



ANNUAL REPORT 2023



Evangelical
Lutheran Church
in America

A MESSAGE FROM PRESIDING BISHOP ELIZABETH EATON



Dear friends in Christ,

Over the past year we have continued to experience changes in the world around us. Even as our church finds ways to adapt to this changing world, we find hope in the unchanging and always present promise of God's love through Jesus Christ. We change and adapt not to conform to the world but because we believe that the gift of God's Son is for the world, and that our congregations and worshiping communities are places to gather and be sent into the world, where we will tell the story of God's love in word and deed.

The ministries of our congregations, our synods and the churchwide organization provide ways for the church to move beyond the boundaries of structures and geography and to share God's love with people in our neighborhoods, our cities, our country and beyond. We engage in this ministry knowing that our church walks by faith, trusting in God's promise in the gospel, and that we exist by and for the proclamation of this gospel word. In John 15:5, Jesus reminds us, "I am the vine; you are the branches. Those who abide in me and I in them bear much fruit, because apart from me you can do nothing." We are connected by the promise that we do all through Christ and can do nothing apart from him.

God gives the Holy Spirit, who uses gospel proclamation — in preaching and sacraments, in forgiveness and in healing conversations — to create and sustain this faith. Just as we rely on God to sustain our faith, we rely on each other to sustain the ministries that offer God's love to the world. Through your generosity to each expression

of this church — your congregation, your synod and your churchwide organization — you add to our collective voice proclaiming God's love for all.

I am grateful for your generosity over this last year. My gratitude spreads far beyond your generous financial gifts. You've shared your gifts of time through countless hours of volunteering, serving and accompanying. You've shared the gifts of your voices as we've tried to discover and learn how God is calling us to be the church now and into the future. And, finally, dear church, you have shared the gift of the realness of God's love with the world around you. Be well, dear church, and stand steadfast in the promise of God's love and grace as you take that promise with you into the world.

The Rev. Elizabeth A. Eaton
Presiding Bishop
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

“I am the vine; you are the branches. Those who abide in me and I in them bear much fruit, because apart from me you can do nothing.” —John 15:5

ANNUAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING

OPENING LITURGY

Son of God, Eternal Savior

Recognizing that our faith is a living, busy, active and mighty thing, may the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with each of you.

And also with you.

Teach us to love you with all our heart, soul, mind and strength.

Receive our prayer, O God.

Descend on our hearts, that we may love others in the ways Jesus loves us.

Receive our prayer, O God.

Empower us to be enthusiastic in pursuing your vision for our congregation.

Receive our prayer, O God.

Move us to engage issues in our community in Christlike ways, and to pursue deep and authentic relationships with those with whom we serve and partner.

Receive our prayer, O God.

Strengthen us to face the barriers we encounter in doing your work, learning to work with others amid disagreement.

Receive our prayer, O God.

Give us the ability to adapt to the cultural, economic and social changes that occur in the neighborhoods we serve.

Receive our prayer, O God.

Guide us to be a healthy congregation that learns from its failures as well as its successes and offers wisdom to others.

Receive our prayer, O God.

As we strive to become the church that we proclaim to be, raise up leaders who focus on the gospel of freedom, forgiveness and reconciliation as given to us through God's indescribable act of love in the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Renew us daily in our baptism, that we may discover vitality in our relationships with you, each other and those we serve in the world.

Amen.

1 Son of God, e - ter - nal Sav - ior, source of life and truth and grace,
 2 As you, Lord, have lived for oth - ers, so may we for oth - ers live.
 3 Come, O Christ, and reign a - mong us, King of love and Prince of peace;
 4 Son of God, e - ter - nal Sav - ior, source of life and truth and grace,

Word made flesh, whose birth a - mong us hal - lows all our hu - man race,
 Free - ly have your gifts been grant - ed; free - ly may your ser - vants give.
 hush the storm of strife and pas - sion, bid its cru - el dis - cords cease.
 Word made flesh, whose birth a - mong us hal - lows all our hu - man race:

you our head, who, throned in glo - ry, for your own will ev - er plead:
 Yours the gold and yours the sil - ver, yours the wealth of land and sea;
 By your pa - tient years of toil - ing, by your si - lent hours of pain,
 by your pray - ing, by your will - ing that your peo - ple should be one,

fill us with your love and pit - y, heal our wrong, and help our need.
 we but stew - ards of your boun - ty held in sol - emn trust will be.
 quench our fe - vered thirst of plea - sure, stem our self - ish greed of gain.
 grant, oh, grant our hope's fru - i - tion: here on earth your will be done.

Evangelical Lutheran Worship, 655

Text: Somerset C. Lowry

Music: IN BABILONE, Oude en Nieuwe Hollandse Boerenlities en Contradansen, 1710;

arr. Julius Röntgen

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2023 ANNUAL REPORT

AMERICAN LUTHERAN CHURCH

Worthington, Minnesota

Lead Pastor, Anne Hokenstad

Associate Pastor, Jeremy Hallquist

Presiding Bishop Elizabeth Eaton

The ELCA

Chicago, Illinois

Dee Peterson Bishop

SW Minnesota Synod, ELCA

Redwood Falls, Minnesota

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Annual Meeting Agenda

February 18, 2024

- | | |
|---|-------------------------------|
| 1. Call to Order | Dave Nerem |
| 2. Opening Prayer | Pastor Anne Hokenstad |
| 3. State of Our Church | Pastors and Council President |
| -Secretary's Report | |
| -Action Item: Approval of 2023 Annual Meeting Minutes | |
| 4. 2023 Financial Report | Marv Isder/ Greg Raymo |
| 5. Election of Committees | |
| -Church Council | |
| -Endowment Committee | |
| -Synod Assembly Delegates | |
| 6. New Business | |
| -Ratification of the Proposed Updated Constitution and Bylaws | Craig Pfeifer |
| -Adoption of the 2023 Budget | Marv Isder/ Greg Raymo |
| -Building Campaign/ Mortgage | Greg Raymo |
| 7. Adjournment | Dave Nerem |
| 8. Benediction | Pastor Jeremy Hallquist |

American Lutheran Church

Beginning a Meeting

CALL TO PRAYER

(The meeting leader, or the person responsible for devotions, begins the meeting by having someone light a candle and then reading the following prayerfully.)

Jesus says, "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness but will have the light of life." (John 8:12)

Lord Jesus, you also promise that where two or three come together in your name, you are there with them. The light of this candle symbolizes your presence among us now.

And, Lord Jesus, where you are, there too are the Father and the Holy Spirit. So we, your disciples, begin our meeting in the presence and in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Amen.

