

2019 ANNUAL REPORT



Westwood Lutheran Church | Annual Report | February 2020

Senior Pastor Report

Budget Town Hall

Sunday, February 2, at 9:50 AM
in the Westwood Room

Annual Meeting

Sunday, February 9, at 9:50 AM
in Good Shepherd Hall

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We go out with GOOD COURAGE!

I have heard so many of you tell me about a choice you've made in your life or a new way of looking at something that has come out of our saying the Prayer of Good Courage every week. Through our focus on that prayer this year, we've seen more deeply who God is, i.e., one who doesn't take away life's "perils," but one who calls, leads, and supports us in the midst of those....both in our own lives and in our congregation.

We celebrated 75 years...

as Westwood Lutheran Church in St. Louis Park...from a gathering of neighbors that met in a basement, to the little white church, to our current building...it is clear how God has worked in and through thousands of members and staff to serve this community and our world! Through videos, song and story, through 75 quilts sold and given away, to festival worship services, to a concert full of Westwood's talent and special commissioned music, "Prayer of Good Courage", we remembered, gave thanks, and looked towards a bright future.

Your generosity and commitment...



made our \$1.5 million "All Are Welcome" Capital Appeal a successful step towards making sure our facility is ready for the future: safe, secure, accessible, and green. Dollars were raised and pledged with approximately \$130,000 left to raise, and all the work has been completed. Upfront gifts saved

us around \$30,000 in debt, so a special thank you for that! Highlights of the project are the new accessible restrooms and a renovated and secure WECC. Thank you!

continued...

We started down "paths as yet untrodden"

- During our 2019 Lenten series we began a conversation on race, knowing the ELCA is the whitest denomination in America. A Racial Equity Team was formed, and a scouting trip was taken to Alabama and the Lynching Memorial as we began to explore more deeply the racism in our country's history.
- Plans for a 2022 Appeal are unfolding as Westwood assumes the role of a catalyst for a low-income housing and childcare site in our community. Our piece would be operating a possible childcare in that facility.
- We continue to pursue a new way of 'doing church' through our emphasis on grace and vocation. Our work has drawn some attention from the ELCA and other congregations as we share our learnings with others.
- Not a new path for Westwood, but realizing we had not taken an important step in our support of LGBTQIA+ folks, Westwood has recently joined hundreds of other ELCA ministries that are Reconciling in Christ...a public and official acknowledgment of our beliefs and actions to welcome all.

We are out and about!

We continue our 16+ year partnership with Arusha Road Church and other ministries in Dodoma, Tanzania. In 2019, a delegation from Arusha Road visited Westwood, and our

first group of youth went there. We continue to learn from each other and build friendships.

We took a group to Holden Village and led trips sailing the Apostle Islands and canoeing the BWCA. Our youth also traveled to Colorado on a mission trip. Dozens of ministries and events happened right here at Westwood with God's faithful, from birth well into 90+ year-olds actively participating.

Penne Sewall retired as our Director of Congregational Care after 6 years, and Janet Johnson retired as our Financial Coordinator after 10 years. We remain deeply grateful for their ministry, commitment, and friendship!

I give great thanks for these and the million other small things that God is up to because of what happens at and through Westwood and each of you! God's hand has clearly been leading us. As we move now into this new decade, may the Prayer of Good Courage remain on our lips and in our hearts, that our lives might reflect this God's Good News for us all.

+ Pastor Tania Haber



Report from the Mpls Area Synod

Written by Bishop Ann Svennungsen

- Our synod currently has 65 people preparing to be pastors and deacons; synod leaders meet with each of them about four times during their seminary years.
- We worked with 50 congregations in call processes last year. I visit each congregation once it has completed its ministry site profile. My colleagues meet with call committees much more often.
- We facilitate peer groups for support and prayer for everyone who works in a church -- not just pastors.
- We provide educational and training resources for congregations - especially for church councils and committee leaders - like the "Tool Kit" on February 22, highlighting topics like evangelism, stewardship and finances, how to lead productive meetings, maximizing the value of congregational real estate, church safety and emergency preparedness, and more.
- We provide pastoral care to the 700 rostered leaders in our synod, of whom half are retired. It is my great privilege to bring greetings from the larger church at funerals for our rostered leaders.

And we foster partnerships:

- among and between congregations,
- between ELCA congregations, the synod, the national church, and the wider faith community,
- with ecumenical and global partners, and
- with community organizations that share our mission objective and bring deeper and more sustainable health to our communities.

May God bless you and your congregation and all the partners in our synod, that together we may discover new ways to share God's grace, build beloved community, and be the real presence of Christ -- in our neighborhoods and with our neighbors.

In Christ.

