

Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church

2022 ANNUAL REPORT

The Year of Story

"You will be my witnesses to the ends of the earth"

*Christmas Eve 2022 -
where the story begins*



*Grace's Church—where the story
is told anew each week of the year*





Images and Events at Grace in 2022

Clockwise from top left:

- Grace celebrated three baptisms in 2022
- The Sanctuary at Easter
- Soup Suppers during Lent and Advent
- The Sanctuary at Christmas
- The Synod's graphic symbol for the Year of Story
- Blessing of the Backpacks
- Hanging of the Greens



Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church

2022 Annual Report

The **2022 Annual Report** of Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church, Elmore, Ohio, is submitted to the members and friends of Grace in compliance with IV, A. of the Bylaws to the **Grace Constitution**, which calls for the presentation of an Annual Report to the Congregation at the end of each year. The **2022 Grace Annual Report** includes the following reports:

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THE ANNUAL REPORT THEME—THE YEAR OF STORY. *This year's Report cover introduces our Report's theme, the **YEAR OF STORY**. Bishop Daniel Beaudoin recently announced that the Northwest Ohio Synod has designated 2023 as the **YEAR OF STORY**. Acts 1:8 is the scriptural guideline for the coming year:*

"But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth."

GRACE'S ANNUAL REPORT COVER uses two photos to illustrate this theme. The top photo, taken during Grace's Christmas Eve service on December 24th, highlights how our church's Story of Jesus begins anew each year with the birth of Christ. The lower photo showing an exterior view of the church emphasizes how the worship services and programs that take place within our church tell the Story of Jesus in new ways every week of the year.

The **YEAR OF STORY** will be a time when Grace's members are urged to focus on our stories. Our stories as individuals, families and collectively as communities of faith are important for us to consider. Learning and telling the stories of Jesus are also important for our growth in faith. Join us as this coming year as we tell one another some great old stories.

Dear Friends in Christ,

We had a very full year at Grace in two thousand and twenty- two. We continue to deal with the pandemic in some ways but in many ways, we are getting back to ministry and worship in a more regular sense. We continue to offer drive up worship which has been accommodating for those who might be feeling ill, have mobility issues or other struggles which prevent them from worshipping inside. A big thanks to the congregation, council, and deacons for assisting with all the worship things this past year.

The partnership with Bethlehem Lutheran went well this past year and I am blessed to be serving two congregations that value their relationship with one another. Both congregations have been flexible in seeking to make schedules work for everyone which has been great to see. Grace being able to take a part in reaching out to people in need in Bethlehem's neighborhood has been wonderful to witness. It is an exciting time in the church to consider how the story of two congregations have come together. I look forward to more ministry partnership in the coming year!

The Northwestern Ohio Synod is marking 2023 as the Year of Story. I love to tell stories and I love to hear stories. The story of who we are individually as well as who we are as a worshipping community are important parts of our story. There are a variety of verbal story tellers as well as many great authors who tell us stories. Yet some of the greatest stories I have ever had the privilege to read come from the gospels, particularly Matthew my favorite book. "Great stories have a way of enlightening our minds, moving our hearts, healing our relationships, and transforming whole communities. During 2023: The Year of Story, I want to encourage you and your parish to learn and tell the transforming Story of Jesus." It is an exciting time to see where God leads us as we work together as the body of Christ in our congregation, our community, and the world to tell our stories and the story of Jesus!

In the book of Joel the word of the Lord came to Joel, and it speaks of the prophecies being handed down from generation to generation. I pray that our stories and the stories of Jesus are handed down this year and for many many years to come.

***Tell it to your children,
and let your children tell it to their children,
and their children to the next generation.***

Joel 1:3

Walking with you in God's story,

Pastor Jaci Tiell

CHURCH COUNCIL REPORT

The Grace ELC Congregational Council is pleased to submit this report on Council activities and the life and mission of the Grace Congregation during 2022.

Pastoral Leadership. Pastor Jaci Tiell was installed as Grace's Pastor in July 2021. Pastor Tiell serves on a three-quarter time basis in a shared call with Bethlehem Lutheran Church in East Toledo. Each church pays half of her pastoral compensation package. The two churches were blessed with a full year of Pastor Jaci's pastoral leadership in 2022. With many older members, including several in assisted living situations, much of Pastor's time is spent doing pastoral care. The terms of Pastor Jaci's call give her one free Sunday each month when she can attend worship with her family. On those Sundays, worship at Grace was conducted by Synodically Authorized Minister (SAM) Clyde Bame.

Worship Services. Grace conducted regular worship services on every Sunday in 2022. Four of those services were impacted by snow or severe winter weather, but no services were cancelled. Communion was served during 51 of the 52 services; one service was a "Lessons and Carols Service" on Christmas day where communion was not served. In addition, special worship services were conducted on Ash Wednesday, Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, Easter Vigil, and Christmas Eve. Festival worship on Sundays included Palm Sunday, Easter Sunday, Pentecost, Reformation Sunday, and Christ Our King Sunday. In addition, 10 Evening Prayer services were conducted on Wednesday evenings during Lent and Advent. 39 of the Sunday services were conducted in Grace's Sanctuary. 13 services during the summer months were conducted in Grace's Fellowship Hall, which is air-conditioned (the Sanctuary is not). Average Sunday attendance for the entire year was 52.46. This is down from 2021 when 29 of 51 services were conducted in the parking lot and attendance averaged 57.33.

