

ANNUAL REPORT 2020

MISSION STATEMENT

*We are a church centered in Christ,
inviting all into a community of worship,
nurturing all to be disciples of Jesus.
Together we reach out to make a difference here and
throughout the world.*



OUR SAVIOR'S LUTHERAN CHURCH

West Salem, Wisconsin

www.oursaviorswestsalem.org

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SUNDAY, June 13, 2021 – 11 a.m.

THE ORDER OF BUSINESS

President Steve Ahles, presiding

DEVOTIONS

MINUTES of last Annual Meeting, January 26, 2020

REPORTS

1. Pastors
2. President's and Church Council
3. Committees, Ministries and Other Reports
4. Financial

ELECTIONS

- Congregation Council
 - three for three-year terms
- One to the Endowment Fund Committee for a three-year term

NOMINATING PROCESS

NEW BUSINESS

- Approval of the 2021 Budget – recommended by the Congregation Council
- Approval of the Audio/Visual project for the sanctuary – recommended by the Congregation Council

OTHER BUSINESS

CLOSING PRAYER

Our Savior's Lutheran Church
Annual Meeting Minutes
January 26, 2020

President Lynette Ender called the meeting to order at 11:46 AM. There were 42 in attendance.

President Ender noted that Kris Seeger was attending the farewell for Pastor Larry Olson at the West Salem Presbyterian Church, and that she was representing Our Savior's, and would not be present at this meeting.

Agenda: A motion was made and seconded to approve the agenda as presented. Motion carried.

Devotions: Pastor Jean led devotions.

Minutes: President Ender drew attention to the minutes of the January 27, 2019 annual meeting, which were approved by the Congregation Council at its February, 2019 meeting.

Reports: The following reports were noted: Pastors, President and Council, Committees, Financial, and other reports. President Ender noted Karen DeSchepper's name was inadvertently omitted from membership on the Outreach Committee report.

- A motion was made and seconded to receive the Pastors' reports. Motion carried.
- A motion was made and seconded to receive the President and Council reports. Motion carried.
- A motion was made and seconded to receive all committee reports. Motion carried.
- A motion was made and seconded to accept the 2019 budget report and other financial reports for 2019. Motion carried.

President Ender reported that the 2019 Annual Meeting had authorized any surplus in funds from 2019 be used to give a retroactive salary increase to employees who were on the payroll as of January 1, 2019 and/or increase mission support. The Congregation Council has taken that action, with employees receiving approximately a 2.5% increase. The La Crosse Area Synod received an additional \$2,000, and Sugar Creek Bible Camp an additional \$500. She also noted that intentional stewardship work through the "Stewardship for All Seasons" ministry had been successful and would allow for a Wednesday worship and increased youth ministry, both to begin later in 2020.

Elections: President Ender noted the following nominations in the annual report on p.26, and the addendum listing Naoko Giblin's biography. She also noted that Jeff Haldeman was a late addition to the nominations.

- Congregation Council (three-year term) – Jaime Fortier, Bonnie Gensch, Carolyn Karl, and Chad Vick
- Congregation Council (two-year term) – Naoko Giblin
 - A motion was made and seconded to close nominations for all council positions. Motion carried.
 - A motion was made and seconded to elect the five candidates for Congregation Council, for terms presented, as nominated. Motion carried.
- 2020 Synod Assembly – Eric Iliff, Dori Jensen, Wendy Kane, Vernetta Moe, Corey Sjoquist
 - A motion was made and seconded to close nominations for Synod Assembly voting member. Motion carried.
 - A motion was made and seconded to elect the five candidates as nominated. Motion carried.
- Mission Endowment Fund – Eric Ender, Linda Arentz
 - A motion was made and seconded to close nominations for Mission Endowment Fund. Motion carried.
 - A motion was made and seconded to elect the two candidates as nominated. Motion carried.
- Sugar Creek Delegates –Jeff Haldeman
 - Pastor Jon offered Mike Larson as a candidate. Mike has agreed to serve.
 - A motion was made and seconded to add Mike Larson’s name to the ballot and to close further nominations for Sugar Creek delegates. Motion carried,
 - A motion was made and seconded to elect the two candidates as nominated. Motion carried.
- Bethany Homes Delegates – Larry Blunck, Jim Michelson
 - A motion was made and seconded to close nominations for Bethany Homes delegates. Motion carried.
 - A motion was made and seconded to elect the two candidates as nominated. Motion carried.

Nominating Committee – President Ender noted that the process of securing nominations without a Nominating Committee worked well this year. She, along with Judy Gilbert and Steve Ahles, contacted persons lifted up by the congregation in November. Those individuals were first contacted by Pastor Jon by letter. They found

it easier than in the past to secure good nominations, especially for Congregation Council.

- A motion was made and seconded to use the same process in 2020/2021 for securing nominations as was used in 2019/2020. Motion carried.

2020 Budget – President Ender presented the proposed 2020 budget, and asked Pastor Jon to review the budget. Pastor Jon distributed a report from the La Crosse Area Synod detailing where the congregation's mission support of \$30,080 was distributed. He then reviewed the 2020 budget proposal and answered questions concerning several budget line items.

- A motion was made and seconded to adopt the 2020 budget as presented. Motion carried.

Expression of Thanks – Carolyn Karl spoke to share her thanks with the pastors and the Congregation Council for their leadership over the past year. Pastor Jon expressed the thanks of the pastors for all who have served on councils over the past years, for those whose terms are ending this year, and especially for President Ender for her leadership of the council and congregation.

Adjourn

- A motion was made and seconded to adjourn the meeting at 12:40 PM. Motion carried.

Pastor Jon closed the meeting with prayer.

Respectfully submitted,

Wendy Kane
Congregation Council Secretary

2020 Congregation Council Members

<u>NAME</u>	<u>TERM EXPIRES</u>	<u>TERM</u>
Steve Ahles	2021	Second
Tracey Beckley	2021	Second
Jaime Fortier	2023	First
Bonnie Gensch	2023	First
Naoko Giblin (appointed to 2 year term to complete unfilled position)	2022	First
Alison Hemker	2022	First
Eric Iliff	2022	First
Wendy Kane	2021	Second
Carolyn Karl	2023	First
Jen Linse	2022	First
Chad Vick	2023	First

Officers of the Church Council and the Congregation

President: Steve Ahles
Vice-president: Tracey Beckley
Secretary: Wendy Kane

Church Staff

Senior Pastor: Jonathan Schmidt
Associate Pastor: Jean Schmidt
Administrative Assistant: Kris Seeger
Director of Youth Ministry: Wendy Kane
Treasurer: Jill Iliff
Music Director: Linda Berg
Musicians: Linda Berg and Kathy Brisson
Senior Choir Director: Eric Sorenson
Choir Accompanist: Linda Berg
Financial Secretary: Karen DeSchepper
Custodian: Josh Corning

Senior Pastor's Report

Wow! Where to start? In a year...that defied all expectations...

- that took us to new places we never imagined...
- that caused disruption in all corners of life...
- that forced everyone to learn new things and do things differently...
- that caused deep fear, pain, despair, and even death...

What more can we say? Maybe the best things we can say is that the year is over.

Or to paraphrase the words of the disciple Nathaniel (“Can anything good come out of Nazareth? John 1:46), “Can anything good come out of 2020?”

The answer, perhaps surprisingly, is “YES!”

How so? Because even though 2020 was filled with dark days, challenging moments, lost milestones and even the loss of life, and much more than its share of fear and uncertainty, Jesus was still with us. And where Jesus is, God is at work. And where God is at work, life is nurtured, restored, and renewed. And that is always good news!

That is exactly what we experienced at Our Savior's. To be sure, 2020 was not the year we wanted, and not a year we want to see again. But it was a year of blessings, of God at work in us and through us. It was a year of faithful discipleship by so many, and a year in which we demonstrated what this congregation has known for over 150 years – that what we are and what we do is not about us – it is about God at work through us – it is about “God's work, our hands.”

So, what happened in 2020? Let's think of this in several “blocks” –

- how we started...
- how we changed in order to remain faithful...
- and where (we think) we are headed...
- while noting God's presence as the journey has unfolded!

We began 2020 with a vision. Bold, though perhaps not as bold as it could be, but a vision that God's call for us was to make a stronger commitment to youth ministry, and to families. We believed that God was (spoiler alert: and still is!) calling us to change the lives of young people and their families. And how would we do this?

1. Expanding our youth ministry and by solidifying its financial base. That meant making a financial commitment to funding our youth ministry at a higher level, and making certain that there is a sustainability about that. In other words, it will continue!
2. Introducing a new Wednesday evening worship experience, with a different style, that would work better in the busy schedules of families and children.

We looked forward to implementing these new ministries later in the year. Then, Covid!

With the coming of the pandemic, it all changed, and quickly. Our last worship service in the building, Sunday, March 15, was an emotional time for many of us. Following the guidance of health experts and our partners in the La Crosse Area Synod, we suspended in-building worship, and closed the building. While some in the world around us insisted that faithful living was to defy and challenge the virus, we listened to Martin Luther. In 1527, when considering the return of the Black Plague, Luther wrote that faithful living means following science and taking actions that protect one's neighbor, not living recklessly. After sharing Luther's thoughts last summer, someone noted that his letter could have been written today! How prophetic, how timely, and how helpful! God at work? Maybe...

