

Sharon Lutheran Church

# Congregational Meeting

Sunday, November 6, 2022



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# Congregational Meeting Agenda

Sharon Lutheran Church

Sunday, November 6<sup>th</sup>, 2022

Celebration Hall

1. Call to order – Jeff Larson
2. Opening Prayer – Pastor Tawanda
3. Approval of the Agenda
4. Approval of the minutes from June 15, 2022 congregational minutes
5. 2021-2022 Receive Financial Report Traci LaDouceur
6. Approval of staff, team written reports. Questions?
7. Old Business- Capital Campaign update conclusion, Mortgage reduction.
8. New Business. Pastor Tawanda's call and employee status. Recognition of some congregational members.
9. Trivia answers and slides.
10. Adjourn – Lord's Prayer



Sharon Lutheran Church Annual Meeting, June 15, 2022

Attendance = 50 members

Jeff Larson, Executive Director, called the meeting to order at 7:10 p.m.

Interim Pastor Karen Young Trenne opened with a prayer

### **Approval of Agenda and Minutes**

Lillian Elsinga moved and Debbie Grow seconded to accept the agenda for this meeting and the minutes from the October 31st, 2021 Congregational Meeting as presented. Motion carried.

### **YTD Finance Report**

Traci LaDouceur provided the year-to-date financial report (end of May). Our fiscal year ends June 30th. Operating revenue is \$816,754 and total expenses are \$843,047, for a deficit of \$26,292. If we end the fiscal year in deficit, will need to draw funds from our operating reserve fund, which has an optimal balance of \$90,000. We will need to do some fundraising to make up difference and pay back the operating reserve fund. Mortgage has been paid down an additional \$90,554 over the last year. On July 1, 2019, our mortgage balance was \$1.1 million and this July 1st it is \$379,000. Refinanced the mortgage in April and payment went down. We have used capital fund to pay for roof and elevator repairs. We had moved \$61,635 to the capital reserve fund last October.

### **Building Task Force Report**

Sara Peters provided a report from the Building Task Force. The task force was formed at request of properties team to identify current building needs and opportunities for improvement in the future. Has identified a list of 50 capital items to



consider as well as a process for prioritizing capital needs. Thanks to task force members and everyone who went on tours and provided feedback.

### **Old Business**

**Roof Update** – Jeff Larson reported that the flat part of the roof on the east side of the building was in dire need of repair. Last fall, we got a bid from Skinner Roofing for \$42,500, which was lowest bid. Accepted bid and they will start the work around end of July. Funds for this project will be paid out of the capital reserve fund which has a balance of \$88,410. The needed elevator repair will take another \$15,000 from the capital reserve fund. Traci was able to secure a \$5,000 grant to pay the remainder of the elevator repair.

**Mortgage** – Jeff Larson reported that the mortgage principal has been paid down by \$730,00 down in three years.

**Celebration Hall Sound System** – Matt Dahlen reported that a team of volunteers has installed all the parts that have come in, but they are still waiting on amps, speakers, and some radio parts for the microphones. System is working and the sound has been much better. Roxanne Gessler thanked those who have volunteered their time and talents to do this work.

### **Proposed Budget**

Traci LaDouceur presented the proposed budget for FY22-23. We had to increase the properties budget as utility bills have been higher as well as for snow removal. The personnel committee suggested the budget for staff, which includes raises. The proposal is for a balanced budget with total revenue and expenses each budgeted at \$1,067,000. Pete Tunseth moved and Mary Adams seconded to accept the budget as presented. Motion carried.

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## **Election**

A roster of candidates for team chairs, at-large council members, and Treasurer seeking election to open positions was presented. The Treasurer candidate would serve the remainder of the term of Penny Zola, who has resigned from that role. Pete Tunseth moved and Steve Erlandson seconded that we cast a unanimous ballot as presented. Motion passed unanimously. Newly elected team chairs and council members are invited to the next Council meeting on June 23rd in South Hall at 6pm.

Those elected on the unanimous ballot were:

**Treasurer** – Traci LaDouceur (completing term originally held by Amanda Holte, then Penny Zola) (2023)

**Council members-at-large** – Audrey Kasprovicz (2025)

Shawn Senescall (2025)

## **Team chairs** –

**Public Relations** – Co-chairs Kerri Heid and Kyle Ellingson (2024) (This term was not filled in 2021)

**Properties** – Co-chairs Fawn Behrens-Smith and Mary Adams (2024) (This term was not filled in 2021)

**Fellowship** – Barry Branvold (2025)

**Community Connections** – Co-chairs Karen Nygaard and Diane Volden (2025)

**Stewardship** – Steve Moser (2025)

**Education** – position vacant (2025)

## **Announcements**

Pastor Karen explained our transition plan for calling a new Administrative Pastor. Typically, a call committee's first task is to create a Ministry Site Profile, but so much

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has changed at Sharon that we will instead create a Transition Team that will work with Pastor Karen on a new Ministry Site Profile. After that's completed, a call committee will be formed. This process will give the call committee a much better idea of what the Congregation needs. The transition team will be looking at many factors including staffing and programs, team structure, and how our congregation's needs have changed. This will allow us to be very intentional about how to structure the position of the Administrative Pastor. The goal is that the transition team will contact each member in some way (phone call, email, meeting) to invite feedback. Asked attendees to consider whether they would like to serve on transition team.

### **New business**

There was no new business.

Jeff Larson called the meeting adjourned at 7:45 p.m.

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## Executive Director Annual Report

Greetings and God's blessings to all of you.

I came across this message from Rick Warren. I have shared this with our council, and I would like to share it with you because I believe it speaks to all of us here at Sharon.

*"The Benefits of belonging to a Church Family from Rick Warren"*

*When we get together, I want to encourage you in your faith, but I also want to be encouraged by yours. Romans 1: 12*

*The better connected you are to a church family, the more you will experience everything the church has to offer.*

What does the church have to offer?

**You learn your true identity.** People often look for their identity in superficial things, such as their career, wealth, or favorite sports team. They may even try to find their identity in the brands of clothing they wear. But when you belong to Jesus, he gives you a whole new identity.