(The devotion leader continues with devotions, including prayer. The candle remains lit throughout the meeting to indicate the presence of our Light, Jesus.)

Ending a Meeting

CALL TO MISSION

(A brief closing prayer is in order, followed by the leader reading the following.)

We disciples conclude our meeting by listening to Jesus say to us what he said to his first disciples in his Sermon on the Mount:

"You are the light of the world. A city built on a hill cannot be hid. No one after lighting a lamp puts it under the bushel basket, but on the lampstand, and it gives light to all in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven." (Matthew 5:14-16)

(The candle is extinguished; then the leader continues.)

The light of this candle is now extinguished. But the light of Christ in each of us must continue to shine in our lives. Toward this end we pray together the Lord's Prayer:
"Our Father ..."

American Lutheran Church
Annual Meeting
Sunday, February 19, 2023
11:30am

Call to Order: 11:31am by Council President Craig Pfeifer

Determination of Quorum: Over 50 people in attendance in person or on zoom

Opening Prayer: Pastor Jeremy Hallquist

State of Our Church: Council President Craig Pfeifer

ALC has had a great year and within that year there has been many changes and difficulties that the church has had to face but we were able to adapt and make appropriate changes. ALC has shown support, gratitude, generosity, and giving.

Council President would like to thank the congregation and council for allowing him to serve as President for the past 2 years. Craig will stay on the council for 1 more year but his role as President is up.

Motion to Approve 2023 Annual Meeting Agenda: Motion by Paul Langseth, 2nd by Steve Dudley. Unanimously approved, motion carries.

Secretaries Report: Motion to approve 2022 Annual meeting minutes- Motion by Dave Nerem, 2nd by Rich Besel, unanimously approved, motion carries.

Treasurer's Report: Greg Raymo-Thank you to congregation for the financial support they have given, especially in reducing the building fund/loan. Thank you to Marv Isder and Sandy Demuth for their work in managing the movement of the funds of ALC.

2022 Financial Report-presented by Marv Isder

Box 1

Total Revenues: \$ 467,882.16 Total Expenses: \$461,740.25 Net Profit: \$6,426.91

Box 2

Debt Balance as of 1/1/2022: \$1,013,506.08 Interest Paid in 2022: \$28,698.23 Direct payments to loan: \$223,357.71 Debt balance as of 12/31/2022: \$790,148.37 To date the debt balance: \$661,448.00

Box 3

Income: \$18,157.84 Contributions: \$16,454.83 Ending Balance in account: \$1,703.01

Funds sent in supports local projects in our community. This year financial contributions were made towards the following projects: Love Inc., Helping Hands Pregnancy Center, Shetek Lutheran Camp, Project Morning Star, and ELCA World Hunger.

Motion to approve 2022 Financial Report as corrected: motion by Paul Langseth, 2nd by Harlan Handevidt. Unanimously approved, motion carries.

Election of Committee Members:

Church Council: Mike Marquardt, Mark Prunty, Jared Ahlers, Karmel Holinka, and Greg Kvilhaug

Endowment Committee: Verne Correll and Grant Sorensen

Synod Assembly Voting Members: Brenda Baerenwald, Gary Brandt, Mary Brandt, Donna Cargin, Arvid Nielsen with alternates of Gary and Lola Lindquist.

No further nominations from the floor past 3 times

Motion to approve committee members: motion by Harlan Handevidt, 2nd by Dave Nerem. Unanimously approved, motion carries.

New Business:

2023 Budget: Presented by Marv Isder

To date the loan balance is \$661,448.00. The loan balance is constantly changing as donations come in and we are paying down as rapidly as possible.

Line 1: Increased by 5% for general giving

Line 7: This has been simplified from multiple headings to 1 heading and it is all inclusive to the staff. This year all salaries will have a 5% increase per synod compensation guidelines except for the office staff which will be 2.5% due to coming on later in the calendar year.

Line 21: Insurance is projected to increase so included a 10% increase.

Line 22: Since we have recently done boiler repairs in 2022, we kept the budget around what we spend for 2022 and did not increase by 5%

Line 24: Trying to decrease the amount that is spend by using the liquid ice removal less but this will all be dependent on the weather.

Line 30: Due to the cost of natural gas we are planning on a 10% increase in cost.

Line 31: Due to the cost of utilities we are planning on a 5% increase in cost. Tried to reach out to the cities utilities but they had not had their budget meeting yet so were not able to give an estimated increase.

No questions or further discussion at this time

Motion to approve 2023 Budget: motion by Nancy Marco, 2nd by Harlan Handevitdt. Unanimously approved, motion carries.

Building Campaign/Mortgage: presented by Greg Raymo

ALC renewed their mortgage note for another 3 year at 4.5% last year and will renew again in 2025. It is likely that in 2025 if the mortgage is not paid off we will likely see a significant increase to the mortgage interest rate.

Recognitions and Gratitude's:

Thank you to the accounting volunteers: Marv Isder and Sandy Demuth for all their hard work they put into the budget each year. Thank you to Jonathan Horn our IT person that will be graduating from school, he will be close enough to continue helping ALC out with all our IT needs. Thank you to the office and staff volunteers who continue to help the pastors and take a load off their shoulders. We currently have 70 to 75 different volunteers that are helping the church out in many different ways.

Lastly, thank you to our current, out-going, and in-coming council members. Special Thanks to those council members coming off: Connie Voss, Jay Jensen, Kieth Olson, and Laurie Maras. Thank you to Mark Prunty for agreeing to another 3 years.

Adjournment:

Motion to adjourn at 12:17pm by Greg Raymo, 2nd Marj Olson. Unanimously approved, motion carries.

Benediction: Pastor Jeremy Hallquist

Special thanks from Pastor Jeremy to the congregation and the wonderful staff that the ALC has.

VISION STATEMENT OF AMERICAN LUTHERAN CHURCH

American Lutheran Church is a faith based Community doing God's work in God's world.

MISSION STATEMENT OF AMERICAN LUTHERAN CHURCH

American Lutheran Church's mission is centered on our common ministry in which we grow our community of faith through worship, study, fellowship, and serving beyond ourselves as God has directed us.

