



**COME
AND SEE**

**Come and see what God
has done: he is
awesome in his deeds
among humankind.**

Psalm 66:5

**Triumphant Lutheran
2022-2023 Narrative Budget
and Annual Report**

We Grow in Christ to Serve Others.

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Congregation of Triumphant Lutheran Church,

Thank you for your time and attention to the material outlined in this document. It is a culmination of the hard work of many of our dedicated volunteers who serve in various roles. Those roles include our Church Council and Ministry Leaders, our Finance Committee, and all those who have helped or served at some point during the year with one or more of our ministry teams and/or lent a hand where it was needed. Also a huge thank you to our Church Staff and all you do to make our church operate day to day!

A Narrative Budget is more than just numbers on a page. Although our numbers for 2023 are included, I hope you take the time to read about what each ministry team accomplished this year and what they plan to achieve in 2023. Hopefully, this will assist you in making decisions on your financial commitment to the church, or your commitment to join a ministry team and use your talents to further the mission of our church. We need and welcome the contributions of every member of our Triumphant congregation!

For those that have not committed to becoming a member and those contemplating membership, our hope is that this Narrative Budget helps you understand the mission of our church and how you can fit with our growing ministries. We are here to answer any questions you may have.

Thank you again for all of you and the blessings you bring to our church!

John Gallo

TLC Council President

What Will You Focus On?

by Deacon Chris

“Then Moses said to Aaron, ‘Say to the whole congregation of the Israelites: “Draw near to the Lord, for he has heard your complaining.”’ And as Aaron spoke to the whole congregation of the Israelites, they looked toward the wilderness, and the glory of the Lord appeared in the cloud. The Lord spoke to Moses, ‘I have heard the complaining of the Israelites; say to them, “At twilight you shall eat meat, and in the morning you shall have your fill of bread; then you shall know that I am the Lord your God.”’” -Exodus 16:9-12

We are taught from an early age about Moses and the Israelites, the hurried flight from Egypt, and the wandering in the wilderness for many years on their way to the land promised by God. It is a beautifully epic story of God’s faithfulness, but it is not an easy story because it is so intense. The Israelites are hopeful but scared, awed but angry, free but dissatisfied. The Israelites are people fleeing slavery, the only life they’ve known. But now wandering in a wilderness, a circumstance that presents its own difficulties. In the midst of this grand epic, on day 45 of their wandering in the wilderness (Exodus 16), we witness a group of scared and hungry people complaining to God. The above excerpt is where God responds to their complaints about hunger. God’s response to their hunger is a promise to provide them with manna and meat for each day. That’s 12,000+ meals for however many people were in their party. Because of this scene, we add this story to the long list of times where God provides in the midst of hard times. That’s the grand story of the Israelite’s exodus, but there is a much smaller story happening at the same time.

One of my college professors used to talk about how much he loved to preach the “in-between moments” of a text. These are those moments that have profound meaning that we often miss or overlook. In this excerpt, there is an “in-between moment.” This moment comes in verse 10 where it says that “they looked toward the wilderness, and the glory of the Lord appeared in the cloud.” Did you notice it? They “looked toward the wilderness” (their threat), and it was there that God “appeared in the cloud” (their promise). They were asked to look toward what they feared, and it was in that direction that God was visibly present. In the words of my professor, “that’ll preach.” In this scene, each Israelite has to choose what they will focus on; will they focus on the wilderness threat and run back to slavery, or will they focus on the cloud and the way forward? From God’s perspective, God asks them a very simple question: “Do you trust me?” For today, for the next 39+ years, and for the rest of your life, are you going to trust that manna and meat is enough for your journey to freedom, or are you going to turn back to Egypt and accept slavery for pots of meat and bread?

We have all been asked the question: “Are you a glass half empty or a glass half full person?” This question is meant to gauge if you are a person that begins from a place of optimism (half-full) or pessimism (half-empty). Reframing the same question in the language of our scripture, “are you a wilderness or cloud person?” While on your journey, do you focus on the threat or the promise? Do you look at life and see the deficiencies, faults and shortcomings, or do you see the abundance and richness? This is the challenge of faith for each of us, to see God’s abundant grace and to trust that God will continue to provide what we need for the journey that God leads us. God asks for your trust for today, for next year, and for the rest of your life. God asks, do you trust me in times of health and times of crisis? Do you trust me in recessions and abundance? Do you trust me when things go according to plan and not? Do you trust me when you feel safe AND when you don’t?

God asks this question as individuals, but also as a faith community. When we look at our journey ahead as a congregation, do we see the wilderness (and all its dangers), or do we see the cloud (the glory of God)? Do we look at the upcoming year and decide to lock the doors and batten down the hatches hoping to keep danger out? Sure, you could keep threatening things out, but you also won’t be moving forward. Or do we look at the upcoming year and see the presence of God already there in the wilderness, inviting us to expend our resources to help heal a broken world? It won’t be easy, but the journey will be very good.

In this narrative budget, we are asking you to be a cloud person; look ahead to the wilderness and see God’s presence already there leading us forward! The journey won’t be easy, but it will be good. God will provide the resources we need to help heal a broken world. We are asking you to trust God, who is the source of life for all of us: the Israelites, the saints, those in the pews next to you, and those in the community we serve.

Snapshot of 2022

What will you focus on?

We regularly run out of visitor mugs on Sundays

We have less people attending in-person than we did a few years ago

We have an expensive repair on our property

Look at all the new acolytes and ushers helping on Sundays

Utility bills are higher than we were expecting

We hosted and fed 400+ high school youth for their homecoming parade

We received over \$200k for our preschool because someone made us aware of a grant

Our community groups have helped people make new friendships

We have more Elementary kids at Wednesday Nite Live than ever before

Our kids didn't go to summer camp because of a COVID outbreak

We provided a comforting funeral reception for 13 families in 2022

I'm worried our volunteers are going to burnout

People with health concerns and visitors can worship with us online

People donated enough money to purchase 168 sanctuary bibles PLUS 31 kid's bibles

Offerings aren't what we thought they would be at this point

6 members helped our local camp clear out a bunch of sick trees

8 members spent an entire week serving with youth from other churches in our synod

