

# THE 2021 ANNUAL REPORT

## FOR

### ST. PAUL'S EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

NEWARK, OHIO JANUARY 18, 2022

Church Phone: 740-345-6115 Web Site: <[www.stpaulselca.org](http://www.stpaulselca.org)>

Pastor: Martin P. Gehring

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Office Hours: M T W 9 a.m. – 2 p.m. or by appointment

Congregation Council President: Tim Jordan

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Office Secretary: Jodie Nickles

Mon-Fri 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

Church Phone: 740-345-6115

Web Site: [www.stpaulselca.org](http://www.stpaulselca.org)

#### PASTOR'S REPORT

As we begin this new year together, I give thanks to God that the call process has brought us together. I am glad to be settling into a congregation that is so welcoming and gracious, and especially want to thank the Call Committee and Council for their hard work through the transition. They have done their work well and with a clear sense of God's guidance. I look forward to the ministry we will do together in the years to come.

I think we all hoped 2022 would bring an end to the pandemic and some sort of return to "normal" (a word that always seems to require quotation marks these days). COVID infection rates remain alarmingly high in our area, leading to ongoing safety protocols in worship and other community gatherings. Thank you for your patience and efforts to protect our community! We all look forward to the day these measures can be relaxed. Meanwhile we will continue to explore new ways to engage and nurture the community in a safe manner.

Some personal goals for the coming year:

- *Renew and restructure Clarity of purpose and responsibility helps people lead efficiently. It is time to update our constitution. Doing so will give us the opportunity to renew our congregation leadership structure to better suit our congregation today. Models that served us well in the past may not be optimal for current needs.*
- *More robust educational offerings A changing demographic requires a new model for education. I will work on a new plan for catechism*

*instruction that will accommodate a wider age range as well as busier schedules. I hope to begin offering this within the next couple months. In addition, I hope to recruit additional congregation members to join me in offering a wider range of youth and adult education opportunities.*

- *Develop a vision for the future Toward this end I will work with council to develop an event that will engage as many of us as possible in developing and implementing a new vision for ministry. I think there are many exciting possibilities to explore!*

- *Get to know the community. I want to continue to get to know the congregation through private and group meetings. So much relies on our ability to know and trust one another! I also want to get to know our surrounding community better in an effort to identify and coordinate ministry opportunities.*

These are a few of my priorities; other opportunities may arise as the year progresses. As with any congregation, our possibilities will be limited only by our willingness to engage and support our ministry together. We have much to offer each other and our community, and this year will require the best of each of us. God bless you all!

*Rev. Martin P. Gehring, Pastor*

## **PRESIDENT'S REPORT:**

We continue to live in extraordinary times, but we've come a long way in the last year. As we pause now both to look back and ahead to the next year, now is a time to feel grateful for the many people who've dedicated themselves to St. Paul's and its ministry.

A year ago, vaccines against COVID-19 were not yet widely available, making expanded worship options very necessary for meeting our congregation's needs. On behalf of those who desired to worship in-person, a thank you goes to those who made those services happen: Chad Baker, Terri Beamer, Alice Burney, Denise Crews, Kerrill Foster, Juli Rauch, Pr. John Stroup, Tim Utterback, and Andrew Willis. On behalf of those who wished online content, a thank you goes to those who recorded and posted material: Terri Beamer, Greta and Jens Blegvad, and Jerry Young.

St. Paul's experienced significant staff turnover in 2020, so hiring new people was crucial in 2021. Foremost among these new hires is our new pastor, Rev. Martin Gehring. Many thank you's go to the call committee, Jim Eastman, Diane Ganz, Hydi Laidlaw-Smith, Tim O'Keefe, Dick Shiels, and Sadie Smith. A thank you also is in order to Pr.

Bob Abrams, Assistant to the Bishop, for his support from the Synod during the call process.

