

Annual Report 2022



SHARING - LOVING - SERVING

CONGREGATIONAL MEETING
SUNDAY March 5, 2023
1:00 P.M.

Desert Cross Lutheran Church

www.desertcross.org
480-730-8600

Desert Cross Tempe
8600 South McClintock
Tempe, Arizona 85284

Desert Cross Gilbert
3225 S. Lindsay Rd, Suite 101
Gilbert, Arizona 85297

THE CONGREGATIONAL COUNCIL

January 1 – May 31, 2022

Council

Glenn Tischefer	President (Resigned March)
Tom Rewolinski	Vice President to President
Vincent Sciamme	Treasurer
Anna Radermacher	Secretary
Stan Fernandes	Past President
Adam Pfau	
Patrick Jennett	
Anna Pelley	
Bill Kalaf	

June 1 – December 31, 2022

Council

Tom Rewolinski	President
Angela Nannenga	Vice President
Vincent Sciamme	Treasurer
Haley Perez	Secretary
Marla Barnard	
Bill Kalaf	
Adam Pfau	
Carolyn Perkins	
Adam Clark	

Staff

Senior Pastor*
 Associate Pastor*
 Director of Operations and Property*
 Office Manager (retired December 31st)
 Accountant
 Director of Worship & Music Ministries*
 Sound Technician
 Director of Media Production
 Worship Coordinator
 Director of Adult Ministries & Missional Service*
 Director of Youth Ministries
 Director of Children's Ministries*
 Children's Ministry Assistant
 Parish Nurse
 Communication's Coordinator (till May 31st)
 Musicians

Rev. Andrea L. Cain
 Rev. Thaddeus M. Book
 Douglas W. Bjotvedt
 Dawn Collins
 Deanna Soll
 Daniel Decker
 Chace Garcia
 Johannes VanRossum
 Arthur Krzyzewski
 Denise McClellan
 Katelyn Williamson
 Shannon Fossett
 Natalie Smith
 Denise Viker, R.N.
 Maegan Jennett
 Christine Soll
 James Soll
 Jason Christ

*Full-time

Mission Statement

As a **Missional** Congregation,
 we **celebrate** Christ's presence,
invite people into a growing relationship with Jesus,
 and **equip** them to **serve** in a broken world.

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Senior Pastor

Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever. Hebrews 13:8



Photo by Brett Jordan on Unsplash

The late Queen Elizabeth declared, *"Change has become a constant; the way we embrace it defines our future."* Sage words for 2022! In a year of massive change, it was hard to keep up with our "post-pandemic" world! We saw lots of progress happening in the midst of a difficult year with lots of need in the world. There were also many changes in the church, but we held fast to our center in Jesus Christ too guide us. It was a challenging yet hopeful year as we welcomed friends both old and new to worship, fellowship, and mission.

2022 gave us many opportunities to live out our mission statement: *As a missional congregation we celebrate Christ's presence, invite people into a growing relationship with Jesus, and equip them to serve in a broken world.* Our mission statement guides us in all of the ways that Desert Cross celebrates, invites, equips, and serves. We started off the year meeting our new missional service 500 hour project almost immediately! We found new places to serve and new ways to share God's love. Our church council produced our first short-term strategic plan for 2022 based on our mission statement and your input. We have accomplished and continue good progress on our goals with lots of work and dedication from staff, council, chamber, and volunteers. Mirroring the culture, we had staff and leadership changes this year. We said goodbye and hello several times and held both celebrations and welcomes for staff and leaders who faithfully work to empower our mission and ministry.

Change is hard but Hebrews promises good news: Jesus is the same yesterday, today, and tomorrow. In order to thrive in the future, we must embrace change and look for ways to make good happen in our lives and in our world as we live out our faith. Transformation is often a painful process, but Jesus came to transform the world with love. As Mahatma Ghandi said, "You must be the change you want to see in the world." The good news is that no matter how much change we experience, Jesus continues to walk with us, support us, encourage, strengthen, and inspire us! With Jesus, we can be the change we want to see in the world. Thank you for all the ways you shine the light of Christ!



Photo by Courtney Hedger on Unsplash

Thank you,
Pastor Andrea Cain

Desert Cross Strategic Plan 2022 ANNUAL REPORT Adopted at Congregational Meeting December 5, 2021

The foundation of the Desert Cross Strategic Plan comes from the Listening Sessions with 23 small groups with 187 participants and the Desert Cross Mission Statement as the guide.

Desert Cross Mission Statement: *As a missional congregation, we Celebrate Christ's presence, Invite people into a growing relationship with Jesus and Equip them to Serve in a broken world.*

The Congregation expressed the desire to work on the following areas:

- Increase Use of Social Media
- Grow Youth and Family Ministry Programming
- Grow Participation in Worship and Education
- Support Growth of Young Adult Ministry
- Improve Connecting Visitors and New Members
- Expand Service Opportunities by Partnering with Area Nonprofits
- Explore the "Neighborhood Church" Concept

Your Church Council has chosen two goals for each area. Those goals are:

- Increase Use of Social Media

Fund 2022 Budget to Include a Director of Media Production ✓

Form a Team to Grow Livestream and Increase Social Media Presence ✓

- Funded and hired Dir. of Media Production who grew volunteer livestream team
- Switched to OBS, free and open source software
- Using plugins to show the worship service PowerPoint slides, lower thirds, and offering message on the stream.
- Implemented Dante Audio to improve overall live stream sound quality; Created stereo channels for piano, keys, drums; Installed crowd microphones on the stream.
- Using LUTs to improve picture color quality on the stream.
- Growing YouTube Channel subscription count. We started the year with 245 Subscriptions; 42 subscriptions were added, for total of 289 subscribers; an increase of 17%, surpassing goal of 15%. Reaching lots of other countries on every continent.
- Facebook Page Reach of 8,824 and 1,590 Page Visits.
- Improving connection with church app
- Growing Facebook and YouTube online presence by posting Special Music Videos, Stories of Joy posts, and Faith Formation posts.

- Grow Youth and Family Ministry Programming

Create a Milestone Ministry to Recognize Significant Life Events in Worship Services ✓

Build Mission Opportunities both Small Scale and Large Scale ✓

- Milestone Ministry at Desert Cross includes: Baptism, First Grade Bibles, 3rd Grade First Communion, Confirmation, Graduation, Blessing of Backpacks, Teacher/Student Blessing, Passover Potluck, New Mom Ministry w/Devotionals, card, poem, Littlest Lutherans
- Service Opportunities are a part of Family Nights for the young kids and families
- DCLC Serves events at both sites in the fall and spring

- Annual Feed My Starving Children event
- Annual Crop Walk event

Youth Ministry: Hired new Youth Director

- DCLC Youth Fundraiser Parents Night Out - (February 12th, 2023)
- Sr. High 2023 Spring San Diego Retreat - (February 17th-20th, 2023)
- Jr. High 2023 - MiX (June 26-29th, 2023)
- Sr. High 2023 Mission Trip - Alamosa, CO (July 9th-14th, 2023)
- ELCA National Youth Gathering - New Orleans (July 16th-20th, 2024)
- Created weekly meeting schedule based on students' schedule. Jr. High on Thursday night 6:45-8:00 PM and Sr. High on Sundays 6:30-8:30PM.
- Schedule 1-2 service opportunities for students each semester
- Worked with students to plan and schedule to build the youth program around their wants and needs:
- Fun themed weekly meetings for students to foster a space for fun and Fellowship: Human Battleship; Name That Tune; Fear Factor; Messy Night; Game Night; Opposite Night; Cookie Night; Trivia Night
- Transformed Confirmation Program: new curriculum; meets at both campuses school year Sundays with volunteer teachers, Youth Director, and Pastors
- Scheduling and planning 1-2 fundraising events or opportunities for students to raise money for upcoming trips/events: Butter Braid Fundraiser; Parents Night Off Valentine's Day; Talent Show at a Spaghetti Dinner Fundraiser sponsored by DCLC Council; Dance/ Rock-a-thon

●Grow Participation in Worship and Education

Develop a Strategy to Engage Online Visitors ✓

Promote Worship, Education, and Activities to the Community ✓

- Created and promoted Sunday fellowship events i.e., Donut Day, Sundae Sunday
- Created and promoted Desert Cross Serves Projects at both campuses
- Encouraged every live streamed service to participate in offering; created DCLC thumbnail; increased online giving opportunities
- Efforts for chat participation have so far been unsuccessful with inappropriate bot messages. The effort will be renewed in 2023. We receive encouraging comments and emails after a live stream is done broadcasting or after posting Special Music Videos.
- Increased special music offerings in Tempe and Gilbert. Strengthened Tempe 10:30 service with a more versatile band and song selections that will stay relevant to current trends in worship music. Developed a strong rotation of worship leaders at both campuses. Highlighted Gilbert campus on live stream. Hired new Gilbert worship leaders March 2022 and renewed search after resignation which is still active
- Increased educational and invitational Mission Moments in worship at both campuses
- Held Town Halls in Gilbert for increased communication
- Welcomed new families in Sunday School this year.
- Communication with 1st grade families resulted in faith formation attendance
- New mom ministry with outreach about children's ministry programming, devotional, invite to Littlest Lutherans

- Vacation Bible School outreach
- Family Nights and Joyful Noises at Gilbert campus well received
- Fellowship event: Spaghetti Dinner
- Created and promoted new opportunities: FAN Club, Grief Groups, Meditation Group
- Created and promoted Snack & Chat in Tempe
- Utilized themed worship services for Advent & Lent
- Created Safety team

●Support Growth of Young Adult Ministry

Form Interest Groups for Young Adults

Collaborate with ASU Campus Ministry ✓

- Began fostering a relationship with University Lutheran Campus Ministry.
- Invited ASU campus ministry associate Dylan Weeks to attend and speak with the DCLC high school youth group and speak about what church looks like in college campus ministry
Planning a DCLC youth group spring trip to visit ASU Campus Ministry Wednesday Night dinner and worship.
- Inviting ASU Campus Ministry Associate and students to attend public DCLC events: Public Safety Training and Spaghetti Dinner Fundraiser

●Improve Connecting Visitors and New Members

Form a Team to Engage with Visitors (ie. Welcome Table) and Design a Welcome Bag with Relevant New Member Info ✓

Create a Three-month Check-in System for New Members ✓

- Created Gilbert welcome team. Designed a welcome bag for a table to direct visitors.
- Welcome team sends birthday notes, get well, and anniversary notes. Checks on absentee members.
- Tempe welcome team in progress. Staff/volunteers check on absentee member with a follow up system that includes administrator sending visitor information to the Pastors. The Pastors follow up the visitors and pass their info along to the welcome team.
- Attendance cards both in person and online distributed to administrator who tracks and shares for pastors/staff input and follow up by staff or volunteers.