But in the meantime, as we waited for the moment to return to what we thought was normal, we needed to be agile, to stay focused on Jesus, and to continue in faithful living. We needed to focus on the essentials, and be willing to change what is not essential. Or, in other words, how could we close the building but keep the "church open?"

How? Here's what we did:

WORSHIP – we began the year as normal – worshipping on Sundays, and then in Lent on Wednesdays. Then, as the pandemic suddenly arrived, we said our goodbyes, and ventured into an unknown future. Right away, within days, we developed an initial framework for a virtual worship presence, with pre-recorded videos on YouTube. The choir provided the music around Holden Evening Prayer, and then later a variety of singers shared their talents. The worship evolved to include lectors and even four singles/couples/families sharing the peace each week. All recorded and then processed using software that was quite new to us! But it worked! And worship happened. Posted by 6 PM on Saturday, we averaged over 130 views for the first week of each video, and the industry standard is to assume two persons for each view – that's 260 worshipers each week! A good start, but there was more...

1. **Driveway communion** – what a blast! 30 times we visited driveways, front yards, even a few backyards, with around 300 in attendance. We shared the word, joined in prayer, and celebrated Holy Communion!
2. **Lion's Shelter worship** – twice we gathered in the Lion's Shelter.
 - a. In August, over five small worship services, we brought our confirmands together, to affirm their baptism and celebrate the milestone.
 - b. In October we had the whole congregation over, and even though the pandemic was fierce, with masks and distancing almost 100 joined us in worship.
3. **Parking Lot "drive-through" communion** – in November (yes, it was getting colder!) we invited folk to come for a short, car-by-car scripture, prayer and Holy Communion. Over 80 joined us for that!
4. In August, acting upon Bishop Arends' authorization and after considerable conversation by the Congregation Council, we began "**Zoom**" **Holy Communion** – a Sunday morning live, online worship event, with Holy Communion celebrated virtually, over distances – even as far away as Massachusetts!
5. And not to forget our children, we also recorded a weekly **YouTube children's message video**. With an average of 20 views a week, 40 kids watched our message.

6. But...**what about Holy Week? And Advent? And Christmas?** Again, we had to do the techie thing, using **Zoom and YouTube**. But again, it worked! OK, most of the time it worked. Zoom from a barn on a near zero-degree Christmas Eve didn't (the computer died), but the Christmas YouTube worked – and was even viewed in an adult care home in Anaheim, California! Really, we reached coast to coast!
7. And finally, **pastoral events** – a few weddings, funerals, and baptisms with less than 15 in attendance occurred in the building, but most of the time we were outdoors. The weather usually cooperated, and these transitions and milestones carried on. Not like we wanted them, but safely and always in God's care.

EDUCATION – We couldn't be in person, so...techie again...

1. **Sunday School?** See Pastor Jean's report.
2. **Confirmation classes** began the year as usual, with Corey Sjoquist leading the 6th graders while I taught 7-9th grade. As the pandemic began in Lent, and classes are on a "hiatus," we had some time to gather ourselves together. We ended the year on Zoom (we learned a lot about that too!). In fall we resumed the Zoom experience, with Corey taking 6th, while I prepared each month a YouTube video for 7-9th graders, followed by a Zoom class. We also started for 7-9th graders a monthly gathering around a fire pit out by the prayer labyrinth, complete with hot dogs and other treats. That gave the kids a time to connect – they really needed that!
3. And, the **Wednesday Bible Study...** tech again, but this time with a fascinating twist! Remember? "You can't teach an old dog new tricks?" Unless they are "Bible study fanatics!" Huge kudos to the Wednesday Bible Study crew, the youngest of whom is 80, for learning Zoom, and quickly! Remarkable? Maybe for you, but not for them! And so, we continued to meet – all year!

STEWARDSHIP – Wow! Thank you! The financial support of our ministries during the past year has remained strong, very strong. Thank you for your gifts, and for making a difference in the world around us. We have lots of stories of people who have been impacted by the ministry of this congregation over the past year, and that is due to you! So, thank you for your support!

As part of Stewardship, **Stewardship for All Seasons** continued during the past year. The "SAS" team has learned much about how we dare to ask, but also how we tell the story, and how we offer our thanks. And not just about money. How do we proclaim that God is generous, that we are gifted, and that our sharing makes a difference – with our money, our time, our efforts, and our very presence. Really good stuff about faithful living!

OUTREACH – Remember? The building was closed, but the "church" remained open. Lots of folk reached out in their own space and time to be the church in the world. And we did that as a community of faith too, many times in ways we hadn't before.

1. The **Summer lunch ministry** coordinated with the school and with volunteers, first to provide bags of food as the pandemic ramped up and the school year came to a close, and then to figure out a safe way to provide lunches. Thanks yet again to Angie Hemker and her many volunteers for making the program work, even in a very different environment.

2. No, we didn't have a **Norwegian Dinner** this year, but thanks to very generous folk, and a boost from the Congregation Council, we raised over \$9000 (more than last year!). And for what? To support a variety of agencies that meet human needs. In a stressed world, that was a huge difference maker!
3. Yeah, the building is closed, but the **Care and Share Food Pantry** remained open all year, distributing food to those in need. A great job by Judy Long, Helen Herold, and all those who share their time with the pantry and its ministry.
4. The **Quilting Group** couldn't meet for most of 2020, yet quilts flowed in – and thanks to Jim Michelson, flowed out to the La Crosse collection point in October. How could that be? Lots of people working from home! And (spoiler alert) 2021 is going a lot like that – lots of quilts, even when you thought there might be none!
5. The **Mission Endowment Fund** never missed a beat. Our investments bore fruit, and over \$12,000 went out to meet needs in our community and around the world.

CONNECTING – we couldn't be together, not like before. So instead, we devised new ways to connect with each other. We began, during “Safer at Home,” with callers – volunteers called others, on a regular basis, checking in, listening, and sharing the concerns lifted up. And while most of those calls ended later in the year, some have continued even in to the new year, while others have discovered new friends and created their own new support network.

Meanwhile, Pastor Jean began to e-mail birthday and baptism greetings. We have been very pleasantly surprised at how many have expressed thanks for being remembered, including some folk we wouldn't really have expected. I guess you shouldn't “assume,” now should you!

And then there is **Forward: Fearless and Faithful**. As they have explored ways to engage and encourage us in faithful living, they saw a need – and acted. FFF developed several events to bring people together, safely, outdoors. And it worked! Once (before the pandemic), and then three times later on, each time engaging us in ways to be connected.

YOUTH AND FAMILY – you can check Wendy Kane's report for more details, but in a pandemic world, the goal has been “connecting.” We started a new “fire pit” ministry in the fall, welcoming kids to bring chairs and masks, and join us in the prayer labyrinth lot, around a fire pit, with hot dogs, smore's, and...lots more! A number of gatherings made it clear that our kids were yearning to be together, as much as they could, and as safely as possible.

And then there was **graduate recognition**. Going home to home, we connected with graduates, bringing a small gift for parents, offering a blessing for graduates, and sharing this in our YouTube worship. Along with the recognition, a number of **scholarships** were again awarded, thanks to the generosity of the Michelson, Marking, and Piper families.

PRAYER MINISTRY – But really, what would we do without prayer? Not much! So, pray we did! Our prayer chain remained hard (very hard) at work, but we also began a weekly ministry – a faithful crew of five prayed each day, usually at 11:45 AM, as the bell in the church was rung. Prayers for God's people, even in a time of great uncertainty!

Yes, the church building was closed, but the “church,” the people of God, were quite open, and quite busy! We have sought to do what Our Savior’s has done for over 150 years – faithfully proclaim the hope of Jesus in a world that even though it changes, remains broken, hurting, and in need of restoration. And as the year unfolded, again and again we experienced God delivering on the promise to never abandon us!

So, where does that take us as we move through 2021? We continue to proclaim hope, and to be agile, to meet changing needs by changing when necessary. And we have our eyes on some ways to make that happen.

As in 2020, we still believe that God is calling us to change lives of young people and young families, and we plan to do just that. We’ve started by removing the “interim” label from **Wendy Kane – she is now the Director of Youth Ministry**, and our plan is to increase her role later in the year when the virus allows! We give thanks to Wendy for her willingness to be a partner in our ministry, and to the Congregation Council for moving forward with Wendy. But most of all, we give thanks to God for the gifts Wendy brings to our work together.

We are also looking forward to creating a new worship experience on Wednesday evenings. We hope that can come together towards the end of the year, but the virus may have something to say about that. Regardless, the call is still there, the need is still there, and (faithfully) we still want it to happen!

Meanwhile, we are planning for changes to how we provide worship on a regular basis. The pandemic has shown us two things:

- Virtual worship works. No, it’s not the same as in-person, and it may not be my favorite. But for the shut-in, or the person in a hospital bed, for the traveler, or the person who lives out of the area, or for the person who has fallen away from worship and is a bit self-conscious to return, it works. It meets that need, and delivers the gospel.
- Our equipment is very inadequate to deliver quality virtual worship. All of the equipment used to create our YouTube videos, from cameras and mics, to computers and PA systems, even the WiFi signal to Zoom our worship, all of that has been borrowed. Moreover, it has been at least 30 years since a significant investment was made in our in-building audio system.