In the last year, we've also had Tim Utterback return to the organ bench and Dustin Hill accept the position of choir director. Thank you to the music search committee for your work in both of these hires: Fred Freytag, Kathy Jordan, Juli Rauch, Sadie Smith, Miriam Truex, and Jerry Young. Finally, we have in the last year hired Dawn Wells as our new church custodian. A thank you goes to Greta Blegvad, Diane Ganz, and John Jordan for their help with that interview process.

As staff members, Pr. Martin, Tim, Dustin, and Dawn join Kerrill Foster and Jodie Nickles, our financial and office secretaries. Thank you to each of them for the work they do in support of our congregation's worship and mission.

As we head into 2022, St. Paul's Congregation Council will organize an asset inventory as we continue resuming our programming. We also will return to our efforts to update our constitution. As we prepare for this work, a thank you is in order to the members who have served terms on council and are going off this year: Alice Burney, Denise Crews, Fred Freytag, Gene Lamp, Mandy Johns, and Al Miller.

In naming individuals assisting in each of these areas, I hope I haven't omitted anyone, but general thank you's would not be enough. In serving as council president in the last year, I have gained a renewed appreciation for the many talented people at St. Paul's.

*Tim Jordan, President*

## **CONGREGATION CARE COMMITTEE**

Our shut-in friends received monthly phone visits by members Lindsay Freytag, Anne Daly, Gail Grangaard, and Debbie Anctil. Holiday cards and birthday cards were sent. The Word in Season devotional booklets were delivered quarterly to each shut-in friend. Respectfully submitted,

*Gail Grangaard and Debbie Anctil, co-chairmen.*

**EVANGELISM** *no report*

**FAITH AND FELLOWSHIP:** *no report*

**FOUR CHURCH FARM REPORT 2021** *no report*

**HEART AND SOUL CLASS** *no report*

**NURSERY SCHOOL** *no report*

**OCTOBERFEST COMMITTEE** *no report*

**PROPERTY COMMITTEE:** Committee Members: John Jordan, Charlie Laidlaw-Smith, Greta Blegvad, Tim Utterback, Diane Ganz.

We have had more expenses than usual this past year in maintaining the facility.

Early in the year it was determined that the HVAC unit in the pastor's office was not working. Considering its age and the cost of repair, we decided to replace it. The heating and cooling system for the sanctuary began having problems in September. First the boiler inspector reported that we needed to replace a valve. Then the AC ceased to function. Over the next few months the plumber was required additional times for work on the heating system and two more parts had to be replaced. In October the water heater in the education building began leaking. We ordered a new one, but before it arrived the bottom dropped out of the old one with the resulting flood of water. All was cleaned up and the new one installed. Charlie noticed some missing tiles on the slate roof. We engaged Robert Stokes to work on the roofs, replacing tiles and sealing channels, as well as repointing some stonework. This is a work in progress, partially due to difficulty locating replacement slates. Meanwhile some water leaked into one of the organ pipes chambers and caused some damage that had to be repaired.

Gene Lamp very graciously offered to take care of lawn mowing this past summer. He does a very nice job and saves the church considerable expense. He has also offered to remove snow from the entrances and walkways when needed. This is most appreciated. Our parking lot is supposed to be cleared of snow by the Phoenix School in exchange for their use of the space on weekdays.

Bats have been a long-time concern at the church and we have researched various ways of dealing with them. This summer John installed 12 plug-in units throughout the sanctuary that emit sound waves. So far they seem to be making a difference.

John also installed a doorbell at the west entrance of the education building which rings in the office so that Jodie can let anyone in who arrives between 10:00 A.M. and 2:00 P.M. weekdays.

In June we engaged a new sexton for the facility. The agency we had been using was raising their prices and not working the hours they agreed upon. Dawn Wells is our current sexton and works 15 hours/week.

Greta and Tim joined the committee this year. Greta is chairing a subcommittee to research options for a new sign at the corner of 5<sup>th</sup> and Locust when the city completes construction of the planned round-about. Tim is making plans for refinishing the exterior doors (12!) in the coming year. Another ongoing project is improving the security lighting on the west side of the buildings.

