



EASTRIDGE

Presbyterian Church



Christ-Centered. Community Strong.
2021 Annual Report

Our mission statement:

*The God of Scripture
Calling Individuals
Into Community through Christ
Empowered by the Spirit
To Worship, Learn and Serve.*

Eastridge Church Staff

The Rev. Dr. Melodie Jones Pointon..... Senior Pastor
mjonespointon@eastridge.org

The Rev. Thomas Dummermuth.....Associate Pastor
tdummermuth@eastridge.org

Kris Adler-Brammer.....Director of Children and Youth Ministries
Donna Gustafson..... Office Manager
Andy Kalnins.....Night/Weekend Custodian
Dr. Brian Lew.....Director of Music Ministries
Will McGuire.....Worship Leader
Brent Shaw.....Organist
Vince Ruhl.....Director of Online Worship
Laura Siemsen.....Administrative Assistant
Brett Meier.....Audio Visual Tech

Eastridge Presbyterian Church
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Senior Pastor
Rev. Dr. Melodie Jones Pointon

Associate Pastor
Rev. Thomas Dummermuth



As the year 2020 ended, it seemed necessary to write a summary of the many historical events that happened and include it in the annual report. At the time, many were looking forward to 2021 with hope that things would improve. However, in the first few days of the new year, on January 6, 2021 (Epiphany in the church calendar), the world watched along with a stunned American population as citizens and members of radical political groups stormed our nation's capital. It was a shocking scene, broadcast live on tv, radio, and the internet. It was also a sure sign that 2021 would have its moments as well.

Many of those moments were positive and hopeful ones! As the vaccine for COVID-19 rolled out across the country, there was a feeling of relief and hope! At the invitation of the Lincoln/Lancaster County Health Department, many in our congregation went down to the mass vaccination clinics at the Pinnacle Arena. After registering, vaccination opened to groups by age, health risk, essential workers, and teachers. By late spring, vaccinations were available at most area pharmacies. Availability to younger age groups opened as the months rolled on: 12–17-year-olds in the spring and summer; 5-11-year-olds in the fall. By fall, boosters were being recommended. As church gatherings continued online, it was a joy to celebrate with each other as we became eligible for vaccination!

The church building remained closed through January and February. We opened our sanctuary for one in-person worship service at 9 am on March 14, 2021. These first worship services were 30 minutes long, with one pastor, one organist, a video Worship Connection, and no congregational singing. For contact tracing and physical distancing purposes, we asked for registrations. For the first time in our careers, we asked our musicians to play "unsingable" versions of comforting and familiar hymns! We did pray the Lord's Prayer together, another moment full of hope! As the spring rolled on, we added in more congregational participation. Services extended to 45 minutes, and we added in singing. We continued with some outdoor services as previously planned - Palm Sunday, Easter Sunday, Mother's Day, and Senior Recognition Sunday - so that all who wanted to attend in person could safely attend. We also worshipped in our parking lot on Good Friday with the congregations of Hickman and Fourth Presbyterian Churches. In person worship continued uninterrupted through the end of the year.

In-person meetings and gatherings resumed as participants were comfortable. The city/county mask mandate was allowed to expire in June and reinstated in August, and then allowed to expire one day before Christmas. With many meetings held outside, the Trustees asked for money from the general memorial fund to purchase tables and seating on the patio. Fall ministry programming began in September, taking advantage of the beautiful fall weather. As necessary, groups started and then paused when necessary and then resumed. When the weather turned colder, proper precautions were taken so groups could gather inside.

Another positive and hopeful moment happened when our community food pantry re-opened after a year of suspended distribution. With construction of the 10-foot extension, water access, and ramp completed, food distribution began slowly. Volunteers pre-packed boxes to be placed in the trunks of clients' cars. By the time we celebrated the 50th anniversary of the pantry in October with the dedication of the extension and ramp, there were two days for food distribution, and volunteers were being recruited to return to the client choice model.