The Bible says, "Therefore if any be in Christ, they are a new creature: old things are passed away: behold, all things are become new. 2 Corinthians 5: 17

When you belong to Jesus, God adopts you into his family, the church. Unlike your physical family—in which people die, grow apart, move away, or divorce—your spiritual family is permanent and will last for all eternity in heaven. Ephesians 2:19 says, "you are citizens with everyone else who belongs to the family of God".

**You are supported by others.** Like the strong structure of a building, we hold each other up. Without the stable support system of a church, you may find yourself collapsing at some point in your life. You weren't meant to do it all on your own. You need physical, spiritual, emotional, and mental support.

Years ago, I began putting LEGO sets together with my grandkids. You know what I discovered? Each LEGO brick has no purpose on its own unless it's connected to others. Disconnected, they're just a pile of plastic. But when you connect them, you can build just about anything you can imagine.

Romans 1: 12 says. "When we get together, I want to encourage you in your faith, but I also want to be encouraged by yours". That's why we belong to the church—so God's people can say together, "Your faith will help me, and my faith will help you."

This is Sharon Lutheran Church. We are stronger together and we can do just about anything, together. I would encourage you to hear and seek out where God is calling you. Sharon is not a building; it is not our great pastor's or deacon or staff or church council or teams or music. It is ALL of us and all of that, together.



Read the reports from the staff and teams. We have great things happening here at Sharon. Let's share that with others. Keep coming to be encouraged and supported. Invite a friend or neighbor or someone who may not know that all are welcome here. We are all better, together.

*Prayer: Loving God, thank you for this church and the people who call Sharon their family. Encourage us to grow our faith together and support one another, to keep the foundation of Jesus strong and supportive and alive in all of us. Where we can imagine that all things are possible, together. In Jesus name we pray. Amen.*

Yours in Christ,  
Jeff Larson, Executive Director

## **Interim Administrative Pastor Annual Report**

*By God's Grace, Created to Worship, Called to Teach, Committed to Serve*

This is the time of the year to reflect on our mission as a congregation and set goals for the coming year. This past year has been full of worship, teaching, and service in Jesus' name. Our mask and distance restrictions have lifted. Worship attendance continues to climb, but has not reached pre-pandemic numbers. Our online worship continues to reach those in our community and around the country who are unable to worship with us in person. Our faith formation ministry has lifted its mask restrictions as well. The need for service in our congregation and community continues as never before. We are blessed with the generous contributions of time, talent, and resources.

Pastor Tawanda Murinda was called to a two-year term call this past January. He began his ministry with Sharon Lutheran in March on Ash Wednesday. The first day he was here a camera crew accompanied him. Later in the year a picture of Pastor Tawanda in the Sharon Lutheran Sanctuary was on the cover of the Living Lutheran magazine. This was because Pastor Tawanda was a recipient of an ELCA Fund for Leaders scholarship. His presence with us as one of our pastors would not be possible without the partnership of the ELCA. Our offering dollars going to the ELCA have come back to us as a blessing in Pastor Tawanda.

Barbara Jorgenson was hired as our new Administrative and Media Assistant, starting in June. She has become a wonderful asset to our staff. She and her family have also joined Sharon congregation as members.

Our Capital Campaign was finished on June 30<sup>th</sup> of this year. Beginning on July 1, 2019, Sharon Lutheran reduced its mortgage by over \$800,000 in just three years. The amount owed on the building is now less than \$400,000. This is a lasting legacy to the future of this congregation. As the digital age progresses, it is difficult to say how church buildings will be used in the future. Having this building paid for will allow the ministry to be able to adapt to the needs of the future church.

Sharon Lutheran continues to be led by a faithful congregation council and our executive director, Jeff Larson. The ministry teams (former boards) have been faithfully carrying out the ministries they are called to. All the teams are looking to expand their participants. If serving Jesus through one or more of these teams would give you joy, please do not hesitate to contact the team leaders. You can find their names in this report. Do not wait to be asked. Let your interest be known. The opportunities are endless.

I want to commend the Sharon Lutheran staff, Deacon Jamie Travers, Pastor Tawanda Murinda, Roxanne Gessler, Dave Berger, Steve DeKrey, Cheryl Nyhlen, Heather Peters, Missy Thompson, Barb Jorgenson, Dan Kuzel, Stephanie Leighton, Sue Kerr, and Jack Boyer, as well as other musicians, technicians, and coordinators for their faithful service to the congregation. They are a joy to work with and have continued to facilitate opportunities for this congregation to worship, teach, and serve in Jesus name.

The time has come for the congregation to move into the call process for a new administrative pastor. I have not been successful in recruiting a transition team who will work on the ministry site profile in preparation for the call committee to be formed. Please prayerfully consider serving on this important team if you are asked. Pray for Sharon Lutheran as we move into the next phase of this blessed ministry that Jesus has given to us.

Yours in Christ,  
Interim Administrative Pastor Karen Young Trenne

### **Congregation statistics for FY 2022 (July 1, 2021 – June 30, 2022)**

**New Members:** Dale & Sally Nelson, Darrel & Beth Randklev, Lindsay Sannes, Doug Henning, Ed Sears

**Baptisms:** Adalynn Anne Knutson, Aurora Lynn Barta, Brooklyn Grace King, Sawyer Layne Fredrickson, Wren Ira Slocum, Rowan James Barta, Ryggs Russell Brown, Beckett Steven Breidenbach, Sawyer Don Omlie, Kase Aaron Sigette, Nellis Winona Odegard, Orson Rivers Odegard, Mathew Albert Laducer, Jr., Amelia Diamond Smith, Nora Evelyn Waege, Anders Connell Senescall, Bennett Alan Rasmussen, Cora Naemy Gibson, Theodore Alan Olson, Colt

Michael Levenseller, Wren Rosalie Boyer, Tenley Rae Kelly, William Kendall Rosaasen, Frederick Aaron Burr, Norah Jane Larter, Jackson Ray Kraft, Logan Ivan Bina, Remi Lou Morrotto, Scarlett Grace Gillespie