Bishop Ann Svennungsen





Laura Ramsborg
President-Elect

Laura and husband Mark have been members for over 10 years. Laura is an avid reader and has been part of the Moms Connect Group (as a parent of 3 little girls). She recently led a stewardship and parenting discussion with Pastor Miriam. Laura says, "I'm thrilled to be a part of Westwood's Church Council because it's a unique opportunity to live out my faith through service. Specifically, Westwood's work with equity, affordable housing, and community outreach is very exciting to me. Thank you for the opportunity to serve you."



LaDonna Reynolds
Secretary

LaDonna has been a member for nearly 60 years and husband, Bud Rabe, joined in 2018. As you can imagine, LaDonna has been involved in most everything over the years, including serving on staff as our Dir. of Administration. She says, "The Prayer of Good Courage urges us to move forward with God's hand leading and supporting. Ministry is waiting and I am hopeful that I might be part of the thoughtful decisions that move our congregation toward meeting needs in our community and within our Westwood family. It is a blessing to serve!"



Dave Hill
Treasurer

Dave and wife Dawn have been members for 21 years. They sent their son, Tim, now a young adult, to the WECC. Dave has served on the Stewardship & Finance Committees, been a Sunday School teacher, and played on the Golf League and Softball Team. Dave says, "I look forward to helping continue the mission of Westwood as we courageously begin the next 75 years."



Dave Guenzel
Council At-Large (3 year term)

Dave and his wife Joan (Olivia, Thomas, Adam) have been active members for 12 years. Dave has taught Confirmation and worked with youth, accompanying Dannica and the youth to Tanzania last summer. He says, "What an exciting time to be a member at Westwood! I am very interested in serving our church and community, especially as Westwood looks at the issues of affordable housing and childcare."



Anna Martinez
Council At-Large (3 year term)

Anna has been a member for 2 1/2 years. Her parents founded the Dodoma Christian Medical Center, with which Westwood is involved. Anna is certified as a Spiritual Director, and we've been blessed to have her as a leader in our Women's Spirituality Nights and on our fall Women's Retreat. She says, "I'm excited to join the mission of Westwood to positively impact our community in tangible ways."

Nominations Team - Nominees



Shelby Strauss

Shelby and her family have been members for about 6 years. She has served on 2 Intern Committees, the Outreach Team and currently the Racial Equity Team. She's also part of the Moms Connect Group.



Lanica Klein

Lanica and her family have been members since 1997. She has volunteered with the Library and Archives Team.



Kurt Koubal

Kurt and his family have been members since 2006. He and wife, Dawn, are very active on the Food Packing Committee, the Parents of Young Children Small Group, and with the youth. Kurt has also served on the Council.

Re-Elected for 2nd Year

Hugh Mattson
Heidi Thompson

Council President Report

It has been another great year at Westwood with the Prayer of Good Courage guiding our work. As we explored this prayer more deeply, it is evident that it guides the congregation to have the courage to venture into places of which we cannot see the ending and be the hands, heart, and feet of Jesus. This has been demonstrated through the support provided within our congregation as well as within our community and the world.

In October, the Council had the opportunity to engage in a retreat to have time to reflect on the progress made on our current Strategic Initiatives and start developing our future Strategic Initiatives.

These Strategic Initiatives are "arrows" that guide us to ensure we continue heading down the road toward our Vision, which has three critical components:

- 1) Create New Connections**
- 2) Empower Discipleship and Mission**
- 3) Be an Advocate for a Healthy Community**

Our goal as a Council is to continue to ensure that our focus is supporting the staff and congregation in living out this Vision.

As the Council prepared for the October retreat, one of the homework items (yes, Pastor Jason assigned homework) was to write an article about Westwood. Here is a little summary of some of the articles from the Council: Westwood Lutheran Church has a strong sense of an environment and culture that is extremely generous, energetic, positive, engaging, courageous, and inclusive. The church has a clear identity and vision, and the congregation focuses on being the hands, heart, and feet of Jesus by living out their vocations to support others. There is a strong belief that each person of the congregation has talents, gifts, and blessings that they can use to make a difference in the world, which is extremely empowering. This has clearly become a way of life for the congregation, and Westwood has created an environment

and culture to allow for these meaningful conversations. This illustration of Westwood is an attractive place to be, which is one of the main reasons we have a vibrant and growing congregation, making a positive impact in the world. Each member of the congregation is important in creating this culture.

The Council would also like to offer a huge "Thank You" to each of you – staff and congregation – for the gifts you share with Westwood. Whether you share your time, talents, and/or financial resources, it all plays an extremely important role in living out God's Vision for Westwood. We are consistently amazed with the talent and generosity that make up Westwood – it is truly remarkable. Additionally, we are so grateful for the congregation's response and support to the "All Are Welcome Appeal." The updates to our church provide access and security for everyone. There are also so many things happening daily, weekly, and monthly at Westwood, each having a profound impact on the community and world. We are grateful for your commitment to this. None of this could be accomplished without our generous, energetic, positive, engaging, courageous, and inclusive congregation.

