach Men's and Women's Shelter: As the cold weather approached, gently used warm jackets, blankets and new socks were delivered for men, women and children.

South Coast Interfaith Council: Marilyn Bittle participated in the South Coast Interfaith Council Crop-Walk and raised \$495! The 71 walkers raised over \$11,000. The proceeds were shared among several organizations including LSS, the Food Bank and the Church World Services.

Southwest Synod: In June, Margie Brown and I attended the Southwest Synod Assembly, the 'Noisy Offering' concept was launched for all the churches within the Southwest Synod.

In August, Bob Siemer was selected to be a voting member from the Southwest Synod to attend the ELCA Churchwide Assembly in Columbus, Ohio under the theme 'Empower the Word'.

Roof Repairs and HVAC: We are blessed! The rain didn't come until our roof repair was completed, plus – we didn't have any hot or cold weather while we waited for our new HVAC to be installed. And there's more! Because of the generosity of our church family, we achieved our monetary goals for paying the contractors. Thank you for all the contributions and a special thank you to Sandy Nelson for working with the contractors and for coordinating the repairs on the plaster and painting upstairs.

Landscaping: Thank you to Stephanie Siemer for getting the landscaping updates and watering system repaired. Our new olive tree is growing and we are saving water with plants in the median by the curb.

As our Mission Statement declares "We are a congregation of Christian servants dedicated to serve the needs of the local community and the mission of the church". We joyfully share the love of the Lord with those we serve, as we demonstrate 'God's Work Our Hands' all year. Your contributions to Gloria Dei and to our individual mission partners ensure that so many that are in need are cared for. We are a truly blessed family of believers! It's such a blessing to be a member of this church family! Thank you for all your love and support...Karen Como

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE PASTOR for 2022, by Pastor Steve Beckham

Above all, clothe yourselves with love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony. And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in the one body. And be thankful. – Colossians 3:14-15

This is my final report to you as pastor of the Little Church with a Big Heart. I didn't realize how hard it would be to write those words when I sat down at my computer.

In my previous reports over the years I have used this space to recap what we've done in worship and education, and to talk a bit about various dynamics in the congregation, the synod and the culture. In short, I told you what you already knew. I have also in the past used part of this report to give you a glimpse of what might lie ahead for us, at least as far as I could see it or plan it. But Covid isn't done with us and the world is changing rapidly, especially in the church, so this is a time, I think, to focus on one step at a time as the path opens ahead of us.

Here's what I know. I know that the role and place of Church in our country and culture is in sharp decline. That's not necessarily a bad thing. Historically, the Church of Jesus Christ has often been most spiritually centered, most effective, and most true to its mission when it was operating from the margins of society instead of from the centers of power. I firmly believe that God is doing a new thing and that, by the power of the Holy Spirit, the Beloved Community of Christ is already being prepared to emerge in a new form. What that will look like we do not yet know. As the late Ralph Abernathy said, "I don't know what the future holds, but I know who holds the future."

Here's what else I know. I know that this congregation is strong and cohesive in all the ways that matter most. Gloria Dei is easily the most loving, open, generous-hearted congregation we have ever been part of. The love of Christ is a palpable presence here. When I look out at you on Sunday mornings, you glow.

I know, too, that you are in good hands—Christ's hands and each other's. This congregation has long been blessed with a faithful and thoughtful Congregation Council. Over the past few years they have had to make difficult decisions in unprecedented circumstances and they have done so with prayer, calm determination, good will and good humor. Karen Como has been superb as Council President, continuing the tradition of gifted and professional Council Presidents who have gone before her.

One of the things I have admired most about Gloria Dei is the way that the members take ownership of the ministries. I think of Phil and Karen Como making weekly trips to LSS and Fe y Esperanza with all the clothing, financial gifts and other odds and ends to support the work of those ministries. I think of all the quilts Margie Brown and others have put together so the Long Beach Police can provide comfort to kids and others in moments of crisis. I think of Marilyn Bittle keeping us connected with the interfaith community, with the Naples Improvement Association, and with city hall. I think of Twyla Karkut collecting hats and coats and scarves for Maritime Ministries—and all the members who knitted and crocheted those hats and scarves. I think of Bob Siemer who keeps us all Zoom connected and protects us by reading the fine print on all the important documents. I think of Gary Bockman who has balanced the books and kept our finances in good order through thick and thin, and done it all calmly and with a smile. I think of Peggy Bockman who uses her remarkable talents to produce our stellar monthly newsletter, Glorious Dei. And, of course, I think of Sandy Nelson, the best Church Administrative Assistant ever. She does so much behind the scenes to keep things running smoothly and to make sure our facilities stay in good repair. She is the cheerful face and voice of this congregation to our neighbors.