So, what to do? We plan a **major tech upgrade for our worship space in 2021**. That proposal, for around \$40,000, will be brought to the Annual Meeting. [*Note...in 2021 we have already received \$14,000 towards the project!*] Big bucks, but just as the Reformation of Martin Luther was driven in part by new technology (the printing press), we too need to stay up to date, and as the pandemic has shown, while we may not always like it, new technology does open doors that didn’t even exist before!

So now where are we as 2021 unfolds before us? In some ways, we are in a very changed world. Masks, distancing, limited connections are all a part of our world. Could we have imagined this reality when 2020 began? Hardly!

But in other ways, and really, the most important ways, things haven’t changed all that much. There are two fundamental realities that have always surrounded us - the world is broken, and God is active in our broken world restoring life through Jesus.

In that broken world, where God is at work in Jesus, we are called to be a part of what God is doing. That means that what we are about is not ourselves, but God working in us – and for me, at least, that is re-invigorating! Moreover, I can only do what God enables me to do. And that is all I am called to do – to be faithful with what I have, doing what I am called to do.

And the same is true for us as a community of faith. We are not called to save the world, and that's a good thing, because we can't. We are called to proclaim God at work, to proclaim hope for the future, and to proclaim life in Jesus. Perhaps imperfectly, but the best we could, we did that in 2020, in the most challenging times we could imagine. And we will continue in 2021. Because we seek to be a faithful community of God's people.

So, moving into 2021, **I give thanks to God for you**, and for your partnership with us and your support of our work together, even in these days.

And **I give thanks for our leadership, in a variety of expressions** – from the SAS team, to FFF, to our reopening team, to Summer Lunch, to everyone else whom I do not have the space to name. You are treasured gifts in our work together.

And **I give thanks for our Congregation Council**, and for their work during a challenging time, making careful, thoughtful, and prayerful decisions. And a special thanks to Steve Ahles and Tracey Beckley, who have continued to serve even beyond their six years until our annual meeting, now set for June 13.

And **I give thanks for our staff**, who have had to figure out new ways to do what we have always done. I am especially grateful to Kris Seeger and Josh Corning, who we see on a frequent basis, and who are not members of this congregation, but have taken to heart the work that we do, and who, in their own way, have joined us in our ministry.

And **I give thanks for “the other pastor,” (my wife)** who has joined me in crafting our ministry in very different ways than we ever imagined. What a gift she has been to me, and to you!

And finally, **I give thanks for my wife (“the other pastor”)** for her presence in my life, especially over the past year. **Rebecca, my daughter, too.** Together, they are incredible gifts of a gracious God. I give thanks for their support and love, patience and understanding.

Most of all, ***I give thanks for Jesus and for the love that embraces and sustains us these days, and every day.*** We are called to be disciples. We are called to do “God's work with our hands.” But we are gifted with nothing more and nothing less than life itself, through Jesus!

Pastor Jon

Associate Pastor's Report

Where does one even begin to put thoughts on the page to describe this past year – 2020. Whoever said, “hindsight is 2020” never could have imagined what 2020 was going to be. The sooner we put 2020 in the rearview mirror, and move forward, the better! But, if hindsight is 2020, that means there has to be a lesson learned from it ... right? So, did we learn anything from 2020?

When we learn something, it doesn't necessarily mean it has to be something good or positive, it means we *learned* something. 2020 was full of learning, maybe more learning than we wanted, maybe learning things we never dreamt of learning or things we never wanted to learn ... but learn we did!

We learned we had to act fast to get things in place. We learned we had to be flexible and willing to change course in the blink of an eye. We learned all kinds of new technology to keep connected, to worship, to meet, to educate. We learned how to be comfortable with ourselves – preaching to a camera lens in an empty sanctuary, engaging imaginary children for a message and lesson. We learned we need each other, we need to see each other, we need to touch each other. We learned we need to put others' needs ahead of our own. We learned hard decisions had to be made for the sake of all and that sometimes those decisions were met with dissatisfaction. We learned too much learning can be overwhelming. We learned that working 50-60 hours a week for months on end without a break is wearying, exhausting, even unhealthy.

We learned we needed to be creative ...

for worship ... We learned how to use technology to produce a worship service that could be placed on YouTube and watched whenever you wanted. As the year wore on, Pastor Jon learned a whole lot of new skills and the quality of the recording evolved to quite a production. Each week the music was recorded on Wednesday evening (safely), we spent Fridays recording the worship service and children's message (and Sunday school lessons), and during spring/summer/fall we spent Saturday mornings going to three- or four-people's homes, standing in the driveway and recording them sharing the “peace” for that week's service. Then, Pastor Jon would spend the rest of Saturday putting it all together, along with adding the words to the music and scripture, and inserting pictures, and getting it up on YouTube by 6 p.m. on Saturday for you to watch. In addition, we did a short communion worship service via Zoom every Sunday at 10:30 a.m. with a faithful group of folks.

The pre-recorded worship was also uploaded onto DVDs (thanks to Dean Olson), and we delivered them to ten+ folks. DVDs were also given to Mulders, Lakeview, and Salem Terrace where they were shown each week to the residents who wanted to watch. This still allowed the folks to worship in the absence of our monthly services in their buildings.

We needed to be creative for the special services throughout the year – Holy Week, Easter, Confirmation, Graduate recognition, Advent, Thanksgiving, Christmas. Our mom's group and their kids shared their artwork on the sidewalks around church at Easter, which we were able to incorporate into the Easter service. The Sunday school

children shared an “alleluia” video clip at Easter that was used, and families shared greetings for the Christmas video. For graduate recognition we gathered at their individual homes, presenting a prayer shawl to parents, along with a blessing. Pictures were taken and used during the pre-recorded video. Affirmation of Baptism (confirmation) was held the end of August for most of our students over five services, outside at the Lion’s Shelter, masked and distanced, with limited numbers at each service. For months we planned a special Christmas Eve worship experience, in addition to the pre-recorded video, Zooming live from the barn at the Holthaus farm. Unfortunately, computers do not like near-zero temperatures and the computer died early in the service leaving everyone in the dark and woefully disappointed.

Beginning in the summer, we introduced “driveway” communion. We packed up our “altar” and communion ware and gathered in people’s driveways (about 30 over the course of the summer and into fall), safely distanced and masked to celebrate communion and see people again. That also served as a way for some of our 5th graders to receive communion for the first time.

for Christian education ... We changed curriculum for Sunday school that was more engaging and also included music for the kids to sing at home. Every week we recorded two lessons – one for the 4K-1st graders and another for the 2nd-5th graders. The YouTube recordings of the lessons and worksheets were sent to every student via email each week. In the absence of being able to have Vacation Bible School, we continued to record Sunday school lessons every week all summer. We even had a pre-recorded Christmas pageant, inviting the kids to be a part of sharing the story of Jesus’ birth and also sharing their musical talents. All was recorded safely, masked, outside, with little overlap being together, which made for an interesting project for Pastor Jon to put it all together into a seamless production. Confirmation classes met via Zoom – *Pastor Jon has more on that in his report.*

for staying connected with folks ... During the summer, postcards were sent to almost every member. For the past year, emails recognizing birthdays and baptism birthdays were sent out to those for whom we had email information. During this process, we learned that most people with Yahoo.com email addresses had communications from Our Savior’s “spammed” and they never received them. This learning was concerning and after consulting with our webmaster, we learned it is a function of Yahoo and there is nothing we can do about it other than letting folks know to periodically check their spam folders.

A group of 20+ folks made multiple phone calls to all of our members periodically checking in to make sure they were doing okay, receiving prayer concerns, and assuring them they were not alone, that their church community was thinking about them and missing them. Another group volunteered to pray for the congregation and our members every day at 11:45 a.m. At first, they took turns coming in to the sanctuary to pray, but when things totally shut down, they prayed in their homes. The previously existing prayer chain group continued to pray every week using a very lengthy list of prayer petitions.

We learned people continue to be generous even during a time of pandemic, which enabled ministries within and outside of the congregation to continue and to thrive. We give you thanks for being a part of keeping ministry happening. Even giving took on a new look as many people learned how to use electronic giving, which had just been introduced prior to the pandemic starting. People also became more comfortable mailing in their offerings. And, to help those who still wanted to come by church to drop things off, we installed a mailbox outside of the doors on East Avenue!

In the midst of the pandemic, our long-awaited church pictorial directories arrived. They, too, were victims of pandemic shut-downs in Ohio. We have tried to distribute the directories during these times of shut-down, but when things open up, we encourage all to make sure they pick-up their new directory. It was a good tool to have during this time of isolation, to be able to see your smiling faces and think about you.

To remind the community that the “church” was not closed, only the *building*, every day at 11:45 a.m. the bell was tolled seven times, and a light was left burning in the front window and on the altar.

My activities outside of church were also affected by the pandemic. The Synod Outreach and Evangelism Committee ceased to meet. Our monthly Synod conference meetings, and Spring and Fall Theological events all transitioned to Zoom. The Institutional Review Board at Gundersen that I am a member of pivoted to meeting via Zoom which eliminated a monthly trip downtown, but also caused us to miss out on good lunches!

