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Annual Report—Sunday, January 31, 2016

AGENDA

I. Establish a Quorum (35% of Voting Members; i.e. 16 people): President Lee Pearce

- Call Meeting to Order
- Opening Prayer
- Appoint parliamentarian: Darald Bothun
- Approval of Minutes (January 24 & May 30, 2015) - Page 6

III. Reports:

- **Slide Show**—Some Highlights from 2015
- Pastor's Report: Dave Steffenson—Page 2-4
- President's Report: Lee Pearce—Page 5
- Treasurer's Report: Page 8
- Audit Committee Report: Page 7
- Questions?

IV. Action Items:

- Ratification of Emmanuel Constitution
- Approval of NALC Constitution amendments
- Election of Council Members
 - Don Holtan (2 years)
 - Lee Pearce (2 years)
 - Katie Siebenaler (1 year)
 - Judy Caudill (1 year)
- Election of Nominating Committee Members (4 needed; 1 year term): Leitha Bothun, Jean Wanek, Peg Holtan, and ?
- Election of Audit Committee Member - 3 year term: Darald Bothun (Larry Vomhof - 2 years remaining; Rich Sunde - 1 year remaining)
- Election of Lay voting Member for NALC & Mission District Convocations: Lee Pearce; Alternates: Don & Peg Holtan
- Approval of 2016 Mission Plan Budget, & Goals/Mile Markers—pages 4 & 9

V. Closing Announcements & Thanks

- Financial Secretary for 2016: Deb Vomhof
- Adjournment with Lord's Prayer



Thanks Julie for an excellent Slideshow!
[Emmanuel Wish List](#)—page 4
[Emmanuel Goals/Mile Markers](#)—page 4
[Minutes from Meetings](#)—page 6
[Audit Committee Report](#)—page 7
[Emmanuel 2016 Budget](#)—page 9
[International Church Vilnius, Lithuania: Jim & Diane Wagner](#)—Page 10

MARKS OF DISCIPLESHIP: Signposts guide our way—Disciples seek to pray daily, worship weekly, grow spiritually, read & study Scripture on a regular basis, serve others, share the good news, and give generously.

The SONG in our HEART: “*Oh Come, Oh come, Emmanuel, and ransom captive Israel. Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to you, O Israel.*”

Servants of Emmanuel celebrate the birth of Jesus every day!



NALC

North American Lutheran Church

Pastor's Report: Rev. David Steffenson — "Spiritual Gifts"

St. Paul reminds the Christians in Corinth that all baptized believers are "sealed by the Holy Spirit and marked with the cross of Christ forever." No one can say, "Jesus is Lord!" unless they have the Holy Spirit. "For in the one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—Jews or Greeks, slaves or free—and all were made to drink of the one Spirit." "To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good." Gifts serve the neighbor and bring praise to our Heavenly Father. A word of caution: Don't devalue your gifts or compare them to the gifts of others. Don't hoard, hide or hinder your gifts. Employ your gifts! Remember the word "*christening*" literally means "to name and put into useful service". Gifts are activated by the Holy Spirit and allotted to each member of Christ's Body as the Spirit chooses. God knows His business. "Pursue love, and strive for the spiritual gifts." I offered a New Year's Resolution to the Servants of Emmanuel: "Let's sign up for worship opportunities for the month ahead, before the end of the current month, so that this information can be printed in our next month's newsletter. Don't wait for someone to call you about ushering, reading Scripture, acolyting, serving Communion, providing treats, etc. Email or give Julie Steffenson, our Worship Coordinator, a phone call. Tell her that you want to employ your spiritual gifts for the building up of the body of Christ at Emmanuel Lutheran.

As I reflect upon the gifts of 2015, and the opportunities awaiting us in 2016, I thank God for your living witness. Thanks for letting your light shine to the glory of God. Together, we are servants of Emmanuel. In 2015, during the Season of Lent, we focused on the gift of Baptism. Our theme was "Water Stories". Martin Luther reminds us that "there is enough in baptism to study and practice our whole life long". Never let it be said, "I was baptized." Instead we confess, "I AM baptized". Jesus, the Great I AM, has placed his seal on us and marked us with his cross for a lifelong walk of discipleship. I was is only past tense. But I AM is always present tense. What does baptism mean for daily living? It means that my sinful self with all of its evil deeds and desires should be drowned through daily repentance, and that day after day a new self should arise to live with God in righteousness and purity forever." This year's Lenten theme will be "Faith Practices—the Marks of Discipleship". Faith doesn't hibernate, sit and sleep. Faith practices, lives, breathes and works, getting ready for the big game, concert, play, etc. Oasis is making space for us to worship on Ash Wednesday (February 10 at 6pm), Maundy Thursday (March 24 at 6pm), & Good Friday (March 25 at 12:00 Noon). Weekly we will enjoy our Revised Holden Evening Prayer on Tuesday nights at 6pm with a weekly soup supper at 5pm. We're hoping that Servants of Emmanuel will eagerly seek to put their faith into practice as disciples of Jesus Christ assemble for Lent.