While all of Grace's worship services in 2022 were conducted in the Sanctuary or Fellowship Hall, Grace continued to offer worshippers the option of remaining in their vehicles and listening to the service via an FM broadcast (94.1). Worshippers in their vehicles are individually communed by the Pastor and a Deacon. Covid-related restrictions continued to impact the Passing of the Peace, offering collection and how Communion is served. Be sure to see the "Board of Worship Annual Report" for full details on worship during 2022.

Church Membership. Grace uses two very different numbers to quantify its membership. Official ELCA records state that Grace's membership roster has 329 baptized members, but this number is significantly inflated because the roster has not been updated for many years. A second membership number is more realistic. The "*ELCA Congregation Report*" asks for the "*total number of people actively participating in the life of the congregation.*" Based on an analysis of members who made contributions (In 2022, 100 adult members were represented in "contributions of record.") or who communed, Grace is reporting 130 active members as of the end of 2022. The following membership changes occurred during 2022:

- *Deaths (3): **Reed Oestreich**, 8 June; **Bertha Marquardt**, 28 October; **Joan Dietrich**, 19 November (**Donald Bench** passed away on 1 January 2023).*
- *New Members (2): **Bobbie Bean & Rachel Haar**, received on 7 August.*

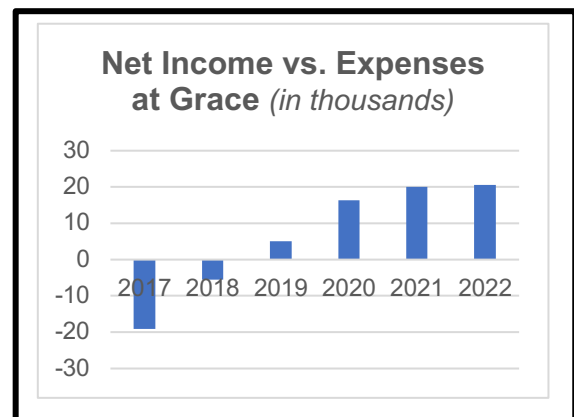
- *Baptisms (3): **Anna Rose Snyder** (20 March), **Tyler Rickman** & **Elsie Jean Rickman** (8 May).*
- *Weddings (1): **Nathan Gerwin** and **Riley Patterson**, 13 August.*
- *Transfers Out (4): **Greg & LaVerne Edwards**; **Bill & Judy Zimmerman**.*

With a net loss of three members during the year, Grace's membership has remained relatively stable. It is not growing, but it is also not declining.

Congregation Meetings. The Grace Constitution mandates that two annual congregation meetings shall take place. The **Annual Report** for the previous year and plans for the new year are presented at a meeting in January. Approval of the budget for the next year and the election of officers and Board of Ministry Chairmen who will serve on the Congregation Council take place in a November meeting. The congregational meeting on the 30th of January was attended by 48 voting members. The meeting on the 6th of November was attended by 42 voting members.

Council Meetings and Actions. The Grace Congregation Council conducted 11 regular monthly meetings in 2022 (*no meeting was held in July*). Three meetings (*January, February, and May*) were conducted via Zoom; seven were in-person meetings at the church and the December meeting was a Christmas event at the Schlievert home. Council meeting agendas include 1) a review of current prayer concerns, 2) approval of the previous meeting's minutes, 3) approval of the prior month's financial report and discussion/decisions regarding financial matters, 4) a Pastor's Report, 5) the presentation of reports from Committee Chairs, and 6) Old and New business as required. Council actions are reported in Grace's **Weekly Messages**; Council meeting minutes are posted on Grace's website at <https://www.graceelconline.org/grace-communications>.

Financial Situation. A detailed accounting of Grace's income, expenditures and account balances is provided at the end of this **Annual Report**. Grace has had another excellent financial year. The 2022 budget projected \$145,000 in offerings. Grace's members exceeded that projection by just over \$5,000. The budget projected an end-of-year surplus (*income exceeded expenditures*) of \$13,842. Grace ended the year with a surplus of \$20,494. After ending 2021 with a surplus of \$20,000, the Council was able to use three years' worth of accumulated surpluses to establish a Capital Reserve Fund of \$35,000 that is now invested in a one-year savings certificate paying 4.65% interest. The Capital Reserve Fund is a savings account being set aside to pay for future capital expenses at the church. The Council intends to divide the 2022 surplus between the Capital Reserve Fund and additional benevolences.



Communications Program. Grace has a comprehensive communications program to keep members of the Grace Family informed about worship, programs, special events and church governance. In 2022, these Grace communications media were produced and distributed.

- **Grace Annual Report.** Each year a new Annual Report summarizing the activities and mission of the church is produced and distributed to Grace's members. These reports are also discussed at congregational meetings.
- **Weekly Message.** The **Weekly Message** is a newsletter sent electronically to everyone in the Grace family who has an email address. Printed copies are mailed to members who do not use email. Each **Weekly Message** includes a Bible Study lesson and information about upcoming worship services and church events. 52 issues were produced and distributed in 2022.
- **Parish Reporter.** The **Parish Reporter** is a monthly publication with messages from the Pastor and Council as well as news about the church family. 11 issues were produced and distributed via email and mail in 2021.
- **Grace Website.** Grace's webpage is accessible to the public via the internet at <https://www.graceelconline.org/>. The website presents basic information about Grace worship services and its programs. The "Communications" page of the website allows users to download recent copies of the **Weekly Message**, the **Parish Reporter**, Council Meeting Minutes and **Grace Annual Reports**.
- **Facebook.** Grace's Facebook account is available to the public at <https://www.facebook.com/GraceLutheranElmore>. This page presents reports on recent activities as well as information about upcoming events.