On another positive note, we contracted with Weekley Electric to convert all of our 1<sup>st</sup> floor florescent tube lights to LED and replace the EXIT lights with LED security units. The work was completed in November, under budget, by a crew who were on time, polite, and cleaned up after themselves.

*Respectfully Submitted, Diane Ganz*

## RENTAL PROPERTY COMMITTEE:

All 6 rental properties are currently rented. Gross income from these rentals, less expenses, equal about \$55,000 per year. The properties have a resale value of about \$612,000.00. The committee again entered an agreement to continue a service contract for the furnace, hot water tank and air conditioner. This includes a yearly inspection of each unit plus a service call and a 10% discount on parts.

We were offered to sell about one fourth of our two lot property on Hudson Ave. to an adjacent owner on Shields Ave. The sale less closing costs was \$8200.00. A row of Arborvitaes was planted along the west and north side at the rear of our property to offer a wind break as well as seclusion from other properties. The closing was done in late December.

A complete rehab of the property on Woods Ave. was made after an eviction of renters taking care of the 1900 era property. This included taking out all carpet and replacing with laminate flooring. Repair and replacement of some rain spouting was done. A complete replacement of a half bath with removal of a corner shower was also completed. Repainting was completed to almost all rooms as well as the front porch. Pocket doors were made usable and a walnut stair railing was uncovered and reworked. Rent was increased by \$200 per month.

A new hand rail and the lowering of the steps, to six inches, at the front door at the 25 28<sup>th</sup> street rental was made for easier access of the renters. Repair work was done to the south side of the closed end back porch.

Once our committee can again meet in person, we will begin to work on long term budgeting to maintain the rentals. We have tried to incorporate good communication with each of the renters.

*-- Jim Rengert, Rental Property*

## TREASURER'S REPORT January 1, 2021 through December 31, 2021

<b>Account Name</b>	<b>Receipts</b>	<b>Disbursements</b>	<b>Ending Balance</b>
General Operating Fund	\$169,968.96	\$162,350.61	\$163,828.46
Altar Flowers & Candles	2,492.00	2,660.62	(320.56)
Christian Education	1,093.69	277.00	1587.47
Youth Ministry	470.15	0.00	21,019.73
Benevolence	5,073.50	5,073.50	0.00
Pastor's Discretionary Fund	1,515.11	380.00	3,452.73
Mecklenburg Fund	0.00	0.00	5,000.00
Memorial Fund	1,060.00	0.00	6,298.69
Designated Memorial Fund	0.00	4,257.00	243.00
Matthew's Kitchen Fund Balance	0.00	60.00	287.89
Newark City Sign Payment	0.00	0.00	9722.00

Community Outreach	5,040.00	5,040.00	57.92
Choir Fund	355.00	450.00	3,924.92
Rental Property	63,190.75	54,709.51	25,528.74
Mary A. Ponser Bequest	16,788.64	0.00	120,447.65
Thrivent Choice Dollars Fund	2,278.00	0.00	24,274.94
New Bell/Ringers Fund	0.00	0.00	1,100.00
Lucas Bible Fund	0.00	0.00	2,330.70
Bob and Ruth Watson Fund*	0.00	0.00	65,396.51
Robert Wright Fund#	20,000.00	0.00	60,000.00
Margaret Ann Dupler Fund	9,372.66	0.00	61,977.63
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$296,420.46</b>	<b>\$235,258.24</b>	<b>\$576,158.42</b>

\*At the time of this report, no information on 4<sup>th</sup> quarter mutual fund interest was available.

#Two previous gifts totaling \$40,000 were transferred from the operations fund in 2021 to add to Dr. Wright's generous donation in 2021 to establish this undesignated fund.

