2004 ANNUAL REPORT FROM THE SENIOR PASTOR

The first thing I wish to do is acknowledge the good people with whom I work. The office and support staff that serves this congregation is very hard working, very personable, and very gracious. Pr. Jeff and Angela are servants of very great faith and spirituality. They work very hard to minister to you and proclaim the Gospel in word and deed. Their wisdom and insight has be invaluable. A special "Thank you!" goes to Ruth Jane for the service she has rendered to Our Saviour's over the years. May God bless her as she retires from her job, but not from her ministry. I would also like to thank the Congregation Council and all the committees who through the year sought faithfully to serve and guide the life of this congregation.

Over the year, there have been many positives. Among many other things, our budget situation is improving; the vision workshops brought together a large group of people to talk about our ministry and its future in a positive way; over 100 people read and studied, "The Purpose-Driven Life"; young people shared their faith and lives in small groups; while faithful people retired from leadership roles, new people became involved with various committees; a handful of people gathered regularly for morning prayer; our membership roll became clearer and more accurate; worship was enriched by a wide variety of music; our young people were taught, let, and encouraged in their faith by dedicated, faithful adults; Scripture was studied; people of all ages joined together for fellowship and learning at WOLF Nights; a group of adults and young people were able to serve those in need and grow in faith on a mission trip to Tennessee; people prayed for one another; couples were married; loved ones were buried to await the resurrection; and children were raised to new life in Holy Baptism.

On the other hand, there were frustrations. Some of our members were frustrated by what they perceived as too many changes too quickly. Other members were frustrated because they felt things should be changing <u>more</u> quickly. I happened to read Pr. Henning's report from 1997 where he expressed his frustration about the condition of the several committees. That situation hasn't changed as of 2004. We are in need of leaders and volunteers to be a part of all the activities, committees, and events we say we need or would like to see take place. While our financial situation has improved, we still have a ways to go. And the worship surveys revealed that we are a people of seemingly infinite tastes, interests, likes, and dislikes.

So where do we go from here? Our new mission statement, developed this year is a good place to start—Love, serve, and strengthen all people in Christ Jesus. To love, serve, and strengthen all people means first of all to love, serve, and strengthen each of the members of this congregation. To offer a short list, it means to see the good in people and events rather than to find fault; to pray for one another; to learn to sing one another's songs; to deny ourselves in service to God and His church at Our Saviour's; to share a faith that has matured over the years with those who are young or young in faith; to bring food and a kind word to the grieving, the sick, and the shut-in; to call and offer a word of encouragement to someone you haven't seen for awhile; to give an extra little bit to support the work we are trying to do; and to seek to live in harmony with one another so that with one voice we might glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

The Lord is in this place! Let us continue to love and serve Him in thought, word, and deed during this coming year; growing in faith toward Him and in love for one another. May the Spirit of the Lord renew the spirit of this congregation in praise, thanksgiving, and faithfulness! Peace be with you!

Pr. Ted Gulhaugen