**Confirmands:** *Two ceremonies in 2021 due to COVID in 2020 (Spring)* Austin Engen, Colby Magenau, Tanner Davidson, Alexis Clausen, Emma Christopher, Alexis Kraemer, Kyle Fulton, Connor Litzinger, Will Johnson, Isaac Schall, Cassidy Mann, Tanner Piepkorn, Sam Strandell, Alexis Crane, Lauren Rusk, Troy Stenehjem, Denver Flanagan, Nick Swanson, Sydney Hanson, Ava Miller, Cade Halvorson, Hannah Olson, Rylee Watson, Brady McGarry, Marin Aure, Lewis Beaver, Katelyn Ring, Cosette Clement, Jordyn Knott, Cara Gigstad, Allison Elmquist, Trevor Olderbak, Drew Boen, Jacob Grandstand, Ashley Berger, Gavin Stroh, Abby Zola, Narria Nuebert, Abby Iverson, Maggie Dietrich, Carly Mann, Grant Vatnsdal, Colten Dahl, Tatem Mosley

(Fall) Logan Arason, Jacob Berglund, London Perez, Gavin Pihlgren, Elizabeth Simon, Charlotte Tellmann, Jacob Votava, Onalee Shogren, Ally Nelson, Anna Welsh, Grace Paranica, Mason Stroh, Bailey Neubaer, Alyssa Drengsen, Aiden Moreland, Cayden Reed, Kiara Lloyd, Eliza Dodds, Calae Sapa, Carter Byron, Jordan Dvorak, Grant Lemm, Carson Skarperud, Canceler Colgrove, Elli Hanson, Sierra Heyd, Brady Price, Hanna Biby

**Marriages:** Cass Meyers and Callie Carlson

**Deaths:** Robert Kringlen, Kraig Wilson, Erick Johnson Jr., Corinne Dahl, Linda Fuller, Ginger Johnson, Eunice Soonpaa, Lucille Qualley, Lyle O. Nelson, Marlene Maxon, Arthur Forman, Brenda Hanson, John Finck, Leon Fjestad, Calvin Lindberg, Robert Thompson, Robert Steen, Jesse Escobar, Mary Ann Thomas, Laurie Saxon, Clifford Horner, Peggy Ryan

## Deacon of Congregational Life Annual Report

“I ♥ My Church” was a theme for congregational life we used in 2021. It was put together by the PR Team. As we look back on this past year what are the things that you love about your church, Sharon Lutheran? I invite you to not only think about it, but to share your thoughts with others inside and outside Sharon. Invite others to come and see what you love about Sharon.

One of the things that I love about our church is the people. From the staff to the members and the visitors. It is an honor to come to work each day and it is great to see people come back after COVID distancing. At the end of September, we had a Golden Age Homecoming worship service and time of fellowship. It was wonderful to welcome back home some of our nursing home and shut-in members. We had some other fun congregational life events like joint worship services, Cereal Sunday and more. Soon we will be getting to celebrate our centennial, in a way we did not get to because of COVID.

Another thing that I love about our church is the way our congregation serves and cares for others. We are regularly collecting and donating, hosting groups in our building, doing service projects and caring for people. This past year we collected food weekly for St. Joseph's Food Pantry, we have served meals with Northland Rescue Mission, assembled Health Kits for Lutheran World Relief on Palm Sunday, filled backpacks at the mission and United Way and had a great God's Work Our Hands Day in September to name just a few. At the end of the summer, we also built a new "Building Community Connections" Center in our narthex to help us continue to do God's Work through Our Hands throughout the entire year and to tell the story of God at work in our church, community, and home.

There are many more things that I love about our church, and you can read about them in the rest of this annual report. When some people hear the word "church" they think of stuffy, out-of-date, judgmental & irrelevant. At Sharon Lutheran Church you won't find any of that! Instead, you will find an authentic community of people who care and support one another, who are learning more about God, and who want to serve our city and neighbors. And that is why we LOVE our church, and we think others might too! I encourage you to invite and bring others to come and check it out!

Deacon Jamie Travers  
Deacon of Congregational Life

## Associate Pastor Annual Report

"O God, our help in ages past,  
Our hope for years to come,  
Our shelter from the stormy blast,  
And our eternal home" – Isaac Watts, *O God, Our Help in Ages Past*

The verse above is from my mom's favorite hymn, *Mubatsiri Wedu Mwari* or as we would call it here, *O God, Our Help in Ages Past*. For my mom, the song is her faith statement – this is how she expresses what God means to and for her. She always reminds me that God is faithful and ever-present. She says that life is a journey with many ups and downs but the one constant thing is God's sure presence through all of it. Time is a tool we use to see how God has been with us. When we look back at the years gone by, we see God's hands in our lives.

While my time at Sharon is still very brief, I can look back and see how God has touched every second of it. As I write this report, I have been a pastor here for almost eight months! And these months have been filled with incredible ministry and new relationships. I feel like I have been welcomed and embraced by many of you who are part of this family of faith. I have been made to feel like myself and been allowed to express myself fully without holding back. That's really what everyone wants when they join a new community.

I joined you at a time when the country was moving out of the pandemic and the community here at Sharon was dreaming of the future. I have marveled at how well you have responded to calls to come back to church and get involved again. I have seen God's love shared among you and outpoured to the wider community. And in my primary calling here as Associate Pastor for Faith Formation, I have witnessed the amazing energy and joy from our youth and families. I have seen God's work during Vacation Bible School, in Duluth on the Middle School Mission Trip, in the community supporting our LGBTQIA youth, in our collaboration with other ELCA churches to do YA ministry, and on Wednesdays with kids of all ages.

One of the reasons I felt called to Sharon was the amazing staff you have working here. You have some of the best Faith Formation leaders I have worked with in my young career. You also have dedicated volunteers who put together a strong ministry for our youth. I am excited to be part of this group as we work together to ignite the fire of God in our young people. Lastly, I know that I get a little too passionate about justice and care for the marginalized in our community. But you have welcomed that passion and supported it with your words of affirmation and diligent volunteering spirit. I have said this before already but I will repeat it here: I believe that if we work together as members of Sharon Lutheran Church, we can change Grand Forks and even the world itself! Thank you for all you do.