●Expand Service Opportunities by Partnering with Area Nonprofits

Educate Congregation about Local Nonprofits and our Role as “Ambassadors” ✓

Challenge Desert Cross with 500-Hour Project ✓

- Sending a monthly Desert Cross Serves Email
- Emails highlight area nonprofits and their volunteer needs
- Emails include website information and contact information for nonprofits so that our folks can reach out to volunteer
- Emails regularly use the language of “ambassador” to emphasize our role as servants in support of the mission of the nonprofits
- Challenge Desert Cross with 500-Hour Project
- Challenged Desert Cross to serve 500 hours in area nonprofits in 2022

- Congregation completed the challenge in only one month
- Planning a new challenge for 2023

● **Explore the “Neighborhood Church” Concept**

Create a Team to Explore Ways Desert Cross can Share our Facilities with the Neighborhoods ✓ in progress

Research Needs and Offer Use of Space ✓ in progress

- Developed partnership with Spirit of Joy Lutheran Church: sharing campus, revenue opportunity, shared Lenten worship services and mission projects, worship leadership and musical partnership, Living Last Supper Maundy Thursday, joint Easter Egg hunt
- Redeveloped partnership with Korean Presbyterian Church with new Pastor Kim
- Identified new revenue/sharing opportunity: With improvements to Tempe Sanctuary it can be rented as “recording studio” and “small concert venue” for musicians, speakers, and other businesses to record and/or live stream podcasts, concerts, cd recording sessions, etc.
- Continue seeking new partners at both campuses

PASTORAL MEMBERSHIP RECORDS AND STATISTICS

Members Received

Transferred to DCLC from other ELCA Churches 4

Sheila Cauchi Judy Sorenson Theo Selby Stu Triplett

Transferred to DCLC from other Lutheran Churches 0

Members Received by Affirmation of Baptism 4

Alexia Faccio Larry Nelson Mary Jo Nelson Joni Van Rossum

Members Received as an Associate 0

Members Received by Adult Baptism 3

Marti Bracken Kelli Brouillette Raymond Lancaster

Members Received by Child Baptism 7

Ellie Avena Cooper Brouillette Kamryn Brouillette Layla Cantu
 Rory Fernandes Nolan Rojas Julia Tainter
 Bohdi Moeller (already added to membership rolls)

Reaffirmation of Baptism 8

Samuel Carter-Easton Ryan Fossett Tate Friesth Ben Gisselquist
 Emily Himes Henry Hunsaker Laney Hunsaker Lisette Ihlefeld

Weddings (*Denotes non-members) 2

Paul Sion* and Anna Pelley
 Jerry Eden and Pam Smith

Membership	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Baptized	928*	913	888	763	735
Confirmed	752	729	712	634	614
Households	461*	448	433	384	369

* Statistical Adjustment on Form A ELCA Congregational Report

Members Released/Transferred

<u>Transferred to ELCA Churches</u>				3
<u>Transferred to other Lutheran Churches</u>				7
<u>Transferred to other Churches</u>				0
<u>Requested Removal</u>				5
<u>Transferred to Inactive</u>				23
<u>Deaths</u>				7
Jane Brandt	Dale Hallberg	Andrea Heleotes	Diane Hodge	
Thomas Reine	Esther Sullivan	Patricia Wood		
<u>Funerals (*Denotes non-members)</u>				10
Nancy Blakely*	Mark Borchers*	Jane Brandt	Dale Hallberg	
Kenneth Merkel*	Valarie Neiman	Woody Neiman	Thomas Reine	
Esther Sullivan	Dorothy Swanson*			

Tempe Attendance	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Average Sunday	363	338	N/A	189	185
Average Sunday - Virtual	N/A	N/A	774*	298*	172*
Ash Wednesday	266	205	N/A	N/A	125
Maundy Thursday	120	161	N/A	N/A	126
Good Friday	170	227	N/A	N/A	103
Easter	612	591	N/A	223	308
Thanksgiving Eve	75	63	N/A	N/A	N/A
Christmas Eve	601	585	N/A	288	318

* Calculation per ELCA Guidelines.

Gilbert Attendance	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Average with Easter and Christmas	129	122	N/A	81	126
Ash Wednesday	N/A	69	N/A	N/A	68
Maundy Thursday	43	30	N/A	N/A	89
Good Friday	43	51	N/A	N/A	N/A
Easter	318	293	N/A	125	217
Christmas Eve	297	313	N/A	179	211

Note: 2021 Worship data is for 39 weeks, not 52.

Associate Pastor

Halloween is a big deal in our neighborhood. Many families must spend hundreds (maybe thousands??) of dollars on decorations, 10-foot-tall demons and other terrifying delights. One home in particular put together a haunted house that ran through their front yard, garage and entryway of their house. My 6 year-old son, Lincoln, has never experienced a haunted house so I was a bit nervous for him as I watched him timidly walk through the mummy and goblin guarded door. As I waited for him at the exit, I heard various screams, witnessed other frightened children, and began to worry about a tear-filled, terrified child reaching me upon escaping the haunted house. Instead, he came out with a look of pure joy, babbling and breathless about all he had encountered along the way. Lincoln barely slowed down as he ran back to the entrance while letting me know he was going to go through it again. He repeated this more times than I could count. And not only that, but he got his little friend, who was pretty terrified, to join him for those return visits.

Being one of your pastors felt the same as Lincoln's first encounter with a haunted house. This was my first year at Desert Cross where we could gather together for ministry. And there was some trepidation as to what ministry and the church looked like on this side of a once in a 100-year event. In spite of those fears, we moved ahead and accomplished a lot in the past year. While there is no way to encapsulate all that has happened in 2022, here are some of my highlights.

*Carolyn Perkins put together a children's Christmas pageant at our Gilbert campus that was delightful. The children and adults were hilarious and also showed wonderful acting and singing skills. We have many future entertainers/performers on our hands. In typical Desert Cross fashion, we also collected toys at the end of the pageant that went to families in need at Jose's closet.

*We hired Katelyn Williamson to be our Director of Youth and Family ministry. She brings incredible gifts and has already begun to share them in so many ways that enhance our lives together.

*The first annual spaghetti dinner/youth talent show was a wonderful success. Witnessing the incredible talent of so many of our youth while eating great spaghetti was a lot of fun. I'm excited to see the ways this event grows in 2023 and beyond.

*I got to experience VBS for the first time in-person at Desert Cross. It was so much fun to see how much fun all of the children and adults had throughout the week. My son Lincoln continues to ask when it will be VBS again.

*The women's tea was a wonderful event during Advent. I was honored to lead the devotion and amazed to see the fellowship hall in Gilbert turned into a generation to generation inspired high tea room.

*I co-led a grief class with our parish nurse, Denise Viker. It was a great opportunity to gather together with those who are grieving the death of a loved one. We laughed and cried and let one another know that this is what a church community looks like.

There is no doubt that this time as Church can be scary. We look around and don't see as many familiar faces as we saw before. We notice that once popular ministries look different than before. We wonder what comes next, what scary beast is around the corner, and how we will navigate all the fearful, future

unknowns. I don't have good answers to those questions and would be skeptical of anyone who thought they knew the answer for sure. But this year has been a reminder that we don't encounter 10-foot-tall demons alone. We continue to be a community that steps into scary spaces and comes out the other end and maybe even says, "Yes, let's do that again." I'm thankful to be on this journey with you.

Peace,
Pastor Thadd Book

Council President

As we celebrate and welcome in a new calendar year it is always fun to look back over the past 12 months to see how far we have come. The first thing that comes to my mind is “change”. Change was a very popular search word in 2022 and really sums up the year very well for Desert Cross.

Numerous changes, some more noticeable than others were completed during the year. While it would take a novel to list all the updates, here are some of the highlights. With the support of Joni Van Rossum, Daniel Decker Pastor Andrea, Pastor Thadd and many others, numerous enhancements were made to our online presence ranging from sound quality, graphic enhancement, and rollout of our Desert Cross App. Our Renew project was completed with upgrades to flooring in our education rooms, Tempe Sanctuary lighting, painting, and cleaning as well as refreshing the fountain in the columbarium.

In Gilbert, we continue to rent our campus space to many groups. This year, we added Spirit of Joy Lutheran Church to the list. We are happy to provide them space for their congregation to meet and their monthly rental contribution to us has been a financial blessing. We also completed our build-out supporting Dogs For Vets, a longtime renter at DCLC which included Suite 104 for us to use Sunday school.

We had staffing changes during the calendar year as Michael Lottes, Chad Diegle, Maegan Jennett resigned their positions along with the retirement of Dawn Collins to end the year. As we wished everyone well, we had the opportunity to meet and engage with new team members. Katelyn Williamson joined us to support our Youth Ministries. We are thankful for Carolyn Perkins and Marta Hatch for jumping in to while we look for our new Gilbert Music Worship leader. Marie Maiorana, our new Office Administrator, started January 3rd and is off and running.

Our Council Team had change as well, Glenn Tischaefter stepped down from his President role after our Annual Meeting in February and I moved into the role accordingly stepping up from Vice President. We elected and welcomed Adam Clark and Carolyn Perkins to Council roles this year and thanked Stan Fernandes, Patrick Jennett, and Anna Sion for completion of their terms. Finally, we thanked Anna Radermacher for her service as Council Secretary as she resigned her role and we welcomed Haley Perez to the team.

We successfully reviewed and approved our 2023 budget thanks to the utilization of our new technology. With minimal increases to Operations and Maintenance we were able to include a payroll cost of living increase for Staff. We will also have objectives for all staff to help the Executive Team communicate more as to what is happening and to support future increases.

Financially we still have work to do. 2022 was very tight to meet all expenses as giving was down due to numerous factors. It takes the entire congregation to meet our goals and we know that when we are challenged, this congregation steps up.

Our Church Council is working diligently in the best interest of our congregation and recognizes challenges that lay ahead. This includes continuing to enhance meetings to include the voting options for online presence as we believe this attendance is real attendance.

Thank you to our congregation, staff, and volunteers for making 2022 successful! It has been a pleasure to lead the congregation and celebrate our successes and challenges during these times. We have momentum going into 2023, as we saw firsthand during the Christmas season with increased attendance at our beautiful Christmas Eve worship services.

Of course, there is still work to be done. Our Strategic Plan is well in motion and we look forward to reviewing and enhancing this during the upcoming year.

2023 is our year to Let Our Light Shine!