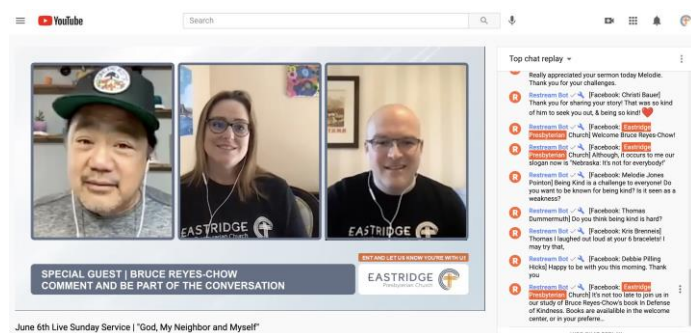
Our online worship and ministries continued to be the constant throughout the year. In January, our average online worship screens hovered around 100 ("they" say to count 2 to 2 1/2 people per screen). Roughly half the screens stayed connected for After Chats with guests covering subjects in lifestyle (outdoor cooking, gardening), spirituality, and Bible study. We welcomed preachers from around the world, including New York City, New York, Northern Ireland, London; worshipping with brothers and sisters around the world. We have maintained connections with a worshipping community that also spans the globe, including Northern Ireland, Switzerland, England, the Philippines, and South Sudan. We are delighted when we see familiar names in the chat from Texas, Arkansas, Idaho, Illinois, Florida, Wisconsin, Minnesota, Iowa, and Indiana. Our Maundy Thursday worship service was once again on zoom, and we shared in the Lord's Supper using the same loaf of bread, made by professional chefs and members of our community Wahadi and Katie Allen, delivered by our deacons, elders, and members. We continued to offer an online Bible Study nearly year-round, meeting in zoom and then uploading the video to a private Facebook group so that all could participate. We welcomed new members to our community who found us online, and then joined us in person. Our community thrived online!

From a pastoral care perspective, we became used to our N95 masks, worn in and out of hospitals, care facilities, and living communities as they opened to outside visitors. We continued to provide care over the phone, on zoom, and in person. We adapted as guidelines changed, were persistent when necessary, and (mostly Thomas) once again donned the clergy collar. Visits began through windows communicating on phones, almost always involved masks, and were often brief. Funerals were often outside or livestreamed from the sanctuary or funeral home. Funeral luncheons were rare and depended on local guidelines and restrictions. We rejoiced to baptize and welcome children once again!

Many congregations and communities saw divisions and discord, a reflection of the stressful, unusual, unprecedented times of politics and pandemic. It is amazing for us to reflect on the year and realize that our community continued to show respect and mutual forbearance throughout the year. We certainly did not always agree with each other! We DID, however, always respect the decisions made by the leadership of the boards and committees, treat each other with lovingkindness, and extend grace.

We know this is not the same pastor's report we have provided in the past! As we started to list the many things we've done, and the many things that we did not do, we were overwhelmed. It's been another year of many emotions, and we struggled to think about the year in terms of things quantifiable - ministries and programs, successes and failures. Instead, as we reflect together, we think about the many people connected with our community of faith and are grateful and amazed. As we remember the great moments of 2021, and the many ways we have been able to connect as a community, we are thankful for the love of God in Jesus Christ that continues to bring us together in relationship with each other. It is with this measure that we look forward to 2022!

Rev. Dr. Melodie Jones Pointon and Rev. Thomas Dummermuth



WORSHIP

WORSHIP COMMISSION

The Worship Commission is comprised of the senior pastor and elders who are responsible for three general areas of focus—worship and music, growth and hospitality, and fellowship. Several task forces function within these areas of focus. Participation in task forces is welcomed and encouraged! **(Note for 2021: some groups were virtual, some were in-person, some were a hybrid)**

Worship and Music Task Forces	GROW Task Forces	Fellowship Task Forces
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Adult choirs (Chancel, Handbell)• Large musical works• Worship teams• Ushers• Sanctuary Technology• Choir fellowship• Children's music• Children's worship resources and connections• Communion• Hospice Singers• Worship and Music Advisory Committee• Visual displays• Wedding coordinators	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Sunday morning hospitality/greeters• Visitor follow-up• New member orientation• Neighborhood outreach (e.g. prayer walks, turquoise tables)• Online devotions• Prayer chain• Photo directory planning & volunteer help	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Wednesday worship• Holiday Gatherings• Ice cream Social• Ladies' Night Out• Fourth Friday Women's Coffee• Men's Tuesday Morning Coffee• Trailblazers• Book club• Parents of Youth• YANA (You Are Not Alone, a group for those who have lost a spouse)



LEARN

The Learn Commission is comprised of the Associate Pastor, Director of Children and Youth Ministries, and 3 elders: 1 each for Children, Youth, and Adult. This Commission is focused on the Christian Education and Faith Formation of all age groups. We welcome participation in our various task force areas.