I am also grateful for my colleagues, Pastor Karen Young Trenne and Deacon Jamie Travers; for the staff, council, teams, and volunteers. I look forward to what God has in store for us in the coming year.

In Christ,  
Rev. Tawanda Murinda  
Associate Pastor

## **Sharon Lutheran Fellowship Team Annual Report**

This newly formed team first met in June, after Deacon Jamie organized volunteers.

The new group consisted of: Deacon Jamie, Barry Branvold, Nancy Lindback, Alice Seneschal, Marsha Johnson, Meg Harrington, Amanda Gulbrandson, Kyle Gulbrandson, Jenifer Anbor and Holly Bommersbach. The team first met in June of 2022.

The team nominated Barry to be the team leader. It was decided that we meet again in July to continue with monthly assignments. The group's primary task during the year is organizing coffee and donut fellowship. At the July meeting, Barry showed the team what it takes to do coffee and donuts each Sunday. Alice suggested a written form would be helpful for people doing the coffee and donuts. Barry agreed and Alice prepared one. Getting volunteers to do coffee and donuts continues to be difficult, but there is a sign-up sheet near the donuts each week. The team decided to try to have about four events each year apart from Sunday morning coffee and donuts fellowship.

In August the team assisted the Evangelism team with the outdoor worship.

Special events in September were planned and the team assisted.

In October the group planned a cereal fellowship to replace donuts on October 2nd, and trunk or treat for Halloween,

For December, helping with Advent events that are already planned.

The team has meetings planned through December 2022.

The team also discussed Wednesday meals. A survey was in the process and it was decided to wait until the results were tabulated. The team did have Natalie Rohloff come to a meeting and speak about her past experiences with Wednesday meals.

Going forward into 2023 we discussed a January Birthday event.

This new team has kept active and energetic since its start in June of 2022.

Respectfully submitted by Barry Branvold

*\*Please see additional information from Barry regarding Sunday coffee and donuts elsewhere in this report.*

## **Lay Ministry Team 2022 Annual Report**

As per Sharon's constitution, the Lay Ministry Team is charged with the responsibility for the spiritual welfare of the pastor(s) and congregational members, individually and corporately, as well as the supervision of everything pertaining to congregational worship. The following is a brief summary/focus of the Lay Ministry team for fiscal year 2022.

The Lay Ministry Team assisted Sharon staff in brainstorming and planning for worship, particularly related to special events and celebrations such as outdoor worship, reformation and confirmation, All Saints Day, Thanksgiving Eve worship, Advent and Christmas services, Lent, Holy Week, and Easter services. Planning included Covid precautions and safety guidelines with continued focus on livestream worship and safe communion practices.

Approximately 64 worship volunteers are typically needed each week, for a total of more than 3,300 per year. Duties of worship assistants were modified as necessary to maintain sanitation as per Covid precautions. We continue to use SignUpGenius for volunteer registration with minimal success and have brainstormed other ways to engage more members to volunteer, including the use of Service Groups. We resumed the use of communion assistant cards at each service, and the Altar Guild has been handling communion preparation. We worked with Cheryl Nyhlen to

utilize youth as worship assistants and hope to continue that effort this year. We are anxious to work with the recently approved Volunteer Coordinator position to increase the level of volunteers for worship assistants.

The Lay Ministry Team recruited congregational members to serve on the Nominating Committee established to fill roles for the various teams. The Call Committee is working on plans to officially welcome Pastor Tawanda to Sharon. Staff and clergy continued to gracefully accept the challenges related to the on-going pandemic and Covid restrictions. Lay Ministry staffed the Welcome Center in August and will do so again in December.

Due to safety concerns and Covid protocol, Sharon's Nursery has not been available in FY 2021. The Lay Ministry Team is currently working on a survey tool to gather input from the congregation about the best use for that space moving forward.

Thank you to the current members of the Lay Ministry team including Jill Dahlen, Marlys Johnson, Kristi Larson and Kari Wiltse. Special thanks to Pastor Karen, Pastor Tawanda, Deacon Jamie, and Roxanne Gessler for joining us on the Lay Ministry team; we look forward to working together in the months to come!

Respectfully Submitted,  
Linda Butler  
Lay Ministry Team Chair

## Stewardship Team 2022 Annual Report

One of the most exciting things that is happening at Sharon is the closing in on the retirement of our mortgage. A new balloon display in the narthex demonstrates how far we have come in recent years to paying off the construction mortgage. Thanks to Bri Molmen for that tremendous work! Steve Moser has succeeded Brent Jiran as the Team Chair without missing a beat. There is room for more on our team so let him know if you are ready to try it on!

We also decided to wipe out our database of My Ministry form collections this year - meaning we are starting from scratch. If you have not updated that form online or in worship in the past few months, it is likely that your preferences are unknown to the staff and boards! Consider filling out a new My Ministry form at the welcome center or by clicking on the **Ways to Get Involved** button on our homepage at [sharonlutheran.org](http://sharonlutheran.org)

The Stewardship Team also developed a 2022 Summer Stewardship program centered around a fish themed envelope collection that brought in close to \$7,500! We created a fun fishing activity and poster around the ancient Greek symbol for Jesus ICHTHYS.

The Fall Stewardship program for 2022 is revving up now and centers on a “Sharon 500” theme that encourages a return to worship and regular church life or “Race into Sharon”. We had a race track available and gave die cast cars and treats to all that participated. This includes a goal of collecting forms from at least 500 families or individuals estimating their giving over the next year.

We are excited for the coming year and ready to support the ministries and other activities that are so much a part of this congregation. Won’t you join us in worship and service? Specifically, we invite your involvement on our creative Stewardship Team. Our current members include Brent Jiran, Kim Votava, Bri Molmen, John Martsolf, Steve Moser, and Pastor Karen.

Steve Moser  
Chair

## **SLC Youth Ministry Team Annual Report**

### **YOUTH TRIPS**

Middle School Mission Trip – Our middle schoolers traveled to Duluth, MN for a week in mid-June 2022 to learn, grow, and serve together. 5 students and 3 adult chaperones made the trip.