One of our faith practices is Bible Study. Men of Emmanuel continue to enjoy good food, fellowship and a deep engagement with God's Word each Tuesday morning at Charlies. We continue to explore the Scripture Readings for the upcoming Worship Service. Women of Emmanuel enjoyed two afternoon studies in 2015: one on Ephesians and the other on "Famous Ladies of the Old Testament". A new evening study was added in November. Katie Siebenaler is hosting this monthly study in her home. Julie Steffenson continued to provide Saturday School for our youth. A special unit on Baptism was enjoyed during the Season of Lent. The children as provided a dramatization of the Nativity Story at our Christmas Eve Service. During Lent 2016, our youth will be studying a five week unit on the Apostles' Creed. One of the greatest assets of Emmanuel is our children. Approximately 20% of our congregation are children. Remember the days when we didn't know if we would have a child present at the Worship Children's Sermon? Thanks for making God's Word and God's Children a mainstay in your life and family!

Highlights from 2015 include:

1. Emmanuel received Six Thrivent Action Team gifts (\$250.00 each). These dollars were invested in the following ways: Praying for our area schools (one each month) and bringing treats of appreciation to each school; an All-Daughter Banquet on May 2, which was enjoyed by about 77 women from Emmanuel, Oasis, and guests; a Recognition of our Veterans with an appreciation event at a local clinic (each veteran received a gift card); a Celebration of the Feast of St. Nicholas, where each child received a keepsake book and a photo with Santa; and Treat bags that were distributed on Christmas Eve at both the Emmanuel and Oasis Worship Services. In 2016 we have already received 3 Thrivent Action Team gifts: One for the continuation of our prayer ministry to area schools, another for Lenten fellowship, and a third in support of the SEMAC mission trip to Brookport-Unionville, IL. Each Thrivent member can receive two Action Team gifts annually. Contact Julie if you want to learn how to get an Action Team grant.
2. One of our supporters, Emmanuel Lutheran, Grafton, IA, brought their choir to Rochester and sang an

Easter Cantata during our April 18 Worship Service. On the same weekend many of us enjoyed a Bill Gaither Vocal Band Concert at the Rochester Civic Center.

3. Attendance at the NALC Convocation in Dallas, TX with Lee Pearce; we subsequently put together our Emmanuel Mission Driven Roadmap. The 2016 Convocation will be in Garden Grove, CA, Aug. 9-12.
4. In August, Larry & Deb Vomhof hosted our annual Church picnic in their home. The date for 2016 has already been set: Sunday, August 7.
5. Deb Vomhof and Leitha Bothun, with the assistance of many other servant hands, published our first Emmanuel Lutheran Church Picture Directory.
6. Participation in our third annual Reformation Sunday Prayer Walk and Potluck. We also enjoyed a showing of the movie, "Do You Believe?"
7. Benevolences: We supported the SEMAC mission trip to Brookport-Unionville, Illinois. I had the good fortune of being able to participate in this Christ-centered ministry of compassion and hope (January 25ff); On June 27, we hosted a Mission Festival Worship Service and our missionaries, Jim & Diane Wagner (International Church of Vilnius, Lithuania) shared God's Word and holy work with us; on August 29, Gary Froiland shared the work of the Gideons with us; we rang bells for the Salvation Army Red Kettle Appeal for 45 hours (\$2,367; \$52.60 per hour), surpassing our goal of 16 hours; & filled shoeboxes were collected for Samaritan Purse, "Operation Christmas Child". In addition to this we supported the NALC and the North American Lutheran Seminary. We also gave \$500.00 to Supermarket Saturday, which will be used as an Easter Extra in March of 2016.
8. Gifts received: Emmanuel is a generous congregation! In 2015, LeRoy Quam made altar candle holders and the Vomhofs donated liquid candles; Julie Steffenson made seasonal paraments for our pulpit; a church safe and a hymnal book truck were purchased by Rich & Janet Sunde; and members of Emmanuel responded to our budget shortfall and gave a year-end, second-mile gift of almost \$10,000. We had budgeted a loss of \$17,785 (Reserves) for 2015. But we ended up with only a \$1,899.77 loss. Yay God!
9. The approval of our revised Emmanuel Constitution and new Bylaws in May, awaiting ratification at our Annual Meeting on January 31, was a major accomplishment. Thanks for your patience and persistence. Christmas with Emmanuel was well supported with 80 people in worship. The children were amazing!