Children (K-5th grade) task forces:

- *Faith Formation
Tuesday afternoons
- *Camp Calvin Crest- Summer Camp
- *Children's Christmas Program

Youth (6-12th grade) Task Forces:








- *Faith Formation
- *Youth Group
- *Confirmation
- *Retreats
- *Mission trips
- *Fundraising
- *Youth Sunday
- *Graduate Recognition

Adult Task Forces:

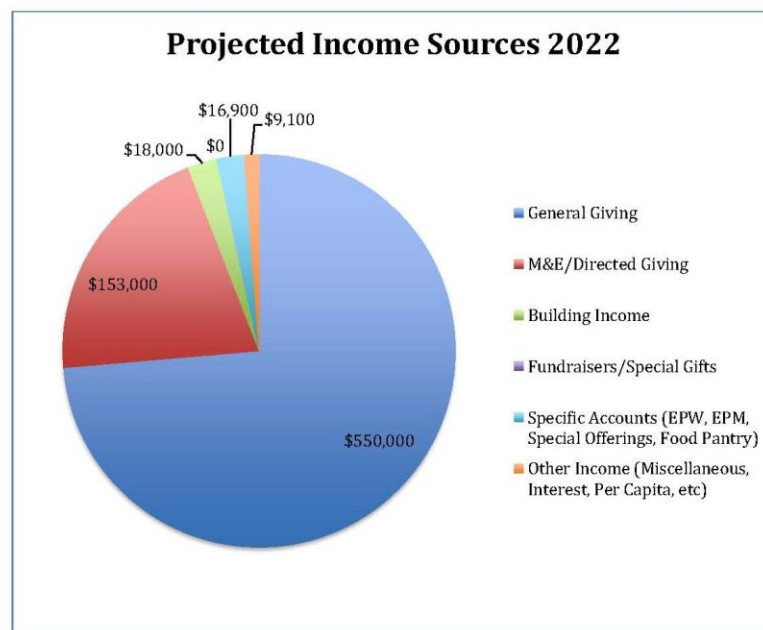
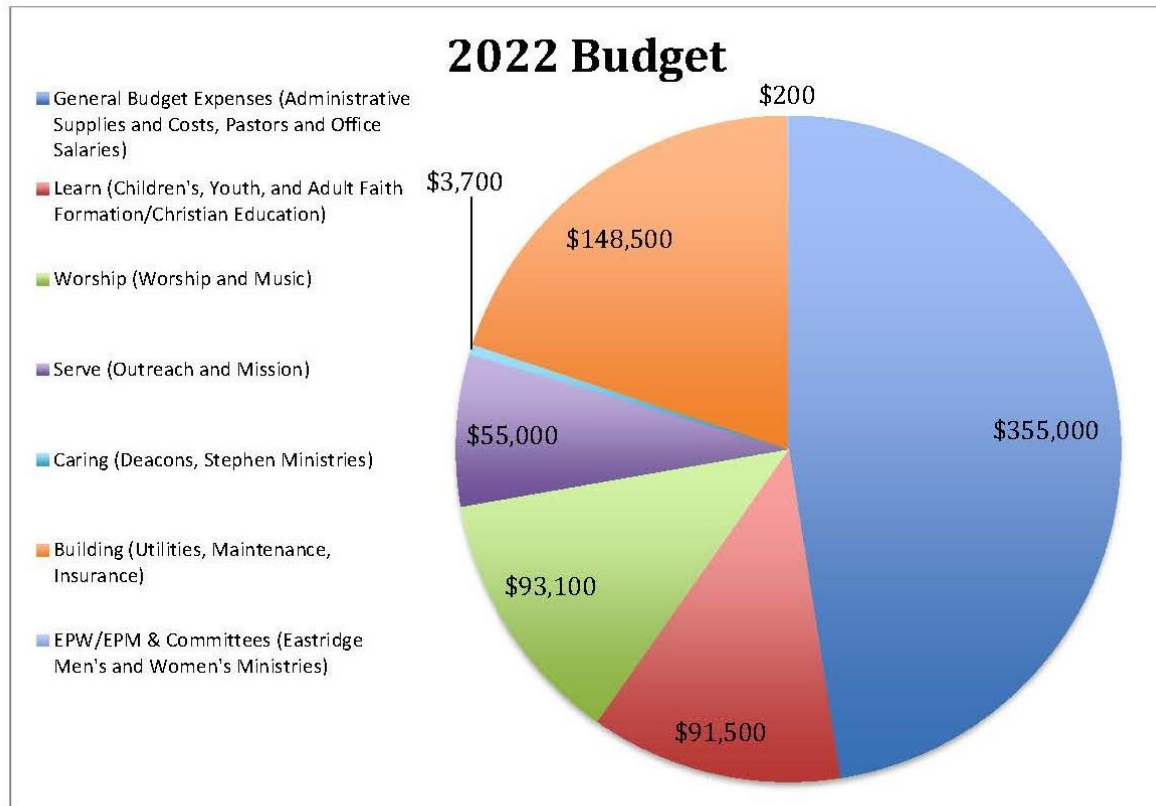
- *Bible Studies
- *Table Talks
- *Bistro Theology
- *Lent and Advent Studies
- *Book Club(s)
- *Men's Breakfast
- *Retreats
- *Circles