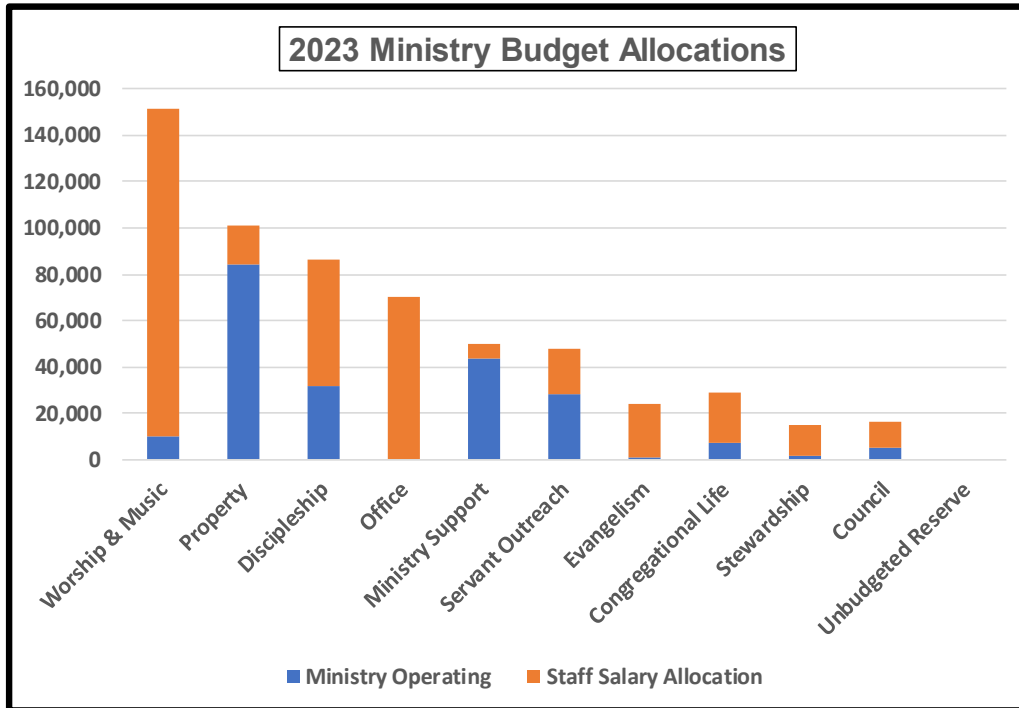
ELCA Youth Gathering in Minneapolis was cancelled

Proposed 2023 Budget - page 1

The last several budgets have been a stepping out in faith that post-pandemic we would resume growing as a congregation, living up to our Mission Statement that We Grow In Christ To Serve Others. That meant we would return to growth in ministry, in membership and attendance, and in giving. We have maintained our staff to assist in this purpose, and in light of lower anticipated income until we recovered, the 2023 budget and several before it have annually committed using our Operating Reserves as a buffer to cover expenses as we move toward resuming growth. These reserves have been a strength to help us weather the pandemic storm. While we are pleased to report that we have seen growth of 48 members so far in 2022, Weekly Offering giving has not shown a commensurate increase and we are seeing a serious income shortfall year over year at the end of September. As a result our reserves continue to diminish and without a change in the present pace of Income vs Expenses we may reach a critical mass Point as early as mid-2024. See the Operating Reserves summary at on page 2. Very simply, we need more income to carry out the 2023 ministry vision. We are, however, super pleased to see the effort and growth in ECP, giving great indication the Preschool ministry will be back to pre-Covid numbers by the end of 2022...which will be helpful financially as well.

Ministry Budget Allocations	2022			2023		
	Ministry	Staff Alloc	Total	Ministry	Staff Alloc	Total
General Operating Income/Budget (Not ECP, Not Mortgage)						
Weekly Offering Income	Based on projections		433,605	Based on projections		404,336
Other Operating & Designated Income	from end Sept.		8,716	from end Sept.		7,696
Total Operating & Designated Income			442,321			412,032
Worship & Music	11,114	140,945	152,059	10,180	141,412	151,592
Property	83,360	13,509	96,869	84,474	16,884	101,358
Discipleship	33,500	52,814	86,314	31,700	54,470	86,170
Office		65,559	65,559		70,414	70,414
Ministry Support	45,016	6,556	51,572	43,630	6,556	50,186
Servant Outreach	24,368	19,211	43,579	28,000	20,039	48,039
Evangelism	6,550	23,178	29,728	1,200	23,178	24,378
Congregational Life	7,000	21,424	28,424	7,554	21,632	29,186
Stewardship	2,070	13,112	15,182	1,750	13,112	14,862
Council	5,600	11,359	16,959	5,157	11,556	16,713
Unbudgeted Reserve			0			0
Operating Expenses	218,578	367,666	586,245	213,645	379,261	592,906
Operating Net Income			-143,923	(Subject to rounding)		-180,874
Early Childhood Prog Income/Budget						
MDO Income	(Nursery only in 2022. Other MDO spaces not state)		18,570	(Nursery only in 2023.)		17,200
Preschool Income			183,125			209,130
Projected ECP Income			201,695			226,330
MDO Expense Budget			13,079			13,718
Preschool Expense Budget			136,805			158,260
Projected ECP Budget			149,884			171,978
ECP Net (Spts Operating Exp)			51,811			54,352
Mortgage Income/Budget						
Building Fund Income			91,104			91,104
Debt Service Expense Budget			91,104			91,104
Mortgage Net			0			0
Other Income/Expenses			4,448			2,800
Reinput of Reserves as Income (if needed buffer)			48,000			
TOTAL PROJECTED INCOME			787,568			732,266
TOTAL PROJECTED EXPENSE BUDGET			827,233			855,986
PROJECTED BREAK EVEN			-39,664			-123,720

2023 Budget - page 2



Reserves

Leadership Reserve. Established several years ago when income could be seen to likely go down for a while. Provides buffer to maintain current ministries and staff levels while we grow sufficiently in both attendance and giving to support these areas. **No input at present.**

G.O. 3 Mo Emergency Reserve. Always maintain a running 3 month operating reserve in the event of emergency(ies); i.e., large storm damage, fire, sustained rates of down total income, etc.

Capital Reserves. A set aside continually banked for future facility and equipment upgrades, and to replace old or dead equipment (e.g., HVAC) beyond normal budgeted requirements. **No input at present.**

Building Fund Reserve. Maintain a 5 month reserve to ensure on-time monthly mortgage payment.