<b>2021 Benevolence Paid to Synod</b>	<b>\$5,073.50</b>
<b>Checking Account Balance – January 1, 2021</b>	<b>\$ 237,030.75</b>
<b>Checking Account Balance – December 31, 2021</b>	<b>\$261,230.03</b>

### Investments - Certificates of Deposits and Savings as of December 31, 2021

<u>Interest only</u> endowments:	Principle	Interest Designation
Davis Fund-Edward Jones	\$205,011.97	75% Current Expenses 25% Discretionary
Weiss Fund PNB Mutual Funds	95,393.57	33% Youth Ministries 67% Youth Education
Lambert Fund PNB Mutual Funds	25,827.15	100 % Current Expenses

<b>Principle &amp; Interest Designated Funds:</b>	<b>Amount</b>
<b>Savings:</b> Heartland Bank - money market	\$69,297.46
includes Lucas Bible Fund	+2,330.70
Weiss Interest	+4,010.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$75,638.16</b>

<b>Designated Funds</b>	<b>Amount</b>	<b>Designation</b>
Edward Jones Danford Fund ( <i>principal \$11,403</i> )	\$23,037.35	Interest for Seminarian ( <i>\$11,634.35 accumulated interest</i> )
Edward Jones Ponser Fund	120,447.65	74% Major Property Exp 26% Undesignated

Edward Jones Youth Gathering Fund	22,293.79	100% Youth Gathering Exp
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### **Undesignated Funds**

Mission Investment Fund of the ELCA	22,392.47
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*\*does not include December interest.*

Bob & Ruth Watson Thrivent Fund	65,396.51*
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Robert Wright Fund	60,000.00
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*\*At the time of this report, no information on 4<sup>th</sup> quarter mutual fund interest was available.*

**– Report Submitted by Financial Secretary, Kerrill Foster 1/10/2022**

**WOMEN of the ELCA:** *Co-Chairs, Diane Ganz & Kerrill Foster, secretary, Shirley Campbell, Treasurer – Debbie Anctil*

We collected mittens and hats again for the Salvation Army this year, collecting over 200 items. Marti Kolb continues to spearhead that project. Ruth Circle has begun meeting and meets the **2<sup>nd</sup> Wednesday** of the month at **9:30 a.m.** We are holding a meeting on January 22<sup>nd</sup> at 9:30 a.m. to discuss the feasibility of holding a Rummage sale in April of 2022. Please join us if you can help. Without enough volunteers we will not be able to hold a rummage sale.

One of our most important ministries continues to be providing a time of fellowship where families and friends can begin to experience healing, wholeness and love in our church after a loss. We do this by providing bereavement luncheons after a funeral or memorial service at no cost to the family. This year we served funeral lunches and continued to make the ministry as socially distanced and single-serving-ed as possible to provide our ministry. Our thanks to everyone who helped. All year long, Florence Knerr continued to send birthday cards to members of the congregation.

**– Kerrill Foster, & Diane Ganz, St. Paul's WELCA**

**WORSHIP & MUSIC COMMITTEE** *no report*

### **VARIOUS BENEVOLENCE PROJECTS of the congregation:**

**1. The Licking County Coalition of Care,** The coalition attempts to help people in need through monetary and other assistance to help with rent and utility payments, prescription costs, and other very basic human needs. At St. Paul's we support this ministry through a special offering received on the first weekend of each month. In 2021 a total of **\$1,708.00** was donated by the members of St. Paul's and given to the Coalition of Care for distribution.

**ORGANIZATIONS THAT WE REGULARLY HOST. With 2021, we have 2**

groups of Alcoholics Anonymous meeting at our facility, one on Friday mornings and one on Saturday mornings both meeting at 11 in Danford Hall.

## Mini January Forward for January 18, 2022

### Message from the Pastor

**What is Evangelism?** Continuing on with our Reformation Day questions ...

One soul asks, “what is evangelism?” Just in case he/she means “what the *heck* is evangelism?” evangelism comes from the Greek *evangelion*, which means “good news.” So to be an evangelist is to be someone who delivers or passes along good news. However, I suspect our questioner is poking at the deeper question of how we be evangelists in a time when our “good news” is not always delivered or received as such. Even the word, *evangelist*, has been coopted by the likes of Rick Warren, Ted Haggard, and Joel Osteen, media moguls who with dazzling, persistent smiles market, package, and sell the gospel to their star-struck fans. For all our faults, most Lutherans have the good sense to steer clear of such exhibitionism. Money always seems to find a way to undermine the gospel – and these media circuses are awash in money.