There are so many people to thank for their hard work during these many months of staying put and finding new ways to do things enabling them to still be done. The congregation council, and especially Steve Ahles and Tracey Beckley who agreed to continue to serve even though their terms ended; the re-opening team who was at the ready to share their insights and wisdom; those who made phone calls; those who prayed and shared prayer needs; choir members who faithfully came in to record songs for worship safely; Dean Olson for rigging up a sound system for recording, and also making the DVDs for the shut-ins; those who came in to record reading the lessons; the Sunday school children and families for making video clips of alleluias at Easter, and all those who shared Merry Christmas video greetings; the mom’s group families for providing our sidewalk artwork; all those who allowed us at your doorstep as you shared “the peace of the Lord”; those who opened their driveways to host driveway communions and all who attended; all who watched the YouTube videos and continued to be a part of the worshiping community of Our Savior’s.

Thank you to our staff: Kris Seeger for all of her work in the office that kept us going, for her flexibility, her calm and caring way of dealing with the needs of the people. Wendy Kane for stepping up in the midst of all things unknown to take on the position of Director of Youth Ministry and to care for our youth, coming up with creative ways to engage our young people and build relationships even during these challenging times. Linda Berg for providing the music for all of the recording sessions and getting the singers signed up. Josh Corning for being so easy to work with as he keeps the building clean, caring for our space, and doing whatever else needs to be done.

Thank you to Pastor Jon and Rebecca, my rocks, without whom I would not have made it through these last many months. They knew when I was at the point of not being able to do another thing, and took me on a two-day “get-away” to see waterfalls and hike in nature – a much needed recharge. Thank you for your love and presence in my life no matter what is placed in our path.

For months the building felt like a ghost town, nothing was moved, nothing was changed, things were left right where they had been on March 15. The clock in the balcony was a constant reminder that time had stood still ... but then eventually the battery was replaced and time moves forward.

When the pandemic hit, we stopped on a dime, it was done ... it will take us longer to come out of this as there are so many moving parts, so many different guidelines, so many people to consider, but with patience and perseverance we will come through this ... hopefully stronger, more flexible, more tolerant, more resilient, more eager to be together as the body of Christ ... because of what ***we have learned***.

Looking forward to being together in Christ,
Pastor Jean

Senior ministry – a faithful group of ladies (Bev Bockenbauer, Caryll Loughan, Judy Morzinski, Barb Schomberg) gather each month to talk about ways ministry can happen “to, with, and by” seniors.

As the year began we were joined by Bonnie Gensch and we were in the planning stages of creating a new ministry – a health ministry that would also utilize a “parish nurse” volunteer. As part of our vision for this new ministry was to implement monthly blood pressure checks for members (of all ages), monthly health-related articles for the newsletter, periodic gatherings to discuss current health topics (again, for various age groups). *All is on hold for now.*

Pastor Jean continued to send out birthday and holiday cards to our “seniors” who have reached the “magic” age of 80 and older.

In the absence of our monthly worship services at the various assisted living and nursing facilities, every week the pastors delivered a DVD of the worship service video to each facility, as well as to an additional eight members (or family members of members).

Our Sunday school “adopted grandparents” program took a bit of a lull during 2020, however we will pick up where we left off in the fall of 2021, keeping the grandparents with their classes and they will all “move up” to the next grade together.

Worship – Worship planning for most of the year fell to the pastors as they dealt with virtual worship and creative ways to provide worship experiences. The fairly new method of using SignUpGenius to schedule ushers, readers, communion assistants, home communion, acolytes, basket holders, bread makers, and altar guild was off to a good start and people were getting used to signing up themselves before the pandemic disrupted this routine. Hopefully it won’t take too long to get back into the habit in 2021.

Communion ministry – We thank those who were a part of our communion ministry when the year began and we look forward to resuming these ministries sometime in 2021. Our shut-in members have been impacted the most in the absence of this ministry as they are missing the visits with the pastors and lay people.

Altar Guild – Pastor Jean is looking forward to relinquishing these tasks and welcoming back this faithful group who fill candles, change paraments and banners, and decorate the altar area, among other things.

Prayer ministry – It is amazing how many times we hear people share how they truly believe the power of prayer has impacted their lives. We continue to have a dedicated group of people on the **prayer chain** who receive prayer requests from Pastor Jean via email and who then lift these petitions up in prayer. In the spirit of confidentiality, names and details may be “changed”, but God knows and hears the prayers. I remind you that we have a “new” **prayer labyrinth** across the street (on East Avenue), complete with scripture passages to ponder on your journey and a bench in the middle to sit and meditate. Thanks to Bonny Goodenough’s confirmation small group there are also flowers at the back of the space. If you haven’t yet checked it out, we invite you to walk the labyrinth, praying as you go, taking time to rest in the center and meditate, and then pray your way back out. All are welcome to be a part of prayer ministry!

Beer and Hymns – We have missed the fellowship of singing together several times each year and look forward to lifting our glasses and our voices in 2021.

Education – *Eric Iliff and Wendy Kane faithfully support Pastor Jean with their gifts and talents planning for Sunday school and especially Vacation Bible School (VBS).*

In the absence of being able to have **Vacation Bible School** this year, Pastor Jean continued the Sunday School videos throughout the summer. The VBS curriculum had already been purchased, and we are hopeful we can use it in some fashion in 2021.

Our **Mom’s Group** connected periodically via their Facebook page during the year. As the pandemic began during Lent, this group initiated an opportunity for the kids to celebrate Easter and share that gift with all of us by drawing Easter greetings with sidewalk chalk around the church. It was wonderful!

Sunday School –

Sunday school never took a break this year as Pastor Jean continued recording lessons throughout the summer. On Rally Day in September, our teachers gathered safely on the lawn across the street from the parking lot to greet any of their students who stopped by. The kids had their pictures taken, spent a few minutes with their teachers, and were given packets with the first 12 weeks of lessons, plus an ice cream treat!

Pastor Jean introduced a new curriculum in the fall – *Simply Loved by Group Publishing* – that would be more engaging for the kids under our current circumstances. The material comes with music videos and Bible helps. The hope is that the kids will have learned the music and when we can gather in person again, they will have songs to share with the congregation during worship.

Giftng of Bibles was a bit different this year. We continued to give a *Frolic Bible* to those who were baptized, and the 4K children were given their *Whirl Story Bible* on Rally Day. The 3rd graders did not get their Bible this year, but we will find a way to get them next year.

First Communion instruction for our 5th graders was held virtually in the fall of 2020 and the students received communion for the first time on various occasions – Sunday Zoom communion, driveway communion, Lion’s Shelter worship, or they will partake at a later date.

The Sunday school Christmas program, “*Miracle in the Manger*”, was a prerecorded video. The children were each recorded safely at different times, most outside, except for those playing the piano or singing. Linda Berg provided the accompaniment for those singing. Pastor Jon then put all of the pieces together to create a cohesive program. It turned out great!

Our Sunday school classroom grandparent program took a hiatus this year, but we are eager to reconnect our kids with their grandparents as they move to the next grade level together in the fall of 2021.

We are grateful to our Sunday school teachers who were eager and ready to connect with their students whenever we had the opportunity – gathering with them on Rally Day and sending them cards and notes periodically throughout the year. Thank you ...

Sunday School Staff 2019-2020

Pre-K: Heidi Krupicka, Kamryn Kane

Kindergarten: Dani Draxler, Clark Draxler

1st Grade: Lindsey Gilberts

2nd Grade: Abbey Vick, Angela Vick, Maddy Noelke

3rd Grade: Stacey Sjoquist, Mariette Stefferud

4th Grade: Kim Foglia, Mandy Bahl, Mia Bahl

5th Grade: Eric Iliff

College ministry – Like many things, this ministry was “lost” in the spring as it was difficult knowing where the kids were – presumably most doing virtual learning. However, at Christmas time, Pastor Jean sent notes and gift cards to those students whose addresses we had. We are hoping in fall 2021 that we will have a better idea of who is where and be able to rebuild this ministry.

Worship and Education Participation for 2020

The pandemic that began in March of 2020 led to the suspension of in-building worship and education, and forced us to be agile and creative. That meant a variety of opportunities over the last 9½ months of the year. While we are aware that numbers do not tell the whole story (especially this year!), they do give us a snapshot of what our worship and education life was like, and a sense of the vitality of our ministry together.