CHURCH PERSONNEL - 2023

Anne Hokenstad Lead Pastor
Jeremy Hallquist Associate Pastor
Sylvia Andersen.....Director of Worship & Music
Kristin Appel..Children & Family Ministry Coordinator
Kelly Henkels.....Office Manager
Sandy Demuth.....Accounts & Book Keeper
Marv Isder.....Financial Secretary
Nobles County DAC.....Custodians
Craig Pfeifer..... Maintenance
Karen PfeiferVolunteer Ministries Coordinator
Sylvia AndersenPianist/Organist
Cindy Anderson Pianist
Sherri Isder Pianist
Rich Besel Choir Director
Louise Clausen.....Bell Choir Director

TV & Sound

Craig Pfeifer, Jeff Carroll, Sandy Demuth,
Jonathan Horn

ALTAR

Diana Kvilhaug Chairperson
Diane Levine Deb Stoll
Karen Pfeifer Sue Rose
Marj Olson Shirley Wieme
Judi Hoevet Kathy Sackett
Connie Voss

BUDGET/FINANCE COMMITTEE

Marv Isder (2024)..... Treasurer
Dave Nerem(2024)... President
Craig Pfeifer (2024)..... Past Pres
Greg Raymo (2024) Council Rep
Scott Langerud (2025)
Pastor (ex officio)

CHURCH COUNCIL

Anne Hokenstad.....Lead Pastor
Jeremy Hallquist.....Associate Pastor
Dave Nerem (2024)..... President
Craig Pfeifer(2025)..... Vice President
Karmel Holinka (2026).....Secretary
Greg Raymo (2024).....Treasurer
Mike Marquardt (2024)
Monica Horn (2024)
Mike Peterson (2024)
Jill Cuperus (2025)
Sarah Anderson (2025)
Mark Prunty (2026)
Greg Kvilhaug (2026)
Jared Ahlers (2026)

ENDOWMENT

Randy Thompson (2023)..Chairperson/Treasurer
Craig Pfeifer (2024) Council Rep
Bruce Juber (2024)
Bob Demuth (2025)
Tammy Koller (2025)
Verne Correll (2026)
Grant Sorensen (2026)

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Pastors
Dave Nerem.....Council President
Craig Pfeifer.....Council Vice President
Karmel Holinka.....Council Secretary
Greg Raymo.....Council Treasurer

LIBRARY BOARD

Shirly Wieme (2024) Chairperson
Shirley Rempel (2025)
Kris Besel (2025)
Martha Naab (2025)
Pat Remme (2025)

MAINTENANCE

Craig Pfeifer (2024) Co-Chair
Jay Jensen (2024).....Co-Chair
Dave Nerem (2024)Council Rep
Dave Baerenwald (2024)
Les Johnson (2024)
Bruce Juber (2024)
Lyle Voss (2024)
Harlan Handevidt (2024)
Arvid Nielsen (2024)

MISSION & MINISTRY TEAM

Pam Handevidt (2024).....Co-Chair
Steve Dudley (2024).....Co-Chair
Monica Horn (2024)Council Rep
Paul Langseth (2024)
Kieth Olson (2024)
Lisa Peterson (2024)
Kathy Harbert (2025)
Deb Anderson (2025)
Jeff Carroll (2025)

NOMINATING

Dave Nerem (2024).....President
Nancy Marco (2024)
Grant Sorensen (2024)

PERSONNEL

Dave Nerem (2024)..... Council President
Craig Pfeifer (2024)Past President
Bob Demuth (2026)Chair
Lori Dudley (2024)
Pastors (ex officio)
Treasurer– Available for financial Advice

SCHOLARSHIP - American Lutheran

Kris Besel (2024)Chair
Jesse Flynn (2024)..... Treasurer
Clasine Lester (2024)Secretary

SCHOLARSHIP - Etta Janssen Memorial

Linden Olson (2024).....Chair / Treasurer
Dave Nerem (2024)..... Council Rep
Nancy Marco (2024)
Kieth Olson (2024)
Karen Juber (2024)
Arvid Nielsen (2024)

SPLASH

Shirly Wieme
Kristin Appel (staff liaison)

STEWARDSHIP

Connie Wienrank (2025).....Chair/Secretary
Karen Pfeifer..... L.W./V.C.
Kathy Sackett (2024)
Lori Ailts (2025)
Karla Kirkeby (2025)
Pat Remme (2025)
Melissa Jensen (2025)
Pastors

CHILDREN'S MINISTRY TEAM

Kristin Appel..... Advisor
Kile Behrends (2024)
Kara Honius (2024)
Sarah Browen (2024)
Sheena Eidhammer (2024)

IT Team

Sylvia Andersen	Jeff Carroll
Jonathan Horn	Craig Pfeifer

Volunteer Coordinator

Karen Pfeifer

WORSHIP & MUSIC

Diana Kvilhaug (2024) Chair/Treasurer
Shauna Carroll (2024) . Choir Rep/ President
Dan Horn (2024)..... Bell Choir Rep
Aubrey Anderson (2024)
Shirly Wieme (2025)
Mary Turner (2024)
Sherri Isder (2025)
Organists / Pianists (ex officio) Sylvia Andersen,
Cindy Anderson, Sherri Isder
Choir Directors (ex officio) Rich Besel, Louise Clausen
Mike Petersen

Report of ALC Council - President Dave Nerem

Let me begin with a heartfelt Thank You to our entire church staff. Pastors Anne and Jeremy, Kelly, Kristin, Sylvia, Marv and Sandy. Your hard work and dedication make this church a warm and caring place.

Also, I want to express a Thank You as well to all the outgoing council members. Mike Petersen, Monica Horn and Mike Marquardt. All have made significant contributions during their terms. I also have sincere appreciation for Craig Pfeifer and Greg Raymo for volunteering for another 3 year term on the council. Their leadership embraces the vision of ALC.

I view 2023 as a wave continuing to roll forward. Churches across the nation of all denominations continue to struggle to realign themselves for post COVID growth. In my mind, ALC has done very well in this aspect. Currently with 2 pastors on staff, I see Gods work being done. We the council have also advocated for a full time Youth Director position. This has been somewhat difficult to fill, but we are continually moving forward to make this happen. Hopefully, this will be accomplished in 2024 with a lot of prayers and support. Council recognizes the importance of this for the youth inside the walls of this church.

I am so amazed and grateful for all the volunteers of ALC. Things that come to my mind are, Meals on Wheels, Every Meal Program, Ushers, Communion Servers, Lunch and Supper Servers, Worship Leaders, Music Leaders, Coffee Servers. Also, those who help at weddings and funerals. The list is endless. This is an example of Gods Work Our Hands! I urge all members to be involved and say yes when asked. In the end, you will know in your heart that you made a difference.

Continued success of our church in 2024 is exciting. We all need to step forward and go where God is calling us. Let's all continue to pray and provide the necessary Time, Talents and Financial support so future generations may enjoy this church as we have had the privilege of doing.

In closing, I appreciate the opportunity to serve as Council President this past year. I have also gained deep appreciation and life changing experiences though this process. 2024 will be my final year on Council and I am grateful to have been involved the last 5 years. I have been enriched by the fellowship and friendship of fellow members.

