

# People of God at Spirit in the Hills,

Alas, another church year is upon us. It's been another difficult, COVID induced year, but here we stand, ready, willing and able to embrace 2022 as we continue to do "God's Work!" Part of that effort includes the church's operating budget which must be formalized; passed by the church Council, and submitted to the congregation in January for acceptance. So please make every effort to fill out the pledge card on the back of this flyer, and submit it to the church on or before November 21st.

In 2022, assuming we can continue to worship in person, a concerted effort is being made by the Council to allow us, "and a choir," to sing praises to the Lord. After all, when we gather together, we sing together to praise God, reminding each other just who this God is that we serve. And because hymns are intended to reflect the qualities of God, they must have poetry that is beautiful, reverent, simple, accurate, and pure. Having said that, we are looking to add a member to the church's staff in the form of a Director of Music Ministry, so please keep that thought in mind when making your pledge.

So just how important is music in relation to the Lutheran church? Well, according to Martin Luther... "We can mention only one point (which experience confirms), namely, that next to the Word of God, music deserves the highest praise. No greater commendation than this can be found - at least not by us. After all, the gift of language combined with the gift of song was only given to man to let him know that he should praise God with both word and music, namely, by proclaiming (the Word of God) through music. Next to the Word of God, the noble art of music is the greatest treasure in the world."

It's also important to note that your gracious tithes and offerings continue to feed and nurture those in need throughout our community. During January to October of 2021, your offerings have allowed SITH to contribute almost \$32,000 to organizations such as:

Southwest Texas Synod @ \$23,763

*in support of church leaders and being the church across the state*

Spirit Blessings @ \$2,900

*feeding food insecure students*

San Lucas Lutheran Church @ \$2,230

*proclaiming good news in Eagle Pass, TX*

Helping Hands @ \$1,423

*helping our neighbors in crisis*

Lu Min at UT @ \$680

*feeding hungry Longhorns in body and spirit*

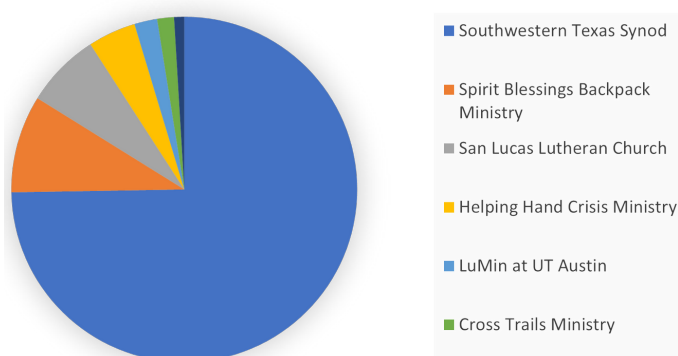
Cross Trails @ \$500

*making sure every kid gets a chance to encounter God at camp*

Kairos Prison Ministry @ \$300

*visiting those in prison*

## 2021 Spirit in the Hills Benevolence



So what does our operating budget account for? Everything we need to regularly worship and share God's love in the world. It encompasses expenses like staff salaries, Internet services, mortgage payments, office supplies, utility bills, music, licenses, the printing of bulletins, insurance, etc. It also funds our many caring ministries, including Music & Worship; Spiritual Growth; Mental Health; Care & Congregation; Outreach, Diversity, Equity & Inclusion, and also many of the other outreach initiatives we participate in throughout the year. Every dollar given to Spirit In The Hills beyond our operating budget increases our ability to support others.

Sincerely,

**John Maniscalco**

Treasurer



# ROOTED IN GRACE

GOD GIVES. WE GIVE WITH GENEROUS HEARTS

## WHY DO WE GIVE?

Both of our families had come of age during the Great Depression and had a keen sense of the value of a dollar. But God always come first. So when we married we chose to continue that tradition. We believe that giving creates a bond that brings you closer to the Lord. It makes you feel connected to his church here on Earth. Without giving back to God, there is a void, an emptiness in life that is palpable. Giving back a portion what we have received is just another way of giving thanks to God...thanks for the goodness and grace with which he has blessed us.

*Bunny and Wally Wilson*

We all share gratitude for a God who has been so generous to us. As a result, we give from the money and talents we recognize have passed from God's hands to ours. Allowing our gifts to flow through the church, clearly credits God with any good that results.