On behalf of the Council, thank you for the opportunity to serve Westwood Lutheran Church. We are honored to be a part of a faith community that focuses on living out God's Vision daily and empowers each person to be an active part of it. Westwood is truly living out the Prayer of Good Courage and will continue to do so in 2020. We are excited to see where this venture takes us!

+ Chris Hentges, President



2019 Council Members

Chris Hentges	President
*Sara Moran	President Elect (joining staff in June 2020!)
*James Behnke	Treasurer
*Wanda Nightengale	Secretary
*Lacey Kraft	Member at Large
*Kathy Catalano	Member at Large

Laura Smith	Member at Large
Jim Fiebelkorn	Member at Large
David Frank	Member at Large
Dan Aune	Member at Large
Tania Haber	Senior Pastor

* notes those outgoing members

Council Strategic Initiatives

This set of initiatives runs through spring 2020. Council reviews these a couple times each year, and in the spring with the new Council revisits and updates them. In 2018-2019, these were the Strategic Initiatives that the Council and Staff held up as they set goals and areas of focus:

#1 **Vocation** individual + corporate

We will become more fully a congregation that speaks into that difficult intersection of our faith and our daily lives, and more fully discerns the corporate vocation of this congregation. Our themes of "Artisans of the Common Good" and "The Prayer of Good Courage," together with affinity groups, retreats, etc. helped us further this initiative.

#2 **Building Financial Capacity**

Because of our 2019 Appeal and the upcoming 2022 Appeal, in addition to funding our annual ministries, it is critical that Westwood builds greater capacity in the area of stewardship. To execute this initiative, a new Stewardship Advisory Team was formed to run the "All Are Welcome" Appeal and continue a variety of ways, year-around, to focus on how we use and share the gifts we've been given.

#3 **Reaching Out into our community**

We will create a vision for the Prayer of Good Courage appeal in 2022, moving into the community in ways we would not have ever dared imagine just a few years ago. We also cement our congregation as a place of faithful innovation for the sake of the world that God loves.

5 areas that are key in defining us

In addition to these Strategic Initiatives, at a retreat this fall, the Council determined 5 areas that we felt defined both our culture and current foci: vocation (as an umbrella over these), race & equity issues, low-income housing/childcare project, lifting up those who are LGBTQIA+, and continuing our inter-faith relationships. These are areas that we want to keep in the forefront as we plan and budget and imagine where God continues to call us.

Vocation

Race & Equity Issues

Low-Income Housing/Childcare Project

LGBTQIA+

Inter-Faith Relationships

Treasurer's Report

During 2019, Westwood's contributions to the General Fund and "All Are Welcome" appeal exceeded \$2.3 million. This generosity is truly incredible and speaks to the community we have built over the past 75 years. Thank you for your commitment of time and financial gifts in support of the important mission and ministries of Westwood Lutheran Church.

The overall financial outcome for the church's general operating fund showed \$1.7 million in receipts, which is up 3% from 2018, but \$55,000 short of budget goals. Operating expenses totaled \$1.6 million and were 2% under budget, partially offsetting the budget variance in receipts. The combined impact, after transfers for debt and capital payments, resulted in a \$30,000 fund balance decrease. The ending balance is at a very low level in comparison to prior years, but not uncommon during the initial period of a capital appeal. The 2020 budget proposal reflects the intent to strengthen this fund. The Council, Financial Management Advisory Group (FMAG) and Director of Administration will continue to monitor this closely as we move through 2020.

The Westwood Early Childhood Center (WECC) operating fund performed in line with budget during 2019. The totals reflected a 7% increase in receipts and an 8% increase in expenses. This was accomplished during a year of significant disruption as the children's classrooms were relocated to Good Shepherd Hall

during construction. We appreciated the flexibility and 'can do' attitude of our WECC families and staff during this time. Thank you. The congregation gave significant gifts to the "All Are Welcome" appeal, truly living out our "Courageous Living, General Giving" mantra. During 2019 we raised over \$800 thousand from members and through the WECC. We have collected slightly over \$1.0 million for this project to date, bringing us to 65% of the overall goal. This is a very significant accomplishment in year 1 of a 3 year capital appeal.

Westwood's financial management and administration is guided by strong and thoughtful leaders comprised of Westwood staff, FMAG and the Council with oversight by the Audit Committee. These teams are diligent stewards of your financial gifts. I have felt very fortunate to have worked with such a strong, dedicated team over the past four years.

Again, thank you for the generous gifts in support of Westwood's mission and ministries. I encourage you to continue your generous support of Westwood as we go out with good courage, knowing that God is leading and supporting us.

May God bless your lives and our community during 2020,

+ James Behnke, Treasurer



A Report from the Westwood Lutheran Memorial Foundation

Did You Know?