SERVE

The Serve Commission is comprised of the ruling elders responsible for stewardship, outreach, and nominating, along with the moderator(s) of the Board of Deacons. The task of this commission is to provide leadership for areas of service to the church, our local community and the greater community. Our intent is to live as Christ would have us live, serving as the hands and feet of God. Several task forces function in each area of focus. Each task force is responsible for the work of their group and are accountable to the Serve Commission to report about their work and to request funds, if needed. Many groups are open to anyone interested in that ministry of the church.

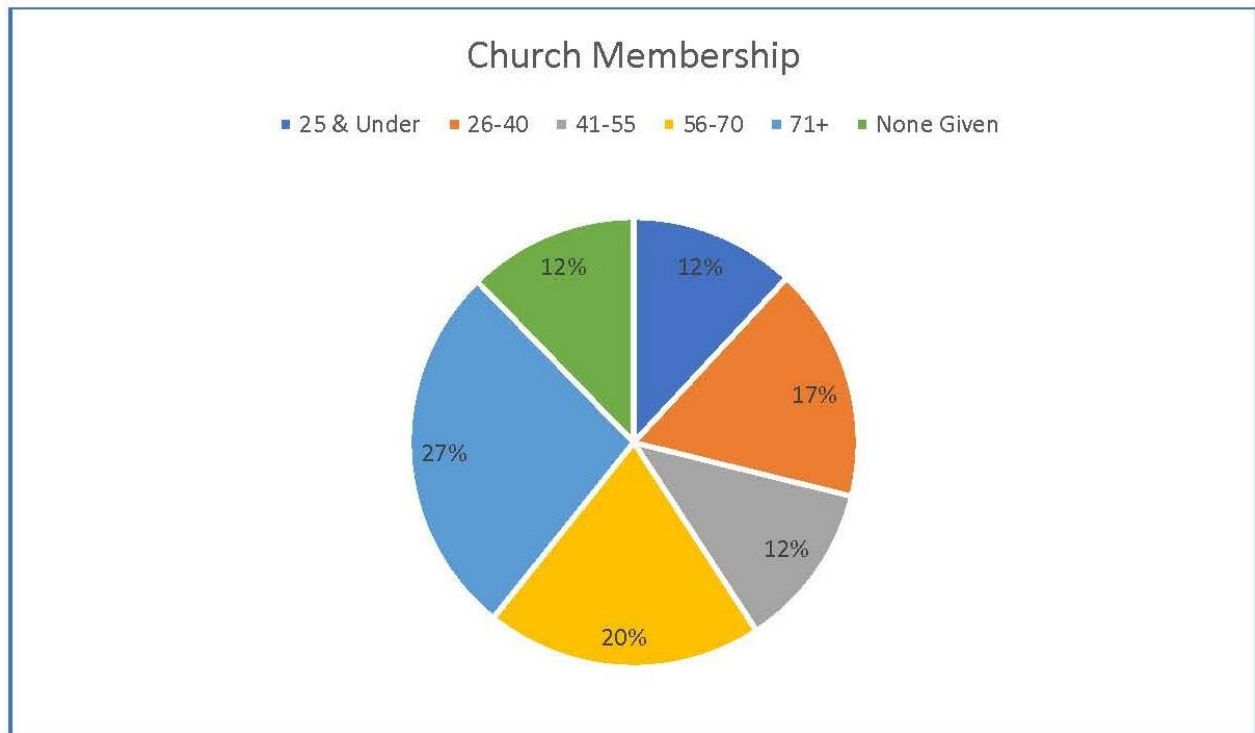
NOMINATING	OUTREACH	DEACONS
<p>Nominating Committee Members:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Robin Hadfield, Chair Mary Amen Cheryl Byler Shirlette Hershiser Sandra Hilsabeck-Hastings Gary Kilian Marge Riemann Susan Taylor Lisa Woito-Petty <p>Incoming Officers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Session: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> George Kilpatrick Alinda Stelk Gary Kilian Lois Wies Elizabeth Kohel Deacons: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Seth Crawford LaDonna Grubbs Donna Gies Ivy Hanson Gina Kohel Shellie Ottis Hope Shortridge Trustees: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Susan Budler Nancy Hall Kevin James Memorial and Endowments: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deryl Merritt Darrell Nelson Nominating: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sandy Hilsabeck-Hastings Susan Taylor Seth Crawford 	<p>OUTREACH COMMITTEE TASKS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a budget for use of the funds budgeted for Outreach Approve quarterly dispersals to PCUSA and local missions (direct services) Approve Emerging Needs requests as necessary Publicize and receive 4 PCUSA special offerings and Christmas Eve offering. Communicate with PCUSA missions we support <p>OUTREACH TASK FORCES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Anti-Racism Taskforce Little Free Library Gathering Place Angel Tree Crop Walk Eastridge Food Pantry Pantry Volunteers Lefler Food Pantry Partnership Bread Ministry Sunrise Property Committee Eastridge Faith Partners <p>Potential Outreach Task forces</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> PCUSA World Mission Partnership Interfaith Peacemaking Conference Neighborhood Partnership and Development Support for Maker Village Veda's School in Pakistan Other Local Agencies 	<p>DEACON MINISTRIES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Home Visitation & Communion Communication with Members Tending the needs of the sick, the Eastridge Neighborhood, those grieving, new parents and young families Welcoming members, and visitors Mentoring new members Transportation <p>DEACON TASK FORCES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deliver Holiday Flowers Advent & Lent postcards Meals at home Funeral meals—preparation and serving Coffee service—prepare, serve and clean-up coffee and food, when provided Eastridge Caring emails Prayer Shawls      

