



“I hope and pray that we will set forth into the fast-moving waters of this stream God gives us to be in with integrity, expediency, passion, joy, excellence, and patience—tempered by enough space for us to discern the voice of God amidst all, and to breathe in the Spirit’s leading.”

— *Pastor Rick Nelson*

Central Lutheran Church Annual Report 2009 - 2010

**Part One:
Leadership, Ministries
and Standing Committees**



Contents

Central Lutheran Church Annual Report 2009-2010 Part One (of Three)

	Page
Senior Pastor	3
President	4
Associate Pastor for Youth, Family and Community Ministries	5
Associate Pastor for Worship and the Arts, Hospitality, and Pastoral Care	6
Community Ministries	8
Cantor	10
Fiscal and Property Committee	11
Personnel Committee	12

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Printed at Central on **Hammermill Color Copy Digital Paper**





Senior Pastor
Pastor Rick Nelson

As I begin my fifth year in service alongside of you in the ministry God has entrusted to us, I am thankful for the movement of God which caused me to come here. **I remain intrigued, excited, challenged, and hopeful about our life together!** Annette and I enjoy this congregation and our lives in the Twin Cities very much and we are grateful for the role that so many of you have played in making that a reality. Each day I thank God for the love and grace of God which comes to me powerfully through the shining lives of **my family, our great staff at Central, the leaders of this congregation, my colleagues in ministry, and so many of you**—it is, indeed, a privilege to be partners in God’s mission through Christ to the world. **As we move together into God’s marvelous future,** I promise to listen faithfully to God, as I hope you will, in order to arrive at the ministries, people, and directions we ought to be reaching.

It is my privilege each year to thank God publicly for the followers of Jesus in this place whose activity and participation at Central make great things take place. **For all of you who have supported our ministry with your participation, tireless labor, and generous financial support, thanks be to God!**

At the Annual Meeting you will vote on a ministry plan—which we also refer to as a budget—that will require even more generosity on your part in order to accomplish all the things God has set before us. **I hope and pray that we will set forth into the fast-moving waters of this stream God gives us to be in with integrity, expediency, passion, joy, excellence, and patience—tempered by enough space for us to discern the voice of God amidst all, and to breathe in the Spirit’s leading.** As we do, I am confident that God will continue to do great things through us!

Other notes of thanksgiving and reflection:



- I thank God for **Annette**—the love of my life and partner in ministry. She remains honestly insightful, a soft and fun place to land, a wonderful distraction from work, and a life preserver for me. I also feel so blessed and happy to remain vitally connected to our adult children: **Kris, Jess, and Brita** and their spouses: **JP, Charlie, and Will**, who all still somehow love Jesus and His Church—and to have all three grandchildren: **Blythe, Isabelle, and Bergen** living in the Cities—to be involved in their young, growing lives, is a gift from God that we enjoy every day.

- I thank God for the privilege of **teaching and preaching**—thank you for showing up at worship and Bible studies—if you haven’t yet, try it! You’ll like it. These two things I especially love. Other elements of my work which bless me often include **casting/keeping before us the vision of God’s work among us, caring for the staff and other leaders, my personal interactions with you,** working hard to maintain a purposeful, fun, lively, welcoming, and engaging **climate** around this place.

- I am proud to be an **ambassador and representative of Central** in this state, God’s world, in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, and in other leadership roles with other organizations which help make the world a better place.

- I’ve never had better colleagues in pastoral ministry than these, and I thank God for them: **Pastors Kristen and Foy**—both of them uniquely talented, gifted, and blessed for the work they do among us; **Pastors Chuck and Judith** who serve in our ministry of visitation. I do appreciate all of them so much, and I hope you will let each one of these pastors know when YOU do, too;

- **My hope and commitment for the coming year of life together? Personally:** I intend to remain a good model for you in living a well-balanced life: work, play, study, exercise, spiritual disciplines, and special relationships. **Corporately:** I will be the best sheepdog I know how to be—pushing, prodding, encouraging you to live the abundant lives God intends; I will accompany you in resisting the many possible distractions that can confuse, discourage, and sometimes even derail God’s people on our way into discerning and living out the future to which God is calling us; I will think and dream imaginatively and large about our ministry and engagement with the world God loves and that Christ died to save.