- ✓ The Westwood Lutheran Memorial Foundation was founded in 1973.
- ✓ Gifts to the Foundation come from people honoring or remembering Westwood members.
- ✓ Designated FUNDS managed by the Foundation are:
 - Music Program Fund
 - Don Hansen Caring Ministry Fund
 - Engen Family Lutheran College Fund
 - Darleen Hysen Community Mission Fund
 - Ralph and Dee Martinson Art Fund
 - Good Samaritan Fund
 - Prazak Visiting Scholar Fund
 - Tom Hunstad Caring Youth Fund
 - Louise Griver Seminary Fund
 - Thoni Youth Ministry and Service Fund
 - Fund for the Homeless
 - Endowment Fund
 - Donald C Bell Adult Ed Fund
 - African Youth Bridge-Building Fund
 - Stanley & Esther Crist Garden Fund
- ✓ Westwood ministries, activities, scholarships and member enrichment are the ONLY beneficiaries of grants from the Foundation.
- ✓ Over \$51,000 in grants were paid out by the Foundation in 2019.
- ✓ YOU can give gifts of any size and to any FUND now or in the future with Legacy giving.

Foundation Board of Directors:

President: Beth Johnson
Kim Aune, Steve Bergeland, Simone Dorcas, Chris Finseth, Greg Loeschke, Jan Prazak, Kerry Kruppstadt, John Racek, Dwight Peterson

Lenten Series 2020

"Who Am I? Continuing Our Conversations About Race" funded by the Foundation's

- Prazak Visiting Scholar Fund
- Donald C Bell Adult Ed Fund
- Endowment Fund



Statement of Financial Position

As of December 31, 2019 and 2018

	<u>2019</u>	<u>2018</u>
ASSETS		
Cash and Investments		
Unrestricted	\$ 167,190	\$ 121,956
Restricted	665,679	408,628
Property and Equipment at Cost	<u>10,431,928</u>	<u>8,913,590</u>
Total Assets	<u>\$ 11,264,797</u>	<u>\$ 9,444,174</u>
LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS		
Liabilities		
Mortgage Payable	\$ 1,323,892	\$ 1,380,542
Short Term Loan	753,511	-
Other Liabilities	<u>111,489</u>	<u>62,888</u>
Total Liabilities	2,188,892	1,443,430
Net Assets		
Unrestricted	8,410,226	7,592,116
Temporarily Restricted	<u>665,679</u>	<u>408,628</u>
Total Net Assets	<u>9,075,905</u>	<u>8,000,744</u>
Total Liabilities and Net Assets	<u>\$ 11,264,797</u>	<u>\$ 9,444,174</u>

Congregational Statistics

<u>Statistics</u>	<u>2017</u>	<u>2018</u>	<u>2019</u>
Baptisms	53	48	35
Marriages	5	11	11
Confirmed	19	13	23
Funerals	26	18	22
New Members	55	105	53
Average Weekly Attendance	611	619	584
Confirmation Enrollment	69	71	70
Membership	2532	2545	2581
Lapsed/Transferred	109	126	111

General Fund

For the Years Ended December 31, 2019 and 2020

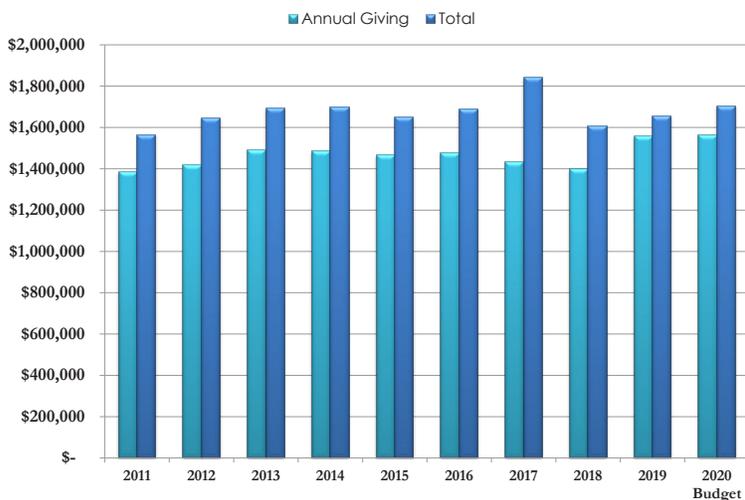
	2019 Budget	2019 Actual	2020 Budget
NET ASSETS - GENERAL FUND - BEGINNING	\$ 41,895	\$ 41,895	\$ 12,030
REVENUES			
Annual Giving	1,610,558	1,558,167	1,565,335
Other Receipts	100,400	97,178	139,125
Total Revenues	<u>1,710,958</u>	<u>1,655,345</u>	<u>1,704,460</u>
EXPENSES			
Salaries and Benefits	1,108,671	1,092,542	1,077,086
Outreach	168,500	156,127	182,500
Administration	102,662	107,074	103,145
Building and Grounds	176,500	177,995	174,750
Program	54,625	51,472	37,775
Total Expenditures	<u>1,610,958</u>	<u>1,585,210</u>	<u>1,575,256</u>
CHANGE IN NET ASSETS	100,000	70,135	129,204
Transfer from(to) Other Funds	<u>(100,000)</u>	<u>(100,000)</u>	<u>(90,000)</u>
NET ASSETS - GENERAL FUND - ENDING	<u>\$ 41,895</u>	<u>\$ 12,030</u>	<u>\$ 51,234</u>