Yours in Christ,
Tom Rewolinski
Council President

Desert Cross Lutheran Church Annual Meeting February 27, 2022

Annual Meeting Agenda:

- Welcome and Quorum
- Opening Prayer
- Financial Update
- Annual Report
- Constitution and Bylaw Amendments
- Nominating Committee
- Closing Prayer
- Adjourn

Motion to approve the agenda- Tom Rewolinski

Second to approve the agenda- Tracy Clark

Meeting Start at 1:09 pm

Financial Update- Vince

1. 2022 Budget Update- \$1,148,000
2. Financial Year through 2/20/22
 - a. Total Gifts- \$126,739
 - b. Total Expenses- \$128,054
 - c. Difference- (\$1,315)
 - i. Not accurate as waiting for electronic giving from last week
3. Trying to maintain and break even on a monthly basis
4. Electronic given is taking longer than "paper" giving
5. Completing plans to publish financials on Church Website. Will always be a month behind (if you are looking in May it will be April's giving/finances)
6. Will it show year to date? Yes it will look like #1's display
7. Are the rental agreements included in the gifts? Yes, it includes all funds
 - a. Change the name to say total revenue instead of total gifts

Annual Report- Presented by Doug

1. All of the slides presented are included in the annual report

2. Variance Report Page 18 of slide handouts
 - a. 0 for budget because it is considered a net number
 - b. Received 81% of what we wanted for 2021
 - c. We were at a loss of \$141,000. With PPP money from the government which gives us a profit of \$179,471 which helps the \$160,000 loss last year.
 - i. Offsets the debt
 - ii. Barely getting by even with PPP money
 - iii. We don't have this option this year (won't receive PPP money)
 - d. Total assets are a slight reduction from 2020
 - e. Contribution is decreasing over the five year period (however, last year was increased from 2020)
 - f. Received 96% of the RENEW campaign pledges
3. Questions:
 - a. Where was the \$33,000 spent?
 - i. Air conditioner repairs
 - ii. Fountain was worked on
 - b. How is the online services being funded?
 - i. Through gifts
 - ii. Grant from Endowment Fund
 - iii. RENEW Mission
 - c. We are looking around 6 months for obvious needed repairs?
 - i. RENEW is on hold (as voted on last meeting)
4. Vote to Approve the Annual Report
 - a. Motion to accept the 2021 annual report- Tracy Clark
 - B. Seconded- Stan Fernandes

Constitution and Bylaw Amendments- Glenn

1. Shannon motions to change the DCLC constitution and bylaws in May of 2021

- a. Regarding wording whether a current member at large who has not completed their term can run for a position on the Executive Team.
- b. Verbiage change to- Upon completion of his/her first term or at any time during, an at- large member shall be eligible, if elected, to serve one term as a Congregational Officer (Treasurer, Secretary or Vice President/President/Past President)
- c. Put parentheses in front of president and vice president to clarify you only vote in vice president for lay understanding term
- d. Change commas to slashes
 - i. Three positions- secretary, treasurer, and vice president/president/past president
- e. Motion to accept the constitution and bylaws as written- Tracy Clark and Stan Fernandes seconded
 - i. Opposed vote- 5
 - ii. Passed to Grand Canyon Synod for review

Nomination Committee:

Three Council positions will be open.

1. Vice President
2. At Large Members
3. Need to confirm Chamber and Endowment positions

Committee Formed to look for at least three people to fill council plus Chamber and Endowment:

1. Stan Fernandes
2. Patrick Jennett
3. Anna Pelley
4. Tom Selby
5. Deb Christiansen
6. Kelly Kaiser Borning

Stan motions to approve these as the Nominating committee for the Spring

Motion seconded- Not sure of the persons name

Motion Carries- to have these as the nominating committee

Mark speaks about the importance of having someone to reach out and get the youth involved

Closing Prayer- Pastor Thadd

Adjourned at 2:01 pm

Desert Cross Lutheran Church **Elections Meeting** **Sunday, May 1st, 2022** **Meeting start time: 1:03pm** **Meeting end time: 2:05pm**

Welcome- Tom Rewolinski

Opening Prayer- Pastor Andrea

Recognizing Outgoing Members of Council/Chamber:

- Stan Fernandes
- Anna Pelley
- Patrick Jennett
- Deb Christiansen
- Kelly Kaiser Borning

Congregational Elections: Stan Fernandes

Thanking nominating committee- Patrick, Anna, Tom, Deb, and Kelly

- Vice President- Angela Nannenga
hand vote: unanimous pass
- At Large A- Adam Clark
hand vote: unanimous pass
- At Large E- Carolyn Perkins
hand vote: unanimous pass

- Gilbert Chamber for Hospitality- Vicki Denman
hand vote: unanimous pass
- Gilbert Chamber for Communications- OPEN
- Endowment Committee Member- Matt Hunsaker
hand vote: unanimous pass
- Motion to do a hand count by Tracy and a second by John Christensen
- Vote by hand: unanimously passed
- Looking for 2 people to serve as leaders for strategic plan committee for Welcome Goal and Neighborhood Church Goal

Financial Update: Vince Sciamme

- Total Revenue in April \$82,979
- Total Expenses in April \$93,164
- Difference in April- (10,185)
- YTD Revenues- \$325,907
- YTD Expenses- \$335,312
- Difference YTD- (\$9,405)
- Suze Scott- How does this compare to the last couple of years- we are ahead of the past few years; in a better position. Vince is happy with these numbers.
- John Christensen- Does this include PPE or this in reserve? We no longer have PPE available. Some of the difference comes from open staff positions that we had for the first quarter, but now those positions are filled.
- We had an internal audit conducted April 23rd. It took over 3 hours. Members went over policies and procedures, it is done every 3 years. Written report is not in yet, but their verbal report states that they did not find any flaws and that they did not have any recommendations for improvement.
 - o Thanks to Lauren, Glenn, John, and Janet for assisting with the audit
- RENEW Campaign- same as it was in December

- o We have \$95,397 in RENEW Home
- o In RENEW Mission we have- \$10,706

City of Tempe Landscaping Water Grant: Tom Rewolinski

- This is informational to keep the congregation informed
- Our irrigation system needs replacement and has major leaks that cannot be repaired. We are wasting a lot of water which is costly and not good stewardship
- City of Tempe is offering grants towards replacing irrigation
 - o Ranges from \$1,000- \$60,000
- Deadline to apply is May 31st
- We are unsure of the extent of our current irrigation issues or cost to replace- have a landscaper looking at it this week to give us a quote (will eventually have 3 quotes)
- Projected savings of \$800 monthly with properly working irrigation after the completion of project
- How to pay for repairs?
 - o We have to pay total amount upfront
 - o We will be reimbursed for it after if we receive grant
 - o We do not have to accept the grant if we are offered one
- If we accept the grant we are obligated to finish all the work by June 2023
- We are spending well over \$2,000 a month right now in water
- Options to pay:
 - o Borrowing funds/applying for grants
 - o Special Campaign
- We are going to proceed to look at options
 - o We will then hold a special meeting once we know the total cost and grant amount has been determined

- John Christensen- who is the lead on this? Tom and Bill; John is chair of the Endowment Committee and says to apply for a grant
- Shelley- Are we getting an estimate? Yes; More than one? Yes, eventually over time
- Suze- Are we sure we do not have to have more than one bid for Tempe? Yes, we are sure; we have checked several times.
- Laura- Could Thrivent give us a loan or match our amount? We are not sure, but are looking into it
- Melanie- Is the fountain water connected to the landscape water? We do not feel so, but do not know for sure. However, that leaks as well
- Vince- What are some other options we are looking into, so we can avoid going into debt? His suggestion is to completely turn off the water and plant plants that do not need water or much of it to survive. As our church is 30 years old and we may have more expenses coming down the pipeline.
- Barb- says we can not just let the mature trees die and we would have to take the plants out. This could become more costly than watering.
- Melanie- She sees some wonderful community gardens around here, and would like to see us do this.
- Susan Maas- Do we have a grant writer? Because the deadline is May 31st. It is just an application and we are on the final step with getting a bid from a landscaper.
- Don Legacie- Are these grants competitive? Are we guaranteed the grant or an amount? No, we are not. This is just informational- we will hold a meeting once we know the result.
- Janet Langley- What are we getting a bid for? To see what we would need for the irrigation and to comply with the application for the grant.

- o Can we provide a bid for going all the way green? (water conservation) Something we could ask as a follow up. Regardless of the grant this just sounds like a catalyst to finally start addressing fixes for our irrigation system.
- Stan Fernandes- quick clarification- we submit the application and then in June a grant will be awarded. We get assurance from the grant before we start the project.
- Lola- Says there is more complication to this because we have to follow the city's master plan that needs fixing. Yes, we know. Again this is just an informational meeting.
- Barb K.- It is a replacement of the irrigation system, with very little repair due to the major issues.

RENEW: Tom Rewolinski

- Project was suspended in December until this meeting
- Council recommendation is to re engage the RENEW Team
- Approval to request to proceed with projects using the available RENEW funds
- Projects to be bid on
- Tom went over the different project options:
 - o Replace failing light switches and other electrical issues
 - o New LED lighting
 - o Some painting within the sanctuary
 - Better visuals for live stream; Gets rid of shadow effects from the light colored walls
 - o Replace carpet/tile in community center that have: holes, stains, and buckling
 - o Full deep clean of the carpet in the sanctuary and the pews/chairs

- Columbarium Fountain repair/shade structure
- Janet Langley- Were any of the RENEW funds used to balance last year? What is our plan in the future if we are in the same situation as at the end of last year? No, it was not. We feel comfortable with where we are at financially and do not foresee that happening. We feel we should spend this money on these projects because that is what the money was given for.
- Suze Scott- Feels that we should do lighting and safety first due to cost savings and for safety. Council agrees.
- There were two project proposals in December. Why is there only one now? We combined them to make one and changed replace pews/carpet in sanctuary to clean them.
- Don Pelley- You identified three projects, in using the entire money for these projects. Can you tell us the other projects that were taken off the table? Rebid before we know the costs. Yes there were other projects like replacing the water stations, new pews, cleaning the bricks in the narthex area, and cleaning the carpet in the sanctuary. Trying to go within the limits of the money we had and are trying to get as much of the projects as we can. Also identified 4 projects including the fountain.
- Shannon Burns- Could we use the money from RENEW money for the irrigation system? We talked as a council and did not feel it was right to use it for that because the initial intent was to use the money for the interior of our church.
- Adam Clark- So we do not have a bid for the RENEW stuff that is current and the irrigation? Correct.
- Mark Sanders- Do we still have all the people from the RENEW committee? What's the plan? First step is to re engage the team and everyone on the

team said yes that they would continue. We are going to reach out to those who bid earlier and see where they are at now.

- Don Pelley- Item number 2 says that we would authorize the RENEW committee to spend \$94,000? We are giving them money to prioritize the projects that fit within that amount.
- Janet Langley- There will not be another meeting for us all to vote? Correct, we are asking the congregation to approve the amount and to give the committee the responsibility to fulfill the most important projects while staying within the budget.
- Mark Sanders- as we go through the process of voting that we sometimes miss the process. He trusts the council and the committee, but does not feel comfortable with us authorizing the expenditure of the money without coming back to the congregation. We will communicate electronically what is happening.
- Vote to authorize to proceed/ re engage with project
 - Motion on the floor to re engage the team: Suze Scott, Adam Clark seconded, motion passes unanimously
- Authorize to permit RENEW Team to spend up to \$94,000 to bid and schedule projects for completion
 - Motion to above: Melanie Hobden and Patrick Jennett seconded Majority approved but there were some nays
 - Lola and team are in process with the fountain and please be patient with the RENEW team. They think they found the leak.