Mildred Morgan Fund.** Continuing Ed for Sr Pastor and Deacon, or o/w as directed by the Sr Pastor.

CCRF. A temporary state fund assisting rebuild of ECP Facilities. Expires after 2nd QTR 2023.

Other Specified Reserves.** Ladies Bible Study, Young Family Ministry, Creative Blessings, WC & Liability Ins, Meditation Gardens, Memorial Fund, Backpacks, Local Outreach, Youth Holding Accts, MDO Reserve, Preschool Reserve, Congregational Care, etc.

Reserve Status

	Dec 2020	Dec 2021	Sep 2022	Projected Dec 2022	Projected Dec 2023	
Leadership Reserve	66,264	56,264	35,533	0	0	***Operating Reserves
3 Mo Emergency Op Res	132,137	132,137	132,137	101,000	51,000	
Capital Reserve	94,979	47,915	47,915	39,000	29,000	
Building Fund Reserve	37,960	37,960	35,960	35,960	35,960	
Ordnained Cont Ed.**	30,742	39,938	30,653	30,000	30,000	** Mildred Morgan Fund
CCRF (Began 2022)	0	0	82,460	52,000	40,000	ECP only. Ends after 2nd QTR '23.
Other Specified Res.	120,481	134,007	78,217	78,217	78,217	See partial listing above.
	482,563	448,221	442,875	336,177	264,177	Dec 2022 = 284K w/o CCRF.

***** Operating Reserves.** In 2018 we had Total Reserves of \$555K. At the end of 2022 we will have \$336K, with the Operating Reserves and Capital Reserve taking the bulk of the hit. Moreover, the projected \$336K at 2022 Year End would be only \$284K w/o the CCRF, which is temporary and ECP only. Because regular income has been lagging for several years, requiring use of reserves, our Operating Reserves are now rapidly depleting, with perhaps 18 months to 2 yrs remaining in these two key reserves at the present rate of usage and income. **We need more income, or fewer expenses, or both.** At the present pace of income and expenses, part way thru 2024 we will no longer have operating reserves to pay our bills when income falls short.

2022 Council Members



President	John Gallo
Vice President	Barbara Wade
Treasurer	Gordon Hengst
Secretary	
Financial Secretary	John Schultz
Worship and Music	Ken Smith
Discipleship	Aaron Theilengerdes
Servant Outreach	Amy Coronado
Ministry Support	Don Kurtti
Early Childhood Programs	Jennifer Feutz
Congregational Life	Becky Sonnen
Stewardship	
Property and Resources	Charles Beierle
Evangelism	Lori O’Berg

Worship and Music

“Whoever serves me must follow me, and where I am, there will my servant be also. Whoever serves me, the Father will honor.”

-John 12:26

The heart and soul of serving God finds its foundation in a communal setting. Through regular worship and making a “joyful noise” in His presence, we find peace, comfort, and blessings.

TLC’s ministry of Worship and Music provides many ways to find a special niche to serve. There are ten programs under this ministry: Acolytes, Altar Guild, Ushers, Greeters, Readers, Assistant Ministers, Music, Sound and Livestream Team, Drama Programs, and the Puppet Ministry. Each of these wonderful volunteer programs offers a place to show your servant heart and to praise God in a valuable and fun way.

The ministry of Acolytes has its roots in the Old Testament, where the prophet Samuel is seen assisting Eli, the Levite priest, and Elisha is seen assisting Elijah, the prophet. When serving as acolytes, our children at TLC are not only serving the church in an important ministry, but they are growing in their personal faith and confidence.



The ministry of the Altar Guild is deeply rooted in Scripture and church history. Altar Guilds serve the clergy and the congregation by preparing the Sanctuary for services and sacraments, much in the same way we prepare our homes for family and guests on special days. By serving the church in this important, behind-the-scenes ministry, you also develop connections and friendships with other church members, working as a team to nurture and deepen your faith.

The important ministries of Ushers and Greeters have a long history in the Christian church. In the Old Testament, there were positions addressed as "Doorkeepers" or "Gatekeepers", and their roles were very similar. As one of the oldest lay ministries in the Church, the Ushers and Greeters of today have descended from a long line of people of God.



Worship & Music, continued

Readers and Assistant Ministers also serve TLC in an important way. Biblical history shows us the importance of temple servants who were part of the formal worship of God and how they assisted high priests and ecclesial ministry. Just as the Apostles spoke the word of God to all who would listen, our Readers take these same words, now written in the Bible, and share the good news which is Jesus Christ.



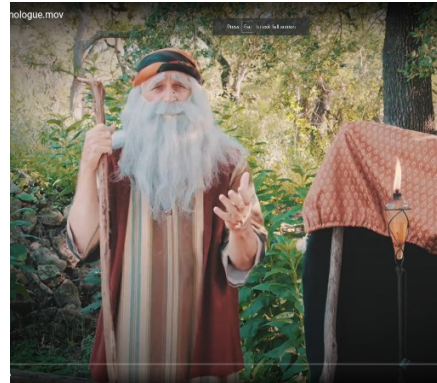
Music was held in high esteem in the early church, believing that it was a "window to heaven." We can trace our modern religious musical heritage through Greek, Russian, Egyptian, Coptic, Ethiopian, and African Christian influences. But it is the themes we find in the Book of Psalms that the foundation of modern theological music can be found. Whether it is our wonderful Choir, Praise Band, Cantata, or guest performers, here at TLC, we are truly

blessed with amazing musical leadership and the multiple talents. Can you carry a tune? We could use your talents!



Our Sound and Livestream Team (SALT) quietly, but expertly, ensures that our church services are successful. We now provide live broadcast services through several media to folks at home. We reach 75-100 people a week who tune in from home. We have even heard from people in other parts of the world who watch our livestream! If you would like to serve in this ministry, it's easy and fun ... and we will train you.

Recently, with Pastor Aaron's leadership, we have added opportunities for drama using talented actors, costuming, scene design, make-up, stage management, and skillful production filming. Every two years during Holy Week we present the moving Living Last Supper play (see photo on page 25).



Watch for opportunities to serve throughout the year on the amazing Drama Team.

Finally, our wonderful Puppet Ministry adds a new and vibrant way to preach the Gospel and bring Biblical stories to life. Both young and the young-at-heart find enjoyment and fulfillment from this ministry. We are always looking for new puppeteers.