My pastoral acts in 2015 included:

- 1 Baptism: Marek Jamison Konop (Emmanuel Lutheran, Rochester, MN) on January 10
- 1 Wedding: DeAndra Boll and Cody Schaefer (United Lutheran, Lake Lillian, MN) - April 11.;
- 2 Funerals: Sharon Hart Memorial (Emmanuel Lutheran, Rochester, MN) - February 19; and Richard Anderson (Rushford Lutheran, Rushford, MN) - July 6.
- Guest Preaching 14 times at 9 congregations: First Lutheran, Hope, MN (May 31); Peace Lutheran, Northwood, IA (June 7); Gift of Grace, Holmen, WI (July 19); Old East and Old West Paint Creek Lutheran Churches, Waukon, IA (July 26); Emmons Lutheran Church, Emmons, MN (August 30); Bethany Lutheran, Laurens, IA (October 18); South Zumbro Lutheran, Kasson, MN (October 25); and Rushford Lutheran, Rushford, MN (May 3 & 10, June 14 & 21, July 15 & 12, & November 8).
- 5 Articles published in the Rochester Post Bulletin newspaper.

As we enter 2016, I want to say thanks to Deb Vomhof for serving as our Financial Secretary in 2015 and for agreeing to continue serving in this way in 2016. I also want to thank Arne Nelson for his faithful work as our Emmanuel Treasurer during the past four years & to Judy Caudill who will assume the duties of Church Treasurer. In 2016 we will be exploring new ways to grow into the full maturity of Christ. We'll enjoy an all-church picnic with Iglesia & Oasis churches tentatively on Saturday, August 27. I'm still hoping that we can invest in our young families by hosting a monthly parents' day out. I'm also hoping that we can put a float together & participate in some of the area parades, proclaiming "Emmanuel". What about a day or a week at Bible Camp? We are growing in our worship attendance so we will be purchasing additional ReClaim Songbooks & additional copies of the revised Holden Evening Prayer Liturgy. On a personal note, I decided to join Bible Study Fellowship last fall. We are studying Revelation. I'm enjoying the fellowship and learning. Christmas Day in 2016 will be on a Sunday. Our Christmas Eve Worship will be on a Saturday. We'll keep you posted as plans unfold. Thanks for walking wet & living your baptismal faith. Thanks for "praising, proclaiming & practicing Emmanuel—God with Us—in daily life". I can't say thanks enough for your partnership in ministry & your faithfulness to Jesus. Soli Deo Gloria!

Together we are singing the Doxology: "Praise God from whom all blessings flow! Praise Him all creatures here below. Praise Him above ye heavenly hosts. Praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost. Amen."

2016 Membership Covenants Received and Approved: 58

The following Discipleship Membership Covenants were approved at the January 12, 2016 Council Meeting: Creig Anderson, Darald & Leitha Bothun, Debra Brown, Judy Caudill, Dennis & MarJean Damerval, Brock & Julie Edwards (Mason, Gavin & Rowan), Robert & Marcia Harms, Don & Peg Holtan, Joe & Amber Konop (Marek), Sharon Matzke (Emma & Elijah), Fred Morck, Robert & Vicky Mulvihill, Arne & Samia Nelson, Lee & Judy Pearce, LeRoy & Margaret Quam, Matt & Jenna Serr (Nora & Scarlett), Jim & Katie Siebenaler (Cabe, Ava, & Addison), Dick & Nancy Stanley, David & Julie Steffenson, Rich & Janet Sunde, Larry & Deb Vomhof, Joe Vomhof, Tom & Sheri Vomhof, Matthew & Megan Wagner (Anna & James), Don & Jean Wanek, and Gloria Wiebusch. Note: 13 youth and 45 adult voting members.

Vision of the NALC – “We are Called ... to Be, Make and Grow Disciples” – Matthew 28

NALC Core Values: Christ Centered; Mission Driven; Traditionally Grounded; and Congregationally Focused

Emmanuel Mission Statement: “Sealed by the Holy Spirit and marked with the cross of Christ forever, we are Praising (WORSHIP), Proclaiming (EVANGELICAL), and Practicing (DISCIPLESHIP) Emmanuel – God With Us – in daily life.”

Desired Outcomes ... Goals and Objectives: Marks of Discipleship

Prayer – Prayer Walk & Potluck on Reformation Sunday; Prayer Calendars; Praying for our area Schools (Thrivent Action Team Dollars)

Worship – Recording/Videotaping/Livestreaming our Services; Christmas with Emmanuel; monthly Worship at Madonna Towers

Spiritual Growth – Discipleship opportunities; Saturday School; Cinema Small Group

Scripture – Reading the New Testament as a Congregation; Expanding men’s and women’s Bible Studies; daily Bible Reading

Service – Veterans’ appreciation (Thrivent Action Team Dollars); Bell Ringing for the Salvation Army; IHN and Supermarket Saturday; SEMAC—Larry Vomhof

Evangelism...Sharing the Good News – St. Nicholas Celebration (books and pictures with Santa – Thrivent Action Team Dollars);

Generous Living & Giving – the International Church of Vilnius (Rev. Jim & Diane Wagner); SEMAC

Emmanuel Wish List

- New Altar Cloths.
- Sponsorship gifts for Easter and Christmas ads in the Post Bulletin (\$500.00 each).
- Pens and Witness Wear items.
- Future Dream: Gift of 15 acres of land for Church Site.