It has been a joy, an honor and a privilege to be your pastor here at the Little Church with a Big Heart.

With much faith in your resilience, much hope for the future Jesus has in store for you, and much love from the bottom of my heart,

Pastor Steve Beckham

WORSHIP COMMITTEE REPORT for 2022, by Phil Como, Chair

Providing a meaningful worship experience each Sunday requires the participation of many in our congregation, as cantor, acolyte, lector, communion preparer, ‘manager’ of the worship monitor, and cameraman.

Thank you to all who have participated in our worship services this past year. When you have a moment, please thank the following for their contributions: Bob Siemer for providing online options for our services and to Karen and Meri – his trusted back-up technicians; to Lark Adams, Meri Beckham, Jonathan Blitzer, Gary Bockman, Margie Brown, Karen Como, Martie Engle, and Stephanie Siemer for your excellent readings and serving as acolytes; to Marilyn and Candy for leading our congregation as cantor.

And a special word of thanks to acknowledge Sandy Nelson for guiding us through our services each Sunday on the monitor and preparing the Order of Worship and Announcements for each Sunday, and to Margie Brown for filling in when Sandy was not available.

Thank you to all who participated in decorating our sanctuary for Advent and the Season of Christmas, enabling these beautiful traditions to continue.

We were blessed by Pastor Steve's continuing work as our instructor in faith and leader of our worship services and for Richard's enrichment of our worship experience through his beautiful organ music and hymn selections for each Sunday.

Blessings to all as we look forward to 2023 and to finding new and unexpected ways to reflect the Christ within us to those we meet.

REPORT OF THE MINISTER OF MUSIC for 2022, by Richard Hoover

It has been with a wonderful feeling of relief that we have been able to return to worship in our sanctuary in the last year. This has enabled us to return to our full liturgy format. We have used Settings 4 and 10 from the hymnbook as well as using the Advent/Christ Carol liturgy as well as the Kildare Liturgy, both created by Pastor Steve. I have also experimented with using verses of hymns for the section of the liturgy where we normally find the *Glory to God in the Highest* or *This Is the Feast of Victory*, commonly known as the "hymn of praise" or "canticle of praise." I have used such hymns as *Joyful*, *Joyful We Adore You*, *We Praise You*, *O God*, and others.

In my duties of selecting hymns I have tried to select appropriate hymns by studying the scripture lessons for the day, thus emphasizing in music what was found that day in the spoken word. I have been making use of hymns by contemporary author Carolyn Winfrey Gillette, a Presbyterian minister and hymn writer. Gillette and her husband Bruce are the pastors of First Presbyterian Union Church in Owego, New York. I find her hymns to be timely and artistic.

My thanks to our Cantors, Marilyn Bittle, Candy Wood, and Phil Como for leading us in the liturgy each Sunday. Special thanks to both Phil Como and Marilyn Bittle for providing Special solos for our Christmas Eve service and at other services. We hope to continue having special music throughout the coming year. It would be an excellent way to introduce some of the hymns and liturgical music in our hymnal that are new but unknown to us.

O Sing Unto the Lord!

Richard L. Hoover

SHEPHERDS COMMITTEE REPORT for 2022, by Stephanie Siemer

Our shepherds act as a support group for our congregants. Shepherds remember birthdays, anniversaries, good times, sad times, and act as an electronic "telephone tree" when needed. Shepherds are expected to pray regularly for their lambs and to be in contact with their lambs so as to be aware of life changing events. An event in the life of a lamb such as illness, hospitalization or death of a family member should be reported to the Church Pastor, church office and the Chairperson of the Shepherds.

Thank you shepherds for your service this past year. We have 10 shepherds; Marilyn Bittle, Margie Brown, Karen Como, Sarah Fuller, Edie Graber, Sandy Nelson, Dianne Keil, Lark Adams, Nancy Sansum and Stephanie Siemer. These shepherds maintain contact with 73 member "lambs" in the church. All members should have been contacted by a shepherd, if you have not and you would like to have a shepherd, please let me know. You can reach me by or my home phone; all in the roster. If you are interested in becoming a shepherd, contact me, we would love to have you with us. We are here for you.....if you want to share something with congregation, let me know and I will let the shepherds do what they do best...keep in touch.