High School Trip to Red Willow – Our high schoolers unfortunately had to cancel their mission trip to Denver, CO, due to COVID concerns. Instead they traveled to Red Willow Bible Camp in mid-July 2022 for a week of fellowship, faith-based learning, and fun. 7 students and 1 chaperone made the trip.

Castaway – In September 2022, 13 middle and high school students and 8 chaperones made the trip to Castaway Club near Detroit Lakes, MN for a weekend of worship, recreational activities, and multiple trips to the campus coffee shop.

To prepare for these trips, the students fundraised by selling wreaths and youth stock and hosting dinner church. Total funds raised exceeded \$12,000!

### **YOUTH GROUPS**

Our middle schoolers have been excited to return to 5G youth group activities on Wednesday nights. Approximately 15-20 students and 3 adults meet weekly for fun, snacks, and fellowship together.

Our high schoolers continue to meet for Re:New youth group activities, which also happen on Wednesday nights. Approximately 12-14 students and 2 adults meet weekly for fellowship, laughter, and deep discussion.



345 Alive music group has returned for 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup>, and 5<sup>th</sup> graders at 3:45 on Sundays. Approximately 10 kids and 2 adults meet each week to share music and fellowship together.

The Middle School Lock-In last May involved 13 students and 5 adults who attempted to stay up all night, first visiting Northern Air and then settling in to play games and watch movies at the church. The High School Late Night event last spring involved 12 students and 3 adults who also had a great evening of games, snacks, and movies.

## **YOUTH TEAM**

YMN Extravaganza - The ELCA Youth Ministry Network 2022 Extravaganza took place in February 2022, and 2 youth team members were part of a larger group that traveled to Minneapolis, MN for the weekend to learn and grow together. A 3<sup>rd</sup> youth team member was able to watch key sessions from home.

Our Youth Team currently has 7 members. We staffed the Welcome Center in May 2022 and we are back at it in the month of October.

## **WHAT'S UP NEXT:**

Mission Trip - Next summer's mission trip location has been chosen, and our middle schoolers and high schoolers will be traveling together for our first-ever (at least in recent history) joint mission trip to Milwaukee, WI. 12-14 students and 4-5 adults are expected to go on this trip. The students were thrilled to learn that they will be departing at 4:30AM!

Fundraising - Wreath sales to support next summer's trip are running now through October 30. Stop by the table in the Narthex before and after worship in the month of October to purchase a wreath and show your support. Additional fundraisers are planned in the coming months. Youth Stock will take place in January, and the Spring Dinner will be back in 2023!

Respectfully submitted,  
Stephanie Magenau  
Youth Ministry Team Chair

## **Faith Formation Ministries - Christian Education**

In Matthew 19 and Mark 10, we find the story of Jesus and the little children. The disciples rebuke parents for bringing their children so close to Jesus. Jesus tells the disciples to stop. As this story is told in our Spark Story Bible, He said, "I want to bend down and look in their eyes and tell them about God's love too. Never stop anyone from coming to see me, especially children. Let the children come sit on my knee—children like these are part of God's big family too."

Are we not the hands and feet of Jesus? We, too, welcome the children and are ready to teach them about God's love. This takes a great number of volunteers and this past year, like many years before, we had a dedicated crew of volunteers who shared their faith, their time, and their love with the children of Sharon Lutheran Church.

We served over 150 children in four church school sessions, two on Sundays and two on Wednesdays. We attended worship on a rotating basis by grade level. It was an interesting year, as we were still trying to maneuver through the Covid-19 pandemic with social distancing and masks. A little beyond midyear we returned to "normal". It was fun to see all the faces! We continued our Ministry Milestones with all grades: Lambs—This Is My Lutheran Church; King's Kids—Baptism; Kindergarten—The Ten Commandments; First Grade—The Lord's Prayer; Second Grade—The Apostles' Creed; Third Grade—NRSV Student Bible and Family Bible Event; Fourth Grade—The Gospel of Mark; and Fifth Grade—Communion Conversations.

In June we were able to hold Vacation Bible School, all in person! Our theme "Kingdom Rock" brought more than 75 participants and again a dedicated group of volunteers. VBS is a fun four-evening event with a chance to explore Bible stories, crafts, music, and games.

Volunteers are the backbone of Faith Formation Ministries. We appreciate those adults and Confirmation students who have stepped up to this ministry opportunity. And we also thank our Education Ministry Team from 2021-2022: Sara Peters, Cienna Toso, Marnie Schuschke, and Laura Look. All of them have many years of service to Sharon's children's ministry.

Grace and Peace,  
Cheryl Nyhlen

**Sharon Lutheran Church**  
**2021-2022 Statement of Revenue and Expenses**

SUPPORT AND REVENUE	General Fund	Restricted	Endowment	Total All funds
Offerings Revenue	\$862,925			\$862,925
Events/Bldg Income	\$30,945			\$30,945
Youth Registrations	\$10,562			\$10,562
Unrestricted Gifts	\$18,742			\$18,742
Temporarily Restricted Gifts		\$157,464		\$157,464
Interest Income/Change in Asset Value	\$33		(\$29,868)	(\$29,835)
Permanently Restricted Gifts			\$21,250	\$21,250
Faith Formation Revenue		\$16,767		\$16,767
<b>Total Support and Revenue</b>	<b>\$923,207</b>	<b>\$174,231</b>	<b>(\$8,618)</b>	<b>\$1,088,820</b>
<b>EXPENSES(by program)</b>				
ELCA Mission Support	\$36,300			\$36,300
Worship	\$11,985			\$11,985
Pastors	\$217,342			\$217,342
Support Staff	\$386,386			\$386,386
Staff Expenses	\$6,831			\$6,831
Other Administrative	\$33,658			\$33,658
Payroll Expenses	\$30,237			\$30,237
Christian Education	\$5,422			\$5,422
Evangelism	\$151			\$151
Public Relations	\$395			\$395
Maintenance/Grounds	\$82,574			\$82,574
Youth Activities	\$6,761			\$6,761
Fellowship Activities	\$1,052			\$1,052
Church In Society	\$0			\$0
Stewardship	\$6,618			\$6,618
Debt Servicing Interest & Principal	\$92,705	\$87,000	\$3,554	\$183,259
Expenses from Unrestricted Gifts	\$17,734			\$17,734
Temporarily Restricted Expenses	\$7,000	\$60,317	\$5,863	\$73,180
Faith Formation Expenses		\$10,375		\$10,375
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$943,151</b>	<b>\$157,692</b>	<b>\$9,417</b>	<b>\$1,110,260</b>
<b>Excess of Support and Revenue over Expenses</b>	<b>(\$19,944)</b>	<b>\$16,539</b>	<b>(\$18,035)</b>	<b>(\$21,440)</b>
<b>Fund Balance 6-30-2021</b>	<b>\$232,461</b>	<b>\$68,706</b>	<b>\$198,190</b>	<b>\$499,357</b>
<b>Fund Balance 6-30-2022</b>	<b>\$212,517</b>	<b>\$85,245</b>	<b>\$180,155</b>	<b>\$477,917</b>