Thank You to the many congregations & individuals who are patrons & benefactors of Emmanuel. Your prayers, financial support and partnership in the Gospel is much appreciated.

Goals and Mile Markers for 2016:

1. Ratification of our revised Constitution and Bylaws.
2. Grow Average Worship Attendance to 50-75 worshipers per week.
3. Discipleship: Each One Make/Reach One (multiplying ourselves). Grow Membership (Increase signed Discipleship Covenants from 58 to 75).
4. Emmanuel Float and participation in two area community parades.
5. Large Group participation at the NALC Convocation in California.
6. Salvation Army Red Kettle Bell Ringing: 40-50 hours
7. Christmas with Emmanuel: Invite families and friends to spend Christmas Eve worshiping at Emmanuel—Saturday, Dec. 24, 2016, with a goal of 100 worshipers. Perhaps offering a Christmas Day Service also.
8. Emmanuel financially self-supporting by December 31, 2017.
9. Other?

Council President's Report: Lee Pearce

When we look back at the year just passed we can do so with amazing clarity, a clearness of vision we don't have when trying to peer into the future. Hindsight is always "20-20" isn't it? When I look back at 2015 at Emmanuel Lutheran Church of Rochester, I see a view of determined servants, living-out ***"Emmanuel - God with us - in daily life!"***

The list of ministry achievements in 2015 is rather mind-boggling. Review some of them with me and take a few minutes to reflect on their importance to us:

- New By-laws and an approved, revised Constitution for our church
- Development of our Emmanuel Mission Road Map. This aligns with and augments our ministry vision, budget, and the Seven Marks of Discipleship.
- Continuing Scripture education through our adult men's and women's Bible studies, including a new evening study opportunity for our ladies.
- Saturday School continues to offer tremendous training for our youth as they explore and learn Biblical fundamentals and truths each week. Here we get a chance to look into the future through the eyes of our children and invest in their spiritual futures and lives.
- Discipleship Covenants allow each of us to personally recommit ourselves formally as we engage in ministry at Emmanuel.
- Mission Outreach is service to others through SEMAC (Southeast Minnesota Area Christians) led by Larry Vomhof; Forty-five hours of bell-ringing for the Salvation Army helped care for those who need a 'hand-up' during hard times.
- New "instruments of ministry" – Handmade baptismal font stand, altar candle holders and candles, a new book cart for hymnals and service handbooks, new altar and pulpit paraments. These are instrumental and vital to our worship experience.
- Music – Unsurpassed songs of inspiration and music from MarJean Damerval, Sharon Matzke, Karen Salz and Mandy Lambrecht, and individual offerings of praise from our new children's choir and Don & Peg Holtan during the year. Thank you!
- Social Ministry is redefined each week with an amazing array of treats and snacks, providing a backdrop for personal sharing and caring.
- Pictorial Directory – What a blessing! Thank-you to everyone who was involved in producing our extraordinary, professional-grade directory.
- NALC Convocation – I was privileged to be your Lay Representative at the 2015 annual meeting along with Pastor Dave. It was a week of spiritual immersion! We participated in Mission District breakout sessions with the Iowa and Minkota mission districts, had opportunities for worship, learning venues, and saw an unparalleled dedication, vision and an inspiring and contagious commitment from our national church leaders. Thank you for supporting this critical ministry involvement!
- Feast of Saint Nicholas in December reached-out to children and families with the true story of Santa Claus (Saint Nicholas). Now they know the real story.
- Emmanuel Huddles – These informal sessions afford us the opportunity for your church leaders to let you know where we are in our ministry, to hear your input, to review current commitments and to explore exciting new ideas and emerging opportunities.
- Second-Mile Gifts at the end of 2015 again demonstrated your commitment to ministry at Emmanuel. Through your selflessness we closed the budget year with a deficit of less than \$1,100.00. You reinforced our Reserve Funds and provided support for 2015 and the coming years. What an accomplishment! This demonstrates a clear determination, dedication, and a spirit-inspired vision by our members for the future. This is "Being Church!"

This is by no means a complete list of our ministries last year, just a smattering of examples of Emmanuel's Seven Marks of Discipleship: Pray Daily; Worship Weekly; Grow Spiritually; Read and Study Scripture; Serve Others; Share the Good News; and Give Generously

As we look to the future, seeking to be spirit-led, let's each set our minds and hearts to determine and develop our Spiritual Gifts and to be about our 'assigned tasks' in God's Kingdom in the coming years.