Synod Assembly: Tom Rewolinski

- Stirred up in Spirit happening June 10-11 at Love of Christ Church, in Mesa

- We are looking for four volunteers to attend as voting delegates (2 male, 2 female)
- Adam Clark- We get four volunteers. Is it supposed to be two from Tempe and two from Gilbert? Doesn't have to be - whoever volunteers
- Don Pelley, Erin Pelley, Stan Fernandes, and Angela Nannenga will be our 2022 synod assembly delegates

Closing Prayer: Pastor Thadd

Desert Cross Lutheran Church Budget Meeting Sunday, December 4, 2022

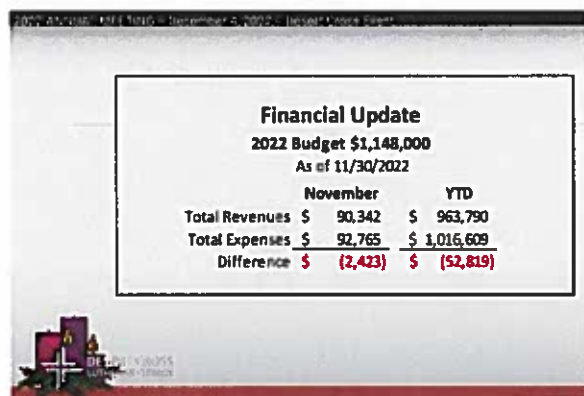
Meeting scheduled to start at 1:00pm in Tempe Sanctuary and viewed via livestream. A quorum in-person (50 people) was not met. Meeting will be held to present items but voting will not occur during this meeting. Steps will be outlined at the end of the meeting.

Welcome -Tom Rewolinski
Devotion & Prayer - Pastor Andrea

Financial update

Total budget for 2022. Total revenue and total expenses.

No questions were asked.



Financial Update			
2022 Budget \$1,148,000			
As of 11/30/2022			
	November	YTD	
Total Revenues	\$ 90,342	\$	963,790
Total Expenses	\$ 92,765	\$	1,016,609
Difference	\$ (2,423)	\$	(52,819)

RENEW Campaign and Special Projects

Current projects to discuss

Tempe- Tempe Water Grant, Columbarium Sails and Maintenance, AC Units, and Community Center playgrounds.

Gilbert- General maintenance and upkeep.

What the congregation can do to help support these projects.

Today's Biggest Needs

AC units in community center and church offices with a quote of \$35,000.

Questions & Answers from Congregation

Q -Will you be lumping *all* AC repairs units into one price? Mark suggests borrowing all the money at once to repair all units.

A -We have a need currently for 2 units as presented but will allow the congregation to vote on options of replacing only those or all.

Q -Do we know how long the units that are not needing replacement, how long they will last?

A -Doug- Community center AC unit (unrepairable) is 23 years old, office unit is 20 years old and additional AC units are 20-23 years old. All reaching the end of life.

Q - Referencing the motion, and a 2nd to approve to research and authority to research and borrow, how do you separate research and borrow? After the research is done is that reported to the council or congregation?

A-Council will research the availability and best of options and return any and all answers to the congregation. The congregation would vote but cannot meet a quorum.

Comment-Don't know the price of AC units but I know they go up every year. It would make sense to get the price for all of them and fix at the same time.

Q/C- The price for 2 units is \$35,000. Add another 3 units to that is \$75,000-80,000 for all units?

Q-1. Don't need a vote to do the research. 2. If we are going to do it, to tackle the problem and not lingerie.

The voting options.

- A. Proceed with the \$35,000 for 2 AC units.
- B. All 5 units \$75,000- 80,000.
- C. None of them

Q - What lending institution will DCLC use to borrow for the funding?

A - Tom-Council will explore the best financial option.

Doug- The community center's first quote was \$25,000. Some sources for funding, Chase, MIF, and ECLA credit union.

Comment- Have the congregation create extra funding/donation options.

Q- There is theft around AC units and may need a cage to protect them. Does the quote include the cage?

A - The units needing replacing are either on roof or already in cages.

Comment - Remember the repairing of the roof. It probably cost more over time. Would like the council to proceed with repairing all AC units.

2023 Budget Highlights

- We do not spend our entire budget unless we have funding to support
- Minimal increase to operations and ministries
- Payroll Cost of Living Adjustment
- Staffing Updates/changes

Staffing Updates

- Increase in hours (5) Joni and Parish nurse (Denise Viker).
- Decreasing hours office administrator, start at 20 hours
- Investment in our Human Capital
- 4% COLA Adjustment

- Staff will have objectives to support future year increases
- Nursery staff raises to 2023 minimum wage \$13.85/hour

How the Budget is Prepared

Operations Costs		Mission and Outreach	
Administration	\$ 100,000.00	Special Benevolences	\$ 10,000.00
Ministry	\$ 10,000.00	Total	\$ 10,000.00
Maintenance & Repair	\$ 25,000.00		
Total	\$ 135,000.00		

Programs Costs	
Adult	\$ 1,125.00
Children's	\$ 2,875.00
Parish Nurse	\$ 300.00
Worship	\$ 6,300.00
Youth & Mission	\$ 6,300.00
Evangelism	\$ 6,300.00
Gilbert	\$ 1,125.00
Total	\$ 24,325.00

Mission and Outreach	
Group Pastors	\$ 1,750.00
Lutheran Social Services of SW	\$ 1,000.00
Pacific Lutheran Seminary	\$ 1,000.00
Lutheran Campus Ministries ASU	\$ 2,000.00
Lutheran Campus Ministries HCU	\$ 750.00
Lutheran Campus Ministries UHCU	\$ 750.00
Habitat for Humanity (3 Moths)	\$ 180.00
Service General	\$ 1,200.00
Crop Walk	\$ 2,000.00
Feed My Starving Children	\$ 1,500.00
ECLA Disaster Response	\$ 5,000.00
ECLA World Hunger/World Relief	\$ 15,000.00
Church	\$
Sanctuary Band of Casting	\$ 500.00
Adjustment for Gilbert Budget	\$ 24,325.00
Total	\$ 48,325.00

Built from cost basis.

Questions & Answers from Congregation

Q - What is that? Referencing the image above. And would like additional documentation of Gilbert program costs.

A-Doug- Running of the Administration of Gilbert campus ie. worshipping, hunger jar, salaries for staff. Gilbert is listed as a Program within the budget, this is the total for Mission support for Gilbert campus.

Q -Are you tracking what is being collected and the offerings from Gilbert? What comes in from each campus. What does it cost us to run the Gilbert campus? Would like to see that information.

A-Doug can provide more detail as requested.

Q -Do you give Gilbert credit for the rent that comes from rented out units at Gilbert campus?

A-Doug- Total rent for DCLC \$8,500 month \$3,500 non-cash income debt from tenant. Net \$5,000 month that comes to DCLC- \$3,400 Gilbert campus

Revenue	Expenses
Pledges	Payroll
Prev Pledgers (not received yet)	Administration
Anticipated Non pledged Giving	Mortgage/Debt Reduction
Facility rental revenue	Synod Benevolence
Other	Programs
Niche	Outreach
Other Faith Contributions	Maintenance and Repair
Total Revenue	Total Expenses
	2022 Budget
	2021 Budget
	2020 Budget

Costs entered into budget on expense side

2023	Cards	Dollars	Average Pledge Amount	Percent Non Pledge Giving Based on 2022	If donate Non Pledge % of Total	Pledge Giving % of Total	Total Giving Based on 11/7/2022	Non Pledge Giving Based on 2022
Current Budget	139	\$ 585,698	\$ 4,213.65	111.33%	75.5%	80.5%	\$ 477,300.00	\$ 108,398.00

Pledge cards are entered into a model

Revenue	Expenses
Pledges	Payroll
Prev Pledgers (not received yet)	Administration
Anticipated Non pledged Giving	Mortgage/Debt Reduction
Facility rental revenue	Synod Benevolence
Other	Programs
Niche	Outreach
Other Faith Contributions	Maintenance and Repair
Total Revenue	Total Expenses
	2022 Budget
	2021 Budget
	2020 Budget

Model balances the revenue side using faith money for shortfall

Questions

Q-Can you explain how it totals the revenue from last year?

A-Doug- Half from last year \$150,000. Money is tight , and giving needs to increase we are losing money from death and departure of our members. We need to grow and we are working on a strategic plan to increase that.

Comment - Budget has gone down overall from prior years.

Observation-Increasing hours for staff- at my old church 5 leaders were unpaid and part of the congregation.

Voting to Proceed

Vote @ church on December 10th & 11th.

Q-Early Voting options?

A-YES

Q-Electronic way to vote?

A-Will get that information and instructions out.

Q - Is that what the constitution says on how to vote since we do not meet the quorum? Are we supposed to have a written ballot? The Council decided how we vote?

A -Tom- Yes

Q -We are not calling another meeting?

A Tom- We are not calling another meeting.

Q- The constitution does speak to it?

A-Tom, It speaks to the 50 people we need. Council will determine how we vote.

Closing Prayer Pastor Thadd

Desert Cross Lutheran Church December 10th & 11th Vote Results

Voting Options

Voting Item #1: Approval giving the Church Council (in coordination with Doug) the authority to research and borrow funding to replace air condition units in Tempe.

Results

- 60 votes (75%) to authorize borrowing to replace all five units (approximately \$75,000)
- 18 votes (22%) to authorize borrowing up to \$35,000 to replace 2 units that are at end of life

- 2 (3%) votes no authorization to proceed on either option

Voting Item #2:

- Approval of 2023 Church Budget presented at the amount of \$1,232,100.
- 74 votes (93%) approving 2023 budget
- 6 votes (7%) not approving 2023 budget

Summary/Next Steps:

Item #1 passes with 75% vote to proceed to review and borrow up to \$75,000 to replace 5 air conditioning units within Tempe. Council will deliver communication regarding the total cost and process as we obtain the final bids and financial terms. Note, expenses for 2023 will come from the Facilities Budget (will be separate line item for 2024) and will not impact item #2.