The reports that follow afford a select glimpse of the larger work that God is accomplishing through the gifts and resources of this congregation and staff. **The real annual reports, of course, are you**—lives touching others, blessing, changed and changing, challenged, and fueled by the Good News of Jesus Christ! **To God be the Glory!**

In the photos—

◆Pastor Rick preaches on the Day of Pentecost, May 23, 2010

◆Centralites joined in a festive Palm Sunday procession up Third Avenue on March 28, 2010



President

Bill Masche
2009-2010 Congregation
Council President

Just over a year ago I stood before the congregation—a humbling experience I might add—on Palm Sunday marking the 90th anniversary of Central Lutheran Church. The joy and excitement of welcoming thousands of ELCA Churchwide Assembly Lutherans to Central was just around the corner and preparations had already brought members and staff together in new ways. However, an uncertain economy loomed ahead and we were about to embark on a year with some significant unknowns in anticipation of lower income. Yet, as in the past, hope prevailed. Parking income eventually rebounded, the foundation responded with a generous one-time grant that allowed us to balance the budget and Central's members and friends demonstrated what St. Paul and Pastor Rick call "hilarious giving," reflecting the commitment and dedication that has marked life at Central for nine decades. We thrive as a vibrant and world leader in worship, music and service to our neighborhood.

Here, from my vantage point, are some highlights of the past year:

● **Our pastors.** The leadership of Central's pastors has created a climate of faith, purpose, involvement, commitment and a joy of belonging that I have personally not experienced at Central in many years. The immense individual talent and gifts of Pastors Rick, Kristen and Foy have rejuvenated our church. Each in their own unique way speaks to us personally in their sermons and relates to us as individuals with respect and grace. They lead us in worship, mentor us in faith and care for us in love. Thanks be to God for our pastors.

● **Communication.** A strategy of unprecedented quality, timeliness and relevancy in communication to members and friends of Central has generated new participation and contributed in bringing us together as a congregation. With the leadership of Communications Manager Joe Bjordal, our collaborative staff and the creativity and enthusiasm of the newly-formed Communications and Public Relations (CPR) Ministry Team, the transformation of communications and public relations at Central has been truly remarkable.

● **The Restoration Center.** The Restoration Center

recently celebrated its one-year anniversary. A greatly-broadened sense of leadership has expanded the boundaries into new service with Downtown Congregations to End Homelessness and other organizations, both public and private, leveraging our role and purpose for the good of the greater downtown community. Many lay ministers work tirelessly in service to members of the community who know Central not just as a building but as a place where Christians are literally the loving hands and feet of Christ in service to them. Thank you to Pastor Kristen and Rolf Lowenberg-DeBoer for their tireless work in the Restoration Center.

● **The Churchwide Assembly.** For hundreds of voting members at last summer's Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, Central became "a church home away from home" thanks to the exceptional hospitality efforts of members and staff. Placed in the national spotlight after the tornado, the story of the damage to Central's spire and its eventual restoration captured the interest of many and provided the opportunity to highlight Central's mission literally across the globe.

● **The Congregation Council.** The Council has effectively carried out its mission this past year—making decisions, adopting policies and advising the Senior Pastor—all serving the best interests of the congregation. It has been my pleasure to lead the meetings this past year, which have been marked with a tone of respect, purpose and joy. I offer my thanks to each member and especially to Treasurer Mark Forsberg and Secretary Karl Starr, whose work made information clear and accurate.



The privilege and honor of serving during this past year has been a "life changing" experience for me. The opportunity to listen, learn and join together with you in our common mission has truly deepened my appreciation of remaining true to our past, yet keeping "eyes wide open" to all possibilities ensuring a vibrant future. Welcoming and affirming the worth of all who come through our doors has from the beginning and will continue to be the life blood of our congregation. That is our tradition and we owe a commitment to each other and to those who will follow us to remain loyal to it.

I offer thanks to each one of you for all the gifts you share—countless gifts of time and talent, given with humility, some known only by a very few. Witnessing this magnificent commitment by members and staff to Central will be the most important gift I have received this year.

"Faithfulness to mission, to our giving, and to God." This was the challenge I offered on Palm Sunday 2009. This remains my personal challenge and I hope yours also. Let us ever be steadfast in bringing the love and grace of Christ to each other and a world in need. May God's peace be with you!