Thank you for your ministry!

Minutes - Special Congregational Meeting – Saturday, May 30, 2015 (7:20pm)

A quorum being present, the meeting was called to order by Kari Richards. Motion made to accept the revised Constitution & newly created Bylaws made by Don Holtan, 2nd by Judy Caudill. Motion as follows: “Whereas each and every proposed revision to the Constitution and/or the Bylaws of Emmanuel Lutheran Church of Rochester has been duly and prayerfully considered, & the results approved by the church council on April 21st, a motion is hereby made that the congregation vote to accept these revised documents in their entirety.” The following 30 eligible voting members in attendance received ballots: Creig Anderson, Darald Bothun, Leitha Bothun, Debra Brown, Judy Caudill, Ardis Christen, MarJean Damerval, Don Holtan, Peg Holtan, Fred Morck, Arne Nelson, Judy Pearce, Lee Pearce, LeRoy Quam, Margaret Quam, Kari Richards, Jenna Serr, Matt Serr, Jim Siebenaler, Katie Siebenaler, Nancy Stanley, Richard Stanley, Julie Steffenson, Rev. David Steffenson, Janet Sunde, Rich Sunde, Deb Vomhof, Joe Vomhof, Larry Vomhof & Tom Vomhof.

Format of ballot was as follows:

Whereas each and every proposed revision to the Constitution of Emmanuel Lutheran has been duly and prayerfully considered and a Bylaws document has been newly created, and the results approved by the church council on April 21st, a motion is hereby made that the congregation vote to accept these revised documents in their entirety. An ACCEPT vote is to adopt the Revised Constitution and new Bylaws. A REJECT vote means we continue using the original Constitution approved on Aug 11th, 2012. A ballot NOT checked counts as a vote to REJECT.

___ ACCEPT ___ REJECT

The results of 28 ballots cast were 26 marked ACCEPT, 2 unmarked (counted as REJECT). Two ballots were not returned. The motion to ACCEPT carried by 93% of returned ballots. Lee Pearce announced that June calendars were available, and noted birthdays and anniversaries. We sang Happy Birthday. The Lord’s Prayer was led by Kari. Motion to adjourn by Deb Vomhof, 2nd by Janet Sunde. Carried Unanimously. 7:45pm. Minutes taken by Don Holtan, Council Secretary.

Minutes - Emmanuel Lutheran Church Annual Meeting – Saturday, January 24, 2015 (7:45pm)

Meeting called to order by President Kari Richards. Opening prayer given by Pastor Dave Steffenson. 23 Voting members present: Creig Anderson, Darald Bothun, Leitha Bothun, Judy Caudill, Ardis Christen, Don Holtan, Peg Holtan, Fred Morck, Robert Mulvihill, Vicky Mulvihill, Arne Nelson, Samia Nelson, Judy Pearce, Lee Pearce, LeRoy Quam, Margaret Quam, Kari Richards, David Steffenson, Julie Steffenson, Janet Sunde, Rich Sunde, Deb Vomhof, and Larry Vomhof. Arne Nelson was appointed parliamentarian by Kari Richards. Arne read minutes from 01/25/14, and 9/27/14. Motion to approve - Julie Steffenson, 2nd - Darald Bothun. Motion Carried. President Kari Richards’ written report was received. Pastor Steffenson’s written report was received. Treasurer’s report given by Arne Nelson. Motion to approve all reports - Fred Morck, 2nd - Leitha Bothun. Motion Carried.

Elections were held. Ballot was presented with no further nominations from the floor. Motion to cast a unanimous ballot was made by Pastor Steffenson, 2nd by Darald Bothun. Motion carried. Election Results: Council: Arne Nelson (2 years); Kari Richards (2 years); Don Holtan (1 year); Nominating Committee (4 needed): Judy Pearce, Leitha Bothun (Council to appoint 2 additional members); Audit Committee (3 needed): Larry Vomhof (3yr), Rich Sunde (2yr), and Darald Bothun (1yr); Lay Voting Member for NALC Convocation: Lee Pearce; Julie Steffenson, Alternate; Announcement: Appointment of Financial Secretary for 2015: Deb Vomhof; Constitution & Bylaw revisions: Motion to refer back to the Council - Ardis Kristen, 2nd - Judy Caudill; Motion carried. Note: Items of concern and questions need to be submitted in writing to Lee Pearce before the February 10 Council Meeting.