Respectfully submitted, Dave Nerem

Pastoral Report from the Lead Pastor

To all of God's beloved Church, American Lutheran Church in Worthington, MN, who walk in the faith of Jesus as we walk with others. Recently, I came across a phrase that captured my imagination as I dwell in God's Word. The biblical commentator was reflecting on Jesus' action in the Capernaum Synagogue as he preached with a new authority and healed a worshipper kept by a destructive spirit. The commentator reflected on how *Jesus was living scripture*. This past year, I have become more aware of how *living scripture* connects us to God's promises and grounds us in the present and prepares us to move into God's future for us.

⁸*For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, ³⁹nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.* (Romans 8:38-39)

2023 began in ways I never imagined. Tending to my dying father with my siblings in 24/7 hospice care was difficult and a gift. This was followed by a sinus surgery that came with a two-week recovery timeframe. The first three months of 2023 were days in which I was separated from you and yet connect through our shared promises of Jesus Christ. It was and is a gift that provided healing grace as I mourned and recovered from a surgery that brought more complications early in the recovery journey.

²²*And God has put all things under Jesus' feet and has made him the head over all things for the church* (Eph 1:22)

A vision adopted by the 2021 Church Council has taken hold and we as a congregation are seeing this vision becoming real. Congregational structure is vital to us as an organization. Structure has the power to keep a church from vitality or nurturing it. Structure is behind our worship, team meetings, faith formation classes, Bible studies, and our mission outreach.

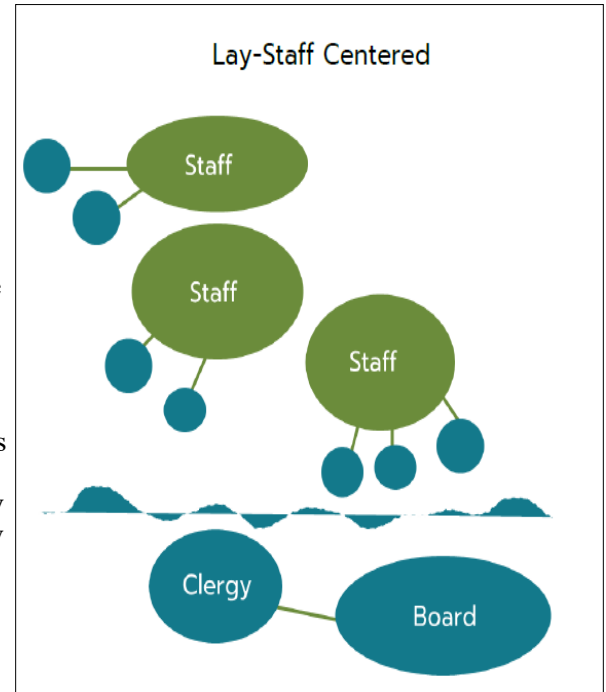
In 2021 our congregational structure was a connection of ministry silos divided with the staff and team leaders on one side and the clergy and the church council on the other. It is called the "Lay-Staff Centered Model and it comes with positives and negatives as do all organizational structures.

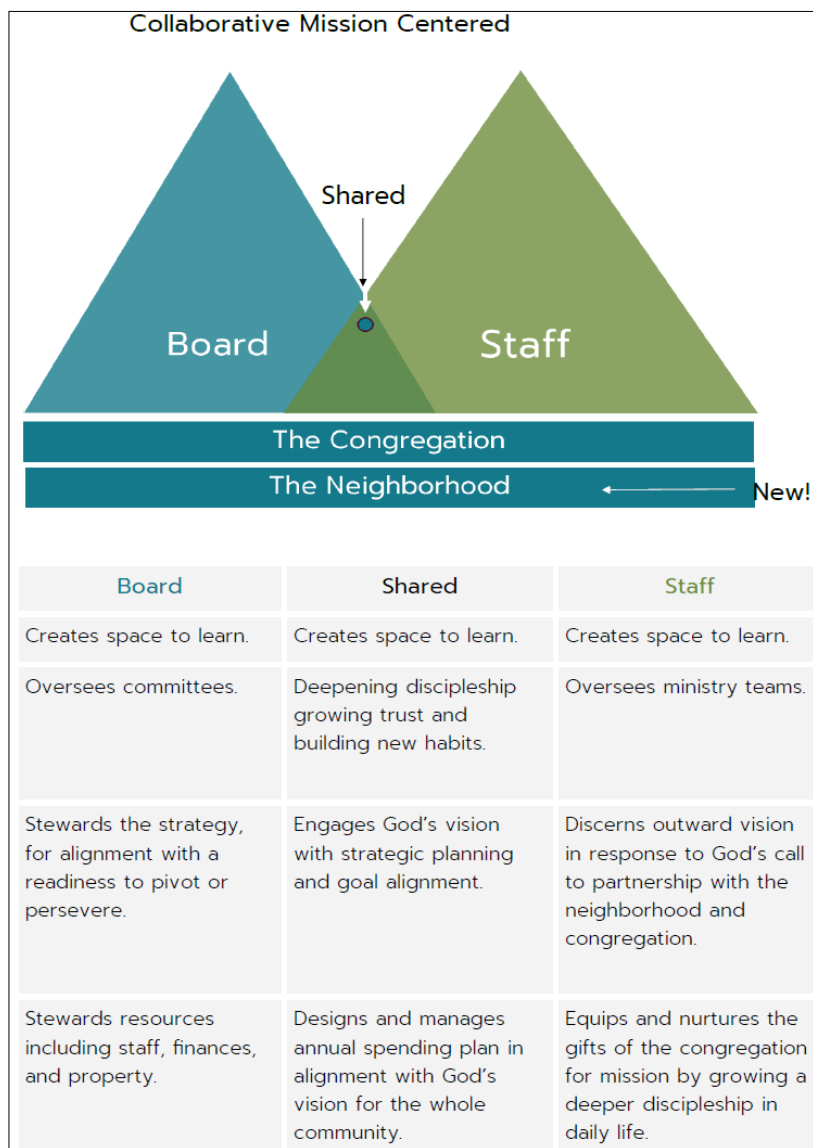
This model was one of isolation, which may have worked well in another era. In the post-pandemic reality a different structure is required to create an organization that was more nimble, adaptive, flexible, and focused on developing relationships and ministry within and beyond our church walls.

During an April 2021 morning retreat, the church council through prayer and discernment lead by Pr. Peggy Hahn, Executive Director of LEAD adopted a new structure to aid us as we live out present and live into God's future for us.