The Congregation Council. The Grace Congregation Council consists of the Pastor, the Officers (President, Secretary, Treasurer and Financial Secretary) and the Chairmen of the Boards of Ministry (Congregational Life, Property, Witness and Mission, and Worship and Music). All nine members actively participated in Council meetings and activities throughout the year. At the end of 2022, one member, **Randy Jacobs**, stepped down from his position as Treasurer. He received a well-deserved vote of appreciation from the November Congregation meeting. 2022 Council Members who will continue to serve in 2023 are:

- **Gary Anderson** President
- **Karen Hammel** Secretary
- **Deb Boos** Financial Secretary
- **Mary Schlievert** Chair, Congregational Life
- **Steve Blausey** Chair, Property
- **Nancy Pries** Chair, Witness and Mission
- **Joan Eckermann** Chair, Worship and Music

Mike Schlievert was elected as the Congregation's Treasurer and will serve in that capacity in the 2023 Council.

Relationship with Bethlehem Lutheran Church. The pastoral relationship that Grace shares with Bethlehem Lutheran Church gives Grace and its members unique

opportunities to cooperate with an urban church. This relationship makes it necessary to coordinate worship and event schedules. Members of both churches participated in the other church's fund-raising projects, a September Chicken BBQ at Grace, and an October Cabbage Dinner at Bethlehem. Members from Grace aided in Bethlehem's annual Operation Christmas Child gift project. Women from Grace participated in Bethlehem's Annual Women's retreat. Women from both congregations participated in two Ladies' Night Out dinners and look forward to several more of these events in 2023. The two churches share newsletter publications and Bethlehem's regular inspirational **Facebook** postings.

2023: THE YEAR OF STORY. An Annual Report must not only look back at the past but look forward to the upcoming year when the Grace congregation will strive to make **2023 THE YEAR OF STORY.** 2023 will be a year when all members of the Grace Family are encouraged to participate in a full program of regular and special worship services where we will hear "the Story of Jesus." All members are encouraged to practice daily Scripture reading (The Synod's **2023 Daily Bible Reading Guide** tells "The Story of Jesus."). **Grace's Weekly Message** Bible Studies will also focus on the Story of Jesus in 2023. A new initiative focuses on recreating a Christian Education Program to bring the "Story of Jesus" to children and youth. Ensuring that Grace's seniors who cannot attend regular worship receive communion and visitation is a priority. Another new initiative seeks to review and update the History of Grace as we seek to tell OUR OWN STORY anew.

Yours in Christ,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Gary Anderson', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Gary Anderson
President

Board of Congregational Life
Annual Report
December 2022

The Board of Congregational Life consisted of Board Chair Mary Schlievert, Linda Stewart, Rachel Beeler, Joan Eckermann, and Nancy Bennett. The Board met 5 times during 2022. Following is a summary of our events.

- January: Prayer partners were chosen and distributed. Prayer partners from 2021 were revealed on 12-19-21. We had intended to have a potluck for the Annual meeting, but a resurgence of Covid led us to cancel that.
- February: We served Valentine cookies on Feb 13th. These delectable treats were made and decorated by Linda. We finalized the new funeral meal protocol. Due to limited people available to help with funerals, we have listed suggestions for caterers to supply food. The board will supply set-up and tableware, but again we have limited availability for serving.
- March: We hosted Soup Suppers for the 5 Wednesdays in Lent. A variety of delicious soups and bread were shared, along with fellowship and conversation.
- April: We hosted a reception with cookies and champagne punch on Saturday evening following the Easter vigil worship. About 17 people attended that service. Leftovers were served Easter morning! Linda made beautifully decorated Easter sugar cookies!
- May: Muffins for Moms! We all made a variety of muffins, with Linda providing gluten-free options, and enjoyed fellowship after worship. We also took photos for the church directory. Many thanks to Amy Simkus for donating her professional photography services, and Rachel for making the schedule for photos.
- June: We served Donuts for Dads on Fathers' Day to all the dads present at worship. Mary was absent- thanks to the board members for their help acquiring and serving the treats!
- August: We hosted a new member reception following worship to welcome Bobbie Bean and Rachael Haar. Punch and cookies were served.
- September: On Rally Day, we hosted an Ice Cream Social in conjunction with the Board of Witness and Mission's project of assembling care kits. About 20 people enjoyed the sundae bar.
- October: We hosted a Reformation Day potluck. Over 30 people attended! Good fellowship was enjoyed in person in the fellowship hall!
- December: Assisted with Advent Soup Suppers with the Savior. Four relaxing evenings of simple food, fellowship, and lively conversation were enjoyed.

Still being mindful of Covid precautions, we were able to offer several safety-conscious fellowship activities for our church family. I would like to say a HUGE thank you to the members of this board- Joan, Rachel, Nancy, and Linda-who helped carry out all of these activities and without whom this board could not function. Looking forward to 2023!

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Schlievert, Board Chair

Christian Education Report

(Jesus) said to his disciples, "Let the little children come to me. Do not keep them away. God's kingdom belongs to people like them. What I am about to tell you is true. Anyone who will not receive God's kingdom like a little child will never enter it." Then he took the children in his arms. He put his hands on them and blessed them. Mark 10:14b -16 NIV

Pastor Jaci, Krista Jackson, Gary Anderson, and Jayne Klett met on October 23, 2022 to discuss Christian education. Many aspects of re-creating an education program were discussed including a confirmation program next fall, gifting Bibles to new readers, and LYO.

Although Advent is not the best time to plan new programs, much was accomplished. Jen Haar and Karen Hammel agreed to lead the Cradle Roll. Christmas board books were gifted to children ages 0-4.