ELCW REPORT OF 2022 ACTIVITIES, by Margie Brown, Chair

Due to a shortened year, courtesy of Covid, we did not do as much as in the past. We meet once a month in the fellowship hall. After a brief meeting, we work on our project for the month. Then we end with sharing sandwiches, salad and dessert. If Pastor is available he leads us with a devotion to inspire us.

We collect an offering and take care of Barbara's Library, another source of funds. We sent money to Lutheran Good gifts to buy baby chicks. We made up hygiene kits for LSS. This means we filled plastic zip bags with toiletries, snacks and other necessities. This was done twice this year.

Two of our members bought supplies for Maritime Ministries boxes. These are delivered to the office in San Pedro and are given to visiting sailors from the ships anchored offshore. We fill the boxes with shampoo, shaving supplies, snacks, pen/paper. One of our group who moved to Florida sent us more hats that she crochets for the sailors. This year we sent 24 boxes.

Filling zip bags with rice and another with beans is another project we do for Fe Y Esperanza, one of our mission partners.

At the conclusion of the year, we decorate our chancel tree with Chrismon symbols. These were all made years ago by members of our group. We try to take very good care of them. We also have to undecorate the tree.

Please join us if you can. We are currently meeting the 2nd Thurs. of every month.

Margie Brown, Chair

PROPERTY REPORT for 2022, by Bob Siemer

Although there was the usual replacement of lights and cleaning of carpets, 2022 was a year for big projects.

In May, we (Gloria Dei) rehabilitated the front landscaping. Besides replacing a sick olive tree, the irrigation and lighting systems were repaired and pavers added to the parking strip. In October, we reroofed the church and had a new air conditioning unit installed. There was the added benefit in that the upstairs, women's bathroom could be repaired and painted. This was a costly repair. Funding came from the generosity of the Congregation and a contribution from the Property Reserve fund.

COUNTING REPORT for 2022, by Marilyn Bittle (submitted by Sandy Nelson)

Each week two church members sit together to count and post the offerings collected from the previous Sunday's worship service. Offerings sent through the mail or dropped off in the church's mail slot during the week are also counted at this time. Donations made through the church's website are automatically routed through the computer system.

Special thanks to our group of counters: Marilyn Bittle, Margie Brown, Karen Como, Twyla Karkut, Sandy Nelson, Beverly Pandora, and Stephanie Siemer. A big thank you to our Treasurer Gary Bockman who makes magic of what has been submitted, and to Bob Siemer who gathers and sends out the financial statements during the year which include your regular pledges, special offerings and in-kind gifts.

FINANCE PLANNING COMMITTEE REPORT FOR 2022, by Gary Bockman

We thank you for your contributions to maintain our congregation and for your continued support of our Mission Partners from "the little church with the big heart."

Revenue exceeded expenses by \$9,777 in 2022 and contributions were \$12,648 higher than the amount budgeted in 2022. Congregants gave an additional \$14,921 to LSS, Fe y Esperanza and other mission partners, plus \$30,517 to the HVAC/Roof fund. The total cost of the HVAC/Roof project was \$54,203 and our reserves were reduced by \$26,686 in 2022 to cover this expense. Looking ahead to 2023 we have 19 pledges totaling \$115,440 and will need an additional \$36,560 from unpledged contributions to cover the estimated expenses in 2023. Also looming on the horizon is a major expense for the parsonage HVAC unit, which is 32 years old. Our current reserves remain adequate to cover most unexpected needs in 2023, but a new HVAC unit at the parsonage would have an impact on them. Thank you again for your contributions to Gloria Dei.

**GLORIA DEI EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH
BALANCE SHEET
as of DECEMBER 31, 2022**

Assets		
Cash & Cash Equivalents		
City National Bank	53,797.68	
American Christian Credit Union	11,536.90	
Mission Investment Fund	26,113.03	
Prepaid Expense	13,363.84	
Receivable Other	3,500.00	
Total Assets	108,311.45	
Liabilities		
Accounts Payable	1,502.72	
Accrued Expense Payable	0.00	
Prepaid Income	0.00	
Paycheck Protection Loan	0.00	
Parsonage Rental Deposit	3,000.00	
Year End Suplus Payable	9,789.43	
Total Liabilities	14,292.15	
Dedicated Funds Payable		
Altar Flowers	0.00	
Among Us	0.00	
LSS Food Pantry/Emergency Services	60.90	
Fe y Esperanza	34.08	
Holiday Fund	0.00	
HVAC/Roof	3,000.00	
Memorials - Designated	0.00	
Memorials - Don Melin	0.00	
Memorials - Undesignated	2,856.84	
Music	11,388.77	
Reserve: Web Advertising	1,600.00	
Reserve: Church Computers	465.15	
Property Reserve	29,336.49	
Emergency Reserve	35,500.00	
Total Dedicated Funds Payable	84,242.23	
Revenue less Expenses YTD	9,777.07	
Total Liabilities, Dedicated Funds & Equity	108,311.45	