In the photos—

- ◆ Bill Masche presides at a special meeting of the congregation on January 24, 2010
- ◆ Voting members of the ELCA Churchwide Assembly gather for breakfast at the Carillon Cafe on August 18, 2009



Associate Pastor Youth, Family and Community Ministries

Pastor Kristen Jacobson

My annual report comes to you as I near the completion of my third year with you. Know that I constantly thank God for the great blessing of this calling and the grace you have shown me in these first few years with you! I am blessed daily with the health of my family and friends as well as colleagues who have become part of this circle as well. The joy of seeking together what is God's will for Central in this time is both challenging and exciting. I find great strength and creativity in the blessings of highly skilled colleagues and laity—all further evidence of God's unending grace and guidance!



Out of a desire to faithfully fulfill my call with you, during this past year I have given great attention to the study of and consideration of children's and family ministry. This research has been blessed with our new colleague, Greer Cherney, who has shared her insight, courage, and passion. Through this prayerful study we have discovered some exciting ways to enhance and build upon the powerful ministry to young families that exists here at Central. Watch for the forthcoming opportunities to partake and serve in this area and please continue to share your insights and feedback as we move into this next year of Children and Family Ministry.

Other areas of ministry that I have concentrated upon are also the pastors' acts of preaching, teaching, and visitation including:

- Training in Greer, our wonderful new Youth and Family Ministries Coordinator
- Planning SIMUL in the City (High School Summer Youth Gathering)

- Weekly Sunday Confirmation Instruction
- Youth Events
- Pastoral Care with youth and families
- Sunday School research and development planning
- Family Ministry research and development planning
- Supervision of our wonderful Community Ministries Director, Rolf Lowenberg-DeBoer
- Weekly Restoration Center worship leadership

- Pastoral Care to homeless community members
- Work with Augsburg Nursing program including the hiring of our wonderful new Nursing Center Director, Katie Welle
- Development of Book of Faith Ministry team (transitioning from Lifelong Learning)
- Women's Summer weekly Bible Study

- Winter Adult Education study series on Luke
- Planning for a new and innovative Vacation Bible School
- Community involvement in Advocacy and Homelessness awareness
- Connecting with the Emily Program and ministry opportunities
- Worship leadership
- Hospital Visitation

"Now may our Lord Jesus Christ himself and God our Father, who loved us and through grace gave us eternal comfort and good hope, comfort your hearts and strengthen them in every good work and word." 2 Thessalonians 16&17

In the photos—

- ◆ Pastor Kristen officiated at the opening worship of the Minneapolis Area Synod Assembly at Central on April 23, 2010 and is pictured here with Bishop Craig Johnson
- ◆ The gathering time at Sunday School this past year was led by Pastor Kristen, Greer Cherney and our Cantors



**Associate Pastor
Worship and the
Arts, Hospitality,
and Pastoral Care**

**Pastor D. Foy
Christopherson**

As I complete this report, June 6, 2010, we begin our fifth year of ministry together. My days are full and fulfilling as together we work to reach out in our corner of the Kingdom of God, inviting others into the odyssey of grace we call life in Christ.

I've written elsewhere that perhaps a ministry should be judged by the number of new Christians it makes – by the number of adults that are baptized each year. With thanksgiving, we've baptized a few this year, including Bart and Ben, but we have room to grow, and room to welcome. That perhaps is the major goal for the year to come. The activity summarized below and the initiatives for the future are to that end – that all might come to know the joy that is ours in Christ Jesus.

Since our last annual meeting we have attended to 18 baptisms – 15 infant and three adult; 58 adult and three children new members; four confirmations; nine marriages; and 24 deaths.