Total participants prior to pandemic January 1- March 15 (11 weekends)	2,473
<i>Average weekend attendance</i>	<i>225</i>

Total participants in "face to face" worship March 16-December 31	717
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Driveway Communions (30)	300
Confirmation (8 events)	242
October worship at Lion's Shelter	85
November parking lot Communion	90

Total estimated participants in virtual worship	12,203
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YouTube videos (March 22-December 31)	11,842
<i>5921 views per seven-day period, two participants per view – industry standard</i>	
<i>Average weekly participants 289</i>	
Zoom worship (August 9-December 31)	361
<i>Average weekly participants 21</i>	

Total estimated participants in virtual YouTube Children's Message	1,718
<i>859 views per seven-day period, two participants per view – industry standard</i>	
<i>Average weekly participants 42</i>	

Total Christian Education participants for 2020

Sunday School	85	
Confirmation	93	
Bible Study	34	<i>(includes Wednesday study, Salem Terrace, WELCA)</i>

Pastoral Acts

Baptisms

Braxton Shea Brockmeyer
Jalyn Louise Hundt
Hattie Emelia Bateman
Axel James Schlifer
Aria Mae Elsen

Confirmations

Ella Beal
Lauren Bell
Kendall Burkhamer
Eva Clements
Alena Donahue
Zachary Fitzpatrick
Emma Fortier
Madeline Giblin
Elly Goodenough
Jaden Hammes

Jacob Helgeson
Amalia Hemker
Jacob Hickey
Kendra Hillyer
Ruby Hughes
Morgan Kammel
Brennan Kennedy
Benjamin Larson
Tyler Leren
Jesse Loging

Adrianna Massman
Tyler Mathison
Anna McConkey
Brett McConkey
Regan Peterson
Morgan Quackenbush
Brandon Riley
Sophia Taylor
Noelle Zarecki

Funerals

Steven E. Bartz
Betty W. Gilbertson
Doris E. Michelson
Andrea S. Page
Harriet A. Slack
Alice M. Bolstad

Joyce G. Root
Patrick M. Hansen
Janet R. Akey
Herbert L. Hetland
Mark V. Stamstad
Doug W. Pierce

Marriages

Adam Wuensch and Emily Copus
Kyle Wright and Kayla Radke
Jacob Wiedemann and Emily Nelson
Alexander Premo and April Haldeman
Nicholas Peterson and Samantha Taylor
Kyle Gresens and Lynae Kumbier

New Members

Greg & Bonnie Ives, and Hailey, Mia, and Rylen
Shelly Davis
Dolores Sinclair

Transfers Out

Ryan & Jennifer Wheeler, and Samara, and Blaine
Kurt & Ona Childes, and Jessica, and Jameson
Bob & Christine Ruud

Residents of Nursing Homes & Assisted Living Facilities

(as of December 31, 2020)

Mill Street Manor

Arlan Gilbertson
Lana Helgeson
Cristi Johnson

Salem Terrace

Eva Farris
Eleanor Lee
Pat Smith
Rich & Mary Storandt

Brookdale Memory Care

Alice Gums

Bethany Heights

Alice Hesselberg

Springbrook-Onalaska

Valgean Anderson
Emmanual Jacobson
Doris Yeske

Home with a Heart-Muscoda

Lydia Ferguson

Nominations

Congregation Council

Three to elect to a three-year term

- Brenda Skittone
- *Nomination from the floor or council appointment*
- *Nomination from the floor or council appointment*

Endowment Fund Committee

One to elect to a three-year term

- Lee Friell

Forward: Fearless and Faithful

The Forward Fearless and Faithful Team (*Carolyn Karl, Jim Kerkman, Jen Linse, Becki Murphy, and Kyle Twite*) continued to meet on a regular basis prior to the pandemic. The Team organized a January winter walk that was cool and crisp, but well attended. Later in the year, during the pandemic, they organized three outdoor gatherings designed to enjoy the outdoors but more importantly to bring people together safely. During those gatherings, quilts were made, volleyball was played, and trails were hiked. Participants ranged from 4 years to 80 plus. The Team will continue to seek ways to engage us in exploring God's presence in our little corner of the world.

President's Report

We started 2020 with some great vision, direction and plans, three months later, time for new visions, direction unknown and plan for what?

The **Marine Corp slogan** "Improvise, **Adapt**, and **Overcome**", became part of everybody's life plan. All three aspects of that slogan were used over and over throughout the year.

Our Synod, Pastors, and all the ministries of Our Savior's responded with good information. Short-term and long-term plans to keep us informed, communicating, worshiping, communing, and even gathering. No easy task!

So many new, great ideas implemented (successfully) and many will shape how we look in the future. In a year filled with much darkness there was A LOT of light discovered. "God's work our hands" was met head on and with the many hands, here we are. Not where we would like to be, but we made it together ...

There is much I could break down and report on, but most importantly WE made it because of you. Your generosity in giving to the general fund was very strong through the year. Although the budget at the end is very out of whack. We remain in the black. When more was needed, especially time and talent, you delivered!!

I personally would like to thank the Pastors, Staff, Ministries, Musicians, Lectors, Dean Olson and others I may have missed and Council members. They worked incredibly hard to keep us together and worshiping with technology.

Looking forward to seeing you all soon.

Respectfully,
Steve Ahles, Congregation Council President

Worship Committee

The Worship Committee met in January and February 2020 but was then suspended. When the congregation became unable to worship in church, we moved to online videos, recorded by pastors and musicians in church and placed online for the weekend. Communion was held through ZOOM sessions and privately in driveways. On October 11 two Sunday morning services were held outdoors at the Lion's Shelter with limited attendance and masks. We were able to get in one Beer & Hymns at Westview in February, with a strong presence of members of the Guitar Group.

While there are many unknowns, we look forward to the time we can worship together again as a community.

The Worship Committee members are Pastor Jean, Jon Hetland, Eric Iliff, Eric Sorenson, Tracey Beckley, Scott Mitchell, and Linda Berg. We appreciate your prayerful comments, encouragement, and support.

Submitted by, Linda Berg

Music Ministry

Music is an important part of the ministry of our congregation. Music is one of the ways we can communally express our faith in the God who deserves the highest praise.

The Music Room was very quiet this year. Our best effort was made to incorporate music into the worship videos. We scheduled and recorded individual vocal soloists as song leaders when the choir could no longer meet. When the handbell choir could no longer practice, solo bell tree ringing was researched and implemented. The SOS Band has a stack of songs waiting to be learned. The guitar group continued to meet weekly via ZOOM to keep up their skills.

The future is uncertain, and we are not sure when and what limitations will be in place, but we will be flexible, willing, and able to provide whatever is needed for our church. We look forward to the future.

Submitted by, Linda Berg

Youth

For the 2020 year I have expanded my outreach of all the youth by sending out "how are you doing" cards during the summer and in the fall, and continuing Birthday cards. Starting in the fall when Confirmation started, the 7th – 9th grade classes were able to meet outside and gather by a fire pit to have s'mores, hotdogs, juice boxes and other treats. We would have a quick "hello how are you doing" and some of them went off to the side and played kick ball, volleyball or just sat around the fire to talk to their friends. It was truly enjoyable to see them light up when they saw their friends they weren't able to see in school or online.

We plan on doing more this year and other fun activities once I have everything figured out with time.

Wendy Kane
Youth Director

Lutheran World Relief School Kits

Lutheran World Relief school kit collections were adversely affected by the COVID-19 pandemic as was nearly every aspect of our daily lives. Shopping trips were not only restricted but were discouraged, fewer school supplies were on sale at fewer stores and there were fewer price reductions. The most expensive items in the school kits, the four spiral notebooks, were always least expensive at a local store that is now out of business.

Despite the challenge of the pandemic we were able to complete 56 kits, about one-third of last year's total. WELCA again donated the back packs. Tracking tags were attached and the kits were shipped in early October by railcar from La Crosse to an LWR warehouse near Baltimore, MD. Last year's school kit shipment was distributed throughout the year to students in Djibouti, Honduras, Rwanda and Georgia (the country). The Dorcas Sewing Circle completed 71 quilts that were also boxed, tagged and shipped to Baltimore. Their last year's quilts were distributed to families in Djibouti, Ukraine, The Bahamas, Georgia (the country) and Lebanon.

Because of the pandemic this was the first year that the third grade Sunday school class didn't assist with packing school kits. Confirmation students had only recently started assisting with packing on a volunteer basis but they too were unavailable. Hopefully we can re-involve the third and fourth graders next year along with a new class of confirmation students.

The school kit project continues to search for a new chair person or co-chair persons willing to manage the project. This is primarily a four-month project with plenty of volunteer help available when needed. Your primary responsibility is bulletin and newsletter articles promoting the project and monitoring donation shortfalls to highlight current needs. Please contact one of the pastors if you are available to assist.

Submitted by: Jim Michelson

Community Care & Share Food Pantry

"Where there is a will, there is a way." That saying definitely describes how the food pantry operated in 2020.

In an effort to address the pandemic the following changes were made to the food pantry: we added more volunteers to work at the pantry each week; we required that everyone wear a mask; changed the entrance from East Avenue to the alley door; got cell phone numbers from anyone using the pantry and asked them to please sit in their car; filled all bags over the phone; delivered the bags to their car; all donated food had to sit for three to seven days before being marked and shelved. The new changes worked, but we're hopeful that we will get back to the way we use to do things.

With the help of all the volunteers and food and monetary donations from both individuals, churches, schools, organizations and businesses, one thing surprised all of us. The number using the food pantry went down. We're not sure why! Maybe it was due to the stimulation checks, so many places providing food, people moving, some dying or just fear of Covid 19.

We will continue to operate the food pantry, every Saturday from 10 a.m. till noon for those living in Bangor, Barre Mills, Melrose, Mindoro, Rockland and West Salem.

The Bible tells us in Proverbs 22:9 to be generous and share our food with those in need. In 2020 all the communities were doing God's work with their hands. Thank you everyone!

Board Member, Judy Long

Social Committee

The Social Committee engages in several ministries throughout the year – Gospel on the Green, tree trimming, and coffee fellowship.

Coffee hour -No coffee hour since COVID 19 pandemic closed church in March of 2020. Restarting coffee hour would bring such JOY!

Tree trimming – Thank you to Jeff & Melissa Haldeman for decorating the trees on the altar and adding one outside in front of the building!