It seems to me the first rule of evangelism should be (to quote Hippocrates) *primum non nocere*, “first, do no harm.” The good news should always be good news. It should never be used to threaten or control. The gospel is not that Jesus will save you if you go to church every Sunday, tithe your earnings, and generally toe the line. Rather it is that Jesus saves us precisely because we fail miserably at doing these things. Jesus said, “It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick. Go and learn what this means: ‘I desire mercy, not sacrifice.’ For I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners.”

Evangelism is not about winning souls for Jesus, as if he was somehow too feeble to complete the task himself and needed us to bring it home. Our *evangelion* is not that people *can* be saved, but that they *have* been saved. It is not that Christ has opened the gate to heaven for us to come ambling through if we can, but rather that Christ has scooped us up, run the length of the field, and spiked us into the end zone. To proclaim that we *might* be saved makes for a lukewarm message at best. But to stand before someone who is being consumed by fear, shame, self-loathing, addiction, anger, despair, or just plain ol’ garden variety angst, and to be able to tell them that God loves them exactly as they are, without changing, contributing, or subscribing, well ... that *is* good news.

Of course, to find those who most need this good news, we will need to go where they can be found and that may not be where we want to find them, in our pews or in our neighborhood, and it may be that a sandwich, a sleeping bag, or a loan communicates much more persuasively than words. Some who hear this good news may even what to



join with us in passing it along to others, but I wouldn't count on it any more than Jesus did. How many disciples did Jesus have in the end? Oh, that's right: none. Our job is not to change the world or tally the numbers. Our job as evangelists is simply to tell the good news, and then give thanks for the power of that *evangelion* to change everything.

*Pastor Gehring*

### Sunday Volunteers for February 2022

Position	Feb 6 <sup>th</sup>	Feb 13 <sup>th</sup>	Feb 20 <sup>th</sup>	Feb 27 <sup>th</sup>
<b>Cantor</b>	Juli Rauch	Tim Jordan	Ruth Gehring	Kerrill Foster
<b>Lector</b>	Dick Shiels	Addison Laidlaw-Smith	Gerry Billy	Sadie Smith
<b>Usher</b>	Charles Cooperider	Charlie-Laidlaw Smith	Greg Everingham	Don Miller
<b>Counters</b>	Fred & Lindsay Freytag, Sally Finck	Julie Lamp, Richard & Diana Koch	Sally Finck, Greg & Kim Everingham	Kerrill Foster, Don Miller

***Flower and Candles are available for January and February. Please contact the church office if you can donate towards the flowers or sanctuary candles.***

In December, flowers were provided on Dec 5<sup>th</sup> by Wanda Cooperider in honor of ***Ernest Cooperiders's*** 97<sup>th</sup> birthday. Nancy Coad provided flowers and candle on Dec 12<sup>th</sup> in honor of ***Kay Coad Edman***, on the 19<sup>th</sup> in memory of ***Franklin and Hanella Coad*** and on the 26<sup>th</sup> in honor of ***Dean Pope***.

### February Birthdays

- |                       |                         |                          |
|-----------------------|-------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1 - Christopher Logan | Paul Meyers             | 16 - Clara Hinger        |
| 2 - Denise Crews      | 7 - Courtney Swisher    | Connie Rutter            |
| Ryan Green            | 8 - Silas Engle-Abbott  | 20 - Marti Kolb-Conner   |
| Tiffany Myers         | Emily Ossa              | 22 - Nick Baker          |
| 3 - Gene Crawmer      | 10 - Carlos McElfresh   | Thelma Trainor           |
| Traci Dupler          | 12 - Dick Daly (83)     | 23 - Arianna Hinger      |
| Karen Jordan          | Susan Enderle           | Michael Mumaw            |
| Katherine Plante      | Daniel Fuller           | Tanya Myers              |
| 4 - Troy Triplett     | 13 - Jeff Kinser        | 26 - Kate (Daly) Jordan- |
| Tabatha Trost         | 14 - Richard Barrett    | Downs                    |
| 6 - Gerry Billy       | 15 - Matt Godenschwager | 29 - Linda Kinser        |
| Kaitlyn Carpenter     | Starr Cummings          |                          |