**STATEMENT OF REVENUE AND EXPENSES
FOR THE MONTH AND YEAR-TO-DATE DECEMBER 2022**

	2021 Approved	Current Month	YTD Actual	YTD Budget	YTD Difference	% of Budget Rec'd/Spent
Revenue						
Contributions	141,250.00	15,894.35	153,898.15	141,250.00	12,648.15	109.0%
Hall Use	2,000.00	(429.00)	3,332.90	2,000.00	1,332.90	166.6%
Interest/Other Inc	500.00	15.74	339.54	500.00	(160.46)	67.9%
Rental Income	42,000.00	3,500.00	42,000.00	42,000.00	0.00	100.0%
Total Revenue	185,750.00	18,981.09	199,570.59	185,750.00	13,820.59	107.4%
Expenses						
Missions	10,500.00	873.00	10,500.00	10,500.00	0.00	100.0%
Properties	9,800.00	920.80	13,062.23	9,800.00	(3,262.23)	133.3%
Worship	115,471.00	9,900.26	115,407.88	115,471.00	63.12	99.9%
Administration	48,579.00	4,119.76	49,557.25	48,579.00	(978.25)	102.0%
Church Programs	1,400.00	103.43	1,266.16	1,400.00	133.84	90.4%
Total Expenses	185,750.00	15,917.25	189,793.52	185,750.00	(4,043.52)	102.2%
Revenue less Expenses		3,063.84	9,777.07			

GLORIA DEI LUTHERAN CHURCH Proposed Spending Plan - 2023				
	2022 Approved	2022 Actual	2023 Proposed	% change from 2022
Revenue Planned				
Regular Offering	141,250	153,898	152,000	7.61%
Hall use donations	2,000	3,333	3,600	
Interest Income	500	340	400	
Rental Income	42,000	42,000	42,600	
Total Support and Revenue	185,750	199,571	198,600	6.92%
Expenses Planned				
<i>Missions</i>				
Synod Benevolence	6,300	6,300	7,200	
ELCA Global Missionary Sup	700	700	800	
Fe Y Esperanza	700	700	800	
Lutheran Maritime Ministry	700	700	800	
L.S.S. Long Beach	700	700	800	
Pacific Lutheran Theolog.Sem	700	700	800	
So Coast Interfaith Council	700	700	800	
Other Mission Support	0	0	0	
Total Missions	10,500	10,500	12,000	14.29%
<i>Properties</i>				
Church Maint/Repairs	5,400	7,054	7,200	
Parsonage Maint/Repairs	1,900	3,217	3,200	
Parsonage Insurance/PropTx	2,500	2,792	2,800	
Property Reserve	0	0	0	
Total Properties	9,800	13,062	13,200	34.69%
<i>Worship</i>				
Child Care	0	0	0	
Religious Supplies	1,000	1,699	1,650	
Music/Audio Visual Supplies	150	150	200	
Sanctuary Adornment	500	0	500	
Director of Music Salary	24,000	24,000	24,720	
Music Soloist/Programs	3,100	3,084	3,084	
Supply Pastor	1,000	750	1,200	
Pastor Salary	76,400	76,404	78,696	
Pastor Exp/Conf/Prof Ed	0	0	0	
Pastor Benefits	9,321	9,321	9,206	
Total Worship	115,471	115,408	119,256	3.28%
<i>Administration</i>				
Church: Insurance/Fees/Permits	6,800	8,585	9,000	
Staff Salaries	26,460	26,460	27,254	
Payroll Taxes	3,860	3,860	3,976	
Office Supplies	600	980	1,000	
Church Supplies	500	154	460	
Office Technology	350	402	400	
Postage/Printing	938	182	1,300	
Contingencies	471	474	600	
Property Taxes - Church	700	693	700	
Utilities - church	7,900	7,767	8,154	
Total Administration	48,579	49,557	52,844	8.78%
<i>Church Programs</i>				
Advertising/Web Service	1,400	1,266	1,300	
Fellowship	0	0	0	
Total Church Programs	1,400	1,266	1,300	-7.14%
Total Expenses	185,750	189,794	198,600	6.92%
Support/Revenue - Expenses	0	9,777	(0)	