**Sharon Lutheran Church Statement of Cash Flows**

**YTD 6/30/2022**

Operating Cash Flows	General Fund	Restricted	Endowment	Total
Change in Net Assets	(\$19,944)	\$16,539	(\$18,035)	(\$21,440)
<b>Adjustments:</b>				
Change in Payables	(\$400)			(\$400)
Change in Payroll Withholding	(\$523)			(\$523)
<b>Net Operating Cash Flows</b>	(\$20,867)	\$16,539	(\$18,035)	(\$22,363)
<b>Cash and Cash Equivalents</b>				
<b>6-30-2021</b>	\$233,949	\$68,706	\$198,190	\$500,845
<b>6-30-2022</b>	\$213,082	\$85,245	\$180,155	\$478,482

**Sharon Lutheran Church Balance Sheet**

**06/30/22**

ASSETS:	General Fund	Restricted	Endowment	Total
Cash and Cash Equivalent	\$213,082	\$85,245	\$180,155	\$478,482
Land and Buildings	\$3,939,114			\$3,939,114
Furniture and Fixtures	\$814,060			\$814,060
<b>Total Assets</b>	\$4,966,256	\$85,245	\$180,155	\$5,231,656
<b>LIABILITIES AND FUND BALANCE</b>				
Accounts/Taxes Payable	\$566			\$566
Mortgage Payable	\$379,216			\$379,216
Special Assessments Payable	\$4,864			\$4,864
<b>Total Liabilities</b>	\$384,646			\$384,646
<b>FUND BALANCES</b>				
Unrestricted	\$4,581,610			\$4,581,610
Temporarily Restricted		\$85,245	\$3,555	\$88,800
Permanently Restricted			\$176,600	\$176,600
<b>Total Fund Balance</b>	\$4,581,610	\$85,245	\$180,155	\$4,847,010
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES AND FUND BALANCE</b>	\$4,966,256	\$85,245	\$180,155	\$5,231,656

**2021-2022 Member Gifts forwarded to these Organizations**

<b>Altru Cancer Center</b>	<b>\$500</b>
<b>Christus Rex</b>	<b>\$122</b>
<b>CROP Walk</b>	<b>\$660</b>
<b>Eastern North Dakota Synod</b>	<b>\$7,600</b>
<b>ELCA - College Scholarship Expenses</b>	<b>\$1,000</b>
<b>ELCA - God's Global Barnyard</b>	<b>\$10</b>
<b>ELCA - Lutheran Disaster Relief</b>	<b>\$693</b>
<b>Feed My Starving Children</b>	<b>\$575</b>
<b>Love Feast</b>	<b>\$331</b>
<b>North Country Food Bank</b>	<b>\$146</b>
<b>Northlands Rescue Mission Picnic</b>	<b>\$360</b>
<b>PATH Foster Care Program</b>	<b>\$71</b>
<b>Red River Valley Community Action - Giving Tree</b>	<b>\$110</b>
<b>St. Joseph's Food Bank - Souper Bowl Sunday</b>	<b>\$391</b>
<b>Sunshine Hospitality Home</b>	<b>\$365</b>
<b>Valley Senior Living Chaplain Ministry</b>	<b>\$1,000</b>
	<hr/> <b>\$13,934</b> <hr/>

**2021-2022 Church School Benevolences**

<b>Altru Health Foundation</b>	<b>\$40</b>
<b>Circle of Friends Humane Society</b>	<b>\$30</b>
<b>Global Barnyard - Good Gifts</b>	<b>\$1,375</b>
<b>LDR- Eastern European Crisis Response</b>	<b>\$100</b>
<b>Make A Wish</b>	<b>\$100</b>
<b>Northlands Rescue Mission</b>	<b>\$10</b>
<b>Sharon Lutheran Properties</b>	<b>\$100</b>
<b>St Joseph's Social Care</b>	<b>\$111</b>
<b>St Jude Children's Research Hospital</b>	<b>\$100</b>
	<hr/> <b>\$1,966</b> <hr/>

**2021-2022 Confirmation Benevolences**

Christus Rex	\$5
Crop Walk	\$17
	<hr/> <hr/> <b>\$22</b>

**2021-2022 Sharon Lutheran Restricted/Designated Expenditures**

Bratteli Memorial Fund Expenditures	\$234
Building & Grounds Expenditures	\$9,891
Capital Campaign - GIFT	\$87,000
Card/Meals Ministries	\$25
Children's Bibles	\$579
Choir Robe Expenses	\$413
Elevator Repair	\$19,902
Faith Formation Ministries	\$674
Fellowship	\$384
Flowers - Easter and Christmas	\$1,108
I love my church T-shirts	\$1,735
Lefse	\$88
Library/Children's Library	\$316
Liturgical Art	\$72
Masks	\$252
Sharon Cares Health Ministry	\$995
Sound System	\$28,794
Thrivent Choice Expenditures	\$1,081
Tree Removal	\$2,000
Wednesday Fellowship Meal	\$534
Young Adult Events	\$53
	<hr/> <hr/> <b>\$156,130</b>