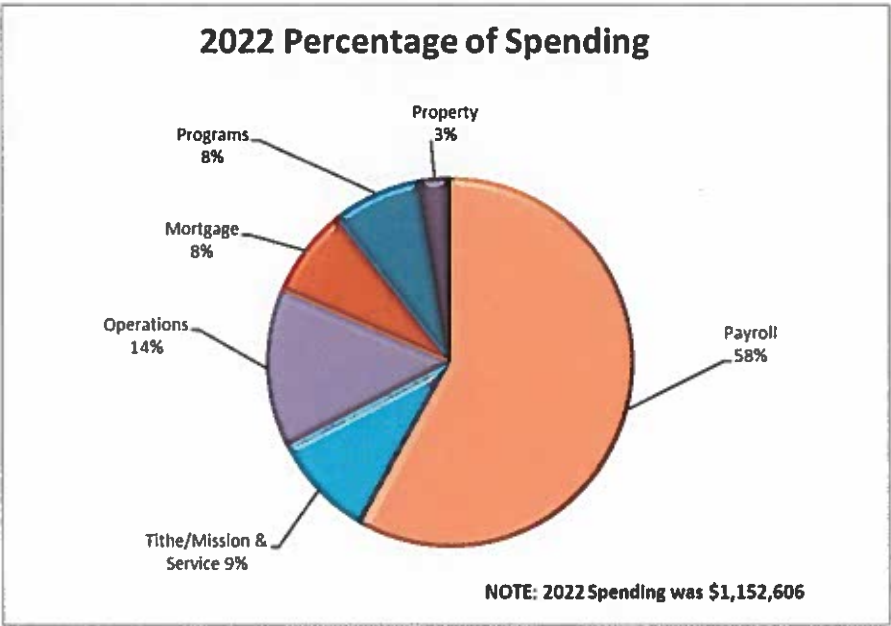
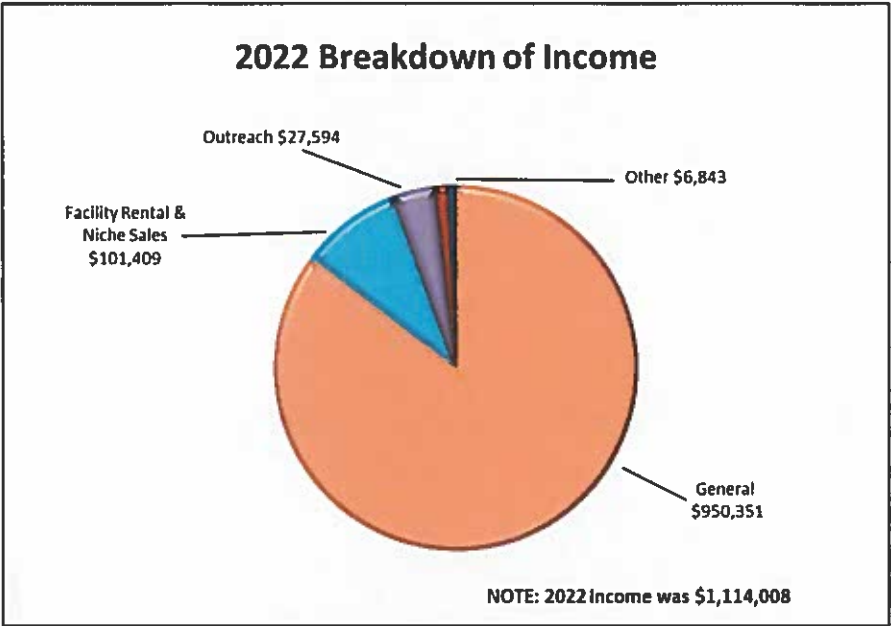
Item #2 passes with 93% vote the approval of our 2023 Church budget of \$1,232,100.

Financial Review

On December 5, 2021, the congregation of Desert Cross Lutheran Church (DCLC) approved a 2022 Budget in the amount of \$1,148,000. This was a decrease from the prior year of \$160,000 with cuts being made to Benevolence and adjustments to staffing positions.

Desert Cross Lutheran Church Income and Expense for 2022 Variance Actual to Budget				
Accounts	Actual	Budget	Variance	% Used
REVENUES				
Contributions				
General Fund	\$ 950,351	\$ 1,069,150	\$ (118,799)	
Sub-total Contributions	\$ 950,351	\$ 1,069,150	\$ (118,799)	89%
Other Revenue				
Faith and Carry-Over	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	
Facility Rental*	\$ 93,609	\$ -	\$ 93,609	
Memorial Garden	\$ 7,800	\$ -	\$ 7,800	
Programs and Worship Revenue	\$ 13,481	\$ -	\$ 13,481	
Mission and Outreach	\$ 41,924	\$ -	\$ 41,924	
Other	\$ 6,843	\$ 78,850	\$ (72,007)	
Sub-total Revenues	\$ 163,657	\$ 78,850	\$ 84,807	208%
TOTAL REVENUE	\$ 1,114,008	\$ 1,148,000	\$ (33,992)	97%
EXPENSES				
Payroll and Benefits	\$ 670,367	\$ 702,500	\$ (32,133)	
Operations	\$ 160,481	\$ 153,400	\$ 7,081	
Mortgages (Debt Reduction)	\$ 91,560	\$ 92,000	\$ (440)	
Synod Benevolence	\$ 60,250	\$ 60,000	\$ 250	
Programs	\$ 91,949	\$ 81,950	\$ 9,999	
Outreach	\$ 47,273	\$ 31,650	\$ 15,623	
Maintenance and Repair	\$ 30,726	\$ 26,500	\$ 4,226	
Other	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$ 1,152,606	\$ 1,148,000	\$ 4,606	100%
NET REVENUES OVER EXPENSES	\$ (38,598)	\$ -	\$ (38,598)	
* Includes \$42,000 of prepaid rental income for Tenant funded Improvements paid in prior years.				

According to GAAP – Generally Accepted Accounting Principles, the year 2022 ended with a loss of \$38,000. However, that includes non-cash prepaid rent of \$42,000. A breakdown of Income and Expenses is displayed below.



A Balance Sheet, listing Assets, Liabilities, and Owners Equity is called the Statement of Financial Position for churches. The most notable differences are Designated Funds and use of the words Fund Principal rather than Owners Equity. DCLC’s Statement of Financial Position is displayed on the following page as of December 31, 2022, with a comparison to last year’s position.

**Desert Cross Lutheran Church
Statement of Financial Position**

	2022	2021
Assets		
Cash and Cash Equivalents		
Unrestricted	\$ (70,768)	\$ 1,349
Pre-Paid Facility Rent	\$ -	\$ -
Operational Reserve Fund	\$ 22,235	\$ 22,235
Designated Funds	\$ 92,536	\$ 94,020
Mission Fund Account	\$ 972	\$ 972
Brokerages	\$ 500	\$ 500
RENEW Restricted	\$ 24,333	\$ 106,104
Total Cash and Cash Equivalents	\$ 69,808	\$ 225,181
 Fixed Assets		
Land	\$ 1,403,900	\$ 1,403,900
Buildings	\$ 3,793,242	\$ 3,793,242
Capital Improvements	\$ 819,888	\$ 819,888
Equipment	\$ 127,195	\$ 127,195
Office Equipment	\$ 37,759	\$ 37,759
Office Furniture	\$ 19,421	\$ 19,421
Furnishings	\$ 33,372	\$ 33,372
Music Equipment	\$ 35,194	\$ 35,194
Audio Visual Equipment	\$ 176,697	\$ 176,697
Accumulated Depreciation	\$ (3,449,624)	\$ (3,338,151)
Total Fixed Assets	\$ 2,997,045	\$ 3,108,518
 TOTAL ASSETS	\$ 3,066,852	\$ 3,333,698
	2022	2021
Liabilities, Fund Principal, & Restricted Funds		
Liabilities		
Current Liabilities		
Security Deposit for Facility Rental	\$ 1,000	\$ 1,000
Prepaid Facility Rent	\$ 63,000	\$ 105,000
Short-Term Debt	\$ 53,004	\$ 56,368
Total Current Liabilities	\$ 117,004	\$ 162,368
Long-Term Liabilities		
Notes Payable	\$ 893,145	\$ 947,759
Total Long-Term Liabilities	\$ 893,145	\$ 947,759
Total Liabilities	\$ 1,010,149	\$ 1,110,128
Fund Principal		
Fund Principal	\$ 2,056,704	\$ 2,223,571
Total Fund Principal	\$ 2,056,704	\$ 2,223,571
 TOTAL LIABILITIES, FUND PRINCIPAL	\$ 3,066,852	\$ 3,333,698

The restricted cash of \$92,536 is offsetting the General Fund which is currently (\$70,768) and is comprised of 32 designated funds such as, but not limited to, tenant security deposits, land sale proceeds, bequeathed gifts, grants, and specific ministry support.

The Mission Fund Account and Brokerages are current balances in accounts used for processing non-cash contributions such as stocks and certificates of deposits. Finally, the remaining cash asset of \$24,333 is that of the RENEW Campaign which saw some project completions in 2022 – see page 25.

General Fund contributions had been up following a few years of declines but were down 7% year-of-year in 2022. The increase in Other income includes the \$42,000 in non-cash prepaid rent in 2022 as compared to the \$21,000 (half year) in 2021. This non-cash income will be counted at \$42,000 again in 2023 and \$21,000 in 2024.

5 - Year Contribution and Income History					
Contributions	2018	2019	2020*	2021*	2022
General	\$ 1,134,639	\$ 1,085,208	\$ 992,884	\$ 1,023,904	\$ 950,351
Other	\$ 119,813	\$ 143,069	\$ 83,795	\$ 120,240	\$ 163,657
Total	\$ 1,254,452	\$ 1,228,277	\$ 1,076,679	\$ 1,144,144	\$ 1,114,008

* Does not include the Extraordinary Income from the C.A.R.E.S. Act of 2020 and 2021

Desert Cross has a mission heart and shares these gifts beyond our walls through Benevolence and Outreach. For 2022, that mission heart gave \$107,523 (approximately 10% of our total income) as detailed below:

Benevolence	\$	60,250
Other Outreach		
Special Hunger Jars and Disaster Relief	\$	17,996
ELCA World Hunger	\$	17,379
Lutheran Social Services SW	\$	3,000
Lutheran Campus Ministries	\$	2,750
Service General	\$	753
Grace Pancake Breakfast	\$	2,250
CROP Walk	\$	2,145
Pacific Lutheran Seminary	\$	1,000
Total	\$	47,273
TOTAL OUTREACH	\$	107,523

In addition to the above, there is an Endowment Fund that was established in June of 2000. This fund was created "...to enhance the mission outreach of Desert Cross apart from the general

operations of the congregation.” Rhea Fernandes serves as Chair of the Endowment Committee and her report can be found on page 38. Below is a summary of the fund account activity.

ELCA Endowment Fund Pooled Trust

Desert Cross Mission Endowment Fund

Beginning Balance (Close of Business 12-31-2021)	\$	599,996
Additions	\$	20,978
Withdrawals	\$	(10,000)
Reinvested - Fund A	\$	-
Change in Value	\$	(104,034)
Ending Balance (Close of Business 12-31-2022)	\$	506,941

RENEW projects were reignited in 2022 following the pandemic shut-downs and totaled \$81,771 for improvements in the Community Center and Sanctuary buildings. The unspent funds in RENEW Home and RENEW Mission remain restricted and, while shown as cash assets, they remain restricted to the RENEW Campaign.

RENEW Campaign

June 2017 - May 2020

Pledged Amount	\$	374,697.00
Amount Received (96% of Pledge)	\$	360,249.00
Remaining RENEW Balance on 01/01/2022	\$	95,397.00

2022 Approved RENEW Projects

Community Center	\$	46,443.00
Sanctuary	\$	35,328.00
Total Completed Projects	\$	81,771.00

Gifts Available as of 12/31/2022

RENEW Home	RENEW Mission
\$ 13,626.00	\$ 10,706.00

Audit Report

April 30, 2022

Church Council
Desert Cross Lutheran Church
8600 S. McClintock Dr.
Tempe, AZ 85284

The church audit committee applied agreed upon accounting procedures to the accounting books and records of Desert Cross Lutheran Church as of December 31, 2021.