The Worship and Music budget covers most of the items necessary to perform our three worship services and other events such as baptisms, weddings, and funerals. From musical scores to communion sacraments; from flowers (including seasonal poinsettias and lilies) to sound and light equipment repair and replacement; from cleaning robes to tuning pianos, from Polka Bands to Living Last Supper performances ... all ten ministries operate from close to historical cost averages which are fine-tuned to be prudent and essential.

At the heart of Triumphant Lutheran's ministry of Worship and Music are people of all ages. People serving, people singing, and people giving of their time and talents in worship to our Lord. Serving others is the very essence of this ministry. I would like to sincerely thank the many volunteers who lead and serve in this ministry. It is through their faithful efforts that our worship programs remain vibrant and worthwhile.

Worship & Music Team: Lead—Ken Smith; **Music Director** – Carol Snyder; **Choir Director** - Feliziti Pena; **Members:** Altar Guild – Helen Bauer; Greeters – D.K.. Guebard; Ushers – Ken Smith: Assistant Ministers and Readers – Lori O'Berg and Mary Fuege; **Sound And Livestream Team** – Jerry Guebard and Gordon Hengst; Puppet Ministry – Gloria Kreuzler; Acolytes – Ken Smith and Pastor Aaron; Drama Team – Ken Smith

Discipleship

Looking back at 2022

We spent 2022 navigating the question “What do we keep from our COVID time and what do we prune?” It took time and energy for the team to think through all of the details, but we made our way through it.



Wednesday Nite Live (WNL) continues to be the primary faith formation time for youth. One example of a COVID lesson learned was with the Elementary-aged group. During COVID, the group began meeting outside at the playground. The group has really expanded so they continue to use the playground and make the time all

about “free-range” playing and learning the Bible stories. The other small groups have maintained their focus on relationships and content; one difficulty, however, is with the high school group which has struggled to gain any momentum after spending the COVID years apart.

This fall Creative Blessings began meeting during WNL and we also hosted game nights, giving adults an opportunity for relationship building. Adults need community in the same way that the children do.

Our Children’s Chapel was held in-person and online through May, then the team made the decision to return to in-person Children’s Chapel after our summer break. It was a difficult decision because we liked kids being able to watch from home, but we decided it was important for kids to learn without having their conversations and actions archived on video.

Vacation Bible School week in June was wonderful. We tried a few new things: a VBS leadership team, a VBS Celebration on Sunday, a focus on hospitality during meal portion, and a Volunteer appreciation meal; most of which were well-received. Hospitality and teamwork were the two key factors of the week.



Our Elementary and Confirmation camp week was cancelled; thanks COVID.

Only a small portion of our kids were able to reschedule for a different week. It was disappointing that we didn't get to attend camp as a church group, but the kids that were able to attend loved their experiences at camp.



The ELCA Youth Gathering for high school youth was also cancelled because of COVID, but we went to Houston with several churches from our synod instead. This was a blessing that we wouldn't normally have. Through serving at the Food Bank and an urban park, to learning from different leaders around our church, the high schoolers learned about God's "boundless love" with youth they had met previously through camp.

We had several life-bringing retreats throughout the year. An adult mission trip in March, a high school retreat in February, a Family Retreat in May, and a 7th-12th grade retreat in September. Each of these offered the opportunity to learn and serve with peers.

Looking ahead to 2023

Deacon Chris is taking the high school youth on a mission trip to Puerto Rico in July. Coming out of the COVID "caution" years when the trips had to stay closer to Texas, the high schoolers wanted to take a trip to an unfamiliar locale and culture, and YouthWorks has a mission site in Puerto Rico. Little did we know that Puerto Rico would be hit by a hurricane a few weeks after we registered. Because of a Southwest Airlines credit left from 2020 and working with YouthWorks, this trip will actually be cheaper than our 2022 ELCA Youth Gathering was going to be.

We are planning to bring back our "Identity" series of faith conversations. This adult event happened twice, once in 2019 and once in 2020, and it was a unique interview/panel conversation around a chosen topic. We received very positive feedback from our first two conversations, and we hope to continue to offer creative topics going forward.



Discipleship, continued



We are planning a trip for adults to the Holy Land in March 2024. We plan to use 2023 to provide learning opportunities about sites and people we will encounter on our trip. These opportunities will be open to all adults, but will be especially helpful to those who are going on the trip.

Sunday morning discipleship offerings is a matter the Discipleship Team struggles with. We have had a few people ask about small groups on Sundays, but not enough to warrant regular meetings. Until it reaches the tipping point of interest to warrant the resources, we will continue to focus our discipleship resources on Wednesday night and mid-week adult groups. We are increasing the budget for our mid-week adult groups to help pay for the curriculum and to ensure that everyone who wants to participate can.

Our middle school and high school youth enjoy spending time together and desire to have more activities as a combined group rather than being separated by age-group. Building on the retreats in 2022, we hope to offer more events for the youth to gather and serve together.



The Discipleship Team plans to address the church Library and how it can help our congregation continue to grow. Equipped with mission and vision statements, we will begin the work of reforming the Library to meet our current needs. Reforming the Library will mean adding and removing some of the resources and modifying the ways that people can access the resources.

Discipleship Team: Lead—Aaron Theilengerdes; **Members:** Deacon Chris St.Clair, Leon Henk, Angela Henk, Brandi Brinkman, Lois Glazener, Mellissa Zipp

Servant Outreach

A few weeks ago, I read this quote by Howard Zinn, a veteran and historian: “Small acts, when multiplied by millions of people, can transform the world.” The Servant Outreach team has the great opportunity to coordinate activities that provide our congregation with ways to serve others through the giving of our time, talents, and treasure. As we look at each of these individual service opportunities, we realize that through these sometimes small, sometimes simple activities, we are able to help so many people. The members of our church family have so many amazing gifts and are filled with such great generosity. Thank you for always being willing to honor God through your incredible service to others.