**2021-2022 Endowment Gifts**

ELCA Disaster Relief - Ukraine Refugee Support	\$1,100
ELCA Fund for Leaders	\$1,233
Sharon Lutheran Church School Curriculum	\$1,125
Sharon Lutheran Faith Formation Mental Health Discussion Guide	\$500
Sharon Lutheran Faith Formation Worship Space Materials	\$576
Sharon Lutheran Mortgage Reduction	\$3,554
Sharon Lutheran Office Furniture	\$500
Sharon Lutheran Senior Bibles	\$190
Sharon Lutheran Spark Digital Bibles	\$419
Sharon Lutheran Stewardship	\$220
	<hr/> <hr/> <b>\$9,417</b>

**Total Member Gifts, Restricted/Designated Expenditures and Endowment Gifts** **\$181,469**

**Sharon Lutheran Church  
Restricted Youth Funds 2021-2022**

<b>Revenue</b>	
Youth Stock Donations	\$8,828
Youth Fundraising	\$3,822
Youth Trips/Registrations	\$3,145
Youth Lock Ins	\$440
Youth Fellowship/Misc	\$412
Youth Gifts	\$120
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>\$16,767</b>
<b>Expenses</b>	
Youth HS Missions/Gathering	\$373
Youth Middle School Mission Trips	\$4,968
Youth Fundraising Expense	\$3,174
Youth Fellowship/Misc	\$955
Youth Lock In Expense	\$831
Youth E-Service Charge	\$74
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$10,375</b>
<b>Excess Revenue over Expense for fiscal year</b>	<b>\$6,392</b>

## **Director of High School and Young Adult Ministries Annual Report**

Greetings Sharon Lutheran,

As of July I have now been on staff here at Sharon for 3 years, and in that time it has been a pleasure and honor to serve and be trusted with the ministries for our High School and Young Adults.

This past year, I was very excited to welcome Pastor Tawanda on board, and he has been such a help and support for the work I do. My ministries have especially benefitted from his guidance.

This past year we renewed our focus on our Young Adult ministries in partnership with Calvary, United and Christus Rex. We have made some more attempts to set aside meeting times for our college age ministry that are more in line with their needs. We have had cookouts, camp fires, bowling and book studies. We have also strengthened our partnership with the other churches and the Grand Forks Pride community because of the number of people in this age group that are becoming more comfortable and open with who they are. We feel this is an important initiative to reach out to a community that has often been marginalized by the church, it also is modeling Jesus' command to love one another. God Talk on Tap continues at Half Brothers the first Thursday of every month. Numbers for this fluctuate based on the time of year, but we do draw a good mix of people from various age groups from 19-35.

In the High School space, we were happy to come back to in person instruction this past year. During the pandemic, numbers for things like 9<sup>th</sup> grade confirmation and youth group were dismal at best with maybe 2-3 people showing up on Zoom meetings each week. Back in person, our numbers got back to where we would have expected them all program year. 9<sup>th</sup> grade confirmation class was around 20-25 students each week, and our weekly High School youth group ReNew welcomed anywhere between 10-15 students. We had 32 11<sup>th</sup> grade students affirm their baptism last fall as well.



The challenge as always remains to retain our students once they feel their Confirmation programs are finished. I have tried to start inviting students who have turned 18 and aged out of my programs here to our young adult ministries. This has not been successful as of yet.

The loss of this church's young population to me remains one of the most pressing issues to the long term health of not just Sharon Lutheran but all church denominations. I think that we as a church need to look harder at the relationships or lack thereof that we are building with young people. Most students know Dave, Cheryl and myself, but it is becoming increasingly important that members of this congregation make an effort to volunteer in our faith formation programs, and make intentional time to try to get to know our students. Without any connection to the people of this congregation, our students see no reason to invest any time and energy here when they have endless options of social opportunities outside the church from sports, and school.

I also feel we are not addressing issues that are relevant to them. High School students are very much thinking about social justice issues around race, mental health, economic disparity, and acceptance of LGBTQIA+ individuals. This church needs to begin having honest, open, and more public discussion in those areas.

If a class of 11<sup>th</sup> grade students is making their Confirmation in the fall, and this is the first time our congregation is seeing them or hearing their names, then we have failed to build any type of meaningful relationship with our students or their parents. Everyone in this church has gifts and talents to offer our young people, our responsibility to help them uphold their baptismal promises never ends.

Respectfully submitted,

Steve DeKrey

## **Upper Elementary Ministries, Middle School Ministries, and Youth Music Ministries Annual Report**

As I look back on everything that has transpired over the past year and everything that we have accomplished despite new and unforeseen challenges, I give thanks for all of you and for this faith community. I appreciate your continued support of these vital ministries for students and their families at Sharon. I enjoy working with our pastoral, diaconal, and other staff, worship leaders, parents and guardians, volunteers, and team members as we accompany young people on their faith journey and help them form deeper connections to God, to our community, and to each other. It is an honor and a privilege to be able to tell families that there is a place for all of us at Sharon: a place for us to be fed and forgiven, a place for us to use our varied gifts, and a place for our honest questions about faith and life. I give thanks to God for all of you, and it is truly a blessing to serve alongside so many faithful followers of Jesus in this place.

We rejoice in the fact that Pastor Tawanda Murinda has joined our staff, and we give thanks for all of the ways that Pastor Tawanda has already enriched our ministries here in this place. We celebrate Pastor Karen Young Trenne's presence with us, and we are deeply indebted to the consistent leadership and creativity of Deacon Jamie Travers.

As Faith Formation Ministries staff, Steve DeKrey, Cheryl Nyhlen, Heather Peters, and I work most directly with the Education Team and the Youth Team, and all of those lay leaders have been and continue to be instrumental in our conversations about changing the focus and scale of our programs, strengthening our sense of community, and caring for all of our members.

Even though our hallways and classrooms are bustling again, we know that things may change at a moment's notice. While we also mourn the loss of some things that simply cannot take place in our current reality, we must also remember that change – even change that is necessitated by circumstances beyond our control – is healthy and life-giving. We are now worshipping both in-person and online. We are more focused than ever on reaching those who may never set foot inside the church building. We are having conversations about what's next for the church in the world.

Our current office, pastoral, worship, and custodial staff have been nothing short of incredible as we have shifted and changed and pivoted and shifted again. I continue to feel that “we are all in this together,” and I get that same sense from our Executive Committee, Church Council, team leaders and members, and our entire congregation.