I am delighted to advise, direct, coach and give counsel to the following ministries:

Worship Life Teams

- **Worship Life steering team:**
 - ◆ 3 seasonal worship pattern teams; readers; assisting ministers; radio ministry; sacristy ministry; ushers; processional corps; floral guild; communion & baptism ministers
- **Worship Task Force** (concluded its 2010 work)
- **Prayer, Spirituality and Meditation teams**
 - ◆ prayer shawls; prayer chain



In leadership in the church-at-large this year:

- Led Valparaiso University Institute of Liturgical Studies master class and workshop
- Developed an ELCA worship training module *The Place Where We Worship*
- Served as a worship space consultant to Kent Lutheran Church, Kent Washington and other Lutheran churches

- **Advise our musicians and their music groups** (see Cantor Mark's report)

Welcome Life Teams (Biblical hospitality)

- **Welcome Life steering team:**
 - ◆ greeters and hosts (Sundays and funerals); Sunday coffee hour(s); public events hospitality; tours and docents; new members and Ambassadors; parking meeters; funeral receptions; pew bags; Sunday receptionists & taxi service; and seasonal activity task groups

- **Advise our fine art team**

Pastoral Care Teams

- **Our steering team of visitation pastors,** Pr. Chuck Anderson and Pr. Judith Stone
 - ◆ care to 93 homebound members (visitation pastors); care ministry team (formerly Central Friends); Grief Coalition; sending Communion from the altar; managing life passages practice; and hospital visitation

● **I also work with**

- ◆ Men's Fellowship; Quilters; Communication & Public Relations Ministry Team; and Friends of Central, a new initiative

- Serving as a worship planner for the synod leaders' fall theological conference

- Assisted many of Central's user groups with their worship and hospitality planning

We have a great staff!

- Visitation pastors Chuck and Judith deeply love their work and our homebound members. I am thankful for their faithfulness.
- Mark and Jane, our musicians, never cease to amaze me by their creativity and their diligence, turning out beautiful music, liturgies and worship publications week in and week out. I am thankful for their artistry.

- Sound and light technicians David and Mark are bulletproof. We can always be heard and heard well. They continually improve our systems and are quick to offer suggestions as the needs of the liturgy change seasonally and from week to week. I am thankful for their innovation.

- Barb, Karen, and Erica keep me out of the ditch. They are quick to offer solutions and share their experience and knowledge of the big picture of what is going on at church. I am thankful that they keep me out of trouble every single day.

- Pastoral colleagues Pastor Rick and Pastor Kristen make it fun to come to church. They help me be less serious. I am thankful for their friendship and partnership.

In the year ahead:

- Implementing Worship Task force recommendations to further our mission and ministry.

- ◆ New Saturday evening service will be fleshed out by the Worship Life team and the three seasonal worship pattern groups

- ◆ New worship public events program, calendar, brochure, and team

- Advancing the columbarium question

- Redeveloping the Prayer, Spirituality and Meditation team with Joyce Anderson

- ◆ A prayer/spirituality retreat

- Time again for a series of worship and hospitality training workshops

- Exploring a drama team for worship

- A deep focus on Baptism during Lent 2011

- Reviewing our music programs for children

- Continued expansion of the hospitality brochure series

- Assist in developing Friends of Central

- Perhaps an extended learning opportunity about worship and music

Great Thanksgivings

I am so thankful for the faithful work of our many lay ministers (hundreds) who serve in worship, hospitality and pastoral care ministry areas, and for the many coordinators and team leaders who I have the privilege to know and work with week in and week out. As I said to one group recently, my ministry is adrift at sea without you. I am deeply thankful for your partnership in the gospel.



A few lay leaders must be thanked by name as they conclude their work and move on to new opportunities for service and discipleship.

These volunteer team leaders are rotating to new leadership opportunities:

- Joyce Anderson, from hosts and greeters coordinator to Prayer Meditation and Spirituality team chair

- Annette Nelson, from readers coordinator to radio ministry coordinator

- Karl Starr, concluding work as Welcome Life team chair

- Kris Stedje, concluding work as Worship Task Force chair

- Deb Thelen, concluding work as radio ministry coordinator

Thanks to them for their great work, and I look forward to our continued ministry together.

In the photos—

- ◆ Pastor C surrounded by Central's Easter garden, April 4, 2010

- ◆ Central extended hospitality to the Minneapolis Area Synod on April 23 as we hosted the Opening Worship of the 2010 Synod Assembly

- ◆ Members of the Floral Guild and Seasonal Worship Pattern Team transformed the chancel into an Easter Garden on Saturday, April 3, 2010



Community Ministries

**Rolf
Lowenberg-DeBoer**
*Community Ministries
Coordinator*

The Restoration Center, Central's outreach and justice center, continues to engage in building healthy community, bridging gaps, and bringing people together. This past year the Restoration Center was open 32 hours a week; on any given week more than 200 people utilized the center. The Community Ministries Program pursues its work with God at the center by pointing to Christ and the abundance of God's love in the midst of the scarcity of the world. As disciples we are called through Christ to do the work of restoration in a variety of ways. Some of these ways include: direct services to those in need, social justice and advocacy for systemic change, and community education on issues pertaining to homelessness and poverty.