## February Anniversaries

- 3 - Ernest & Wanda Cooperider (63)
- 5 - Wayne & Margaret Marx (50)
- 6 - David & Elviria Engle (48)
- 8 - Ben & Crystal Stamper (25)
- 9 - Jayson & Megan Thorpe (14)
- 14 - Ron & Mary Howard (58)
- 19 - Francis & Laura Pastorius (17)
- 22 - Chuck & Jane Lawrence (19)

**Please keep the following people in your prayers: *Bill Wittman, Linda Smart, Richard Buse*** (Terri Beamer's brother), ***Lee Sidle***, (friend of Gene Lamp).



**Those with long-term ongoing concerns:** Mary Beamer (now in hospice care), Tambra Simon, Pastor Martin Waack, Milton & Carmella Holman, Ernie Cooperider, Peg Hupp, Starr Cummings, Pamela Graham, Jena Olien-Harris, Logan Johnson, Marshall Rosene, Pastor Betsy, Ruth Swinehart, Ginny Baker, Betty Neighbarger, Wilma Keller, Terry Nelson, Margaret Marx, Rose Godenschwager, Frances Slebodnik, Terrie Baker, Alice Smith.

***If you need an address for anyone or wish to add someone to the list, please call the office.***

### **Notes to the Church and Congregation:**

**PASTOR'S OFFICE HOURS - Monday, Tuesday & Wednesday  
9 a.m. to 2 p.m. or by appointment.**

**SHUT-INS** – If you are in need of pastoral care, a friendly visit, or would like communion brought to your home, please contact the office and leave a message with Jodie between the hours of 10 and 2. Thanks!

**ARE YOU GRIEVING THE LOSS OF A LOVED ONE?** – The Grief Group meets on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Wednesday of January and February at 1:30 in Danford Hall. If you would like more information, please contact Thelma Trainor or Jean Hovland.

**RUMMAGE SALE PLANS!!!** After a 2-year hiatus, plans are being made to hold the church rummage sale the weekend after Easter in 2022, Friday April 22<sup>nd</sup> and Saturday April 23<sup>rd</sup>. In order to make this happen, we need volunteers to arrange items on the tables, work during the sale and help box up and move on remaining items on Saturday afternoon. If you can help, please come to a meeting on Saturday January 22<sup>nd</sup> at 9 a.m. A light breakfast will be provided. If you cannot attend but can help, please see Kerrill Foster or Diane Ganz.

**MITTEN TREE ROUND UP** – This year we collected 80 hats, 105 pairs of mittens, 16 scarves, 22 pairs of socks and 7 blankets!!! Not bad for a pandemic!! Marti Kolb-Conner delivered our donations to the Salvation Army in time for their Christmas distribution. Thank you to everyone and thank you, Marti!

**THE WHEN'S AND THE WHERE'S – If your group is starting up again, please let us know so we can get your information on the church calendar!**

- ***ST. PAUL'S BOOK CLUB*** meets the third Monday evening of each month at 7 p.m. in Weisgerber Lounge.
- ***AA*** meets every Saturday morning at 11 a.m. in Danford Hall and on Fridays at noon.
- ***Friday Fellowship Bible Study*** meets every Friday morning at 10 a.m. in Weisgerber Lounge.
- ***Ruth Circle*** meets next on February 9<sup>th</sup> at 10:15 to noon in Danford Hall.
- ***Church Council*** will meet Monday January 31<sup>st</sup> at 7 p.m.

THE ANNUAL REPORT January 18, 2022  
St. Paul's Evangelical Lutheran Church  
67 North Fifth Street (at Locust)  
Newark, OH 43055

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