Thank you for your prayers, your patience, and your partnership as we continue to grow in faith and serve God together!

Respectfully submitted,

Dave Berger

## Community Connections Team Annual Report

October 2021 – October 2022

The Community Connections Team's mission is to heighten congregational awareness of societal issues and provide an avenue for members to address these issues. The following is a list of congregational activities from this past year.

**Backpack Program** – Northland Rescue Mission and United Way are committed to ending hunger in our community. Locally over 2000 children each week receive a grocery bag filled with two breakfasts, two snacks, two lunches and two beverages. Children who don't have enough to eat are able to have food throughout the weekend because of this program. Sharon Lutheran volunteers help pack bags September through May.

**Bags of Blessings** – Throughout the year this program provides back packs with needed items like a t-shirt, sweatshirt, comb, shampoo and other personal care items. These bags of blessings are provided to residents at the Northlands Rescue Mission.

**ELCA World Hunger** – Gifts to ELCA World Hunger reach communities most in need throughout the world. Working through Lutheran churches and the Lutheran World Federation as well as other partners like Church World Service, Bread for the World, Lutheran World Relief and Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service more places are reached more effectively, than they could ever alone.

**Feed My Starving Children** – In this program volunteers from area churches spent the weekend packing, labeling, and boxing meals. Cargill scientifically develops these meals to provide nutritionally balanced meals for starving children. This non-denominational group works to raise money to purchase the unique supplies necessary for the meals for the at-risk children.

**Love Feast** – Each year Sharon members plan and serve a meal for the community at Zion United Methodist Church in March. This is a free meal intended for those who may not have the opportunity to receive a good meal. Area churches take turns each month serving the Love Feast which was a grab-and-go meal. This year 250 people were served.

**Lutheran World Relief** – Quilts are made and LWR's Care Kits are assembled to help people throughout the world dealing with some of life's most difficult situations –the aftermath of earthquakes and floods, fleeing home to escape violence and living in extreme poverty. Collections and assembly sessions were held resulting in 105 school kits.

**Salvation Army Bell Ringing** – Sharon members rang bells collecting donations for the Salvation Army.

**Souper Bowl of Caring** - was held the beginning of February.

**Teddy Bear Ministry** – Teddy Bears are collected to provide comfort to all those in need and are now displayed at the Welcome Center for anyone to take.

**ELCA Good Gifts Global Barnyard** –Christmas tree donation animal decorations were available for congregation members to purchase.

**God's Work Our Hands** – In September 20 people assembled 105 School Kits for Lutheran World Relief.

**Noisy Offering donations** went to North County Food Bank, Love Feast, Feed My Starving Children, Sunshine House, Ukraine Relief, Mission Picnic, St. Joes' Summer Lunch Program, Lutheran World Relief School Kits, and Sharon Faith Formation School supplies. Community Connections Team Members are: Jeannie Sollom, Dale Sollom, Kaye Carlson, Jim Weinsenberger, Sherryl Weinsenberger, Vicki Lindberg, Yvonne Welsh, Diane Volden, Karen Nygaard Kristi Houska, Lora Machart, Julie Hill, and Debbie Grow.

Respectfully submitted by Jeannie Sollom

## **Church Properties Team Annual Report**

This report focuses on the time period of July 1, 2021 through June 30, 2022 and includes a few things done since to provide additional information up to this reporting date.

Christmas decorating for the 2021 holidays was done as a congregational activity in conjunction with the Fellowship Team.

A contract has been signed for replacement of about 5,000 sf of roof at the SE section. Skinner Roofing will be doing the work. The completion of the work has been delayed due to their busy schedule. They are however holding their bid price.

Water leak at west skylight has been found and patched. Steamatic completed remediation and demo. Repair of interior finishes damaged has begun and will be finished when roof replacement work has been complete to make sure no more problems are seen.

Installation is complete for the new sound equipment in Celebration Hall which was paid for with a donation. Thank you to a professor of acoustics at UND for tuning the system.

The Building Task Force completed a tour of the existing building to review its condition and completed a questionnaire. As a reminder, the most recent addition/update is from 1997.

- Tour and Questionnaire Notes:
  - Items in need of repair or replacement
    - Better lighting
    - Bathrooms near door I
    - Workroom/copy room of office
  - Under utilized
    - Sanctuary
    - Landscaping is lacking
  - Over utilized
    - Celebration Hall
  - Future use (10 – 20 years)
    - Centralized/organized donation area for community distribution
  - Things seen elsewhere that should be considered
    - More welcoming entrance
    - Centralized cloak room
    - Seating and coffee area
  - If money was unlimited we should...
    - Replace flooring throughout
    - State of the art audio and video systems
    - Remove skylights, redo lighting

The Council reviewed and passed a clarification of the role of the Property Team. The need for long term planning related to building use and maintenance was emphasized. Constitutional issues were also cleared up on how much authority this group has regarding committing funds to repairs.

Thank you to Dan Kuzel, our custodian. He is dedicated to taking care of things and his work is invaluable. Remember to say thank you when you see him.

A few more things of note since July 2022:

Thank you to Deacon Jamie Travers for his work to construct a new donation center outside of South Hall this summer.

Conversations have been taking place with Electro Watchman to consider increasing building security with the installation of an electronic access system. There are still some decisions being made regarding the system details and the need to possibly replace some existing exterior

doors before getting a cost proposal. Due to the anticipated amount congregational support will be sought if this moves forward.

Three trees in bad shape have been removed by south the parking lot for \$3,600 by Boe's Tree Care.

Both the primary and secondary sewer ejection pumps in the lower level stopped working. Both have been replaced by Lunseth Plumbing and Heating and the system is working again as intended.

The Fall 2022 rummage sale was held on Friday August 26<sup>th</sup> and earned \$8,600 for future property needs. Thank you to Jodi Boettner and Naomi Bancroft for their leadership and everyone else who volunteered to make it a success.

We are currently reviewing options for snow removal for this winter.

There continues to be a need for Properties Team members to help as things come up. Thank you to everyone for their support over the last year.

Mary Adams and Fawn Behrens-Smith, Properties Team Co-Chairs