The "Collaborative Mission Centered" model of church organization (picture on the right) focuses us on Jesus' faith as we walk with others. This has been operational in the background of congregational life. It is shared at staff and council meetings. This model has moved from a vision that was "holy experiment" to a vision "that is grounded in daily reality." Please take time to compare the two models. Begin to see how you as a congregational member and a part of the neighborhood are integral to how we at ALC are participating in God's mission and ministry in this place.

During the Cottage Meetings to discuss the findings of the Congregational vitality study, I framed the results in these words of Paul to the church in Philippi: ⁸ *Finally, brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is pleasing, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence and if there is anything worthy of praise, think about ⁹ these things. ⁹ As for the things that you have learned and received and heard and noticed in me, do them, and the God of peace will be with you.* (Phil 4:8-9)





After the Cottage Meetings, I tabulated the voting from those events. Eighteen of the thirty-six values of vitality were named as important. The next step was to bring these eighteen values to the church council. Together, the council discussed and named four values as areas of ministry focus for the congregation in 2023, but more for 2024 and the next few years. The four values are 1) participation of ALC's members and friends in ministry and mission, 2) nurturing relationships and spaces of belonging to God and each other, 3) fostering faith relationships with and for children and youth, 4) being an intentionally *vision-driven* congregation.

Thank you to all who took the survey and participated in the Cottage Meetings in March and April of 2024. The Church Council will spend time in prayer and discernment at meetings and a retreat to begin to connect these values to the work we do in Jesus' name.

The Stewardship Ministry Team and I created the 2023 stewardship worship series centered on the theme from Acts 2: 42-47: *Daily they broke bread together with glad and generous hearts*. Thank you to all who are stewarding God's mysteries of good news and grace by completing the yearly commitment/pledge form. More members than any other year in recent history filled out the form indicating that you are invested and committed to the ministry and mission pathways of caring for the congregation and the neighbors as our vision.

In many ways it seems like the Stewardship Season continued into December 2023 and January 2024 with the "Double Your Impact" Debt

Reduction Ministry Campaign. Thank you to the investors that made the matching grant possible. Thank you to all the people, both in person and online givers. Thank you to all the first-time givers and those who give often. Together, we have made the reality of paying off the debt a reality that is not far off.

You will find throughout this entire annual report stories of ministry. Even work on updating the Constitution and Bylaws and our annual budget tell the story of how we walk in Jesus' faith. Thank you to those provided the leadership in these areas. Most of the stories comes from our own congregation, but there are stories represented from the Southwestern Minnesota Synod and the churchwide offices of the Evangelical Church in America. All of these stories form a network of how we as a local congregation within the global ELCA are *living scripture* as Jesus did as he walked this earth.

It is a gift and a privilege to serve and walk with you as your lead pastor. I love the work we as God's church are able to do together as we talk about Jesus and how we turn that love into compassion. I give thanks daily for the ministry team leaders and Church Council leaders for their faith and dedication to Jesus' faith. Your partnership in the Gospel of Jesus Christ keeps God's promises before me. With deep gratitude, I am aware that our staff makes it possible for me to live out my call as pastor in this place: Sylvia Andersen, Kristin Appel, Sandy Demuth, Pastor Jeremy Hallquist, Kelly Henkels, and Marv Isder, thanks be to God for you! To the Office Volunteers who weekly care for the staff and those who call or stop by the church, thank you. In 2024, may each of you know the deep love of Christ in ways that are familiar and those that are surprising!

Pastor Anne M. Hokenstad, D.Min.

Associate Pastor Annual Report

*I am about to do a new thing;
now it springs forth; do you not perceive it?
I will make a way in the wilderness
and rivers in the desert.*

~Isaiah 43:19

I've been spending a lot of time on these words of the prophet Isaiah. "I am about to do a new thing!" It has seemed like we have found our joy as a congregation this year and at each turn, new things keep popping up. I am grateful for your partnership and for the ways that God has invited each of you into the mission we share as people of faith. As I reflect on this past year there are many joys for which we hold space, many sorrows shared in conversation, and many ways that we continue to be church together.

Wednesday night Faith Formation. We've seen an increase in numbers joining us for Wednesday meals. Thanks to Karen Pfeifer and the exceptional kitchen crews we've increased our numbers of people joining us for meals to the upper 70's. Our confirmation program has welcomed friends of students each week who come to learn, share in games and laughter, and make connections with ALC. Some of these new students have even come back without their friends!

Nursing Home ministries continue to flourish. We meet the second Tuesday of the month at Golden Horizons and Meadows and average about 15-20 worshippers joining us each month for singing, prayer, a message, and Holy Communion. A special thank you to Cindy Anderson and Rich Besel for walking alongside these residents and providing their talents so others may have a place to worship.

The Busker Band has been practicing several times a week and we have added a few new instruments to the crew. While they haven't played as much as we would love, they've committed to learning and growing together as musicians and cannot wait to add their gifts to our worship life. If you would like to join them, please let us know!

With your generosity, we as a church have walked through nineteen funerals in 2022/23. Thank you to the Women of the ELCA and all who have tirelessly worked to provide meals, hospitality through greeting and ushering, set up tables and chairs, and all who helped provide a place of refuge in these difficult seasons.

The staff at ALC is exceptional. Kristin's leadership has taken off and we've seen beautiful programs at "The Barn," and through the community event Journey to Bethlehem, as well the tireless hours she spends walking alongside kids each week in Faith Formation. Sylvia keep the heart of Worship at the center of her energy and coordinates and ensures Sunday mornings go off smoothly, sometimes despite the pastors best efforts! Kelly is the glue that keeps us running smoothly. She continues to coordinate, plan, and create beautiful components of worship each week that amaze and surprise us.

I am grateful for the joy that you all share. You've been an incredibly welcoming congregation who has opened its doors wide to new ideas. Your willingness to laugh at imperfection, and hold hope in sorrow, is a powerful witness to your future. Thank you for being a part of American Lutheran, and for allowing new things to bring forth life. We continue to be grateful for your presence, nurturing, and wisdom.

God is up to new things at American Lutheran. New life is bubbling up around us. As we go forward into the future may you perceive new life around you and take the risk of jumping in!

Peace in Christ,

Pastor Jeremy Hallquist

Report of Altar Committee

The Altar Committee consists of volunteers who prepare the altar for all worship services, weddings and funerals. Responsibilities are as follows:

Fill oil burning candles, replace wicks in candle lighters as needed.

Prepare baptismal area as needed.

Do light cleaning of the altar area as needed.

Change colored altar cloths with the season.

Help out with special services as needed.