Invitations to Christmas services were sent to 17 families with children which included a message announcing that Sunday morning classes for children would begin in 2023. Although the weather kept many away from church, the Christmas treats were shared with all in attendance and enjoyed by young and old alike.

While a start date is still pending, much is being accomplished:

Rooms are being cleaned and organized. Many thanks to the Board of Property for fixing the broken water pipe in the double classroom. The Nursery has been sanitized and is ready for use.

The plethora of art supplies here at the church are being identified and organized. Many thanks to Addie and Brie Simkus for testing markers in a large tub to make sure they ready for use.

At this time, only one class for Grades 1-6 is being planned. Peggie Avers and Jayne Klett have teamed up to teach. More teaching teams, as well as substitutes, are needed. Class time will be 9:45-10:25. Teaching materials already at the church are being used for lesson planning. In addition to Bible lessons, Mission Mornings and Campfire Songs and Storytelling opportunities are being planned for the entire congregation.

Web-based materials are also being researched that support Cradle Roll parents, Sunday morning classes and family devotions. As DVDs become obsolete, streaming Christian videos from the internet is a viable option. The church's WIFI supports this method of teaching. The process of determining which of our TVs and other devices support DVDs and streaming has already begun.

Krista Jackson has volunteered to organize the youth group (Lutheran Youth Organization, aka LYO). This group at Grace is very small. Opportunities to join other groups are being researched and planning has begun to include the youth who will be in confirmation next fall.

Pastor Jaci and Gary have assisted in affirming the Bible translation that has been, and will continue to be, used in Sunday school. The Kids' Study Bible is the New International Reader's Version (NIRV). Not only is it an accurate translation, it is also the perfect translation for new readers.

Thank you for praying for the children by name. Your openness to share ideas and possibilities for Christian education is not only helpful but necessary... and very much appreciated.

Jayne Klett

BOARD OF PROPERTY 2022 ANNUAL REPORT

The main topic for the Board of Property this past year continued to be our water testing issues with the EPA. Countless hours were spent by several members of the Board and other individuals along with thousands of dollars trying to satisfy the requirements levied on us by this useless arm of the federal government. During this process, the use of the Fellowship Hall by the Ottawa County Seniors was interrupted twice, and we also offered a month's rent holiday to our parsonage tenants to compensate them for all the inconveniences they suffered. We are currently in good standing with our water testing results and we pray that continues.

Due to the time and effort spent on the water issue, our list of items done around the church isn't as long as usual and I hope that changes in the coming year. Here are some highlights.

- Allowed Jazzercise to begin using the Fellowship Hall for their classes instead of the basement
- Work done in the mechanical room
- Repaired the entryway soffit
- Various roof repairs
- Work on replacing exterior spigots
- Various landscaping projects
- Installed a new cross on boiler chimney

We also had to make repairs to our boiler system in the beginning of the year and at the end of the year.

In conclusion, this Board would like to thank Al Wolfe for the volunteering of his time and equipment to plow snow from the parking lot. It is greatly appreciated. We also want to thank the Avers family for their constant hard work keeping our complex looking great, from the spring thru the fall.

Respectfully submitted,

Steve Blausey

Board of Witness and Mission REPORT OF GRACE BENEVOLENCE DISTRIBUTIONS

The members of the Board of Witness and Mission work in partnership with the members of the Grace Family to promote, plan, coordinate, and supervise events that support the congregation's witness and mission activities. The Board is responsible for managing the disbursement of offerings that are designated for benevolences according to the following schedule for 2022:

Benevolence Offerings (10% of all offerings)*: **\$15,046.30**

Members have the option of designating benevolence offerings as "Traditional Benevolences" where a share of those benevolences goes to the ELCA and Northwest Ohio Synod, or as "Directed Benevolences" where no support goes to the ELCA. In 2022, Traditional Benevolence Offerings were \$8,816.90; Directed Benevolence Offerings were \$6,230.00.

Benevolence Offerings were allocated as follows:

- First Fruits Allocation (26% of Benevolence Offerings) **\$3,912.15**
- World Hunger Allocation (21% of Benevolence Offerings) **\$3,159.89**
- ELCA Mission Support (53% of Traditional Benevolences) **\$4,673.03**
- Directed Benevolence Fund (53% of Directed Benevolences) **\$3,301.97**

The following actual benevolence distributions were made in 2022:

ELCA/NWOS Mission Support **\$4,672.96**

ELCA World Hunger **\$3,159.89**

First Fruits Benevolence Distributions **\$3,400.00**

- Salem Lutheran Church \$400.00
- Redeemer Lutheran Church \$400.00
- Lutheran Social Services \$400.00
- Luther Home of Mercy \$400.00
- Genacross \$400.00
- Lutheran Outdoor Ministries \$400.00
- Liberty Center \$400.00
- Elmore Thanksgiving Dinner \$200.00
- Christian Resources \$400.00

* Grace's policy to dedicate 10% of all offerings was adopted by the congregation.