ELCA World Hunger

ELCA World Hunger -We sold \$660 dollars' worth of Christmas ornaments. Due to COVID 19, no other fund raising has been done. We hope to restart the farm project in 2021. Nonetheless, the cause of hunger has continued to be supported by numerous financial gifts from the congregation.

Mary & Martha Prayer Shawl Ministry

2021 begins the 15th year of the Mary & Martha Prayer Shawl Ministry. Members of this group knit &/or crochet "shawls of comfort" for the many people in need of being wrapped in the love of our Savior, Jesus Christ, as well as the love of Our Savior's Lutheran Church.

This group of 4-6 members ordinarily meets in the Koinonia room at OSLC on the 1st & 3rd Tuesday of each month for about 2 hours to work on these shawls, share patterns with other members, and turn in completed shawls. Many of the shawls are primarily worked on at home, then brought to a meeting to be prayed over by the group before adding it to the available shawls. The shawls are blessed at a church service by one of the pastors before they are given to the recipient. They are given for a wide variety of occasions: hospitalization, illness, shut-ins, adult and non-infant baptisms, those grieving, parents of high school graduates, 20-25 each year to residents at Lakeview Health Care Center, Dialysis units at La Crosse medical centers for patients during treatment, individuals, and local medical centers. These shawls are available for ANYONE, not only OSLC members. If you know of someone who would be comforted by being wrapped in this love, please let the pastors know.

Our group met only 5 times in 2020. By the time we would have had our second meeting in March the Covid "Safer at Home" was only 2 days from being enacted, and because many of our members are in age or health groups that wouldn't be safe meeting like this, the meeting was cancelled. We continued making shawls at home, so they are still available.

At one point during the summer we reached as many members as we could on short notice. We asked them to bring a lawn chair, facial mask, their needlework, and some of us provided the elements for communion. We met on the lawn around the Prayer Labyrinth, socially distanced, and enjoyed a bit of a beautiful afternoon. We had arranged for Pastors Jon and Jean to join us ... we had "Driveway Communion" there on the lawn!

We continue to receive monetary gifts for purchasing yarn, and gifts of yarn - new or "gently used" that they no longer need. We can always make use of it! Thank you for these very generous gifts!

We look forward to being able to gather together again when it is safe for us to do that.

Praying for all to stay healthy & safe.
Blessed Be! Carol Wittenberg

OWLS

The OWLS (Older, Wiser, Lutherans) started off 2020 with a presentation by Bonnie Gensch on her medical mission trip to the Dominican Republic.

Next, we planned a tour of Havenwood, an independent and assisted living facility located in Onalaska. Due to Covid 19, the tour was cancelled.

Looking forward to being together 2021.

Submitted by, Judy Long, Member

WELCA

Ruth Circle – Ruth Circle met this last year on the third Monday of the month at 9:30 a.m., usually at church. From April to October we met either outside or in someone's home. In October the \$900 in our offering fund was disbursed to 9 ministries. We do the Bible study from "The Gather", the ELCA's women's magazine.

We are taking a break now, but look forward to the time when we can again meet at church. Any woman in the congregation is most welcome to join us.

Connie Blunck, Chairwoman

Norwegian dinner-The Norwegian dinner was cancelled due to COVID 19 pandemic. \$4000 dollars was raised from congregational donations. The church council voted to match the \$4000 dollars. January 17, 2021 will be a Zoom meeting to disburse the money to charities. Hope to restart the Norwegian dinner in 2021.

Submitted by, Lynette Ender

Summer Lunch Program - Feed Our Children - West Salem

As the final thank you letters of the season are placed in the mail, the Feed Our Children Summer Lunch Committee has so much to be thankful for. After a second and third count we served around 957 lunches, provided the BGC with over 860 snack portion servings as they had strict restrictions on food prep, as well as 215 bags of groceries. This is in addition to the bags of groceries that were picked up or delivered in the spring.

There were more than 100 volunteers who prepared food, served the vehicles at drive up, and delivered meals and groceries to homes. We partnered with volunteers from the Presbyterian Church, Prince of Peace Lutheran, St Leo's Church, Thrivent Financial (thanks to Connie Pinski and Lynette Ender's memberships), the National Honor Society, 1st Community Credit Union, and the West Salem Food Service staff.

Donations of food, serving products and money, came from all over the community. What we received from insurance agencies, churches, service organizations, local businesses and individuals (including an anonymous donation of over \$1,000) almost completely paid for absolutely everything we needed this year. There was even a community individual who sewed masks, sold them and donated all of the profit. We did use a little of our reserve from last year, but we still end the year in excellent standing in case we need to prepare to serve again earlier than expected. Anything that was left over went to the Food Pantry, BGC, and non-perishables such as sandwich bags were packed up for next year. Nothing was wasted.

On a personal note, I am always humbled by the generosity and support of those at Our Savior's and our West Salem Community for this program as well as other things that I am a part of. However, this year was extraordinary. This year, has been like nothing we have ever seen. There were moments that even seemed somewhat hopeless. Some days were dark, literally and figuratively. As I looked at starting this season (and quite a bit early) I was fearful of how difficult this could be. But then it began, a food drive which started the grocery bag distribution, this generated so many items that it took care of that entire service for weeks. Then it was time to start summer planning, again - I wondered "how will we do this, who will still be willing to help during a pandemic?" There were times that I expected businesses, hurt by the shutdown to not be able to help, they surpassed the gifts they had previously given, there was no hesitation in their response to help. In fact, there were times that businesses and individuals came to me with what they could offer before I even had the opportunity to ask. We had more weekly kitchen leaders than any year before. In truth, organizing all of this is not a small task, but the amount of support that so many provide, in so many different ways, makes this a true gift to behold. It is truly incredible and a huge honor to be a part of.

Should the end of this year, or the beginning of the next, present us with the opportunity to serve again, we are ready. Otherwise - we will see all of the children again next summer.

Angie Hemker
Feed Our Children, Summer Lunch Program

(A special thank you to Angie Hemker for volunteering beyond countless hours organizing, overseeing, and supporting the Summer Lunch Program. It was extremely complicated and time-consuming this past year as she also had to coordinate with the school, as well as be ready earlier in the year and extend things longer than normal. Without her tireless efforts, this community effort would not be possible.)

Mailing Crew

The Mailing Crew meets on the last Wednesday of the month at 8:30 a.m. to assemble the Newsletter. The members of this crew have found it a time of work and fellowship as they stuff and label the newsletters. Due to pandemic, the members only met in January and February of 2020. The remainder of the year the newsletter was done by the office. Members of the 2020 Mailing Crew were Connie & Larry Blunck, Bev Bockenbauer, Sandra Holthaus, Carolyn Karl, Caryll Loughan, Judy Morzinski, Carol Peterson, Velma Schmidt, Barb Schomburg, Marion Twite-Stensven, Rich & Mary Storandt, and Betty Whitlock.

Submitted by, Kris Seeger

Mission Endowment Committee

The Mission Endowment Committee was able to distribute \$16,200 to Missions in 2020.

This Endowment has allowed Our Savior's, to distribute in excess of \$205,200 since being established in 2002.

Each year committee members thoughtfully discuss and decide where our donations should go utilizing the guidelines set by Our Savior's church council.

Donations are always welcome. We receive many as memorials, bequests, wills, honoring birthdays and anniversaries.

Members of the Endowment Committee: Carl Wallace, Eric Ender, Linda Arentz, and Melody Schmitz.

This year the money was distributed as follows:

LaCrosse Warming Shelter	\$2,000
New Horizons	\$3,000
St Claire Health Mission	\$2,000
Sleep in Heavenly Peace	\$1,200
Sugar Creek Bible Camp	\$2,000
ELCA World Hunger	\$2,000
OSLC Capital Improvements for Technology	\$4,000
Total	\$16,200

Respectfully Submitted,
Melody Schmitz-Chairperson

**Mission Endowment Fund
2020 Financial Report**

Assets

ELCA Endowment Fund Pooled Trust (330.3662 shares)	\$438,421.67*
* Share value as of September 30, 2020 @ (\$1,327.077886)	
River Bank Money Market Checking Balance	\$6198.57
River Bank Easy Checking Balance	\$11.00

Income

Money Market Checking Interest	\$43.91
Contributions	\$11,725.00
ELCA Endowment Fund Pooled Fund Dividends	\$16,364.80

Expenses

Distribution (as detailed in Committee Report summary)	\$16,200.00
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Submitted by Eric Ender,
Financial Secretary

Dorcas Sewing Circle

Balance on hand January 1, 2020	\$238.00
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INCOME

Memorial for Doris Michelson	<u>\$40.00</u>
Total Income	\$40.00

EXPENSES

Fabric	\$34.45
Plates	\$2.00
Repair/cleaning of sewing machine	\$106.55
Thread and needles	<u>\$70.00</u>
Total Expenses	\$213.00

Balance on hand January 1, 2021	\$65.00
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Respectfully submitted, Norma Piper