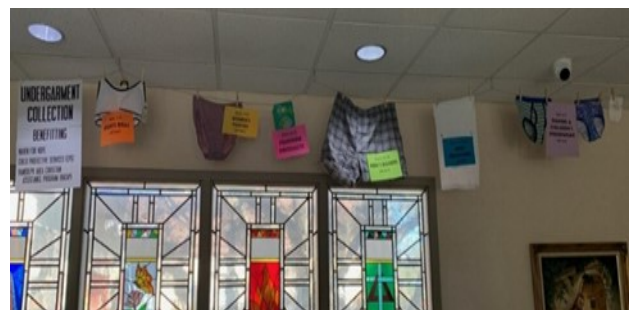
In January, the Servant Outreach team worked with Jennifer Feutz to support the children in Roatan, Honduras. Jennifer shared about her mission trip to serve the children through Little Sprouts, a ministry program that feeds children physically and spiritually. Through your donations, our church was able to provide enough money to supply approximately 60 children with daily vitamins for a year.



In early March, six adults from our congregation went on an adult mission trip to Ebert Ranch. They were able to clear diseased trees to ensure that the beauty of the camp will continue for future campers and retreaters.

For our Lenten Service Project, we decided to help others meet some of their basic needs. We collected undergarments, some of the most

needed items for both children and adults at local organizations. Weekly items were collected to benefit Haven for Hope, Child Protective Services (CPS), and RACAP. During the weeks of Lent, we were able to collect over 200 items including 37 packs of women’s underwear, 32 packages of women’s feminine products, 53 bras, 20 packs of men’s underwear, 8 packages of diapers, and much more.



Servant Outreach, continued

In April, we created young adult care packages. About 30 of our young adults were surprised with these packages, which included a signed card from our congregation along with gift cards to Starbucks and Chick-fil-A.

During June and July, at both Vacation Bible School and in church, we collected items to help Randolph Area Christian Assistance Program (RACAP) restock their shelves with needed items. We also did this at other times, as needed, during the year.



In July, we focused on service opportunities with the New Braunfels Food Bank and the Ronald McDonald House. At the New Braunfels Food Bank, we were able to work in the pantry and help with a food distribution event. At the Ronald McDonald House, a temporary home for critically ill children and their families, we were able to prepare and serve lunch to families staying there. The meal we prepared was enough to provide lunch for 2 Ronald McDonald Houses in San Antonio.

In July, with the start of school just around the corner, we took the opportunity to collect school supply kits to donate to Communities in Schools (CIS). CIS is an organization that works directly with students in our local schools to provide mentoring, academic support, basic needs and much more. We were able to fill many bags with school supplies needed to help students have a great start to the school year.

In early August, we welcomed our missionary, Rev. Dr. Carolyn Schneider, to our congregation. She preached and gave a presentation on her work in Jamaica.

The end of August was focused on "God's Work. Our Hands." weekend. "God's Work. Our Hands." is an opportunity every year for ELCA members across the country to engage in service work to make a positive change in their communities, build and deepen relationships, and share God's love. On Saturday, we volunteered at the San Antonio Food Bank to help sort and organize food for those in need. On Sunday, we assembled fabric care kits for Lutheran World Relief. We were able to prepare 18 fabric kits to be used for vocational training programs teaching sewing and for newly





trained tailors to launch their sewing businesses. Additionally, we put together teacher care packages for our Preschool Staff, as well as the staff at Garden Ridge Elementary. The kits included bracelets, which we made with colored beads to represent positive messages to the staff. Cards were colored and prepared to add to the kits, along with dry erasers and markers. These kits were very much appreciated. Participants of all ages made this weekend a successful time of helping others.

The holiday season will provide us with even more opportunities to help those in need. In October and early November, we are collecting food items for the RACAP Thanksgiving Baskets. We hope to collect enough food items to provide 75 families with a great Thanksgiving meal. In December, we will hold our Angel Tree to provide Christmas gifts to children in our local community as well as items for those in need throughout the world through monetary donations to the ELCA Good Gifts program.



In 2023, we will continue to find ways to use our time, talents, and treasures to serve others. We are exploring new service partnerships with local organizations to give us opportunities to use our hands in service. We have also added two organizations – Trulight127 Ministries and Lutheran Disaster Response - to the list of ministries we financially support through monthly giving. These two organizations continue to offer quality care for children in the foster care system and victims of natural disasters, respectively.

We are so thankful for the amazing generosity of our church family! We look forward to planning and organizing opportunities in 2023 for our community to generously share the resources that God has provided with those in need.

Servant Outreach Team: Lead—Amy Coronado; **Members:** Deacon Chris St. Clair, Amanda Henderson, Sarah Richter, and all of the generous members of our congregation!

Ministry Support

The Ministry Support Team is responsible for overseeing Triumphant’s ongoing needs, the needs of the church staff, and the financial needs of the church. The church finances are managed through the diligent work of the Finance Committee, which is no easy task. We are continually reviewing the donated income and daily expenses to ensure that we are on track with the annual budget. (Please refer to page 3 for information on our current financial status.) Each of our ministry teams has done an amazing job of maximizing their ministry impact within their budget.

The IT Team, led by Gordon Hengst, has made much-needed updates to our technology this year, including the livestream equipment, internet, phone services, and computers. After researching the options, the team changed our internet and business phone providers, giving us increased, more reliable service and cutting the costs as well. We are grateful for the faithful and mostly behind-the-scenes work of our IT Team! Be sure to thank them when you see them.