2015 Mission Plan Budget & Goals. Motion to approve - Janet Sunde, 2nd - Larry Vomhof. Motion Carried. Local Benevolence Recipients: 3 charities designated with \$500 to each: Salvation Army; Oasis Supermarket Saturday; SEMAC (Larry Vomhof). Motion to approve - Arne Nelson, 2nd - Lee Pearce. Motion carried. Closing Announcements & Thanks. Motion to Adjourn Meeting - Arne Nelson, 2nd - Judy Pearce. Motion carried. Adjournment @ 8:45PM with Lord’s Prayer. Minutes taken by Don Holtan, Council Secretary.

Audit Committee Report: Audit took place on Wednesday, January 13, 2016

Rich Sunde, Larry Vomhof and Darald Bothun served as members of this year's Audit Committee. Pastor Steffenson participated as an observer. Treasurer Arne Nelson gave a detailed report of procedures that he has been following regarding the care of Emmanuel Lutheran's church finances. Emmanuel's banking is at Think Bank located at the corner of 41st Street NW and West River Parkway NW, Rochester.

The 2015 financial records of Emmanuel Lutheran were reviewed & found to be in good order. The Financial Secretary's year-end income including Thrivent dollars (\$1,930) was \$102,098.73. The Treasurer's year-end income was \$102,098.73. Everything balances.

The Audit Committee is currently establishing a handbook folder including a yearly calendar of scheduled responsibilities. An Audit Committee member, Emmanuel Council member, and Pastor will review our church insurance policy in 2016. Emmanuel's Articles of Incorporation need to be renewed annually. This procedure has been completed for 2015 & 2016 by Darald and will be completed by a member of the Audit Committee in the future. Procedures of refileing for Incorporation will be included in the folder.

Arne gave the Committee a detailed listing of required reports and necessary passwords that need to be filed throughout the year. Arne retired as Treasurer of Emmanuel effective December 31, 2015, and is providing us with necessary information for our Annual Report and year end closing of the church books. In addition, Arne will be providing assistance to the newly selected Treasurer. Thanks were expressed to Arne for his faithful, dedicated and excellent work.

Audit Committee talking points – from the audit conducted at Arne's home on Wednesday, Jan. 13, 2016.

1. Arne reminded the Audit Committee that there is now a division of duties between the Treasurer and the Financial Secretary, with the Financial Secretary handling counting, deposits and recording of weekly contributions.
2. Emmanuel currently has no stock holdings; consequently the Brokerage Account has been closed.
3. Arne also explained Thrivent Simply Giving and Thrivent Choice Dollars.
4. Arne requested that Pastor give him the designated thumb drive so that the 2015 financials can be backed up.
5. It was noted that the Check Register is currently located in the Emmanuel Safe.
6. W-2 and 1099 forms cannot be downloaded from the website and must be picked up at the IRS office (310 South Broadway, Rochester).
7. Arne has several boxes of church financial records in his house. A decision must be made as to the location for permanent storage.
8. Oasis does not provide receipts for Emmanuel's monthly rent payment.
9. Arne will provide Pastor a W-2 and MarJean a 1099 before the end of January.
10. We have no employees which require withholding taxes. Emmanuel is required to file quarterly reports informing the State of MN that we have NO WITHHOLDINGS.
11. Emmanuel has a tax exempt number and an EIN.
12. Federal Requirement: File Quarterly 941.
13. In 2016, FS (Deb Vomhof) will create a fictitious donor to track Thrivent Choice Dollar received.
14. Treasurer and FS job descriptions will be created and reviewed annually by the Audit Committee.
15. The offering counter sheet will be review as needed.
16. The software program (accounting system) to be used in the future to keep track of our church financials will need to be selected. Previously, Arne used QuickBooks.
17. Desired Outcome: create a Treasurer's Handbook.
18. Arne shared the MN E-Services Emmanuel ID and password with the audit committee and Pastor Dave.

Worship Attendance at Emmanuel Lutheran

In 2014 we began keeping track of worship attendance at Emmanuel Lutheran. In 2015 a couple of notable highlights include: Thanksgiving Eve Worship increased from 22 people in 2014, to 57 in 2015. Christmas Eve Worship in 2014 was 45 people. In 2015 we had 80 people in worship for Christmas Eve. Our Average Worship Attendance per week in 2014 was: 41. Our Average Worship Attendance per week in 2015 was 48. Thanks for making weekly worship a priority in your walk with Jesus!