Over the past year we have enhanced existing direct service programs while developing new programs. These programs together are building strong foundations for a future of sustainable and effective ministry, ministry with transforming impact in the community. The direct services offered by Central Lutheran Church are growing, transforming, and thriving as we work alongside people experiencing homelessness and poverty. About 75 disciples give their time and energy in direct service to others through the Restoration Center and even more are involved in the work of social justice through advocacy by speaking out for and with the most vulnerable in our society. Opportunities to serve our community and to love our neighbors include, but are not limited to:

- ♦Community Outreach Ministry Team (since 2008)
- ♦Clothes Closet (1967)
- ♦Community Meal
- ♦Community Worship
- ♦Open AA (2009)
- ♦Spiritual Care (since the beginning)

- ♦Employment Team (2009)
- ♦Community Resource Guide (Referrals and Financial Assistance Advocate)
- ♦Community Ministries Christmas Team--seasonal
- ♦Augsburg-Central Nursing Center (1992)
- ♦Heading Home Central Ministry Team (2009)
- ♦Downtown Congregations to End Homelessness (DCEH)
- ♦Inter-Faith Team (2008)
- ♦Receive Action Alerts through the DCEH (2009)
- ♦Project Homeless Connect (since 2007)
- ♦Restoration Center Office

How much impact are we making overall? This is a difficult question to answer because much of what we are doing is hard to measure but let's look at the big picture. We are working on charity and justice simultaneously. Because we are doing direct services, education, and justice work at the same time we are becoming more and more effective. The reality is that there are many immediate needs and there are many long term needs in the community. Systemic change is necessary to bring about an end to homelessness as we know it; however, there are many people who have a variety of serious and complex needs today. Both are necessary. Raising awareness and engaging in community discussion is also essential to ensure that the community takes action overall.



This past year several educational forums were sponsored by Community Ministries which included speakers Cathy ten Broeke, the city/county Office to End Homelessness Coordinator, Mikkell Beckmen, Executive Director of St. Stephens Human Services, and a performance by zAmya Theater Project. Also, over the winter the DCEH held an advocacy training workshop at Central.

A number of Centralites participated in the Joint Religious Legislative Coalition Day on the Hill this spring as well as in multiple Project Homeless Connect events, of which Central is a sponsor. The Heading Home Central Team and the DCEH Inter-Faith Team members from Central helped to organize the educational forums at Central and they also helped to coordinate Central's involvement in JRLC and PHC. We continue to work closely with the other congregations in the Downtown Congregations to End Homelessness, St. Stephens Human Services, St. Stephens Outreach Team, St. Stephens Human Rights Team, Community Emergency Services, Hennepin County Social Services, Catholic Charities, Salvation Army, Our Savior's Housing, Simpson Housing, Youth Link and many more!

Highlights from 2009-2010

● Open AA Group:

Thursday mornings from 9-10am the RC hosts an open AA meeting. This group draws between 3 and 12 people each time. Recovery is restoration; this is a stable and reliable outreach to the downtown community.

● Employment Team:

The Employment Team now has 9 people (members and non-members) working hard on finding available jobs in the community and posting them on our employment board. They also meet one on one with guests to create resumes, cover letters, and to enhance job searches. The team works to establish networks with people when possible. The employment team has worked with 85 individuals as of May 26, 2010.

● Heading Home Central—Advocacy/Justice/Organizing:

The Heading Home Central Ministry Team (8 people) is working to organize the congregation in its pursuit of social justice through advocacy. The team works with Central's Inter-Faith Team representatives to the Downtown Congregations to End Homelessness. The Take 5 (minutes) Table in Fellowship Hall every other Sunday is part of this activity. We also set up a Take 5 Table on Monday mornings so that our guests have an opportunity to participate in the legislative process that will directly affect them. There are currently 82 people who receive action alerts on our email list. Gayle Dustrud, Roberta Groening, and Ann Oyen are wonderful leaders in these endeavors. The team focuses on the issues of homelessness and poverty in our community and recognizes that systemic change is necessary for our community to be truly healthy. This year the team focused on General Assistance, General Assistance Medical Care, Emergency General Assistance, jobs, housing, equality and more.