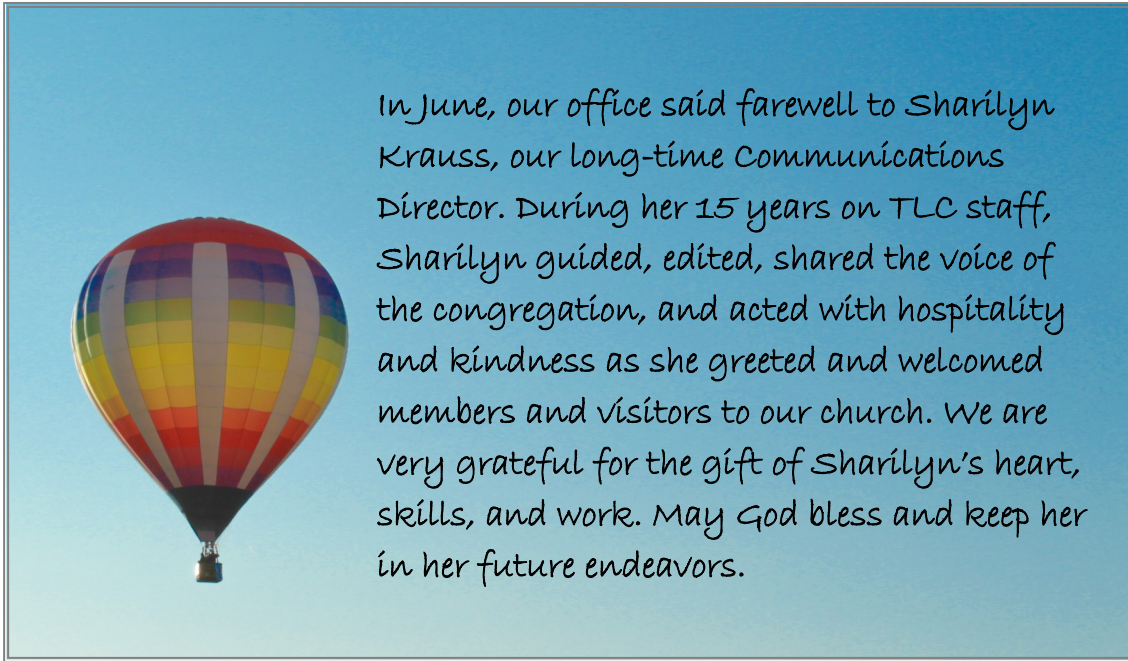


Visit Us
ONLINE

Have you visited triumphantulheran.org, lately? It provides access to our livestreamed 9am Sunday worship service, online giving options, the church calendar, the TLC newsletter, weekly announcements, Facebook and YouTube pages, TLC Preschool info, and more.

TLC’s insurance coverage and vendor contracts are also Ministry Support functions. Along with the many cost increases we have all seen, insurance coverage for our facility is increasing by about 12% in 2023, primarily due to the higher cost of building materials and labor.

Our amazing church staff continues to provide excellent leadership and support for all our TLC ministry. Pastor Aaron and Deacon Chris work directly with each ministry team as well as coordinating and leading the weekly worship services, Wednesday Nite Live, and other opportunities for us to “Grow in Christ to Serve Others.” The office staff provides constant invaluable support for our TLC worship services and activities.



After serving on staff for 15 years, Sharilyn Krauss, our talented Communications Director, has moved on from our church staff. In addition to missing Sharilyn's always-willing-to-help presence and expertise, this has prompted several changes, such as going email-only newsletter format. After evaluating the needs of our office and ministry going forward, we will soon begin the process of hiring an Office Assistant.

Thank you for your ongoing support of your church and its ministries. Your continued spiritual and financial support are needed and appreciated. Looking ahead, one of the goals of the Ministry Support Team is to guide TLC to a fiscally stronger 2023.

Team Members: Lead – Don Kurtti; **Members:** Pastor Aaron Richter, Jerry Guebard, Dennis Feuge, John Gallo, Doug Hammerstrom, Jim Moreland, John Schultz, Bobbie White, Marilyn Winters, **IT Team:** Gordon Hengst, Brian Krauss, and Jeff Boyes.

Early Childhood Programs

“Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it.” Proverbs 22:6

At the end of the school year, we bid our retiring director, Kristin Miller, farewell. She faithfully and professionally served in our Early Childhood Programs (ECP) for over 12 years. A teacher on staff, Karla Hammen, stepped forward as the new director. She got her feet wet as director during the summer overseeing the summer camp sessions with Kristin as a mentor, and officially took the reins in August.

Three summer camp sessions occurred: one week each in the months of June, July and August. Approximately 44 campers enjoyed themes such as Top Chef, Science, Baking and Ocean.

Currently the ECP has 70 enrolled students and 13 staff members. The age range of children served is from 18 months to 4 years old. ECP is still operating at a combined preschool and Mother’s Day Out (MDO).



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A Child Care Relief Act Funds (CCRAF) grant by the Texas Workforce Commission (TWC) was applied for and received. TWC introduced the Child Care Relief Fund to help childcare recover from the pandemic. The ECP has diligently followed the guidelines of the funding and started improvements of facilities and implementation of Preschool Staff support and retention.

Some of the improvements already installed are the “cactus corner” near the basketball courts, and a little loan library built by Bob Braun. These improvements make our Preschool building an inviting space for our Preschool

families to call home. New sand boxes and picnic tables for the playground were also built by a volunteer. Another exciting improvement is happening while this article is at print - a new playground is being installed. Most of the cost is covered by the CCRAF grant, along with a donation designated for the playground.

The Preschool also has an active Facebook page, **Triumphant Lutheran Preschool**, as well as a new Instagram account, **@TriumphantLutheranPreschool**. With social media we hope to advertise our school and to share the wonderful program we have with current preschool families and church members.



As we look into the future, we plan to keep fulfilling our goal to provide an age-appropriate, Christian-based environment where children grow socially, academically, physically, and emotionally. We also plan to grow responsibly.

Team Members: Leads - Jennifer Feutz & Marilyn Winters; **Members:** Preschool Director Karla Hammen, Nancy Hendricks, Sandy Arneson, Ruth Garcia and Pastor Aaron Richter.

Congregational Life

**“For where two or three are gathered in my name,
there am I among them.” -Matthew 18:10 NIV**

The main focus of The Congregational Life Ministry is fellowship. Being around other believers provides us with opportunities to grow in our faith. As we gather outside of worship, we discover shared interests, promote the formation of new friendships, lift one another up, share ideas, backgrounds, and faith stories, and enjoy each other’s company.



In 2022, we engaged in many special activities. We had a New Year’s party with a delicious meal, a game, fun decor, a photo booth, dancing, and entertainment by TJ Dolotina. We also had our annual Cowboy Breakfast, a festive

Fiesta brunch, an Easter Egg Hunt, a Church Picnic, and an Ice Cream Social, to name a few. Full meals and snacks were served at Vacation Bible School and at each week at Wednesday Night Live. In September, Primetimers returned to meeting monthly for a themed meal. Our ministry provided and served cake for special events, such as graduation, Baptismal celebrations, Confirmation, and other occasions. We also assisted with Oktoberfest and provided funeral meals. In the coming year, we may start a Bunco group. We always welcome new ideas and input into ways to create fellowship opportunities.