Directed Benevolence Distributions **\$3,400.00**

- CRU (Campus Crusade for Christ) \$2,000.00
- The Cocoon \$200.00
- Veterans Matter \$200.00
- Lutheran Disaster Response \$500.00
- Ottawa County Holiday Bureau \$500.00

Special Benevolences and Distributions of Special Offerings: \$3,537.00

- Lenten Offerings (for ELCA honeybee colonies) \$1,441.00
- Ottawa County Family Advocacy Center \$386.00
- Advent Offerings (for ELCA Child Clinic) \$510.00
- Elmore Ministerium-Two Villages \$500.00
- ELCA Mission Response \$700.00

TOTAL BENEVOLENCE DISTRIBUTIONS IN 2022: \$18,169.85

Total Grace benevolence distributions in 2021 were \$26,716.98; in 2020, they were \$21,283.87. In addition, to these benevolence distributions, Grace members collected supplies to assemble 129 school kits (backpacks) and 160 personal care kits, which were transported to Lutheran World Relief for distribution through their worldwide network. Thrivent provided a \$250 grant to purchase supplies for these projects. Also, Grace members adopted 11 residents at the Luther Home of Mercy who were provided with Christmas gifts. Ongoing benevolence efforts at Grace continue and include collecting receipts from Miller's New Market Grocery (Genoa) as well as an opportunity to raise benevolence program funds through the AmazonSmile platform.

2022 Board of Worship Annual Report

“Make a joyful noise to the Lord, all the earth. Worship the Lord with gladness; come into his presence with singing.” Psalm 100: 1-2

The 2022 Board of Worship members were Ruth Ann Anderson, Gary Anderson (Church Council President), Bobbie Bean (Parish Musician), Rachel Beeler, Joan Eckermann (Board Chair), Mary Schlievert, Jean Weng and Pastor Jaci.

The board oversees the Altar Guild, Deacons, Choirs, Lectors, and Musicians. The Board Chair attends Church Council meetings and gives a report of our items of business. Meetings are scheduled four to six times each year to coincide with the liturgical worship seasons. 2022 meetings were held in February, May, August, and November to plan worship services and attend to other business pertinent to this board.

This past year’s worship activities included:

- All regularly scheduled Sunday and weekday worship services.
- Lent/Triduum/Easter: Ash Wednesday service, midweek Wednesday services with the theme “Making Change” led by various pastors in our area, Maundy Thursday worship and stripping of the chancel, Good Friday Tenebrae service, Easter Vigil service, and Easter Sunday worship.
- Sunday worship services were held in the air-conditioned Fellowship Hall in the summer months.
- Reformation Sunday was celebrated on October 30. A special visit by Katie Luther was presented by Ruth Ann Anderson. No students were confirmed at this service.
- Advent/Christmas: Midweek Wednesday services using the *Holden Evening Prayer* liturgy, Christmas Eve worship at 8:00 p.m. with special music and candle lighting, and Sunday worship on December 25 using a Lessons and Carols format and led by Joan Eckermann.

Other business and activities:

- The Adult Choir has four to six members.
- Several COVID-19 protocols remain in place for worship in order to protect the health and well-being of each other. People are welcome to worship in the sanctuary as well as in their cars, with deacons taking them bulletins, hymn sheets, and communion kits as needed. Offerings are collected at the back of the sanctuary as members enter, members remain in the pews during the sharing of the peace of Christ, and Holy Communion is served using pre-packaged kits as well as members’ own wine and bread. Each person’s communion elements are blessed by Pastor Jaci and a deacon, both in the sanctuary and at cars in the parking lot.

Joan Eckermann will serve as the 2023 Chair and there is no Vice-Chair. The board welcomes new members at any time to plan and implement worship that is pleasing to the Triune God!

**Respectfully submitted,
Joan Eckermann, Chair**

Balance: 1/1/22 \$ 180.97

Thank offering	314.50
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\$ 314.50

Women of the ELCA - Thank offering	314.50
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Grace - Memorials (Joan Dietrich)	20.00
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\$ 334.50

Balance: 1/1/23 \$ 160.97

Ruth A. Haar

2022 Annual Report for Grace Piecemakers

"Have faith" is our motto. God always sees to it we have material to work with each year. This year we had twelve people come to sew at the church and/or work from home.

From cloth too heavy to make into quilt tops, we turned into 129 backpacks for LWR School Kits. A request from Thrivent for \$250 for two spools of rope to string through the back packs to make them serviceable finalized that project.

A total of 150 quilts were made. One hundred and twelve were packed and shipped to Lutheran World Relief, thirty-nine were distributed to Cherry Street Mission, Sparrow's Nest and Lutheran Social Services. Two were given to the Elmore Holiday Bureau along with a baby blanket that was requested. There is always a couple on hold in case there is a special need throughout the year.

We were blessed with two generous gifts of cloth provided us with much cutting and sewing together the various squares to make the quilts. Many hands work diligently throughout the year to make this project happen.

Thank you to anyone who in any way has helped this project become what it is today. As close as I can come, Grace has been sewing for at least sixty-five years, helping others near and far with a bit of love.

Report Submitted by:

Nancy Pries

2022 Thrivent Blessings Report

Thrivent Financial, as a fraternal organization, must dispose of any money remaining after meeting the expense of doing business. They make these funds available through their Choice Dollar and Action team programs and in partnership with Habitat for Humanity.

Thrivent Choice – Thrivent Financial members who have investment, insurance or retirement products can receive money from Thrivent that they may designate to Grace Lutheran or other authorized organizations. These funds can then be used by the recipient, as they choose, within the church, organizations, or for projects in the community. All Thrivent members should check their Thrivent account since Thrivent sometimes makes available funds to Thrivent members that previously did not receive them.

Reminder: Thrivent members must go online or call Thrivent (1-800-847-4836) to designate their Choice dollars. Say “fraternal” at the prompt to be connected to an agent. Have your Thrivent number available for verification purposes. Any funds that you do not direct to the eligible agencies goes back to Thrivent. Enter your zip code to get a list of local agencies that accept Choice Dollars.