● Augsburg-Central Nursing Center:

The Nursing Center is moving into the Restoration Center! The Nursing Center is keeping their hours but they are transitioning well into their new space. The nurses are serving even more of our guests these days as they are more visible in the new space.

A women's group has been meeting for the past few months focusing on women's issues, diet, community, health resources, and more. This group started as a student project and has turned into a stable and beneficial component of the Nursing Center's work.

● The Currie Avenue Partnership:

The Currie Avenue Partnership is a prime example of the community coming together to give lasting support to our

neighbors. The collaborative effort of the Currie Avenue Partnership between the faith community, the downtown business council, downtown businesses, and private donors, has been unparalleled in my tenure. Thanks to the Central Lutheran Church council and the congregation for making our contribution of \$20,000 (Forward in Faith dollars) to the CAP. Over \$350,000 was raised total--150 people will be permanently housed with supportive services over the next few months because of this effort. A community that collaborates to support each other is a healthy community! Please see the website for a detailed article.

● Spiritual Direction:

Pastor Harris Lee and Pastor Lloyd Thorsen have been giving their time, energy, and pastoral gifts in working with folks during the community meal and during the Restoration Center hours. They have been available for prayer, Bible Study, conversation, and listening.

● Clothes Closet:

The Clothes Closet is alive and well, and serving many people. More than 200 folks utilize the Clothes Closet (free store) every week. Disciples work hard at least three days a week to serve some of the immediate needs of our neighbors. The Clothes Closet is dignified, orderly, and well organized. It is volunteer operated!



Entering into my third year at Central I am elated about the work being done with those most in need in Minneapolis. During the recession we stepped up our efforts despite the scarcity caused by economic downturn. Rather than dwelling in the scarcity of the world we focused on the abundance of God's love and God's creation. There is no doubt that it has been a very challenging year. As hundreds of people are entering the

building every week we endeavor to maintain a radically hospitable, inviting, and caring environment. Every case is separate and new.

The ministry of Central Lutheran Church to the most vulnerable in our community continues to grow and develop. Personally I feel called to serve here and to empower others to find and use their gifts for service. I thank God for so many incredible people to work with and for an amazing supervisor, Pastor Kristen Jacobson, who is visionary, supportive, and full of compassion. The Restoration Center offers hope; it's a place where God is at work restoring people through Jesus Christ our Lord.

To quote Pastor Rick, we endeavor to serve "...with integrity, expediency, passion, joy, excellence, and patience----tempered by enough space for us to discern the voice of God amidst all, and to breathe in the Spirit's leading."

In the photos—

◆ Rolf Lowenberg-DeBoer is pictured with Ann Oyen at "Day on the Hill, March 25, 2010

◆ Guests enter the Clothes Closet on October 10, 2009

◆ Longtime lay ministers and special guests serve the Community Meal on June 29, 2009



Cantor

Mark Sedio
Cantor and Director of Music

Music has always played an important role at Central – a tradition that continues. Over the past year our three choral organizations

(Central Choir, Cantorei and Männerchor) have flourished as has our amazingly gifted handbell choir. In addition to weekly anthems, Psalm settings, choral hymn arrangements and other liturgical music in the context of worship, both the Central Choir and Cantorei have joined with instrumentalists in presenting four cantatas with orchestra. Each Sunday morning throughout this past year the music staff (Mark and Jane) led music for the children of the Sunday School in hopes of solidifying a future ongoing musical opportunity (children's choir) for our youngest members. Associate Cantor, Jane Lien, also began a once-a-month "for fun" group of beginning handbell ringing seniors – the Silver Belles.



Each Sunday morning throughout this past year the music staff (Mark and Jane) led music for the children of the Sunday School in hopes of solidifying a future ongoing musical opportunity (children's choir) for our youngest members. Associate Cantor, Jane Lien, also began a once-a-month "for fun" group of beginning handbell ringing seniors – the Silver Belles.