“Offer hospitality to one another without grumbling. Each one should use whatever gift he has received to serve others, faithfully administering God’s grace in its various forms.” 1 Peter 4:9-10 NIV

There are many opportunities to meet people, forge new friendships, and contribute in some way. We encourage you to consider the following groups in addressing your needs, engaging your interests, matching your skills, experience, and passion, and discovering how you can serving others. Be sure to check the TLC calendar on our website for the days or dates and times our groups meet, and feel free to join in!

Primetimers

On the second Monday of each month from September through May, join others that are 60 years or better in the Fellowship Hall for lunch at noon. They enjoy each other's company while celebrating a different theme each month.

Meet Me at the Grill

This group meets at our BBQ Hut, grilling their own meat and sharing sides and dessert. It is often accompanied by games, but always has good conversation. Look for these gatherings during the spring & summer.



Creative Blessings

This group knits and crochets shawls, hats, and baby items. These lovingly hand-made items are blessed through prayer then given to soldiers, chemotherapy patients, and others in need of comfort and an awareness of God's presence in their lives. Beginners are welcome, and there are terrific teachers who can help you learn! They meet in the Fellowship Hall each week during Wednesday Nite Live meal, then knit, crochet, and fellowship.

Quilting Bees

This group meets two Tuesdays a month to create colorful quillows for the girls at New Life Center, a home for underage girls in difficult family situations. A quillow is a quilt than can be folded and tucked into its own pocket to create a pillow.



Quilting supplies and laughter are provided. It's a great opportunity for fellowship.

Art Group

This group meets on Thursdays from 9am to 2pm in the "Creative Room" to work on individual art projects while gathering with great company to promote artistic expression through faith and fellowship. Bring a lunch if you like.

Wednesday Night Live (WNL)

This is an awesome time of gathering on Wednesdays from September to May. We share a meal in the Fellowship Hall, followed by youth educational classes, Choir practice, Creative Blessings, and other projects or activities that promote our mission as a congregation.

Congregational Life, continued

Prayer Team

This team gathers to pray for TLC members, friends, and others who are in need of prayer and the power of God's healing love.

Special Events, Baptisms & Funerals Team

Members of this dedicated team coordinate, prepare food, serve, and clean up for special events such as baptisms, funeral meals, and graduation. These events don't occur weekly or monthly; the team plans them as they come along.



Love in the Mail

This group sends cards to express loving thoughts to TLC congregation members on their birthdays, anniversaries, when they are ill or bereaved, need encouragement, or just have not been seen for a while. This loving service is usually done from home. The group plans to meet occasionally to enjoy each other's company as we write notes in the cards.

Sunday Morning Coffee Fellowship

This team schedules the requests for refreshments, sets up for the after-worship refreshments provided by volunteers, and cleans up afterwards. Team members usually serve once every two months. All are welcome to provide refreshments, either home-made or store-bought.



Our Congregational Life groups promote a sense of togetherness within our church family.

Through both good and difficult times, these ministries work alongside other TLC ministries to let others know they are not alone and that God is always with us and is part of whatever we do. The budget for this ministry allows all these activities throughout the year. With the many gifts of time, skills and money given by our members, Congregational Life will continue to support our TLC family.

Congregational Life Team: Lead – Becky Sonnen. **Members:** Pastor Aaron Richter, Marilyn Winters, Barbara Wade, Jackie Mitchell, Kenneth Weber, Michelle Salazar, Chris Crawford, D.K. Guebard, Carol Snyder, Nancy Hendricks, Marcia Brinkman, and the many people who help with weekly or special events and bring refreshments.

Stewardship

As you've read through this Narrative Budget, you might have noticed the stories of generosity. There are stories of people serving in a number of ways, from being an acolyte to tending to the grounds. People giving their money for the sake of ministry. People sharing time and gifts to bring hope and life to others. Those are all examples of stewardship!

The TLC Stewardship Team focuses on how we can live generous lives, which ultimately begins with all that God has given us. We are blessed over and over by God in countless ways, and our team's hope is to help us grow as generous followers of Jesus.

We give thanks for the incredible generosity of TLC, whether your gift is your time, talent, resources, or all of these. Thank you!

In November, our worship focus is gratitude; how giving thanks can make our lives more joyful, kinder, and more generous. There will be stories shared, opportunities to give thanks to God, and a time to commit and respond with generosity.

As we look to 2023 and beyond, the Stewardship Team is focused on providing more opportunities to share what God has blessed us with, giving thanks to God and our TLC community, and telling the stories of how our giving makes a life-giving difference in the world.

We are grateful to the people of Triumphant Lutheran the many ways you have been generous with your time, shared your God-given gifts, and continued financial support. It is your giving that allows our church family to thrive and be a reflection of God's love to this world.

Stewardship Team: Pastor Aaron Richter, Kim Hinze, Jerry Guebard, Bobbie White, Andrew Feutz, Jessica Anderson



Property and Resources

The Property and Resources team's purpose is to maintain a warm, welcoming, and attractive environment for TLC members and guests both indoors and outside. Our objective is to enhance the experience of worship and fellowship so that all may enjoy their time together.



Property and Resources supports the ministries of the church through the care of all things facility related. Perhaps most importantly, the team's stewardship comes in the form of time spent on property maintenance, preparations for special events and program support.

Property and Resources volunteers help maintain the entire TLC property comprised of fifteen acres, five buildings, a total of thirty-one heating and cooling systems, and the numerous appliances on campus. Our "boots on the ground," Sexton Frank Fogg, tackles the regular maintenance and oversees the onsite work of contractors we call in for the larger jobs.

This year we purchased a new riding mower as the old one could no longer be reasonably repaired due to years of service on our campus with its rocky, wooded terrain. We were able to purchase the new mower under-budget, and it has been a critical contributor to getting the mowing completed efficiently when we hold workdays.

Thanks to a number of volunteers and the help of our Sexton, we made numerous repairs to our sprinkler systems this year. Unfortunately, with the drought, watering restrictions have mostly prevented us from using those systems to the benefit of our landscaping, which will need continued attention now and when we begin to get rain again.



Our campus property will continue to need your helping hands and donations in the coming year and beyond. It takes a diligent team of six about four hours to complete the regular landscape maintenance planned every second Saturday of the month. More help is needed -- we have few volunteers able to regularly attend, making the effort harder than it needs to be. Our goal is to make this as much about fellowship as possible, and we are more than willing to share knowledge and skills with others who might be interested in learning.