Contact John Heminger or Nancy Pries if you have questions.

Thrivent Action Teams – All Thrivent members are eligible to apply for two \$250 grants each year to use as seed money for projects that benefit others. Complete the application online or call Thrivent (see above) to schedule a project.

Past project examples include supplies for quilts, personal care and school kits, supplies to support fundraisers, pet food and supplies for shelters and assistance dog training facilities and purchasing desserts and meat used for the community Thanksgiving meal. The ideas are endless, and the money is available for you to apply for so you can organize and lead a project anywhere in the community.

Grace Thrivent Choice account

2021 balance	\$3368.65
2022 funds received	1563.00
2022 funds disbursed	<u>2141.00</u>
2022 balance	\$2790.65

Choice Dollar Projects – your donations were used for the following:

Piecemakers	200.00
Chicken Dinner match	414.00
Care Kitt Towels	192.00
LWR kit shipping cost donation	830.36
ELCA Child Clinic visit match	505.00

Thrivent Choice donors, thank you for your Choice Dollar donations to Grace. Please share your ideas regarding the use of your donations.

Report submitted by,

John Heminger

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REPORT ON COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS

As part of its outreach ministry, Grace, and its members support, provide facilities for or cooperate with several public service, philanthropic or community organizations that serve residents in the Elmore area. This report identifies those community organizations provides brief summaries of their 2022 activities. Where possible, contact persons for these programs are listed.

Boy Scouts. *Boy Scout Troops 314 & 329, sponsored by the Elmore American Legion Post #279 and the Kiwanis Club of Elmore, use the Grace Fellowship Hall for its meetings. Approximately 30 youth from the Elmore area are served by this program. Scout meetings take place every Sunday evening from 6:00 pm to 7:00 pm, from September until the end of June. The leaders of the local Boy Scout program express their sincere gratitude for their use of Grace facilities for their meetings.*

Dartball. Steve Blausey. The 2021-2022 Dartball team of Grace Lutheran Church (Elmore, Ohio) held off nine other formidable foes (other church teams) in a clearly decisive manner (skin of our teeth) beat down to claim the highly coveted (it's o-k) American League Championship of the Sandusky and Ottawa County Church Dartball League (SOCCDL for short). Yes, what a year it was. Unlike ever before, (same thing, different year) this team showed they can fling feathers with the best of 'em (or the worst). The pure stamina (what's that?) this team presented every Monday night (nothing else to do) was surely something to behold (unless you had paint drying somewhere). But can this powerhouse defend its title for the next season? (Inquiring minds want to know). So far the start of the "22" season has been rough losing some close matches (getting pounded) by those same formidable foes (other churches), plus being riddled with injuries (coach hurt his foot), this could prove to be quite a showdown (we have a firm grasp of last place currently). Stay tuned for another exciting issue of How the Darts Fly. (Generally, like wounded ducks!). Seriously we had a great year and I want to thank everyone that played.

Elmore Food Pantry. *Michelle Timbrook and Jean Weng. Grace provides physical facilities for the Elmore Food Pantry. This public service program was organized by the Elmore Ministerial Association and staffed by members of local churches including several members of Grace. Grace members contribute food items and funds. The Food Pantry is open once a month throughout the year. In 2022, the Elmore Food Pantry provided a total of 2,871 meals and served an average of 13 households per month. This represents an increase of 4 households per month over 2021. In 2023 the food pantry will be open once a month, on the second Friday of each month, from 9 to 12.*

Grief Support Group. Mary Lou Kohli. "Our Grief and Loss Journey of Healing" group members learn from each other as they seek to find and share ways to cope with loss during their experiences with life's most difficult challenges. The Grief Support Group was active in 2022, with 12 participants, but due to covid, did not meet in person (*We hope to meet in person in 2023.*). Personal grief support continues with prayers, phone calls, emails as well as a series of four booklets that were sent out; a Blue Christmas service with 18 participants was also held. We continue to stay in touch. Please let Mary Lou know if anyone wants to be included or needs help in any way. Please leave a message on her home phone.

Jazzercise. *Joyce Bruntz. Jazzercise, Inc. operates franchised fitness centers that offer instructor-led dance and fitness programs of aerobics and strength training. The leadership is dedicated to keeping participants healthy and moving. Currently, there are five classes that meet at Grace each week. The group has moved their program into the Fellowship Hall. They really enjoy being able to use this space. Jazzercise participants are very grateful and respectful of the Grace building. They are a very WELCOMING group!*

Operation Oreo. Jennifer Marquardt. This program assembles and ships gift boxes containing Oreo Cookies, snacks, puzzle books and toiletries to various military personnel stationed at military installations away from home. Gift boxes are sent every other month, while cards/letters are sent in the opposite months. Names are submitted by members of Grace and the community-at-large. In 2022, two military personnel from this area, Staff Sergeant Steven Simkus, U. S. Army, and Cadet Julian Sanchez, U. S. Military Academy, were sent gift boxes and cards through this program.

Ottawa County Seniors. *The Ottawa County Office on Aging previously provided lunches and social programs for a senior group that met twice a week at Grace. The program was moved to the Genoa Center for much of 2022 due to Grace's water contamination issues. Those issues were resolved in mid-2022 and the Elmore Senior Center returned to Grace in October 2022. Unfortunately, the Ottawa County Commissioners recently decided to consolidate the Elmore and Genoa Senior Centers and will be closing the program at Grace at the beginning of February 2023.*

Red Cross Blood Drive. Joan Eckermann. Blood drives are held twice each year at Grace. In 2022 Blood Drives were conducted on 18 July and 19 December. Grace members assist with the conduct of each drive. The most recent blood drive in December received blood donations from 22 persons.