Asset Report – 2020

WELCA Account

Account # Account Name End of year Balance

Assets

1.88.000 WELCA – Union State Bank Checking \$401.84

2020 FUND REPORT							
WELCA Account							
			Beginning	Income	Expense	Ending	
			Balance 1/1			Balance 12/31	
3.88.100	WELCA General Fund Balance*		\$848.20	\$180.00	\$626.36	\$401.84	
3.88.200	Norwegian Dinner Fund Bal		\$205.39	\$118.74	\$324.13	\$0.00	
3.88.300	Ruth Circle Fund Balance		\$41.00	\$1,059.00	\$1,100.00	\$0.00	
<p>*General Fund includes funerals, ministries (prayer shawl, baby quilts, quilting), and other miscellaneous income and expenses.</p>							
2020 Recipients - Ruth Circle							
	New Horizons		\$100.00				
	Care & Share Food Pantry		\$100.00				
	Lutheran Campus Ministry		\$100.00				
	Lutheran World Relief		\$150.00				
	Sugar Creek Bible Camp		\$50.00				
	WS Community Assistance		\$100.00				
	LaCrosse Area Synod WELCA		\$100.00				
	WELCA Katie's Fund		\$100.00				
	Children's Vision		\$100.00				
	Total Donation		\$900.00				
2020 Recipients - Norwegian Dinner							
<p>In the absence of a Norwegian Dinner a matching fund challenge was initiated over \$9,000 was collected to be distributed in January 2021, and reported in the 2021 Annual Report.</p>							

Asset Report – 2020

Youth Account

Account # Account Name End of year Balance

Assets

1.77.000 Youth – Union State Bank Checking 26,837.08

Liabilities

2.77.700 Pass Through Accounts 10.00

2020 FUND REPORT							
Youth Account							
				Beginning	Income	Expense	Ending
				Balance 1/1			Balance 12/31
3.77.100	General Fund Balance			\$16,434.10	\$3,699.93	\$0.00	\$20,134.03
3.77.200	Scrip Card Fund Balance			(\$5,626.44)	\$16,342.25	\$19,332.50	(\$8,616.69)
3.77.300	Student Fund Balance			\$14,503.46	\$358.00	\$0.00	\$14,861.46
3.77.350	World Hunger Fund Balance			\$530.75	\$633.00	\$530.75	\$633.00
3.77.400	Flamingo Fund Balance			\$335.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$335.00
3.77.402	Peach Fund Balance			\$2,546.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$2,546.00
3.77.500	Mission Trip Fund Balance			(\$3,215.72)	\$150.00	\$0.00	(\$3,065.72)
2020 Pass Through Accounts							
Youth Account							
				Beginning	Income	Expense	Ending
				Balance 1/1			Balance 12/31
	Middle School Mission Trip			\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
	High School Mission Trip			\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
	Sounds Like Love			\$10.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$10.00
	General Pass Through			\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00

2020 Scrip Card Sales Report

- Scrip card sales remained strong despite COVID and not being able to worship together.
- Intend to review future card offerings; eliminate cards with low profit margins and add cards with profit margins greater than 5%.
- Thank you for your support of Youth and World Hunger programs.



2020	Sales	Profit	Profit Margin
Festival	\$ 1,100.00	\$ 33.00	3%
Kwik Trip	\$ 2,985.00	\$ 149.25	5%
Kwik Trip Car Wash	\$ 72.00	\$ 32.00	\$16 per card
Woodman's	\$ 16,800.00	\$ 840.00	5%
Total	\$ 20,957.00	\$ 1,054.25	5%

Prepared by Linda Arentz

Submitted by Scrip Team Members:

Linda Arentz
Tracy Skrentny
Jan Wee

2020 Budget Report						
2021 Proposed Budget						
	2020 Budget	2020 Actual	2021 Budget	\$ Change	% Change	
General Envelope	230,000.00	186,237.00	182,000.00	(48,000.00)	-20.87%	
Loose	5,600.00	2,613.64	2,500.00	(3,100.00)	-55.36%	
Electronic Giving	73,000.00	108,692.00	110,000.00	37,000.00	50.68%	
Initial	350.00	440.00	350.00	0.00	0.00%	
Advent	900.00	195.00	900.00	0.00	0.00%	
Christmas	7,500.00	2,165.00	7,500.00	0.00	0.00%	
Lent	2,900.00	2,008.00	1,000.00	(1,900.00)	-65.52%	
Ash Wednesday	1,300.00	1,368.00	500.00	(800.00)	-61.54%	
Holy Thursday	500.00	150.00	250.00	(250.00)	-50.00%	
Good Friday	700.00	300.00	300.00	(400.00)	-57.14%	
Easter	3,000.00	2,280.00	2,500.00	(500.00)	-16.67%	
Thanksgiving	350.00	570.00	500.00	150.00	42.86%	
Thrivent Choice Dollars	1,000.00	2,231.00	2,000.00	1,000.00	100.00%	
Campus Ministry	750.00	1,430.00	0.00	(750.00)	-100.00%	
The Lutheran	160.00	80.00	100.00	(60.00)	-37.50%	
Interest-General	8,400.00	12,116.39	5,000.00	(3,400.00)	-40.48%	
Sunday School Reg	675.00	0.00	0.00	(675.00)	-100.00%	
VBS Registration	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00%	
Special Event Fee	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00%	
Johnson South Rent	6,300.00	6,600.00	6,600.00	300.00	4.76%	
Parsonage Pooled Trust	7,750.00	7,932.58	7,900.00	150.00	1.94%	
Other	0.00	1,066.30	0.00	0.00	0.00%	
Budget Income	351,135.00	338,474.91	329,900.00	(21,235.00)	-6.05%	
Prepaid	\$14,818.72	\$14,818.72	\$38,320.00	23,501.28	158.59%	
TOTAL Income	365,953.72	353,293.63	368,220.00	2,266.28	0.62%	
EXPENSES						
La Crosse Synod	32,000.00	34,166.70	32,000.00	0.00	0.00%	
Campus Ministry	4,000.00	3,999.96	3,000.00	(1,000.00)	-25.00%	
Sugar Creek	2,500.00	3,041.62	2,500.00	0.00	0.00%	
Food Pantry	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00%	
Community Assistance	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00%	
Causeway	800.00	800.00	800.00	0.00	0.00%	
WS Fire Dept	200.00	0.00	400.00	200.00	100.00%	
Mission Total	39,500.00	42,008.28	38,700.00	(800.00)	-2.03%	

Salary, Senior	53,087.00	44,472.20	57,663.00	4,576.00	8.62%
Benefits, Sr Pr	31,477.00	30,889.54	26,276.64	(5,200.36)	-16.52%
Housing, Sr Pr	13,890.00	25,000.08	13,890.00	0.00	0.00%
Cont Ed, Sr Pr	800.00	800.00	800.00	0.00	0.00%
Books, Sr Pr	300.00	299.60	300.00	0.00	0.00%
Synod Mtg, Sr Pr	400.00	46.29	400.00	0.00	0.00%
FICA Sr Pr	4,184.00	4,184.16	4,184.00	0.00	0.00%
Senior Pastor Total	104,138.00	105,691.87	103,513.64	(624.36)	-0.60%
Salary, Assoc Pr	39,140.00	39,139.92	39,500.00	360.00	0.92%
Benefits, Assoc Pr	24,722.76	24,342.28	20,181.00	(4,541.76)	-18.37%
Housing, Assoc Pr	10,725.00	10,725.12	10,725.00	0.00	0.00%
Cont Ed, Assoc Pr	800.00	524.00	800.00	0.00	0.00%
Books, Assoc Pr	300.00	56.03	300.00	0.00	0.00%
Synod Mtg, Assoc Pr	400.00	17.86	400.00	0.00	0.00%
FICA, Assoc Pr	3,231.00	3,230.64	3,231.00	0.00	0.00%
Assoc Pastor Total	79,318.76	78,035.85	75,137.00	(4,181.76)	-5.27%
Office Secretary	26,750.00	24,805.18	26,750.00	0.00	0.00%
Directory, Youth/Fam	10,750.00	1,775.44	10,750.00	0.00	0.00%
Music Coordinator	4,200.00	4,200.00	4,368.00	168.00	4.00%
Organist	12,600.00	7,745.50	12,600.00	0.00	0.00%
Choir Director	5,568.00	3,116.50	5,568.00	0.00	0.00%
Maintenance	9,350.00	8,083.36	10,000.00	650.00	6.95%
Treasurer	4,400.00	4,505.04	4,576.00	176.00	4.00%
Counter	1,830.00	1,006.00	1,900.00	70.00	3.83%
Dishwasher	450.00	160.00	450.00	0.00	0.00%
Employer FICA	5,806.20	4,189.32	5,887.59	81.40	1.40%
Lay Salaries	81,704.20	59,586.34	82,849.59	1,145.40	1.40%
Conference/Conv	800.00	0.00	800.00	0.00	0.00%
Property Insurance	5,000.00	7,942.25	5,000.00	0.00	0.00%
Worker's Comp	2,100.00	3,394.50	2,100.00	0.00	0.00%
Pulpit supply	500.00	0.00	500.00	0.00	0.00%
Administration	8,400.00	11,336.75	8,400.00	0.00	0.00%