Supplies such as candle oil and baptismal candles and towels are purchased as needed. Communion supplies including wine, wafers cups and kits also are part of the Altar Committee budget.

Volunteer members of the committee are divided into three teams. Each team is responsible for four months of service on a rotating basis throughout the year.

Members of the committee in 2023 were Marj Olson, Karen Pfeifer, Shirley Wieme, Judi Hoevet, Sue Rose, Diane Levine, Deb Stoll, Connie Voss, Kathy Sackett and Diana Kvilhaug.

Financial Report:

Beginning balance	\$1,600.00
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Altar expense

Baptismal supplies	\$248.72
Liquid paraffin	\$147.10
Advent candle set	\$ 97.90

Communion expense

Wine	\$360.98
Wafers	\$227.63
Cups	\$150.19
Communion sets	\$254.93

Total expenses, December 31, 2023	\$1,487.45
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Ending balance, December 31, 2023	\$112.55
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Report of ALC Endowment Committee

2023

Committee Members in 2023

Bob Demuth	Craig Pfeifer
Verne Correll	Grant Sorenson
Bruce Juber	Randy Thompson

The committee held a meeting on January 10, 2023. A review of the ELCA Endowment Fund Pooled Trust Account was discussed. It was discussed and decided to not send any in-house funds to the ELCA Pooled account due to the down markets and the fund was losing value as it had lost \$15,692.11 in market value in 2022 and January 2023. It was tabled and decided to revisit the destinations of the in-house funds later in the year or the first part of 2024. The current in house account has a balance of \$17,254.46 as of December 31, 2023, including \$1,250.00 of funding from the congregation in 2023.

A request by the ALC Sound and Tech committee for a Control System Replacement component costing \$5,000.00 was discussed and approved by the committee.

The endowment funds are held with ELCA Endowment Pooled Funds and managed by the ELCA Endowment Fund Pooled Trust. The annual performance is listed below for the period 1/1/2023 through 11/30/2023.

ELCA Endowment Fund Pool Trust

Beginning Balance as of January 1, 2023	\$91,991.46
Additions	\$2,934.00
Withdrawals from Fund	\$ 0.00
Change in Market Value	\$5,291.78
Ending Balance	<u>\$100,217.24</u>

Respectfully Submitted,

Endowment Committee

ALC LIBRARY COMMITTEE

2023

The ALC Library Board continues to support the ministry of our church and its various ministries. These ministries include ¹the enrichment of educational programs, enhancing and assisting Bible study and BibleLand, ²helping members grow in their faith and the understanding of other faiths ³providing information on social issues from a Christian perspective, and ⁴providing spiritual support and assistance to people in times of personal need.

The Library Board members wish to thank the individuals who generously donated books to the library throughout the year. It is most appreciated! .

Our goals for 2024 include, expanding our collection of large print and audio books ,improving and expanding our library to make more readily assessable to our members, and help supporting our youth with DVD's for their fundraisers for mission trips.

The members of the library board meet as needed during the year—to improve our library.

Our expenses for 2023 are \$79.46.

Respectfully submitted,

Shirly Wieme,
Co-chair Library Board

Report of Lutheran Women

Thank you to the women who served as officers of the Lutheran Women this past year: Diana Kvilhaug (Secretary), Lori Dudley (Treasurer), Open position -(Mission Action), Diana Kvilhaug and Clasine Lester (Mission Community), Karen Pfeifer (Mission Growth), and Shirly Wieme (Recognition). These officers along with chairpersons from each of the circles made up our Executive Committee which met the six regular scheduled times throughout the year in January, March, May, July, September, and November in person. Lutheran Women's Circles met monthly for Bible study and fellowship.

Our Congregation: 2023 brought back normal committee responsibilities. Our many committees served American Lutheran by preparing the altar for worship, making banners, filling busy bags, coordinating the altar flower program, preparing and serving funerals, and maintaining the kitchen. We celebrated confirmands with a gift, the high school graduates with flowers, and continued financial support of the youth programs. We helped with ALC Youth Mission Trip, Bible School, and reduction of the building debt. We helped to collect items for Christmas Boxes and collected items for Elementary students in Worthington. Our monthly women's newsletter and annual yearbook helped keep women informed and involved. In addition members of the organization celebrated and highlighted the work of many in the church during the Thank Offering service.

Our Community: We had a Summer Salad Buffet in June, and the Christmas Salad Buffet in December. We continued with the "Sensible Scandinavian Smorgasbord" in the Fall. Since this is the main source of income for the Lutheran Women and the outreach that they fund, the support of the members of the Church was awesome! Once again we saw the God does work in wonderful ways and through the members of ALC and their generosity the funding for the organization and the outreach will continue to be strong. Because of this contributions were made to the Hospice Cottage Endowment, Helping Hands Pregnancy center, Love Inc., and the SW Crisis Center.

Our Region: We supported Shetek Lutheran Ministries annual fundraising activities. Financial contributions were also made to Project Morning Star, Shalom Hills Farm, Lutheran Social Services, Lutheran Campus Ministry of MN, and Inner City Cru.

Our World: Our quilters continued to work on beautiful quilts. The group donated to Lutheran World Relief and ELCA Work Hunger. We are still in need of a chairperson for the Mission Action Committee that works with these projects. Please consider joining our group and providing leadership and ideas for the world outreach and projects.

The Lutheran Women's Organization appreciates the support from all of the members of American Lutheran and we invite all women to take a look at all the options for service, fellowship, and fun that brings all the programs ad services to the congregation or join us for an event in 2024!

Kris Besel
Lutheran Women Chairperson

Lutheran Women Financial

Budget
Lutheran Women
American Lutheran Church
Expense Accounts

	2023 Actual year to date
Convention Expenses	
Conference Spring/Fall Offering	150.00
Con. Spring/Fall Love Offering	52.00
SW MN Synod Conv. Offering	300.00
Synod Convention Love Offering	0.00
SW MN Synod delegate registration	0.00
Officers Orientation / Travel	35.00
Nat'l Triennial gath 2023 Sept 18	150.00
Total Convention Expenses	687.00
Giving	
Missionary	600.00
Gather for Library (3 yrs) Circle books	157.50
Confirmation gifts	200.00
Bibles for youth	300.00
Camperships to Shetek Camp	500.00
Outreach 2022 & 2023	9,029.00
Shetek Quilt basket (auction)	300.00
Youth Council (Smorg. servers)	0.00
General Meeting offering to Synod	400.00
Thankoffering	2,190.00
Total Giving	13,676.50
L. W. Events/Other Expenses	
Special Events/Speakers	436.66
Other Event	38.23
Senior Graduation Recognition	0.00
Friendship Club 2023	151.84
Smorgasbord Expenses	0.00
Thankoffering speaker/mileage	0.00
Table decorations fellowship hall	0.00
Christmas Salad Buffet	77.26
Flowers: Graduation, Confirmation	100.00
Flowers: outside pots, plants	0.00
Quilter supplies/Sewing machine	439.47
Kitchen supplies / cleaning	38.05
Kitchen durable goods(funeral fund)	0.00
Nursery supplies	0.00
Yearbook cover	13.45
Busy bags	0.00
Banner expense	0.00
Funeral Expense	4.99
Postage, miscellaneous	41.50
Total Events/Other	1,341.45
TOTAL Expenses	15,704.95