All information included in these accounting records is the responsibility of the management of Desert Cross Lutheran Church.

Our procedures were performed based on the recommendation of the Treasurer of the ELCA. The information subjected to a limited sampling of the general accounting within the church, including the process and procedures involved with cash receipts, accounts payable and vouchers, bank reconciliations, member contributions and pledges, payroll and withholding tax, and general insurance coverage.

The church audit committee members are pleased with the records we reviewed and the documentation that supported them. There are no significant findings to report to management.

Sincerely,

Lauren Farrell

Church Audit Committee Chair

CC: Doug Bjotvedt

Media Production

2022 has truly flown by in an instant, and so I would like to take this opportunity to highlight a few things that have been accomplished.

AVDC

- We built a team with a solid core of volunteers over the course of 2022 to help in and around the booth for worship services.
- I implemented Dante technology in the Sanctuary (audio over the network), which led to great improvements in livestream audio. The Sanctuary can now potentially be used as a recording studio, small concert venue, or podcast recording location. I am currently working on getting certification to be a Dante engineer, which will come in handy when we want to expand our broadcasting and recording capabilities in the future.
- We added a TV in the Narthex to show the Desert Cross news at all times.
- We added a tv in the Sanctuary so that whoever is up front can see what the people see on the big screens.
- Working closely with the Renew team, we now have 3 live stream cameras instead of 2. The lighting in the Sanctuary has been upgraded as well.

SOCIAL MEDIA

In all of 2022 on YouTube:

- 7,513 views
- 46 user subscriptions added
- 93 video shares
- See the maps for where our viewers are located



In all of 2022 on Facebook:



I have consistently posted all Stories of Joy and Faith Formation items on Facebook throughout the year, which has led to higher social media engagement than the year before.

COMMUNICATION

- I tried to improve the Weekly update and Worship emails visually, so that people can find what they need more easily. To keep communication levels high, I am going to need all the cooperation from everybody to get messaging to me on time. This has been going quite well so far, but some people need some reminders sometimes.

OTHER IMPROVEMENTS

- Before my installment of Director of Media Production our location in Gilbert often had trouble with the projectors. As it turns out, an expensive system was installed there that never seemed work properly. So, I decided to install a new, much cheaper system that hasn't given us any trouble at all since installment.
- The Church App has had major improvements and improving it more will be an ongoing process throughout 2023. For example, the live stream is now accessible on the app.

In His service,

Joni Van Rossum

Music Ministries

Chancel Choir: A year ago after the Pandemic, we started up with only nine members and we have now grown to 15 members. We start each rehearsal with a devotion based on the Lectionary for the day (Sunday rehearsals) and a hymn then go on to work on sectionals and progress to full ensemble singing. We are doing much more complex music that the members enjoy singing and the congregation enjoys hearing for worship, especially recent feedback we have received. I have been updating our library with pieces that have a “fresh” sound for today’s singers. We are excited to have been invited to sing the cantata with the Desert Cross Choir at Tempe on March 30th and April 2nd. We have been able to grow as a choir thanks to having a regular accompanist to play for us since September. Our choir never had someone to play until the day we performed an anthem, and only were able to go through it with them once or twice, all the credit going to these members who hung in there to make this work since 2016. So, having an accompanist every week has made a huge difference for us, allowed us to grow and made the experience more fulfilling for our members. We are honored to serve this congregation.

Junior Choir: Junior Choir started up again a year ago to sing for Easter with 5 members . In the Fall 2022, we learned several anthems and also produced a Christmas play called “Room for Christmas” on December 18th and they did a fantastic job plus they conducted a successful toy drive to benefit Jose’s Closet, a charity for Foster children supported by Desert Cross. This year the toys collected went straight to the Navaho Reservation, making a lot of kids very happy, many of whom had never received a gift at Christmas at all. We start each rehearsal with a devotion in “God’s Gift Box” based on the Lectionary for the next day. They are fun too. For Reformation, we did the “Martin Luther Game Show” so they could learn about who Martin Luther was and all he did for believers the world over. We work on 3 songs per rehearsal using the outstanding Choristers Guild anthems, specifically composed for children with worthy text and melody. Choristers Guild is a publisher of choral music for churches with some of the best composers known today for children’s, youth and adult, and handbell choirs. Dr. Anton Armstrong of St Olaf College is among the founders and past Board member, as well as many well known composers of Lutheran hymnody, such as Ronald Nelson whose hymns are in the ELW. I myself, earned a 3 year Certificate in Children’s Worship and Choir Methods from Choristers Guild in 2012. Junior Choir exists to allow our children to take an active role in church worship leadership and to prepare to be “tomorrow’s worshippers”. This year, they have learned to read the Gospel for services, sing with inflection and beauty and to be an example to others their age. They have learned several hymns of the church as well as anthems. They are a delightful part of Gilbert worship! We are grateful for this opportunity to serve the congregation. I am also grateful to Pastor Thadd who has been an invaluable resource of help for special things the Jr Choir presents at services.

Instrumental Ensemble: This is a new group that started up in May 2022 with 5 members: Flutes: Laura Book and Liz Rewolinski, Violins: Ariane Nannenga, Leanna Ihlefeld, Carolyn Perkins and Alice Pfau, Cello: Gabriel Ihlefeld. This group as a start-up, rehearsed all summer and provided special music to the congregation about once a month. Since that time, this group accompanied the Joint Choirs of Gilbert and SOJ for Reformation Sunday, provided several numbers for fall, Advent and Christmas services, and now are able to play music specifically for ensembles and accompany hymns about twice a month for preludes and special music. We are hoping to grow and are pleased that this group is open to players of all abilities, as well as seeing so many of our talented young persons being able to play for services.

Respectfully Yours,
Carolyn Perkins, Director Gilbert Choirs and Ensemble

Adult Ministries & Missional Service

Stories of Joy

Our Stories of Joy blog is five years old. Our blog gathers and promotes Modern Day Gospel Stories. It's designed to be a tool for the people of Desert Cross to share good news stories with our family and friends. When you see Stories of Joy you enjoy, we encourage you to share our blog with others. For some good news in your inbox, sign up to follow the blog at www.storiesofjoy.org

2022 Stats for Stories of Joy:

135 Followers

105 Stories Published

1717 Visitors to our Website

4421 Views of our Webpages

47 Different Countries Viewed our Website

The countries with the highest views (after the US) are Canada, China, United Kingdom, India, South Africa, Germany, Australia, Indonesia, Philippines, Ireland, Netherlands, and Thailand.

Desert Cross Faith Formation Website

This was our Desert Cross Faith Formation website's fourth year. Our hope for this project is to provide folks with good tools to study the good news, wherever they are and whenever they have the time. Our tagline is: Exploring Faith. Making Connections. In 2020 we added monthly Playlists to the website, and we've continued that practice. We choose a theme for the month based on the lectionary readings and publish Playlists designed for Children, Youth, and Adults. Folks can explore the Playlists throughout the month at their own pace. Please sign up to follow the website at www.dclcfaitformation.org to get updates on new posts.

2022 Stats for Desert Cross Faith Formation:

150 Followers

72 Posts

1914 Visitors to our Website

4027 Views of our Webpages

41 Different Countries Viewed our Website

The countries with the highest views (after the US) are China, Canada, Japan, France, India, Germany, Thailand, Philippines, Netherlands, Singapore, and Italy.

Adult Study

The monthly Adult Playlist on our Desert Cross Faith Formation Website continues to be a good tool for faith formation. We use the theme from the Adult Playlist in our Adult Forum offered by Pastor Andrea and Pastor Thadd. Lola Peterson and I offered several Book Groups throughout the year. Elaine Kraemer started a Meditation Group and continues leading it two times per week. Thank you to all of them for offering studies, and a big thank you to all of you for attending these groups. It's great to gather together to learn from each other.

ChristCare Small Group Ministry

This was a year of transitions for our ChristCare Small Group Ministry. We had groups restarting at varying times because of the pandemic, and we have a couple of groups that are still on hold. Our ChristCare Leaders do an amazing service for this congregation in leading their groups and connecting with their group members. They are a blessing to Desert Cross.

In the fall we started a ChristCare Leader Training Group. Pastor Thadd, Karen Koslow, Ellen Minde, and Katelyn Williamson are in the group. I look forward to seeing where and how they feel called to serve in our small group ministry.

Our Equipper Team has had a lot of change in the last couple of years. The death of Rosemary Kesler left a big hole on our team, and the move of Lin Bourgeois added to that hole. We miss both of them greatly.

Dawn Collins, Tim Collins, and I were glad to welcome Pastor Thadd to the Equipper Team this year. Thank you to all of our leaders and equippers for being my partners in this ministry.

Nonprofit Partnerships

Forming nonprofit partnerships is part of the Desert Cross Strategic Plan. The people of Desert Cross told us that they want to get outside the walls of Desert Cross and serve in the neighborhood, so that's what we're working on with this project. Since the fall of 2021, I've been reaching out to nonprofits in the East Valley and asking how we can help them with their missions and serve alongside them. I write a monthly Desert Cross Serves Email Newsletter highlighting opportunities to serve outside the walls of Desert Cross.

In January 2022 we kicked off our 500 Hour Project, challenging Desert Cross to complete 500 hours of service. We reached that goal in only one month! So, for 2023 we're doing the 1000 Hour Project, and we're off to a great start!

Desert Cross Serves

Our Faith Formation Team includes service projects and service events as part of our Faith Formation programming each semester. We held a Desert Cross Serves Project in January, packing health and hygiene items. In October, we packed bags of food. Folks from Desert Cross took these bags to share with folks we see in need around town.

We also had a Feed My Starving Children Packing Event in April and partnered with other churches and community groups in the Ahwatukee CROP Walk in November.

Thank you for being part of these Desert Cross Serves projects and events!

In Joyful Service,

Denise McClellan

Director of Adult Ministries & Missional Service

Youth Ministry Report

The year has come to an end, and that means it's time for the youth ministry report. I am the new director of the youth ministry at Desert Cross Lutheran Church, and I have been here for about eight months. It has been a great experience so far. Desert Cross is more than just a place of worship; it is also a place where people go to find answers to their problems and salvation. Desert Cross is a home for the hearts of God's children. It is a place where teen believers can grow in their faith and have fellowship with each other. Each year, many young people join the church as children and teenagers. Youth and their families join the church to find happiness in its environment and to have Christ's presence in their lives. I aim for DCLC to be a chief outpost for the Gospel of Christ among our youth. We have created an environment in which: students feel safe, the individual students and their relationships experience the restorative work of the Gospel, students can reach out to friends and family members with the love and grace they have received from Christ, and students are equipped to live faithfully in the Body of Christ, their family, and their community. Here is a small snip of what has been happening in the youth ministry world.