Postage/Petty Cash	2,200.00	2,663.00	2,200.00	0.00	0.00%
Office Supplies	3,000.00	2,859.94	3,000.00	0.00	0.00%
Copier Expense	1,200.00	672.93	1,200.00	0.00	0.00%
Office Equipment	250.00	634.29	250.00	0.00	0.00%
Online Support	520.00	677.15	1,110.00	590.00	113.46%
Auto Expense/Mileage	2,500.00	1,641.06	2,500.00	0.00	0.00%
Internet/Telephone	3,100.00	2,666.10	3,100.00	0.00	0.00%
Office	12,770.00	11,814.47	13,360.00	590.00	4.62%
Gas-church	3,800.00	2,786.45	3,800.00	0.00	0.00%
Electric-church	7,000.00	5,524.40	7,000.00	0.00	0.00%
Water/Sewer-church	900.00	972.52	900.00	0.00	0.00%
General Maint/Repairs	10,000.00	10,873.46	10,000.00	0.00	0.00%
Green Thumb	400.00	421.20	400.00	0.00	0.00%
Building	22,100.00	20,578.03	22,100.00	0.00	0.00%
Outreach Committee	750.00	385.00	750.00	0.00	0.00%
Lutheran Subscription	400.00	574.08	400.00	0.00	0.00%
Senior Ministries	250.00	210.78	250.00	0.00	0.00%
OWLS	100.00	0.00	100.00	0.00	0.00%
Outreach	1,500.00	1,169.86	1,500.00	0.00	0.00%
Parish Activities	600.00	839.62	600.00	0.00	0.00%
Social	600.00	839.62	600.00	0.00	0.00%
Stewardship Comm	100.00	1,029.00	100.00	0.00	0.00%
Envelopes	1,300.00	1,246.39	1,300.00	0.00	0.00%
Electronic Giving	600.00	1,081.82	1,200.00	600.00	100.00%
Stewardship	2,000.00	3,357.21	2,600.00	600.00	30.00%
Music Supplies	550.00	60.75	550.00	0.00	0.00%
Worship Supplies	3,300.00	2,394.50	3,300.00	0.00	0.00%
Devotional Materials	550.00	556.70	550.00	0.00	0.00%
Copyright Fees	700.00	902.67	1,385.00	685.00	97.86%
Wednesday Worship	5,500.00	0.00	5,500.00		
Worship	10,600.00	3,914.62	11,285.00	685.00	6.46%

Sunday School	2,800.00	1,370.60	2,800.00	0.00	0.00%
Confirmation	500.00	710.23	500.00	0.00	0.00%
Vacation Bible School	500.00	174.59	500.00	0.00	0.00%
Education	3,800.00	2,255.42	3,800.00	0.00	0.00%
Youth Program Support	1,000.00	313.06	1,000.00	0.00	0.00%
Sugar Creek Campers	2,400.00	2,400.00	2,400.00	0.00	0.00%
College Student Support	650.00	450.00	650.00	0.00	0.00%
Family Ministries	250.00	319.26	250.00	0.00	0.00%
Youth	4,300.00	3,482.32	4,300.00	0.00	0.00%
TOTAL EXPENSE	370,730.96	344,070.64	368,145.23	(2,585.72)	-0.70%

Asset Report – 2020

Church Accounts

Account #	Account Name	End of year Balance
<i>Assets</i>		
1.00.200	Interest Checking Account	171,623.86
1.00.608	ELCA Pooled Trust – General*	320,172.91
1.00.609	ELCA Pooled Trust – Parsonage*	<u>211,649.47</u>
	<i>Total Assets</i>	\$703,446.24
 <i>Liabilities</i>		
2.00.200	Federal tax deposit	841.02
2.00.300	State Withholding tax	275.62
2.00.900	Pass Through Accounts	<u>9,306.00+</u>
	<i>Total Liabilities</i>	\$10,422.64

*These balances are as of November 30, 2020 based on the statement from ELCA Endowment Pooled Trust. The December 31, 2020 numbers will not be available until 23 Business Days in to January/February. The numbers will be updated once they are received to reflect the correct ending balance of 2020 and will show on the 2021 annual report.

+Includes \$9,285 Lutefisk Dinner Donation Challenge to be distributed in January 2021

2020 Fund Report

			Jan 1	2020	2020	Dec 31
			Balance	Income	Expense	Balance
3.00.000	General Fund		\$60,320.49	\$461,248.87	\$381,925.34	\$139,644.02
3.01.100	Building Fund		\$14,133.77	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$14,133.77
3.01.102	Facility Needs Fund		\$1,827.16	\$4,000.00	\$0.00	\$5,827.16
3.01.103	Cap Improvements		\$5,975.12	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$5,975.12
3.01.104	Emergency Fund		\$5,020.25	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$5,020.25
3.01.105	Equip Repl Fund		\$1,156.23	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$1,156.23
3.01.200	<i>New Facilities/Programs</i>					
	3.01.201	New Fac/Programs	\$54,162.93	\$1,218.50	\$9,480.63	\$45,900.80
	3.01.202	Youth Program	\$4,951.14	\$820.00	\$0.00	\$5,771.14
3.01.300	Building Centennial Fund		\$0.00	\$20,929.13	\$0.00	\$20,929.13
3.02.102	Johnson House South		\$2,157.65	\$3,000.00	\$1,743.41	\$3,414.24
3.02.103	Market Gain-ELCA PT Parsonag		\$216,171.49	\$31,623.18	\$36,145.20	\$211,649.47
3.03.100	<i>Memorial/Bequest Fund</i>					
	3.03.101	Bequest	\$20,929.13	\$0.00	\$20,929.13	\$0.00
	3.03.102	Memorial Fund	\$42,403.16	\$660.00	\$0.00	\$43,063.16
	3.03.103	To Be Designated	\$2,310.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$2,310.00
3.04.101	Eggen Seminary Scholarship		\$7,463.96	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$7,463.96
3.04.102	Eggen-Anderson Camper Fund		\$2,328.12	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$2,328.12
3.04.103	Meyer/Lewis Scholarship Fund		\$3,983.80	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$3,983.80
3.04.105	Marking Scholarship Fund		\$20,457.31	\$0.00	\$500.00	\$19,957.31
3.04.106	Michelson Scholarship Fund		\$56,388.08	\$0.00	\$1,400.00	\$54,988.08
3.04.107	Moe Scholarship Fund		\$1,564.82	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$1,564.82
3.04.108	Piper Scholarship Fund		\$500.00	\$500.00	\$500.00	\$500.00
3.05.101	Dir-Youth/Family Salary Fund		\$4,646.67	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$4,646.67
3.05.102	Sabbatical Fund		\$6,027.20	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$6,027.20
3.05.103	Medical Reimbursement Fund		\$0.00	\$2,000.00	\$0.00	\$2,000.00
3.06.101	Choir Fund		\$1,421.64	\$1,195.00	\$0.00	\$2,616.64
3.06.102	Confirmation Bibles Fund		\$1,141.68	\$500.00	\$0.00	\$1,641.68
3.06.103	Disaster Relief Team Fund		\$2,135.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$2,135.00
3.06.104	Education Fund		\$2,517.97	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$2,517.97
3.06.105	Coffee Fellowship Fund		\$784.29	\$116.60	\$36.23	\$864.66
3.06.107	Green Thumb Fund		\$212.54	\$1,740.00	\$94.41	\$1,858.13
3.06.108	Music Fund		\$1,674.77	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$1,674.77
3.06.109	Senior Ministry Fund		\$1,136.65	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$1,136.65
3.06.110	Social Fund		\$2,523.89	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$2,523.89
3.06.111	Youth Ministry Fund		\$8,318.21	\$275.00	\$0.00	\$8,593.21
3.06.113	Summer Lunch Fund		\$5,451.25	\$6,149.81	\$9,857.46	\$1,743.60
3.06.114	Youth Mission Scholar Fund		\$1,886.12	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$1,886.12
3.06.115	Confirmation Fee Fund		\$61.98	\$45.00	\$674.65	(\$567.67)
3.06.116	Long Education Fund		\$3,208.28	\$15.00	\$80.90	\$3,142.38
3.06.117	SEP Resource Fund		\$200.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$200.00
3.06.118	PLC Fund		\$520.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$520.00

3.06.201	Administration-Bequest Fund	(\$262.86)	\$0.00	\$0.00	(\$262.86)
3.06.202	Outreach-Bequest Fund	\$5,501.74	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$5,501.74
3.06.203	Stewardship-Bequest Fund	\$1,748.03	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$1,748.03
3.06.204	Worship Fund	\$297.53	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$297.53
3.06.301	Library Fund	\$982.33	\$1,000.00	\$37.95	\$1,944.38
3.07.101	Market Gain-ELCA PT General	\$49,893.99	\$47,837.99	\$54,678.68	\$43,053.30
	Total Funds				\$693,023.60
	Total Liabilities				\$10,422.64
	Total Liabilities and Fund Balance				\$703,446.24

Ministry Giving – 2020 (Via Pass Through account)

Ministry Supported	Amount
Sugar Creek	80.00
ELCA World Hunger	2,513.00
ELCA World Hunger – Sunday School offering*	822.26
Care & Share Food Pantry	605.00
Red Cross	88.59
La Crosse Warming Center	84.27
Lutheran Campus Ministry	500.00
Community Assistance Fund/Disaster Fund	232.90

Accounts with balances held over

Lutefisk Dinner Donation (Challenge)	9,285.00
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* includes Sunday School-2019-2020 - \$564.35

To Note:

By Congregation Council action, Sugar Creek Bible Camp also received \$2,400 as additional mission support using money that was budgeted for Camperships but in the absence of camp in 2020 the money was still sent to support the camp budget.