2022 Budget and Stewardship Information



*Fundraiser and Special Gifts projection unknown at this time, as plans for special events are finalized and discussed.

Church Membership



Age Distribution of Active Members

25 and Under	70	Ages 56-70	117
Ages 26-40	99	Over 71	158
Ages 41-55	70	None Given	72
Presbytery members	4		



Eastridge Session 2022

Kurt Beck

(Personnel Committee)

William Wehrbein

(Serve Commission)

Lois Wies

(Personnel Committee)

Doug McDaniel

(Stewardship)

Gary Kilian

(Nominating Committee)

Robin Hadfield

(Clerk)

Chris Boden

(Learn Commission/Children's Faith Formation)

George Kilpatrick

(Finance Committee)

Alinda Stelk

(Learn Commission/Youth Faith Formation)

Kris Brenneis

(Worship Commission/Worship)

Carolyn Olsen

(Learn Commission/Adult Education)

Carol Ripley

(Worship Commission/GROW)

Elizabeth Kohel

(Learn Commission/Children)

Greg Tubach

(Worship Commission/Fellowship)

***Melodie Jones Pointon**

(Moderator, Senior Pastor)

Thomas Dummermuth

(Associate Pastor)

Memorial and Endowment 2022

Beth Birnstihl

Paul Harmon

Deryl Merritt

Darrell Nelson

Leo Schumacher

***Robbie Shortridge**

Eastridge Deacons 2022

Wahadi Allen

Mary Amen

Charles Bachinski

Carolyn Brandle

Seth Crawford

Cathy Duling

Jean Dunbar

Donna Gies

Jim Gies

Sharon Gollehon

LaDonna Grubbs

Ivy Hanson

Sharon Irvin

Judith Keller

Gina Kohel

Emma Newcomb

Garin Newcomb

Shellie Ottis

William (Bill) Short

Hope Shortridge

Becky Shupe

Berna Stading

Eastridge Trustees 2022

***Susan Budler**

***Shirley Flynn-Bell**

Nancy Hall

Kevin James

Mike Laughter

Rex Radcliff

John Rouse

Ray Schapmann

Lisa Woito-Petty

*Denotes Moderator and/or
Co-Moderators