Westwood Early Childhood Center Fund

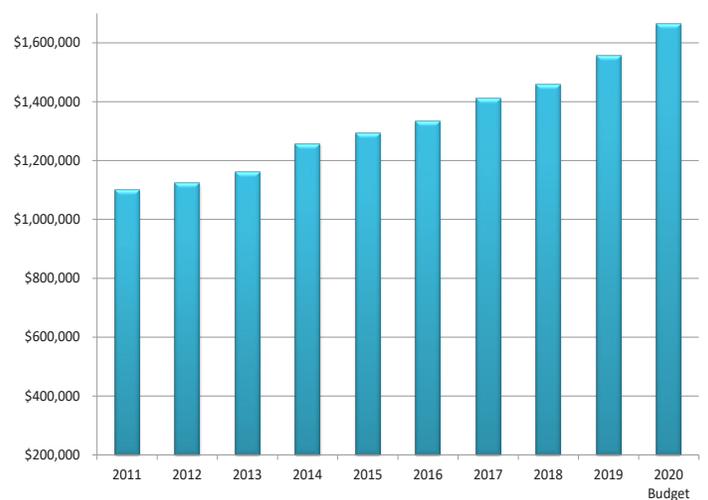
For the Years Ended December 31, 2019 and 2020

	2019 Budget	2019 Actual	2020 Budget
NET ASSETS - WECC FUND - BEGINNING	\$ 21,469	\$ 21,469	\$ 47,968
REVENUES			
Tuition	1,536,456	1,542,171	1,644,059
Other Receipts	10,500	13,991	21,000
Total Revenues	<u>1,546,956</u>	<u>1,556,162</u>	<u>1,665,059</u>
EXPENDITURES			
Salaries and Benefits	1,291,169	1,294,208	1,423,573
Operating	98,600	105,163	88,516
Food Service	67,000	65,762	67,000
Program	29,000	27,530	26,000
Total Expenditures	<u>1,485,769</u>	<u>1,492,663</u>	<u>1,605,089</u>
Change in Net Assets	61,187	63,499	59,970
Transfer from(to) Other Funds	<u>(37,000)</u>	<u>(37,000)</u>	<u>(87,000)</u>
NET ASSETS - WECC FUND - ENDING	<u>\$ 45,656</u>	<u>\$ 47,968</u>	<u>\$ 20,938</u>

General Fund Revenues



WECC Revenues



Capital Fund

For the Years Ended December 31, 2019 and 2020

	2019 Budget	2019 Actual	2020 Budget
NET ASSETS - CAPITAL FUNDS - BEGINNING	\$ 200,214	\$ 200,214	\$ 450,084
REVENUES			
Capital Fund	33,540	163,412	40,000
All Are Welcome Appeal	327,492	788,382	200,000
Other Receipts	-	37,088	16,154
Total Revenues	<u>361,032</u>	<u>988,882</u>	<u>256,154</u>
DEBT FINANCING			
Principal and Interest Payments	(114,228)	(114,228)	(114,228)
Short Term Financing/Loan Payments	682,780	736,013	(318,162)
Net Debt Financing	<u>568,552</u>	<u>621,785</u>	<u>(432,390)</u>
EXPENDITURES			
Capital Expenditures	1,213,675	1,497,797	192,000
Total Capital Expenditures	<u>1,213,675</u>	<u>1,497,797</u>	<u>192,000</u>
CHANGE IN NET ASSETS	(284,091)	112,870	(368,236)
Transfer from(to) Other Funds	137,000	137,000	177,000
NET ASSETS - CAPITAL FUNDS - ENDING	<u>\$ 53,123</u>	<u>\$ 450,084</u>	<u>\$ 258,848</u>