Budget
Lutheran Women
American Lutheran Church

Income Accounts

	2023 Actual year to date
Circle Offering	
Special Event offering (\$400. to synod)	354.00
Esther	362.00
Martha	186.00
Mary	83.00
TOTAL	985.00
Wills, Memorials, Thrivent Choice, Quilt	474.00
Lenten freewill	109.00
Smorgasbord Fundraiser	7,409.75
Thrivent Action + Thrivent Choice	0.00
Member donations, circle books	71.00
Funeral donations (kitchen fund)	1,100.00
Misc. donations	0.00
June Salad offering	759.00
Other	0.00
Bank interest less service charge	0.00
Thankoffering	1,165.00
TOTAL	11,087.75
TOTAL Income	12,072.75

Lutheran Women
CASH RECONCILIATION

	2023 Actual year to date
Beginning Balance	26,029.24
Total Receipts	12,072.75
Subtotal	38,101.99
Total Disbursements	15,704.95
Ending BALANCE	22,397.04
Escrow:	
Kitchen Fund (Funeral Donations)	7,765.45
Friendship Club 2025	0.00
Quilters	0.00
Triennial Conv 2026	2,250.00
Wills, Gifts, Memorials	1,500.00
Other	0.00
Other	0.00
Ending Balance	10,881.59
	\$ -
Lori Dudley,	\$ -
Lutheran Women Treasurer	\$ 10,881.59

Mission and Ministry

Mission and Ministry met 7 times in 2023 to plan service projects and fellowship opportunities for our congregation.

- 1) We hosted 4 congregational potlucks, in March, July, September and December, serving between 40-80 people at each. We were involved with the set-up, serving, and clean-up at each meal.
- 2) 600 gallons of laundry detergent were prepared and delivered to the food shelves in 2023. 250 of these gallons were prepared by our committee, following our regular scheduled meetings.
- 3) We served 96 people at our Lenten Supper in March. We served a baked potato bar with chili, and many toppings. A total of \$380.00 was earned for the support of Every Meal.
- 4) We participated in the Every Meal project, with ALC sponsoring the Worthington Intermediate School, where 200 meals were distributed weekly from January to May and 171 meals weekly from Mid-September through December. We also helped register the students for Every Meal in August at the Intermediate School. We use 9-10 volunteers each week to distribute to registered students' lockers, immediately after school most Thursdays, for them to take home on Fridays for weekend meals.
- 5) We voted to resume the practice of collecting a "Noisy Offering" on the 4th Sunday of every month, beginning in November, with the collection supporting the Every Meal program.

Respectfully submitted,

Pam Handevitdt and Steve Dudley, co-chairs.

Report of ALC Scholarship Committee

American Lutheran Church

Scholarship Committee

Year 2023

ELCA Endowment Fund

Beginning Balance as of 11/30/2022 \$308,112.89

Ending Balance as of 11/30/2023 \$317,597.13

ALC Scholarship04417

Beginning Balance as of 12/31/2022 \$ 4044.17

Credits

Transfer from ELCA Endowment \$ 10,800.00

Gifts, Donations \$ 475

Total Credits \$ 15319.17

Expenditures

Scholarships Awarded

Kalea Appel \$ 1,350.00

Dylan Graff \$ 2,700.00

Konnor Honius \$ 2,700.00

Alec Langerud \$ 2,700.00

Dalen Schultz \$ 1,350.00

Total Expenditures \$ 10,800.00

Ending Balance as of 12/31/2023 \$ 4519.17

Minimum deposit to the ELCA Endowment Fund is \$2,000. Whenever the scholarship line item balance exceeds \$2,000, a deposit of \$2,000 is made.

If year-end balance of the ELCA Endowment Fund has increased from the previous year-end balance – dis-pense 4.5% or more.

If year-end balance of the ELCA Endowment Fund has decreased from the previous year-end balance – dis-pense 4.0% or less.

REPORT of the ETTA JANSSEN MEMORIAL LUTHERAN COLLEGE and SEMINARY

ENDOWMENT FUND COMMITTEE for 2023

The estate of Etta Janssen (1895-1973) established this scholarship in 1975. The expressed desire of Etta was that the fund be perpetual and be used for no other purpose than scholarships for seminary and Lutheran college students. The amount to be used for scholarships each year cannot exceed the interest and investment earnings generated. Funds received during the year specifically designated for current distribution are combined with other monies in the fund but are accounted for separately from the fund principle. Funds received during the year that are not designated for current distribution are added to the fund principle.

Scholarship applicants must be a current member in good standing of ALC, have completed one year of college and be enrolled full time in a college or seminary of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. Each applicant may receive scholarships for up to three years with and additional three years if preparing for full time church work.

Members of this committee for 2023 were: Karen Juber, Keith Olson, Nancy Marco, Linden Olson and Dave Nerem (Council Representative).

Financial Statement

First State Bank SW	Balance 01-01-2023	\$ 20,745.46
	Contributions in 2023	\$ 1,370.00
	Net Earnings 2023	<u>\$</u>
	TOTAL CREDITS	\$ 22,115.46
	Debits	
	Scholarships Paid during 2023	<u>\$ 00.00</u>
	TOTAL DEBITS	\$ 00.00
	Bank Balance 12-31-2023	\$ 22,115.46

ELCA Endowment Fund Pooled Trust	Balance 12-31-2022	\$ 57,571.58
	Market value change 1-01-2023 to 12-31-2023	\$ -5,548.28
	Earnings 1-01-2023 to 12-31-2023	<u>\$ 2,407.70</u>
	TOTAL VALUE 12-31-2023	\$ 64,286.96

TOTAL VALUE ALL FUNDS **\$ 86,402.42**

NOTES:

There have been approximately \$112,000 in scholarships paid since the inception of this fund.

Scholarships granted are not all paid out for the school year granted. Matching grants from the colleges may be awarded if paid in the next year. Ex. Part of a scholarship granted for a student in 2022 for the school year 2022-2023 may not be paid until the 2nd semester that begins in 2023.