Thanks and blessings to all who have contributed to maintaining our beautiful campus.

Property & Resources Team: Leads—Charles Beierle and **Sexton**—Frank Fogg. **Members:** Jackie Mitchell, Jerry Guebard, Frank Fogg, Dennis Feuge, Larry and Kathy Beierle, Wes and Barb Wade, John and Nadine Schultz, and all who volunteer on property work days.

Continued from Worship and Music, page 8



Living Last Supper 2022

Evangelism

“And Jesus Said to them, ‘All authority in heaven and earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age.’” Matthew 28:17-20



The mission of the Evangelism Team is how we communicate our faith and mission, “We Grow in Christ to Serve Others,” both inside and outside our church. As **we have shifted to being an in-person and online church community**, we’ve discovered the importance of technology like livestreaming, Zoom, and other options

which allow us to connect beyond our campus!

We are grateful for the ongoing work of the Worship and Music team, especially the Sound And Livestream Team, which helps worshipers gather together. We often hear that visitors found us online first, worshipped with us online, and then decided to come in-person. We also hear from others who are unable to join in-person for a variety of reasons, and what a blessing it is to be able to worship along with us online!

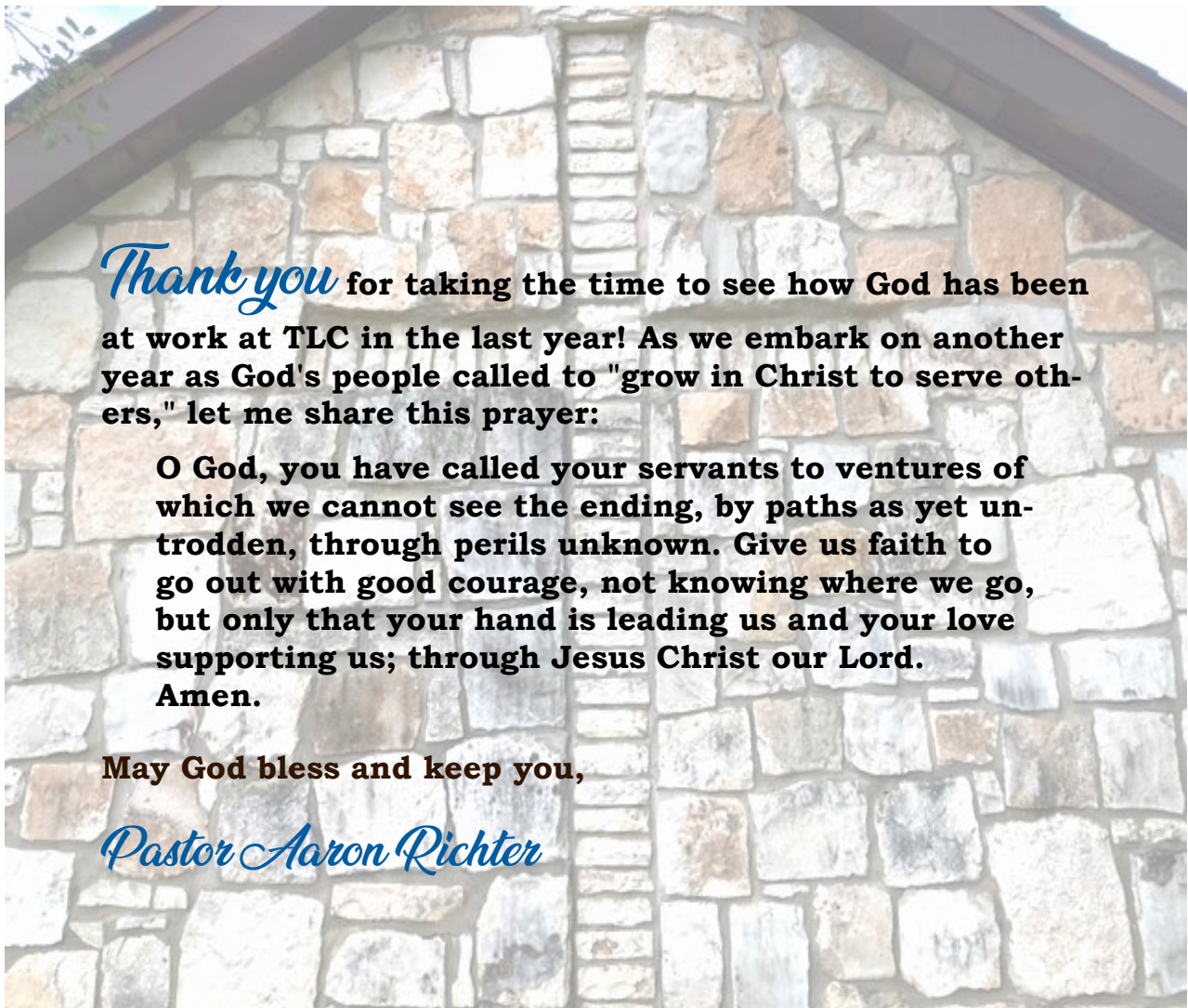


As we look into 2023, our focus is how we can help those who visit and new members of our TLC community feel fully welcome and connected. In October and November, we asked our newer members for feedback on the blessings and challenges of becoming part of the TLC community. This information is valuable as we minister as a congregation.

Several years ago, our team thought of defining evangelism as “faith communication.” We realized that this is a call of the whole church, not just our team. Each of us has many opportunities to connect deeply with others, sharing the ways God has blessed and filled our lives with hope, life, and love. It may be telling a story or posting on Facebook, or texting words of support and a Scripture, or posting a photo of how you have seen God at work. There are so many ways we can live out our call to make disciples of all nations; growing in Christ to serve others!

Team Members: Lead—Lori O’Berg. Members: Pastor Aaron Richter

Conclusion



Thank you for taking the time to see how God has been at work at TLC in the last year! As we embark on another year as God's people called to "grow in Christ to serve others," let me share this prayer:

**O God, you have called your servants to ventures of which we cannot see the ending, by paths as yet untrodden, through perils unknown. Give us faith to go out with good courage, not knowing where we go, but only that your hand is leading us and your love supporting us; through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.**

May God bless and keep you,

Pastor Aaron Richter



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