When I think about how best to share my resources here, I'm both humbled and energized. I recognize what I give, and even what all of us give together may never be enough. Hurricanes, pandemics, recessions, wildfires, aging, disease, Christian education, and more create continual need. On the other hand, working together we gain the strength to transform the needs into something good when we can. We remind each other God's math works differently than ours, multiplying gifts exponentially. So with hope and humility I add my bit to the bits of others and leave the full accounting to God.

*Becky Rische*



## WHAT YOUR SUPPORT WILL MAKE POSSIBLE

The Kingdom of God is always just outside our reach. It's right at hand and still to come. We'll continue praying for it and pursuing it here on Earth for as long as we possibly can.

**Expanding:** We are rooted in grace and ready to get moving sharing God's love in more ways than ever. To do this, we need to grow our staff, starting with a new Director of Music Ministry who will start with us in 2022 leading us in praise and worship and helping us know and share the gospel.

**Inviting:** We're committed to getting to know our neighbors and walking alongside them, sharing God's love in word and deed and inviting them to experience the good news of God's grace alongside us. Next year, we want to offer 150 new invitations to neighbors.

**Reconnecting:** As we continue to move toward the end of the COVID-19 pandemic and find ourselves in a changed and changing world, we know now more than ever the importance of strong and healthy relationships grounded in the grace and love of God. Your gifts help us find ways to reconnect with God, one another, and creation from new outdoor worship gatherings to small group fellowship, to worship-at-home kits.





# OUR COMMITMENT RUNS DEEP

**"How much should I give?"** This is a great question, but there's no one answer. We hope you can be generous with your financial resources in a way that gives you joy in recognizing your part in bringing about the Kingdom of God.

Below are how some families think about their giving to Spirit in the Hills:

- 💡 *I give at least as much to the church as I spend on my gym membership each month, because my spiritual health is just as important as my physical health.*
- 💡 *We budget our weekly gift to the church to match what we spend on groceries.*
- 💡 *I choose a monthly bill every year and commit to giving the church the same amount. Each year I choose one that's a little higher than the one I matched the year before.*
- 💡 *My partner and I keep track of how much we spend on coffee and eating at restaurants each week, and we try to put at least that much into the offering plate.*
- 💡 *My family gives as much to the church as we spend on extra-curricular activities for our kids. We want them to understand that we value church as much as we value sports, music, art, etc. Every time they want to do something new, figure out if we can swing it, knowing that it increases our giving to the church, too.*
- 💡 *I used to give to the church whatever was left at the end of the month, but now it's the first thing I budget. Basically, I've decided it matters, so I've made it a priority in my giving and spending.*

## IF YOU CAN INCREASE YOUR GIVING, NOW IS THE TIME.

Together, we'll grow in our relationship with God and our community in ways we never could alone. To that end, we invite you to join in making one of the commitments below, as we continue to work toward sharing the good news of God's love for generations to come.

You can help us be wise and accurate stewards of our budget through regular, automated giving. We'll continue to provide giving opportunities through worship offering by cash and check, special appeals as needed, text message donations, and giving directly through your financial institution.

**Making these deeper commitments on or before November 21 allows us to see how our budget for 2022 lines up, and will help us set reasonable expectations of our financial resources.**

**Learn more & access all the methods of giving:**

**[spiritinthehills.org/give](https://spiritinthehills.org/give)**



Name (individual/couple/family) \_\_\_\_\_

My/Our commitment is in the amount of: \_\_\_\_\_ given (circle one): weekly/monthly/quarterly/annually

I/We would like to make an additional commitment to the building fund in the amount of: \_\_\_\_\_

I/we commit to doing the following on or before November 21, as a deeper commitment to the current and future life and ministry of Spirit in the Hills Lutheran Church:

- ☐ **I/we will set up regular, automated giving for the first time.** ☐ I'd like help setting up this automated gift
- ☐ **I/we will increase the amount of our current regular, automated giving.**
- ☐ **I/we will not use automated giving, but prefer to give through check, cash envelope, or directly through my/our financial institution.** ☐ Please send me envelopes for 2022

Please fill out and bring it to worship on November 21, when we'll receive them as an offering during worship or mail it in advance.