Designated Funds

For the Years Ended December 31, 2019 and 2020

	2019 Budget	2019 Actual	2020 Budget
NET ASSETS - DESIGNATED FUNDS - BEGINNING	\$ 208,414	\$ 208,414	\$ 215,594
REVENUES			
Outreach	75,000	75,223	75,000
Operating	45,000	32,535	30,000
Memorials	5,000	27,471	8,000
Total Revenues	<u>125,000</u>	<u>135,229</u>	<u>113,000</u>
EXPENDITURES			
Outreach	75,000	90,448	85,000
Operating	45,000	31,359	35,000
Memorials	5,000	6,242	18,000
Total Expenditures	<u>125,000</u>	<u>128,049</u>	<u>138,000</u>
Change in Net Assets	-	7,180	(25,000)
NET ASSETS - DESIGNATED FUNDS - ENDING	<u>\$ 208,414</u>	<u>\$ 215,594</u>	<u>\$ 190,594</u>

Annual Meeting Minutes

DRAFT

Westwood Lutheran Church Congregational Meeting Minutes February 10, 2019

Attending: 217 voting members attended between the 9:45 and the 11:45 meetings. Church Council President Karoline Pierson reported that there was a quorum (at least 100 members present) and called the meeting to order.

Opening Prayer: Council President Karoline Pierson started the meeting at 9:50 AM by welcoming those present and Pastor Miriam Roberts-Samuelsen led an opening prayer.

Secretary's Report: Council Secretary Wanda Nightengale addressed the minutes of the 2018 Annual Meeting of the Congregation, copies of which were provided within the Annual Report to meeting participants. She asked if attendees would like the minutes to be read aloud or had any corrections. There were no such requests or corrections noted. President Pierson asked for a motion to approve the minutes. A motion was made and seconded, and the motion was passed.

Treasurer's Report:

- **Previous Year Financial Report**

Treasurer James Behnke thanked the congregation for their faithful stewardship in supporting God's mission at Westwood. He then referred to the Treasurer's Report found in the 2018 Annual Report which was made available to participants. James provided a brief overview of the report, pointing out that the Town Meeting had been held the previous Sunday where Q & A and discussion took place. He asked for a motion to approve the report. A motion was made and seconded, and the motion passed.

- **Current Year Proposed Budget**

President Pierson introduced Dave Hill, Chair of the Financial Management Advisory Group. Dave highlighted key points of the 2019 budget. After reviewing the budget, President Pierson asked for a motion to approve the budget. A motion was made and seconded, and the motion passed.

Nominations Report and Elections:

Phil Coen-Pesch, Nominations Team member, thanked members of the committee and presented the following slate of candidates for the Church Council and Nominations Team:

- **Officers and Council:** President Elect (2-year term): Sara Moran
- **Council Members-at-Large:** (3-year term): Dan Aune, David Frank
- **Nominations Team:** (for 1st of 2-yr term): Hugh Mattson, Heidi Thompson, Steven Seehusen
- **Re-elect Members for 2nd Year:** Karin Renier, Jane Severson Kelly, Phil Coen Pesch
- **Audit Team:** Jared Settingsgard, Brandon Rosenthal

Phil moved that "the slate of nominees as presented by the Nominations Team be accepted and the individuals on that slate be elected to the positions indicated and for the terms stated".

President Pierson asked if there were any nominations from the floor for these positions. Hearing none, she declared the nominations closed and asked for approval. The motion was made and seconded, and the motion passed.

DRAFT

“God Sized Vision”:

President-Elect Chris Hentges described Westwood's broad visions which include “hands in”...taking care of our house, followed by “hands out”...moving forward to help address community needs with Westwood's leadership, resources and care.

“All Are Welcome” Capital Appeal:

Pastor Tania gave a detailed report on the construction and remodeling plans of the Westwood building. The changes will address issues of accessibility, security, safety, and sustainability. Construction will begin in May 2019, on the \$1.5 million project. Funds are already being raised for the “All Are Welcome” appeal, with official pledging to begin in May.

Vote on Short Term Loan:

James Behnke described the terms of the proposed loan. Council members distributed ballots to each member attending. Voting followed and ballots were collected or deposited in ballot boxes.

“Good Courage Appeal”:

Pastor Jason presented a description of how this large vision has developed in the past 2 years by researching the needs of our community. City and school leaders have been consulted and information compiled to assess how needs might be met. The results have revealed that the needs are great for affordable housing and childcare. Conversation continues to determine which ideas may lead to Westwood's partnership with other non-profits to address these issues.

Foundation Report:

Foundation President Marcy Yarger described the work of the Westwood Lutheran Memorial Foundation. It continues to thrive, grow and support Westwood and its many programs through gifts and grants. The Foundation passed the million dollar mark this year as they celebrated their 45th anniversary. The Foundation Annual Report was made available.

Thank You from the Floor:

A member from the floor thanked out-going President Karoline Pierson and others who have been serving on council and teams.

New Business:

President Pierson thanked outgoing Council members. She then asked whether there was any further new business, comments or discussion items. Hearing none, she announced that the session would be continued following the 10:45 service to include members who worship at the later service.

Prayer of Good Courage: All attendees

Ballots were counted by the Executive Committee after the meeting adjourned at 12:05 PM, and the vote was 216 in favor of the short-term construction loan, 1 opposed.