2015 Financial Report—Arne Nelson

- Thrivent Choice Dollars received in 2015: \$1,930.00 (\$4,187.00 received in 2014; \$1,496.00 in 2013)
- Pastor's Discretionary Fund Balance (1/1/16): \$2,026.50
- 11 Supporting Congregations and 4 Individual Benefactors/Patrons: \$20,500.00+ (i.e. 1 congregation in SD (Immanuel Lutheran, Whitewood), 2 congregation in MN (Rushford Lutheran, Rushford; Emmons Lutheran, Emmons), 1 congregation in WI (Gift of Grace Lutheran, Holmen), and 7 congregations in Iowa (Old East Paint Creek, Waterville; Old West Paint Creek, Waukon; Waterloo Ridge Lutheran, Dorchester; Emmanuel Lutheran, Grafton; St. Matthew Lutheran, Readlyn; Bethany Lutheran, Laurens; Peace Lutheran, Northwood).
- Lease continuing with Oasis for 2016: \$6600.00 per year (\$550.00 per month)

Emmanuel Balance Sheet—12/31/15

ASSETS	
Current Assets	
Checking/Savings	
101 Think Bank Checking	\$57,988.46
Total Checking/Savings	\$57,988.46
Total Current Assets	\$57,988.46
Fixed Assets	
110 Furniture/Equip.	\$1,008.89
Total Fixed Assets	\$1,008.89
TOTAL ASSETS:	\$58,997.35
LIABILITIES & EQUITY	
Equity	
Balance from prior yrs.	\$60,093.12
Net Income	-\$899.77
Total Equity	\$59,193.35
TOTAL LIABILITY & EQUITY:	\$59,193.35*

***Designated Funds: \$4,026.50**

Pastor's Discretionary: \$2,026.50
SEMAC: \$600.00
Funeral Fund: \$300.00
Sunde Fund: \$1,100.00

Emmanuel Profit & Loss (Jan-Dec 2015)

INCOME	
401 Weekly Offering	\$68,536.24
402 Second Mile Gift	\$9,950.00
405 Partners (Indiv./Congr.)	\$16,458.74
406 Thrivent Choice Dollars	\$1,930.00
410 Designated/Memorials	\$565.00
415 Designated Offerings*	
NALC Missions	\$500.00
Pastor's Retirement	\$500.00
416 Pastor's Discretionary	\$1,500.00
417 SEMAC	\$600.00
420 Designated—Post Bulletin	\$1,158.75
421 Designated—Funeral	\$300.00
422 Designated—Oasis/funeral	\$100.00
TOTAL INCOME	\$102,098.73

EXPENSE	
416 Pastor's Discretionary	\$340.50
501 Advertising & Promotion	\$1,912.25
502 Payroll Expenses	\$75,205.00
504 Mileage	\$4,045.87
506 Bank Fees	\$126.91
507 Retirement	\$500.00
508 Continuing Education	\$239.81
509 Conference Expense	\$1,494.70
510 Worship/Office/Ed. Supplies	\$3,194.76
511 Mother-Daughter Banquet	\$225.00
512 Computer/Software Exp.	\$90.00
520 Rent (lease)	\$6,600.00
530 Insurance	\$721.70
540 SEMAC	\$500.00
542 Mission - Vilnius	\$1,000.00
550 NALC Church at Large	\$3,000.00
551 NALC Synod	\$350.00
552 NALC Seminary Fund	\$2,200.00
553 Salvation Army	\$500.00
554 Mission - Supermarket Saturday	\$500.00
555 Miscellaneous Expense	\$25.00
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$102,998.50

Net Ordinary Income -\$899.77

Net Income **-\$899.77**

** Two designated offerings need to be sent (#415 above); actual shortfall for the year is a net loss of \$1,899.77.*

Note: Emmanuel budgeted to use \$17,785.00 of our Reserves in 2015. Our actual shortfall for the year was only \$1,899.77. Praise God from whom all blessings flow!

2016 Mission Plan Budget

INCOME		Budget 2015
Offering from Covenant Members	\$69,000	\$67,000
Partner Gifts of Support		
Rushford Lutheran	\$5,000	\$5,000
Others	\$9,000	\$13,500
Thrivent Choice Dollars	\$1,750	\$3,750
Loose Offering	\$750	\$00
Cash Reserves	\$15,000	\$17,785
TOTAL INCOME	\$100,500	\$107,035

** Proposal: General Offerings exceeding projected income will be divided 1/3 Reserves, 1/3 Benevolences, and 1/3 Pastor's Compensation.*

EXPENSE

Benevolences (goal: 10%)		
NALC (Churchwide)	\$1,670	\$3,000
NALS (Seminary)	\$1,000	\$2,000
Global (ICV – Lithuania; Wagners)	\$500	\$1,000
Local (SEMAC, Salvation Army)	\$1,000	\$1,500
Minkota Mission District	\$100	\$75
<i>(Suggested \$2 per baptized member)</i>		
Iowa Mission District	\$400	\$400
<i>(Suggested \$400 per congregation)</i>		
NALC & Mission District Convocations	\$750	\$2,000
Rent (Oasis Lease - \$550 per month)	\$7,000	\$7,000
Insurance (property/liability)	\$750	\$500
Bank Fees	\$150	\$00
Supplies (worship, office, education)	\$3,000	\$3,000
Advertising/Marketing	\$00	\$1,500
Church Musician (62 Services @ \$90)	\$5,580	\$5,400
Pastor's Mileage/Prof. Exp. (Rushford)	\$5,000	\$5,000
Pastor's Continuing Ed.	\$750	\$750
Pastor's Retirement	\$2,000	\$3,500*
Pastor's Salary	\$28,000	\$30,004
Pastor's Housing	\$18,000	\$18,000
Pastor's Medical	\$16,500	\$14,496
Pastor's HSA	\$6,500	\$6,500
Pulpit Supply/Mileage	\$1,000	\$1,110
Miscellaneous & Emerging Opportunities	\$850	\$300
TOTAL EXPENSE	\$100,500	\$107,035