Sr. and Jr. High Nights:

The high school continues to be on Sundays from 6:30-8:30, and Jr. High meets Sundays from 5:00-6:30. Each week, we have a new theme that we do fun activities, games, questions, and bible study around. Here are a few ideas of the themes we have used in the past few months. Messy Night, Hunger Game Night, Make A Movie Night, Fugitive Night, Mario Kart Night, Karaoke Night, Movie Night, and Family Dinner Nights. It is so fun to hang out, be goofy with our youth, and tackle real-life questions they have. We also have seen a significant number some nights, at 25 each group; our youth are even inviting friends from school to join us and see what DCLC is all about!

Faith Formation Education:

We have two classes (Jr. and Sr. High) running at Tempe and Gilbert. Confirmation will take place on Sunday morning during Jr. High Faith Formation time. Confirmation is either taught by the Pastors, Myself, or Lorrie. Mark, Josh, Allen, and I will rotate through leading high school education. I have prepared pre-made lesson plans for high school education teachers to ensure they're prepared and ready. I hope next school year to rotate each Sunday between Tempe and Gilbert. I have called and written to youth to encourage and share the importance of Sunday morning worship and education. I want to thank Mark, Laurie, Josh, and Allen for the fantastic job that they do each Sunday providing a safe place for students to grow their relationship with the Lord.

Summer 2022.

Last summer, our Jr. and Sr. High students had the opportunity to attend Campformation as a Camper or a Counselor! I am so glad we were able to provide this opportunity to our youths!

Examples of upcoming fundraising events:

Butter Braid Fundraiser Parent's Night Off for Valentine's Day Dance/ Rock-a-thon
Trivia Nights

Blessings,

Katelyn Williamson

Director of Youth and Family Ministry

Children's Ministry

Faith Formation: DCLC is committed to nurturing our children, youth, and the adults who love them as we discover and experience God and community throughout life's journey. We believe the "passing on of faith" is done in community—there are HUGE benefits to having all generations praying, learning, and growing together. Faith Formation allows us to worship, serve, and learn together! We LOVE having the kids in worship and an education time for all ages. Education is at both sites and consists of an opening time with music, and then kids explore the gospel and theme of the month through fun and interactive ways. Parents can attend the adult forum offered at the same time. Those with children under the age of 3 can attend Littlest Lutherans. We continue to update our Faith Formation website which includes playlists for children, youth, and adults to engage in faith from home or on the go! Each month we have a new theme and new activities. The faith formation website also has monthly resources that we post that relate to faith. We offer "DCLC Serves" events and fellowship events in the fall and spring. We love having the opportunity for the congregation to serve and have fun together. I am so thankful for the amazing teachers at Desert Cross who share their hearts and time. They do God's work beautifully! Thanks to Natalie Smith for her partnership in children's ministry. Also, thanks to our amazing families for their commitment and participation!

Faith Milestones: Our 3rd and 4th graders received instruction for *Holy Communion* at a workshop during Lent and received their First Communion on Maundy Thursday.

We did Blessing of the Backpacks in August. The 1st graders received Bibles in September. Moms with new babies receive a new mom devotion book and kids that are baptized receive a card and invitations to our programs.

Family Night: January-May we were in the midst of our Parenting for Faith course with our family nights. Adults did the Parenting for Faith course which entails some engaging videos and group discussions. The youth and kids did a service project, and then the youth had a confirmation lesson while the kids did fun games and activities. Then this school year, August-December we went back to everyone being together and enjoying a night of fun. We had a game night in September, but the movie night in November had to be cancelled. It was a busy time of year. A huge thank you to the amazing dinner team for the yummy dinners! Thank you to the volunteers who help make these nights possible and the families that join us for the fun!

Joyful Noises-Parent-Tot: This outreach program is rewarding for all. It is fun to watch the children learn the routines, songs, and prayers. It has also been a great fellowship time for the caregivers! It is truly a joy to work with these kids and families. We had some graduates out over the summer, but we had new ones join with the new school year.

Kids Connect/Parents Connect: Natalie continues to meet with the kids once a month for games, crafts, planned activities and lots of fun. Laura Book had a great idea for the parents to meet at a restaurant nearby while the kids are having fun. That way the parents get fellowship time too!

Vacation Bible School: ☺ Vacation Bible School this past summer (June 2022) was back in person. Hip-hip-hooray! We had about 45 kids attend, 15 of which were from other churches and 12 who do not have a home church. We had about 55 awesome volunteers! It is a lot of work and preparation, but the result is worth it...an amazing faith-filled week where volunteers and kids are learning about our Awesome God! The focus was on how God is with us everywhere, God loves us no matter what, God is in charge, God is stronger than anything, and God is surprising! For the service project the kids brought

in change to help children on the reservation get much needed school supplies. The proceeds went to a local ELCA affiliated school on the Navajo reservation called Navajo Mission Preparatory School in Rock Point, AZ. The kids raised \$125.94 and with a Hunger Jar donation and a matching grant we were able to send \$1,582.74 to this school. They were so appreciative! We look forward to 2023's VBS where we will head to space!

Service Sundays/Fellowship Events: Service Sundays are a time for ALL generations to gather and work together to serve others! In January we packed hygiene packs for those in need and in March we had a Donut Day at both campuses. In October we had a Sundae Sunday, and a Service Sunday where we gathered all generations to make snack bags for those in need. The Crop Walk was in Ahwatukee this year and we had a great team of volunteers who participated. Gilbert hosted their annual Trunk or Treat event, and the youth and council hosted a spaghetti dinner/talent show in December. We have such wonderful families here at Desert Cross and we value the opportunity and time to gather for fun, service, and fellowship!

I want to thank the Desert Cross staff, council, congregation, families, and children for making this another year full of blessings at Desert Cross. I look forward to this upcoming year!

In Faith and Love,

Shannon Fossett

Director of Children's Ministries

Parish Nurse

“Nurses are trusted with the most precious things on earth: the life, health, and happiness of other human beings” -Isabel Hampton Robb-Founder of Nursing Theory.

I worked reduced hours in 2022 due to budget constraints for Desert Cross. This led to a decrease in the programming and support I was able to offer to the community. For example, we maintained services from the Stephen Ministry program, but did not offer any new growth opportunities. We had a few of our Stephen Ministers leave the program but Ron Diegle, Dave Lanstrom, Heidi Maxson, Kathy Whiting, and Cindy Wilkinson continue to serve the program. I offered grief support classes in spring and fall.

I led fewer wellness classes and did fewer visits with individuals. However, I was able to work with Victoria English during Lent to offer a ***Sugar Fast*** book group. We began a new structured way to look at wellness through our FAN-Faith, Activity, Nutrition program. The FAN committee consisting of Dawn Collins, Jackie Jones, Susan Tischafter joined with Parish Nurse ministry to offer a few opportunities this year. We made a healthy granola recipe which we shared with both fellowship offerings on Sunday morning in January and had a butternut squash soup shared by a student nurse in November. In between time, we encouraged the congregation to move their bodies, drink more water and focus on whole-person wellness. We have a small presence on the website and on bulletin boards at each site.

I implemented a new documentation and reporting system for 2022. This system allows me to keep required health records but also allows confidentiality in reporting Parish Nurse activities. I logged over 180 individual visits with 10% of those being with non-members. A total of 164 were women, 16 were men. I provided support for many things including for those coping with cancer, caregiving issues, chronic disease management and mental health challenges. I offered prayer, presence, advocacy, health information, and referrals to community resources. Outcomes for the people included increased understanding of available resources and options, improved participation in health care decision making and stronger coping strategies.

Thanks to the generous donations from the congregation, we were able to reopen the nursery during worship services at both sites in September. We have hired and trained teens to be nursery attendants for our youngest members. The nursery staff, consisting of Josh and Ryan Fossett, Brooklyn and Alexy Wisch, and Sydney Kennedy, is trained in CPR, First Aid, Childcare and Behavior management.

I stay current in my knowledge by working with other Faith Community/Parish Nurses through a local network. I am the President of the national Health Ministry Association where I share with others the knowledge I've acquired from my many years of service at Desert Cross. We continue to work with student nurses from local universities. Our investment in Parish Nurse Ministry has a far-reaching impact.

I appreciate the continued opportunity to serve Desert Cross as your Parish Nurse.

In Christ,

Denise Viker, BSN, RN

Parish Nurse

Gilbert Chamber

It is my pleasure to present the 2022 Annual Report for the Desert Cross Lutheran Church Gilbert Chamber. The report will give you an overview of the activities and achievements of each of our committees, as well as their members.

Facilities - Joe Weingartz did a remarkable job managing our facilities in 2022. He updated our signage, made multiple repairs across the buildings, and served as a liaison between the church and tenants. He also successfully coordinated efforts with Spirit of Joy to make suitable accommodations for all events throughout the year.

Education - Rosemary Schlechty, along with Shannon Fossett, kept the Sunday School program running smoothly in 2022. They lined up volunteers for each age group's education and their hard work showed in the increased number of young children attending church.

Outreach Committee - Deb Gabrielson and her outreach committee had a standout year in 2022. With the end of the pandemic, citizens were looking to return to in-person worship, and Deb's programs did a great job attracting the right attention to our faith community. Some of the most successful events included 'Trunk or Treat' on Halloween and Desert Cross Serves. Deb also made sure to include Spirit of Joy in her programming and worked together with them during Advent and Christmas, food drives, and care package builds. Another outreach event to note was the 'Active Shooter' training event coordinated by new Council Representatives Carolyn Perkins along with other members of the DCLC Council. The event had 60+ people from the congregation/community in attendance and was widely well-received.

Worship Committee - There was some unexpected turnover in this committee this year. Nancy Zine left the committee to pursue an educational program, and Tracey Landa stepped in and did an amazing job. She coordinated the use of resources between the two congregations and started a sign up for flowers for the Altar.

Finance Committee - Glen Gabrielson did an excellent job representing the Gilbert Congregation's interests in finance committee meetings and communicating updates to the Gilbert Chamber and Gilbert Congregation. 2022 was an eventful year for the finance committee as post-pandemic giving increased, and we signed a new lease agreement with Spirit of Joy Lutheran Church, which was later renewed for another year.

Hospitality Committee - John and Deb Christiansen did a fantastic job during the early part of 2022, coordinating treats and meals for events. After their term ended in May, Vickie Denman stepped in but had to step away due to unforeseen challenges. John and Deb then stepped in to serve in an interim capacity.

Communications Liaison - Kelly Kaiser Borning served in her role through May of 2022 and kept us well-organized with her meeting minutes. Leslie DeMarco stepped into the role in the last quarter of the year and has been doing a wonderful job keeping meeting minutes and serving as a valuable member of the team.

As we move into 2023, we are in need of members to serve in various capacities such as Hospitality Chairperson(s), DCLC-Spirit of Joy Committee, and volunteers to help with events on various

committees. If you are interested in serving in any of these capacities, please reach out to a member of the Gilbert Chamber.