Respectfully submitted,

+ Wanda Nightengale, Council Secretary

Audit Committee Report

September 16, 2019

To the Financial Management Advisory Group
Westwood Lutheran Church
St. Louis Park, Minnesota

I have performed the procedures on the Church's financial statements and financial systems described in Schedule A as of December 31, 2018. The Church Council and management are responsible for the Church's financial statements, accounting records, and transactions. The sufficiency of these procedures is solely the responsibility of the Church Council and management. Consequently, I make no representation regarding the sufficiency of the procedures referred to below either for the purpose for which this report has been requested or for any other purpose.

I have conducted my procedures in accordance with Westwood Policies, which are guided by the ELCA Congregational Audit Guide. These procedures are not in accordance with attestation standards established by the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants. My procedures included tests of the nature of the financial statements and financial systems and to the extent I considered necessary to reach my conclusions and to conform to Westwood policy. The scope of the procedures examines all aspects of the Church in varying levels of details. The procedures were not designed on a basis to detect fraud and were performed in my volunteer capacity as member of the audit committee.

This report is intended solely for the information and use of the Church Council and management and is not intended to be and should not be used by anyone other than these specified parties. This report does not constitute an opinion on the financial statements or financial systems.

Conclusion

Based on the work performed, no material errors were found in the financial statements. Testing performed also found that the controls governing the financial operations process appear to be in place and operating as intended.



Brandon Rosenthal
Westwood Lutheran Church Audit Committee Member
September 16, 2019

Memorials

2019 Memorial Donations Received in Memory of:

Elaine Friauf
Doris Swanson
Ruth Haug
Fred Swenson
Mary Lind
Alice Collings
Marilyn Stalheim

Paul Peterson
Art Amundson
Todd Kent
Dawn Setter Bilek
Cal Engelstad
Doug Nelson
Juanita Oliver

Jeff Lanes
Audrey Wittnebel
Delores Nord
Mike Thompson
Gary Walgren

Westwood Early Childhood Center

2020: Opportunity Abounds at WECC



The New Year brings opportunity for growth and renewed possibilities. The "All Are Welcome" construction project was a success, and we are enjoying our new classrooms and office space. The changes have enabled us to increase our capacity to 100 and enroll additional preschool children. Thanks for your support and patience during this process!

A special thanks to Sarah Seehusen, Tess Kingsbury, Sarah Whiting, and Tanya Sommerfeld for serving on the 2019 WECC Advisory Team and to Liz Teigland, Sarah Hoffner, Nicole Norder and Nick and Anna Lovas for their support with various fundraising efforts! Please join us in welcoming Kristin Pladson to the Advisory Team in 2020!

As we enter into 2020, we look forward to living our vision by maintaining our current high quality accreditation and certification standards and sharing God's love through story-telling, community outreach, and stewardship; advocating for the rights of children by honoring play and providing authentic, child-led learning opportunities; and continuing to build on our relationships with children, staff, families, and the WLC community. We are blessed!

With heartfelt gratitude,

+ Kellee Nelson, Director



Music Ministries Report

As we look back on the wonderful year of 2019 and look forward to what 2020 will bring, we could not be more excited. We would like to share with you a look at the previous year, and what a year it was!

The year began with wild winter weather, causing multiple rehearsals to be canceled and altered. However, this did not deter any of Westwood's music ensembles! Despite blizzards and frigid temperatures, groups adjusted, and worship continued as if there wasn't a cloud in the sky. Our summer featured an exciting week of VBS and Musical Camp, both of which reminded us all of Westwood's welcoming spirit. Of course, Father Abraham was sung every day! As fall arrived, preparations intensified for what would be a milestone accomplishment, Westwood's 75th Anniversary. A full weekend of celebration, highlighted by music from Westwood's past, present, and future, made for an unforgettable experience for all. The year ended with a remarkable children's program and beautiful Christmas Eve worship, a favorite time of year for your music ministries director!

With 2019 over and 2020 already in motion, we want to take this moment to say thank you. Thank you for everything you do to make Westwood's music program active and thriving in so many ways. Psalm 150 calls "everything that breathes" to praise the Lord, and we believe Westwood answers that call.

Praise be to God!
Andrew, Elsa, Em, and Alanna



Andrew Paulson being recognized as a VIP at the opening of the Thai Cultural Council of MN for their work together with 'St. Louis Park Unity Sing'.



Some of the children singing at VBS this past summer (Father Abraham was sung next!)

