

Council Report January
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Submitted January 30, 2023

We kicked off the new year with 6 youth and 2 adults for this year's Winterfest. Our theme was "Created For..." and I had the pleasure of helping to plan it for 250 youth in our Synod. We learned all about how we are created for community, care, creation and communion. It was another great year for me planning this event and slowly starting to have a larger leadership role in this event. For our 30th anniversary we celebrated the ministry of Charlie Roberts as well as the impact this event has had on many youth over the years. We welcomed Middle schoolers and families to partake in our Friday activities and get a taste for what Winterfest is all about and what synodical youth events look like!

We had youth group on January 22 with 5 middle schoolers, and 6 high schoolers. We've held pretty consistent numbers this year with attendance and are building a nice foundation as a group. As we continue to search for a Children and Youth Director, I will prepare adult volunteers and the youth for fundraising for the youth gathering. We had a successful fundraiser of Whoopie Pies. Even in the midst of the Hershey Farms burning down (our prayers still go out to them!) and having to pivot.

I spent time this January planning for my first Youth Gathering Planning meeting where I am bringing my team of people together in New Orleans. I am excited to start our planning process and search for speakers and bands that can connect with our youth. This team of people will be here in Shiremanstown on June 7-10, 2023. We look forward to welcoming them and showing them our area! At this meeting I will invite a few of our high schoolers to sit in on the planning process. This is a great opportunity for them to get some leadership experience, learn the creative process and also learn from them about what topics are important to them right now.

We will begin the interview process for our Children and Youth position in early February. The Committee has 4 candidates 2 over zoom and 2 coming in person.

We had a guest preacher and teacher this month from ELCA Churchwide, The Rev. Ben Hogue to talk about ELCA World Hunger. He did a great job sharing with our combined Sunday school classes about where our dollars go, and how partnerships are made. He preached in worship and had a chance to talk to members and share how we are connected to Churchwide.

Finally, a peer of mine, died earlier this month and I want to thank Council and the congregation for holding that grief tenderly.

We baptized Samuel Curtis Shearer on 1/22/23
Home/Hospital Visits: 5