In conclusion, I would like to thank each and every one of the members of the Gilbert Chamber for their hard work and dedication in making 2022 a successful year for our faith community.

Blessings,

Adam Pfau

Mission Endowment Fund

The Endowment Fund at ELCA Pooled Trust Fund A for Desert Cross Balance was \$506,940.98 as of 12/31/2021.

The Mission Investment Fund Checking Account balance on 12/31/2022 was \$8,459.45 and the Desert Cross Checking account for the Endowment Fund is \$500.00.

The DCLC Endowment Fund received 22 grant requests and recommended 21 for approval by the church council, according to the guidelines established by the congregation.

Specific grants:

Category One - Community Outreach (Scholarships and Social Programs)

13 Grants approved for college scholarships for \$1000.00 each, totaling \$13,000.00

Spirit of the Desert Retreat Center: \$2000.00

Step Up Schools, Mesa: \$1,000.00

Grand Canyon Synod Retirees Retreat: \$600.00

First Evangelical Lutheran Church/Santa Trinidad Lutheran Mission Church: \$500.00

Category Two- Missions of the ELCA in the continent and worldwide

Feed My Starving Children: \$1,200.00

Navajo Mission Prep School: \$781.37

Category Three- Capital Improvements for DCLC

Sanctuary lighting upgrade: \$3,200.00

Security covers for exterior A/C Units: \$5,460.00

Total grant payments of \$27,741.37 were issued.

The balance in the investment funds ensures the committee will have resources for 2023 grants.

The committee looks forward to continuing the mission outreach of DCLC.

Respectfully submitted,

Rhea Fernandes

Endowment Fund Committee Chair

Members of the committee: John Christiansen, Greg Beatty, Terry Kaiser-Borning and Matt Hunsaker

Memorial Garden/Columbarium

The Memorial Garden/Columbarium was established as part of the Ministry at Desert Cross that begins with baptism and continues to the end of life, from birth to death, ashes to ashes. It is available to members and assisted family members. Provision was also made for inurement because a serious financial need.

Three niches were purchased in 2022, making a total 68 niches purchased. There is room in each niche for two urns.

Projects for 2023 include:

- Refurbishment of the fountain in May 2022 to repair leaks and blistering paint.
- Replacement of timer and float valves in June 2022.

You are encouraged to consider purchase of a niche as you contemplate the end of life planning. The placing of the urn in the niche at the completion of a Celebration of Life service is a special time for family and friends. You are also encouraged to take time to sit, pray, and meditate from time to time.

Memorial Garden Maintenance

Lola Peterson

I-Help — Desert Cross invites the stranger to the table

Do you remember being the new kid at school and walking into the cafeteria for the first time? I remember the screaming, the yelling and kids doing just about everything except eating. I remember surveying the room wondering where to sit. I wanted a safe place. A place where people wouldn't make fun of me. A place where people wouldn't judge me. A place where someone might be friendly and ask me about my day. I wanted a place where I would be accepted for who I was and not to be forced to be someone I'm not.

In some ways the Desert Cross I-Help program is like a cafeteria where the new kid walks in. What he/she sees are strangers, volunteers who know the lay of land. I still recall a female guest sobbing as she came through the door. It was her first night of I-Help and she was scared. She felt vulnerable. She was unsure of what the night would bring. She came with no money, no job, poor health, no friends or family. She felt alone and frozen in her fear. Desert Cross volunteers sat with her and listened. It wasn't long before she relaxed and even started joking. I believe this is the heart of I-Help, caring and loving the stranger. I believe this is exactly what Christ calls us to be, mirrors of God's love.

I would like to invite you into Desert Cross' I-Help ministry. I still need coverage for three months in 2023. You can create your own group, 2 or 3 families can do this. We just started a Breakfast Buddies ministry on Wednesday morning (serving a simple breakfast - like bagels & coffee). This takes 2 people to serve one hour on Wednesday morning starting at 6:00 am.

Please keep these possibilities in your prayers and let me know when you want to serve.

In Christ,

Glen Stadler

I-Help Coordinator for Desert Cross Lutheran Church
glenstadler@gmail.com

Tempe Community Outreach

The Community Outreach Ministry is a group that reached out to serve the needs of others with emphasis on the local community. The ministry achieves it's goals through the efforts of volunteers who give of their time and talent along with the generosity of the Congregation.

Those we supported during 2022:

Kyrene School District Family Resource Center

This facility collects needed items for the 700 families in the Kyrene District who are underprivileged with some living out of their cars, hotels or with other family members or are otherwise considered homeless. They have available for these families clothing, food, school supplies and assistance in finding the social services they need. It is located at 1330 E. Dava Drive in south Tempe adjacent to Kyrene de los Niños School.

Blood Drives - Vitalant (formerly United Blood Services)

Our blood drives have been very successful. We have five per year. The bloodmobile comes to our Tempe facility on a specific Saturday.

Step Up Charter School

Is a K-8, Title 1, nonprofit, charter school established in 2012. The school is housed in Mesa's Washington Park Activity Center. The school serves a population of about 90 students. The breakdown of this population being 19% African American, 11% Caucasian, 65% Hispanic, and 5% American Indian students and families.

Community Baby Shower

Lutheran Social Services of the SW - This program provides needed supplies and diaper bags to Mesa and Phoenix Resource centers. They need many items, such as socks, bottles, caps, small hygiene products, nasal aspirators, diapers, wipes etc. for diaper bags.

Women 4 Women

Women4Women is an all-volunteer, non-profit organization which distributes much needed feminine hygiene products to women in our communities who are either experiencing homelessness, or who are financially unable to afford these items.

Shoe Box Ministries

We collect new and like new purses and personal items for women living in shelters to make their Mother's Day special.

Grace Lutheran in Phoenix

We provide bottled water and cool room respite, through the Hunger Jar collections, for the homeless that Grace serves in Phoenix. We also provide toiletries.

We have two food drives per year. The Souper Bowl collects cans of soup and crackers and canned foods and other non-perishable food. The second drive is the Be Thankful Drive that collects food items more related to Thanksgiving. We also have a Turkey Sunday where we collect frozen turkeys. These drives will support Kyrene Resource Center, Matthew's Crossing, Chandler Salvation Army and others.

ANGEL TREE

At Christmas time, we have an Angel tree in the Narthex. Kyrene Resource Center provides us with the names and wishes of children, ages of 15 and under, for about 20 families. Each child gets one item of warm clothing and one toy or special item of their request. We also provide gift cards for food for each family for a Christmas dinner.

A big thank you to June Bowman for her assistance and liaison with different agencies involved. Thank you also, to Doug Bjotvedt for assisting with the logistics of the financial aspects involved. A big thank you to the Committee members for their willingness to take on projects and follow up and assist in various ways as necessary.

It isn't sufficient enough to say "thank you" to the Congregation for the contributions of gift cards, money, food, clothing and various items during the year. I'll say it anyway- THANK YOU! THANK YOU!

Blessings,
Lola Peterson

Gilbert Study and Fellowship

For the calendar year 2022, a congregation member developed brochures which included information and schedules for the Breakfast Dudes, Beer and Bible, and C3 (Coffee, Conversation, and Christ), and an informational brochure on the Gilbert Campus. These brochures were made available to the congregation as a way of increasing awareness of the activities taking place at the Gilbert campus.

Breakfast Dudes:

The Breakfast Dudes Men's Group met at the Gilbert campus at 8:00 AM on the Third Saturday of the month. No meetings were held in July and August. The meetings included a light breakfast, devotions, prayers and program speakers such as: Ron Diegle – "The Mountain Men" and Curt Krizan – "NCAA Football Playoffs." The highest attendance was 12, with an average attendance of 8. In June, the Breakfast Dudes hosted the I-Help program at the Tempe campus, providing an evening meal and packing sack lunches.

John Christiansen and Donald Legacie

Beer and Bible

The Beer and Bible group met monthly beginning in January through December, with no meetings held in June, July, and August. The group met in the homes of families who served as hosts. Attendance averaged about 15 people, with a highest attendance of 25 in October. The meetings included a social hour with bring-your-own snacks, followed by an hour of scriptural study. The group used lessons from the book, 100 Stand-Alone Bible Studies. Several couples from the congregation joined the group in 2022.

Ron Diegle

C3 (Coffee, Conversation & Christ)

C3 is a conversational fellowship that met at the Gilbert campus Fellowship Hall from 10 AM - 11:30 AM on the 2nd & 4th Thursdays of the month for nine months of the year. Our 'TOPICS' of discussion ranged from guest speaker presentations, to Bible study, to "in the news," to other special topics of interest. ALL WERE WELCOME. The average attendance was about 10 per meeting. Participants were usually asked to name those for whom they had prayer concerns. Then, prayers were offered up to almighty God in the name of Jesus Christ for all children and adults named in those prayer requests. C3 will continue to lift up in prayer the names of all those for whom we have prayer concerns.

Bennett Henrikson, C3 Facilitator

Boy Scout Troop 379

Thank you, Desert Cross Lutheran Church, for sponsoring Boy Scout Troop 379 and allowing us to meet at the church. The Troop was chartered in 1980 by the Church and we have been active ever since.

The Boy Scout program provides the opportunity for youth (11-18 Years) to build better character and life values through the Scouting program in a Religious based environment. They do this by having fun participating in weekly troop meetings and the monthly outdoor programs. The Troop meeting are varied based on a monthly theme offered by the Boy Scout organization. Meetings are organized and run by the scout leadership which consists of the Senior Patrol Leader and each Patrol leader. Monthly Patrol Leader Council meetings are held where the youth scout leaders plan the specific activities for the meetings and outings.

The Troop meets on most Monday evenings at 7 PM in the Community Center. Outings occur at least once a month and involve a balance of activities. These include Backpacking, Camping, Bicycle Trips, Canoeing Trips and then a yearly week-long Summer Camp normally held out of state. In July 2022, the troop traveled to Connecticut to attend the JN Webster Scout Reservation for a week of summer camp. Troop 379 has a long tradition of attending out of council summer camps. This offers our scouts the unique experience of camping and earning merit badges at some of the best scout camps in the United States. Going out of state offers scouts the opportunity to visit a part of the country that they might not otherwise could see. Attending camps out of council also provides scouts an increased growth experience that is unique to our troop and helps to retain older youth.

The scout year begins in August when units recharter with the National Scouts BSA organization in Texas and the local council. The troop currently has 23 registered scouts in the unit. Of these 23 scouts, 4 has reached the highest rank of Eagle Scout. We currently have 2 other scouts scheduled for their Board of Review in the coming weeks. Since the beginning of Troop 379, we have had a total of 116 Eagle scouts.

Troop 379 is trying to recruit new youth to join scouting. Boy Scouts has a fabulous program where all boys learn leadership skills, have a lot of fun in a safe environment and perhaps take a small break from Video games. We will welcome families from Desert Cross Lutheran Church to join us and learn more.

Sincerely,

Alan Garlington,

Scoutmaster Troop 379, Desert Cross Lutheran Church
Troop379.com