Children, Youth & Family

Family Ministry

Thank you to our families for participating in our growing Family Ministry here at Westwood! A dream of our staff was to grow Family Ministry to be a regular part of our congregation's life, and with your help and enthusiasm, that has become a reality. Over the past few years, events like the Beach Bash and Fall Festival have grown to be part of our vocabulary. They have grown to be large events of over 250 people. You embraced crazy ideas like Turkey Bingo and sang alongside us at congregational caroling. Family Ministry has brought us together in our individual families and as part of our larger Westwood family. It has also allowed us opportunities to serve and laugh alongside one another. Here is to another year of family fun as a congregation! Thank you, from the bottom of our hearts, for helping make this dream a reality.

Messy Worship/The Message

Thank you for your continued support of The Message and Messy Worship. The Message includes over 170 children from ages 3 years through 5th grade! On Sundays, kids actively participate and lead in worship, talk about their faith in relation to the real world with friends, and experience how important they are as members of our Westwood community.

Messy Worship on Wednesdays is our vibrant Westwood family-friendly service that serves over 50 families. This Wednesday community includes many WECC families, busy families with weekend commitments, and families worshiping with their toddlers, preschoolers, elementary kids, and Grandparents!

+ Dannica Olsen, Bekah Engstrand, and Jen Mohr



The ever popular Beach Bash complete with a limbo line.



The children's Christmas program.

Outreach Report

2019 was another year filled with opportunities for Westwood to live out its collective vocation through many Outreach relationships and ministry activities.

We rejoice in another year of Westwood's participation in what God is up to in our community and world through our many Outreach commitments. This work includes everything from Monday night volunteers at Wayside Supportive Housing, to the many connections to God's work in and around Arusha Road Lutheran Church in Dodoma, Tanzania, to various mentoring opportunities through Up Works and a federal re-entry program, to new dreaming of where God may be calling us in St. Louis Park. In addition to the countless volunteer hours spent in places like these, along with work at STEP, Redeemer Lutheran Church, and the Community Meal, Westwood donated \$156,000 from our Faith Giving budget to support various ministries/programs and an additional \$23,000 from the Cause of the Month program.

Here are just a few of the highlights from the year 2019

- The Westwood-Arusha Road partnership was strengthened this year with two trips to develop relationships between our congregations. In late April-early May, a delegation of 7 Arusha Road members spent time learning more about Westwood's ministry and sharing more about what God is up to through that congregation. In June a delegation of 6 youth and 2 adults from Westwood visited Arusha Road Lutheran Church, specifically seeking to build relationships between our youth. While 2020 will not have a trip, we look forward to a delegation traveling to Arusha Road in 2021.

- A major focus of the Outreach teams in 2020 was researching and developing a vision for the 2022 Prayer of Good Courage Appeal. The team is currently working on a potential partnership with Common Bond to develop a unique, affordable housing/affordable childcare project in St. Louis Park, where Westwood would provide the childcare. Watch for further information on this idea later in the year. Whether or not this current idea happens, we continue to work towards a vision of community engagement in our 2022 appeal that will match the call presented in the Prayer of Good Courage.

- Westwood's Outreach vision is driven by a commitment to work long-term with other organizations/congregations, based on our belief that longer relationships develop more impactful results. We recently received pictures from Arusha Road of 4 of the orphans that they've (and we have, secondarily) been supporting, who just graduated from college. It was over 15 years ago that Arusha Road connected with 150 AIDS orphans in their community. What a powerful witness to see these orphans and others who have gone all the way to completing college or vocational school and now are able to financially support themselves and their families!

On behalf of all of us, many thanks for all the ways you contribute to these many ministries. May God enlighten us as we seek to be faithful to God's call in 2020.

+ Pastor Jason Van Hunnik



In late April-early May, a delegation of 7 Arusha Road members spent time learning more about Westwood, building relationships, and here attending Messy Worship.



In June, a delegation of 6 youth and 2 adults from Westwood spent time visiting Arusha Road Lutheran Church and building relationships.



On the 1st of January, orphans from the Dodoma community, supported by Arusha Road Church, graduated from college.



Outreach Food Packing Event: Each year, Westwood and the surrounding community gathers to pack meals for our partner church, Arusha Road Lutheran in Tanzania, to distribute to those who need meals in their community.



Westwood Lutheran Church

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Who Am I? Deepening Our Conversations About Race



Lent 2020

As we have been asking “Who is My Neighbor?” our past few Lenten seasons, and after a powerful six weeks talking about the history of race last Lent, we are deepening our conversations about race this year and looking more specifically at how racism plays out in our own lives and communities.

Join us for Sunday morning worship services featuring guest preachers, Rev. Babette Chatman, Rev. Kelly Chatman, and Rev. Paul Slack; for Sunday Westwood U sessions, between services, on the effects of race in education and housing; and Wednesday noon and evening services followed by small group discussions on racial healing.

We are grateful to the Westwood Lutheran Memorial Foundation, especially the Prazak Visiting Scholar Fund, the Donald C. Bell Adult Education Fund, and the Endowment Fund for generously funding our Lenten series and ongoing conversations about race this year. More information to come via eNews and mail.