GRACE ELC 2022 ACTUAL INCOME AND EXPENDITURES

2021 Actual Expenditures; 2022 Budget; 2022 Actual Expenditures; 2023 Approved Budget

INCOME:	2021 Actual	2022 Budget	2022 Actual	2023 Budget
TOTAL OFFERINGS	\$ 150,231.00	\$ 145,000	\$ 150,469.00	\$ 145,000
Dedicated contributions (Maintenance-6% + donations)	\$ 9,013.76	\$ 8,700	\$ 9,032.14	\$ 8,700
Contributions to Traditional Benevolences	\$ 8,528.61	\$ 8,200	\$ 8,616.90	\$ 8,400
Contributions to Directed Benevolences	\$ 6,494.50	\$ 6,400	\$ 6,230.00	\$ 6,100
Special/Dedicated Benevolences	\$ 6,541.96	\$ 6,000	\$ 2,342.00	\$ 6,000
Unrestricted contributions (84% of Total Offerings)	\$ 126,194.04	\$ 121,800	\$ 126,393.96	\$ 121,800
Miscellaneous Income				
Facility rent-Jazzercise	\$ 3,675.00	\$ 3,900	\$ 4,400.00	\$ 3,900
Facility rent-Senior Center	\$ 3,709.65	\$ 2,500	\$ 1,598.85	\$ 4,800
Facility rent-Miscellaneous	\$ 368.77	\$ 400	\$ 145.00	\$ 300
Parsonage rent	\$ 10,800.00	\$ 10,800	\$ 9,800.00	\$ 10,800
Miscellaneous Income and Donations	\$ 507.97	\$ -	\$ 554.26	\$ 300
TOTAL: MISCELLANEOUS INCOME	\$ 19,061.39	\$ 17,600	\$ 16,498.11	\$ 20,100
TOTAL INCOME & OFFERINGS	\$ 169,292.39	\$ 162,600	\$ 166,967.11	\$ 165,100.00
EXPENDITURES OF RESTRICTED FUNDS				
Benevolence Offerings (10% of all offerings)	\$ 15,023.10	\$ 14,550	\$ 15,046.90	\$ 14,500
Benevolence Distributions:				
World Hunger (21% of all benevolences)	\$ 3,154.78	\$ 3,100	\$ 3,165.89	\$ 3,100
First Fruits (26% of all benevolences)	\$ 4,486.39	\$ 3,800	\$ 3,400.00	\$ 3,800
NWOS/ELCA Mission Support (53% of Traditional)	\$ 5,019.85	\$ 4,500	\$ 4,672.96	\$ 4,500
Directed Benevolence Disbursements (53% of Directed)	\$ 3,600.00	\$ 3,100	\$ 3,400.00	\$ 3,100
TOTAL REGULAR BENEVOLENCE DISTRIBUTIONS	\$ 16,261.02	\$ 14,500	\$ 14,638.85	\$ 14,500
Special Benevolence Distributions (from line 9 above)	\$ 6,755.96	\$ 6,000	\$ 2,337.00	\$ 6,000
Maintenance Fund				
Maintenance Fund Deposits (6% of offerings + donations)	\$ 9,012.76	\$ 8,750	\$ 9,032.14	\$ 8,700
Maintenance Fund Expenditures	\$ 7,047.90	\$ 10,000	\$ 9,495.00	\$ 10,000
Maintenance Fund Balance (end of month)	\$28,147.33	\$ 27,048	\$ 27,660.51	\$ 26,361
Dedicated Funds (Memorial Fund, Oreo, Youth, etc.)				
Dedicated Contributions	\$ 480.00		\$ 1,727.73	
Dedicated Fund Expenditures	\$ 200.00		\$ 1,809.52	
Dedicated Fund Balance	\$ 21,467.32		\$ 22,699.36	
	2021 Actual	2022 Budget	2022 Actual	2023 Budget
STAFF EXPENDITURES				
Office Manager/Parish Secretary	\$ 2,395.06	\$ 17,250	\$ 17,250.00	\$ 17,800
Parish Musician	\$ 16,613.41	\$ 14,500	\$ 14,499.92	\$ 15,000
Pastor Salary	\$ 14,075.00	\$ 10,460	\$ 10,460.00	\$ 11,473
Pastory Housing Allowance	\$ 11,997.18	\$ 15,600	\$ 15,600.00	\$ 15,600
Pastor--FICA Co-Pay	\$ 13,644.30	\$ 1,835	\$ 1,835.00	\$ 2,072
Pastor Portico Benefits	\$ 1,962.52	\$ 650	\$ 613.70	\$ 501
Pastor Retirement Contributions (Portico)	\$ 1,640.67	\$ 9,763	\$ 9,651.65	\$ 10,201
Staff--FICA Co-Pay	\$ 10,158.48	\$ 2,000	\$ 1,312.88	\$ 1,500
Workers' Compensation	\$ 183.72	\$ 300	\$ 262.52	\$ 400
TOTAL STAFF EXPENDITURES	\$ 72,670.34	\$ 72,358	\$ 71,485.67	\$ 74,547