In the past year Central has hosted a number of concerts by various ensembles including the Metropolitan Symphony Orchestra, Augsburg's Advent Vespers, Grand Symphonic Winds and our annual organ symposium. A number of events also took place in Central's sanctuary during the ELCA Churchwide Assembly last August: two organ recitals, a children's musical, three carillon concerts, compline and two large

worship services. This year's Minneapolis Area Synod Assembly opened with a festival service at Central that included Taiko drummers, instrumentalists and seven choirs from synod churches (in addition to our own Central Choir) – some 120 voices! All planning, organization and coordination for both churchwide and synod events was carried out by our worship/music staff in cooperation with the synodical and national offices.

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In the photos—

- ◆ Cantor Mark Sedio at the piano during the Opening Worship of the 2010 Synod Assembly of the Minneapolis Area Synod at Central—a service planned by Mark—on April 23, 2010.
- The Central Choir and members of the Metropolitan Symphony Orchestra presented J. S. Bach's Ascension Day Cantata, "God Goes Up with Shouts of Joy," on Sunday, May 16, 2010.

Fiscal and Property Committee

by Kari Lyle and Ron Fiscus

The Central Lutheran Church Fiscal and Property Committee was faced with numerous challenges and opportunities during the 2009/2010 year. The natural challenges, in the form of tornado damage, and manmade challenges in the form of reduced operating revenues, forced the Committee to work through unusual circumstances during the year.

The Committee consciously took a stronger focus on the **fiscal side** of its responsibilities this year than in recent past years. This, in part, was the result of challenges caused by reduced revenues from parking ramp operations resulting from diminished use by the public. Further, due to the decline in the market value of the investments held by the Central Lutheran Church Foundation the funding of our operating budget was decreased proportionally. The following actions were taken by the Committee as a result:

- A fiscal working session was held in January through which \$75,000 of budget savings was identified.
- Bulletin printing was brought in-house saving \$10,000 annually from the cost of having them printed commercially.
- Budgets for the next fiscal year were reviewed with recommendations made to the Council for a balanced budget with conservative projections for fiscal year 2011.
- After extensive review of expenses and cost containment, Central Lutheran Church Foundation generously provided a grant of \$150,000 in March of 2010
- A condo unit given to the church through an estate was sold with the proceeds placed in the Designated Fund account.

The **property management side** of the Committee's responsibilities proceeded with an unexpected intensity. A tornado struck downtown Minneapolis in August, damaging the recently replaced roof, the steeple, site lighting and trees on the campus. Repair of this damage was added to other facilities improvements as follows:

- Disconnection of the roof drains and other storm drainage systems from the City's sanitary sewer system proceeded in compliance with City requirements. Storm water detention and infiltration improvements on the northeast corner of the building were completed, together with some landscaping improvements.
- A planned connection of the sanctuary roof drains to the City's storm sewer was discontinued due to conflicting underground utilities prohibiting that connection. An underground storm water detention system has been designed and one bid has been received for that work. Additional bids are being sought. Construction of these final improvements may be completed late in 2010 or in 2011. Construction of these improvements will save several thousand dollars in storm sewer utility charges from the City each year.



- The Committee shared its prioritization of needed capital improvements at a congregational sharing session in November. These improvements are divided among maintenance, major and strategic projects.

- New staging sections were added to existing system to accommodate larger groups and presentations in the Sanctuary.
- New heating and cooling controls were added to the education wing.
- The large closet in the Community Room was removed.
- Pews were removed from the sanctuary on the Third Avenue side to make the use of the space more flexible.
- The Confirmation Room (228) received ceiling, wall, painting, lighting and A/V improvements.
- Room 222 received a ceiling mounted projector and screen.
- A new accessible ramp to the narthex was constructed on the North Plaza.
- Storm damage repairs included Lower Narthex entrance improvements, repair of the Elbow Room stairs, water damage on the east and west flat roof areas, exterior lighting bollards, resealing the skylight in the South Commons, roof and steeple repairs.

- A replacement of the server was accomplished.
- The location of the ELCA Churchwide Assembly in Minneapolis created an opportunity to revitalize the landscaping on the church campus. Many trees and shrubs were donated from the conference for replanting on the grounds. Fiscal and Property Committee members assisted with the selection of the plants, design of the landscaping and coordination of the planting process.