** \$3000.00 in line item "Pastor's Retirement" forfeited by Pastor Steffenson in 2015.*

International Church Vilnius, Lithuania: Jim & Diane Wagner (from...Christmas Letter)

A blessed Christmas and a prosperous New Year to all! This year – 2015 – has been a "settling-in" year for the Wagners. If late 2013 and 2014 were the "getting acquainted" years, this year has been the time for becoming comfortable with our life in Vilnius & the International Church. We do not explore as much & we are probably not as curious, but we also know how to get around to the things we like the most. The museums, the ballet, and the philharmonic are amazing for such a small city! We have become fanatics about the Vilnius International Film Festival, attending something like 22 films in 21 days. Is that nuts or what?!

The church has been a joy & we have seen a slow but steady growth in attendance. As we have written before, it is a mix of many nationalities and denominations, yet somehow it seems to flourish. Many have said that they wish they could experience this kind of mixed fellowship back home. The grace of God in Christ, Eucharistic liturgy and the English language seem to hold us together.

As we understand our ministry, one of our callings is to be visible wherever expats congregate. This means we attend various social events: the Scottish Robert Burns Night, the Norwegian Lutefisk Dinner, Scandinavian Mid-Summer Festival, the American Marine Corps Ball, Danish Christmas Dinner and the British Carol Night. In addition, our church hosts the annual Anglo-Canadian Remembrance Sunday Service (akin to American Veterans' or Armistice Day), and a traditional American Thanksgiving Dinner on the Saturday before Thanksgiving. It is all good fun, but we also believe it is an important part of our ministry. As time passes we are becoming more recognized and accepted in the expat community.

One of Jim's joys has been his involvement with the Danish Chamber of Commerce. Someone recommended it to us before we arrived, and it has become a great source of friendship outside of our work within the congregation. This year Jim was invited to preach at the Danish Christmas Service instead of a pastor flown-in from Denmark. Interesting how things come around: Jim was ordained by Dick Jensen, who came out of the Danish Church heritage and our first call was to Westwood, the only Danish heritage congregation in Kansas City. And no, Jim speaks no Danish!

In mid-May Diane headed back to the USA to spend time with our younger daughter Hannah and husband Erik in North Carolina as they welcomed the birth of a new daughter, Kersee, our twelfth grandchild. Jim arrived the second week of June. From there we visited Peter & Khristyna in San Diego, then back to the Midwest to see Sarah & Brad, Matthew & Megan, and John & Molly and their families. While visiting Matt and Megan and their children, we also preached at a Mission Festival Worship Service hosted by Emmanuel Lutheran in Rochester, MN (a faithful supporter of ICV). We also spent some time with Diane's 93-year-old mother, Lois, and her sisters Dixie and Darla. The last weekend in Iowa we attended Jim's 50th high school reunion in Lohrville. What a grand time to be with old friends again: Friday night at our class reunion and again Saturday night at the all-school reunion. So many good friends, even after fifty years!

Our last week in the USA was spent in Chicago at the ELCA Summer Missionary Conference, then back to Europe. Our personal vacation was spent with twelve lovely days in Vienna and Budapest before returning home in Vilnius. While we were away the church in Vilnius was served by one of its former pastors who returned from retirement in Wisconsin. He and his wife did a splendid job of keeping the ship afloat!

Perhaps the biggest joy of the year came in early September when Sarah, Brad, Nadia and Luka came to Vilnius for several days. Usually the weather is perfect that time of year, but this year it rained every day but one. Nevertheless it was a beautiful experience for them and for us. Now all five of our children and five of our grandchildren have been to Lithuania!

On September 1st we completed two years at the International Church and the congregation has asked us to stay two more. Who knew retirement could be so much fun? In November our Resident Visas were renewed for two full years, so it looks as if, God willing, we will be in Vilnius into the Fall of 2017. Visitors are always welcome! If interested, we are on Facebook at "WagnersinLithuania." Blessings!

“Sealed by the Holy Spirit and marked with the cross of Christ forever, we are praising, proclaiming, and practicing Emmanuel – GOD WITH US – in daily life!”