Grace ELC Financial Report -- December 2022

ADMINISTRATION EXPENDITURES

Advertising/Media	\$ 1,293.00	\$ 1,300	\$ 1,168.00	\$ 1,350
Stewardship	\$ 473.28	\$ 600	\$ 1,056.70	\$ 1,000
Copier Service & Supplies	\$ 3,050.30	\$ 3,300	\$ 3,309.91	\$ 3,600
Expense and Mileage Reimbursement	\$ 500.00	\$ 500	\$ 500.00	\$ 1,000
Pastor, Professional Expenses	\$ -	\$ 500	\$ -	\$ 500
Office Supplies	\$ 1,540.27	\$ 1,500	\$ 1,583.92	\$ 1,400
Paper	\$ -	\$ 400	\$ 69.96	\$ 450
Postage	\$ 660.00	\$ 850	\$ 702.00	\$ 750
Computer Hardware, Service, Software	\$ 822.64	\$ 500	\$ 88.04	\$ 800
Church Website Development & Maintenance	\$ -	\$ 500	\$ 289.00	\$ 350
Disaster Relief Fund Allocation	\$ 4,700.00	\$ 700	\$ 700.00	\$ 1,000
Contingency for Unbudgeted Expenses	\$ 788.84	\$ 1,000	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 1,000
TOTAL ADMINISTRATION EXPENDITURES	\$ 13,828.33	\$ 11,650	\$ 10,467.53	\$ 13,200

CONGREGATIONAL LIFE EXPENDITURES

Fellowship: Events/Supplies	\$ -	\$ 400	\$ -	\$ 400
Synod Assembly	\$ -	\$ 500	\$ -	\$ -
TOTAL CONGREGATIONAL LIFE EXPENDITURES	\$ -	\$ 900	\$ -	\$ 400

EDUCATION EXPENDITURES

Adult Education	\$ 233.35	\$ 400	\$ 290.60	\$ 400
Affirmation of Baptism (Catechism)	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Leadership Education	\$ -	\$ 200	\$ -	\$ 200
Sunday School	\$ -	\$ 100	\$ 51.85	\$ 100
Vacation Bible School	\$ -	\$ 100	\$ -	\$ 100
TOTAL EDUCATION EXPENDITURES	\$ 233.35	\$ 800	\$ 342.45	\$ 800

PROPERTY EXPENDITURES

Church Cleaning Supplies/Upkeep?	\$ 9,745.84	\$ 7,000	\$ 6,350.41	\$ 7,000
Utilities: Electric	\$ 4,313.37	\$ 5,000	\$ 4,138.06	\$ 4,700
Utilities: Gas	\$ 8,521.63	\$ 9,500	\$ 10,901.89	\$ 12,500
Insurance	\$ 8,027.00	\$ 8,100	\$ 8,871.00	\$ 9,500
Phone-Internet	\$ 2,161.60	\$ 2,100	\$ 2,234.70	\$ 2,400
Parsonage-Property Tax	\$ 3,224.38	\$ 3,500	\$ 3,308.10	\$ 3,700
TOTAL PROPERTY EXPENDITURES	\$ 35,993.82	\$ 35,200	\$ 35,804.16	\$ 39,800

WORSHIP EXPENDITURES

Altar Supplies	\$ 760.37	\$ 500	\$ 716.53	\$ 900
Bulletin/Resources	\$ 302.21	\$ 900	\$ 657.13	\$ 900
Music	\$ 142.00	\$ 200	\$ 150.00	\$ 200
Organ/Piano Tuning	\$ -	\$ 150	\$ -	\$ 150
Supply Organist	\$ 125.00	\$ 500	\$ 375.00	\$ 500
Supply Pastor	\$ 1,200.00	\$ 2,400	\$ 2,400.00	\$ 2,400
TOTAL WORSHIP EXPENDITURES	\$ 2,529.58	\$ 4,650	\$ 4,298.66	\$ 5,050

SUMMARY:

	2021 Actual	2022 Budget	2022 Actual	2023 Budget
TOTAL UNRESTRICTED INCOME	\$ 145,255.43	\$ 139,400	\$ 142,892.07	\$ 141,900.00
TOTAL UNRESTRICTED EXPENSES	\$ 125,255.42	\$ 125,558	\$ 122,398.47	\$ 133,797.00
NET: INCOME LESS EXPENSES	\$ 20,000.01	\$ 13,842	\$ 20,493.60	\$ 8,103.00

Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church
REPORT OF CHURCH ACCOUNTS AND DEDICATED FUNDS
For the Calendar Year 2022

Account	1-Jan-22	Inflows	Outflows	31-Dec-22
Checking Account	55,554.65	173,025.18	187,502.91	41,076.92
ELCA Mission Investment Fund	\$658.40			661.14
Parsonage Deposit	900			900
Capital Reserve Fund	0		35,000.00	35,015.84

Dedicated Funds				
Building Fund	693.04			693.04
Congregational Life	627.06			627.06
Directed Benevolence	0	3301.97	2900	401.97
Maintenance Fund	28,147.33	9305.18	9792	27,660.51
Memorial Fund	10,630.38	740	0	11,370.38
Mission Response	0	700	700	0
Operation Oreo	763.53	511.08	542.91	731.7
Pastors Discretionary Fund	449.5		300	149.5
Piecemakers	31.88	358.48	348.71	41.65
Scholarship Fund	3200.23			3200.23
Sunday School	12.56			12.56
Youth Camp/Travel Fund	4259.14	312.13		4571.27

TOTAL: ALL DEDICATED FUNDS (Savings Account) \$50,359.87

TOTAL: ALL GRACE ACCOUNTS) \$127,113.77

Note: Grace ELC funds are held in 1) a checking account at the Huntington Bank, 2) an ELCA Mission Investment Fund account, 3) s savings account at the Huntington Bank, and 4) a Savings Certificate (4.65%) purchased through Edward Jones.