The Fiscal and Property Committee has worked closely with other ministry teams and with the Congregational Council in the coordination of its activities and communication. One particular team whose focus closely interlinks with the Committee is the newly formed C3 Team, who focus on care for the environment. Coordination of the Committee's actions with the C3 team and other ministry teams will continue to be enhanced by greater attention to improved communication.

The challenges of meeting the financial needs of this church community and the maintenance and improvement of our historic church building will continue into the future. It is the Committee's intent to maintain its efforts to carefully anticipate and prioritize needs and plan for strategies to address future challenges.

Fiscal and Property Committee: Kari Lyle (chair), Ron Fiscus, Jean McGrath, Paul Troselius, Franklin Dietrich, Karl Starr (Council Liaison), Mark Forsberg (Treasurer) and David Alexander (Business Administrator) and Dave Rodriguez (staff).

Personnel Committee

by Shirley Teig

Central's Personnel Committee is a committee of the Congregation Council, appointed by and serving at the pleasure of the Council. This committee does not have decision-making authority, but serves in advisory capacity. Central's by-laws state: "The Personnel Committee is charged with advising the Senior Pastor regarding staff matters, developing recommendations for Congregation Council action as required and requested, and ensuring that compensation and benefit levels of non-pastoral staff are reviewed annually (By-law 13.01.b.1.2).

Our concern is for a just, orderly and encouraging environment for our staff – one in which they can carry out their work with support, yet with accountability to the congregation and to one another.

Pastor Nelson's leadership of the staff has been outstanding. The congregation can see the results in the nature of staff teamwork, their productivity, and their commitment to the Mission and Vision of Central Lutheran Church.

Committee Highlights of Activities and Accomplishments:

- **Committee Schedule/Fiscal Cycle:** Reviewed and estab-

lished the schedule of Committee activities with the Congregation's fiscal cycle to ensure that the Committee's work is done in a proactive and consistent manner.

- **Review and Revision of the Human Resource Policies and Procedures Manual:** Central personnel policies had not been revised since 2004 and many changes had occurred since that time. At the urging of Central's auditors, a review process was established and five months were devoted to that review and recommended revisions. Pastor Nelson and Business Administrator David Alexander were involved in all aspects of the review, but the Personnel Committee members did the basic work and made the final recommendations. The Congregation Council at its April 27 meeting approved the recommended adoption of the Proposed Revised Human Resources Manual. The policies and procedures will be reviewed annually in the future.

- **Staff Orientation to the Human Resource Policies and Procedures:** The Committee felt it was very important to bring an overview of the newly revised policies and procedures to all of the staff in one setting. We wanted them to hear how important we believe it is for them to have an up-to-date personnel document that guides them in their work and employment relationships. Shirley Teig, Personnel Committee chairperson, led the staff through an overview of the manual at the first staff meeting after its adoption by the Council.

- **2010-2011 Personnel Budget Request:** Significant discussion was held on Central's current fiscal situation and its potential implication on the personnel budget. After careful conversation with Pastor Nelson, the recommendation was made to the Congregation Council to consider downsizing the staff through a combination of positions resulting in a savings of \$125,000 in salaries and benefits.

- **Salary Increment Pool:** With the awareness that there had been no salary increments in the past two years, the Personnel Committee recommended a salary increment pool for the fiscal year 2010-2011 to be distributed by Pastor Nelson based on performance and job classification.

As the Personnel Committee, we want all staff to know that Central members are very appreciative of their work, their commitment and their leadership. They are a significant part of Central's most valuable resource - people, and they have been called or hired to provide leadership and care as the congregation lives out its mission and ministry. The congregation is responsible for undergirding the work of its staff through the Council and the Personnel Committee. This is the "intersection" between God's mission for Central and the work of our Committee. We thank you for the privilege of serving in this capacity.

Personnel Committee: Shirley Teig (chair), Kevin Lile, Susan Troselius, Chris Lyle, Bill Masche (President), Senior Pastor Rick Nelson and David Alexander (Business Administrator).

In the photos—

- ◆ Central's spire is pictured on August 20, 2009, the day after the rare downtown tornado; during repair; and on Sunday, December 13, 2009, just after the restored spire cross



Central Lutheran Church

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