Since the account for this fund was moved to the general fund account in 2022 no interest earned has been credited to this account.

The December 31st value was used for the ELCA Endowment Fund Pooled Trust was used for the first time this year because the value was available at the time this report was due. The November 30th value was used in previous years/

Submitted by the Etta Jansen Scholarship Committee

Report of the Nominating Committee – February 2024

Members of the Nominating Committee have one-year terms:

Dave Nerem	Council Chair
Nancy Marco	Congregational member-at-large
Grant Sorensen	Congregational member-at-large
Karen Pfeifer	Facilitator

The Nominating Committee has two functions:

To prepare the ballot for election at the congregation's Annual Meeting for the positions of Church Council, Endowment Committee and Synod Assembly Voting Members (listed below.)

To recommend committee appointments to Church Council for their approval.

Below is the ballot as prepared by the Nominating Committee for election at the Annual Meeting on Sunday, February 18, 2024:

CHURCH COUNCIL

Harlan Handevitd	3-year term	2027
Laura Hoffman	3-year term	2027
Craig Pfeifer	second 3-year term	2027
Greg Raymo	second 3-year term	2027

ENDOWMENT COMMITTEE

Nancy Marco	3-year term	2027
Bruce Juber	second 3-year term	2027

SYNOD ASSEMBLY VOTING MEMBERS – June 7 and 8, 2024 at Gustavus in St. Peter – hybrid

Jocelyn Horn
Monica Horn
Arvid Nielsen
Pam Handevitd
Harlan Handevitd

Alternates

Donna Cargin
Shirly Wieme

Report of STEWARDSHIP COMMITTEE

Committee members for 2023 were: Pastor Anne Hokenstad, Pastor Jeremy Hallquist, Connie Wienrank, Karla Kirkeby, Kathy Sackett, Lori Ailts, Melissa Jensen and Pat Remme. We met monthly on the second Tuesday evening of each month.

“Because of You” articles were written for the monthly newsletters to help members be aware of the many activities that were accomplished because of their involvement and dedication. Topics were highlighted such as church office volunteers, Manna Food Pantry participation, ALC’s assistance to the Intermediate School through the Every Meal program and donation of classroom supplies, involvement in Wednesday night meals and cleaning of the Fellowship Hall floor and chairs.

The **“Manna Food Pantry”** drive was conducted during March and received \$9,564 through special envelopes and Lenten offerings. The Worthington Regional Health Care Foundation matched our gift by 100%, creating a total contribution of \$19,128. Thank you to all who contributed!

Easter Plant Delivery was held on April 1 as ALC focused on members who had suffered loss of loved ones, who had endured health issues and who had mobility issues. About 30 kalanchoe plants and handmade cards were delivered to members’ homes by volunteers. Cards were signed by the pastors. Thanks to all who participated!

Time and Talent Sheets were mailed out in May, inviting members to indicate which areas of ministry they would like to participate in, such as ushering, preparing Communion, assisting with Faith Formation, etc. Thank you to those who offered to help with all areas of ministry!

The Stewardship theme was selected based on Acts 2:43-47: **Day by day, they broke bread together with glad and generous hearts.** The theme was implemented in many ways throughout November – in bulletins, newsletters, sermons, banner, bread-making classes, music and power point slides. A month-long devotional was printed with daily readings written by ALC members.

Stewardship Sunday was celebrated on Sunday, November 19. Members returned their financial commitment forms for 2024. Every worshipper was given a votive candle decorated with the stewardship banner image. Between services the Stewardship Committee hosted a brunch complete with homemade cinnamon rolls, egg bake and fruit.

The Sharing Trees and Christmas Plant Program continues to be a popular Christmas project enabling poinsettias and handmade cards to be signed by the pastors and delivered to 45 members experiencing long-term health issues, mobility issues and loss of loved ones. Poinsettias were delivered to members’ homes on December 16 by volunteer drivers. Members selected large paper stars off the Sharing Tree in the narthex, then included the \$10 in the attached envelope to help pay for the plants. Stars on the small Sharing Tree generated baby items which will be donated to Helping Hands Pregnancy Center for use by their clients after the New Year. Thank you to all who participated!

Thank you to members of ALC for reading the articles prepared by the Stewardship Committee, for participating in the projects coordinated by the committee, for completing Time and Talent Sheets and commitment sheets, and for being faithful stewards every day of the year.

Report of Worship and Music Committee

Committee members for 2023 were Aubrey Anderson, Rich Besel, Shauna Carroll, Sherri Isder, Diana Kvilhaug, Mary Turner, Council Rep Mike Peterson, Sylvia Andersen and Pastors Anne Hokenstad and Jeremy Hallquist. The committee met a total of 9 times using a combination of in person and hybrid formats.

In addition to providing regular worship materials with a managing budget and aiding the review of the worship experience, it is the intent of the committee to provide support and encouragement to all staff involved in organizing and enhancing worship.

Three worship times and styles are available each week using in person, livestream and FM 88.3 radio options: Wednesday at 6:30 p.m. – Koinonia worship; Sunday at 8:00 a.m. – First Word worship; Sunday at 10:15 a.m. – Journey worship. Each of these services use the same scripture with a different approach to give congregation members a choice of worship. On the Sunday mornings of December 24th and 31st, one 9:00 a.m. worship service was held. From Memorial Day to Labor Day, the 10:15 a.m. worship time changes to 10:00 a.m.

Three special “Summer Celebration Series” worship services were held this year. Each of these services was held at 10:00 a.m. followed by a meal. Sunday, June 25th was scheduled at the Downtown Pavillion, however windy, rainy weather caused the service and meal to be held at the church. Sunday, July 16th Worship at the Lake was scheduled at Centennial Park, but due to poor air quality, the service and meal were held at the church. The third special and meal, At the Barn, was held at Al and Janice Oberloh’s Barn Event Center on Sunday, August 27th. All services were supported by this committee and were well attended! Free will offerings were collected at each service to aid in the support of a Youth Director position.

The committee set the following goals for 2024:

- To provide quality TV, radio and online ministry, including updating software, for those not attending worship in person.
- To continue to encourage youth as well as adult participation in worship services.
- To continue to encourage participation in musical groups and encourage individual musicians to enhance the praise of our worship.
- To pursue the idea of hosting an online Sunday worship service at The Meadows and Golden Horizon facilities to give residents a sense of worshipping together with us on Sundays.

The committee will continue to pursue new worship avenues and promote being a warm and caring congregation, welcoming all and sharing Gods love as commanded. We look forward with faith and hope, trusting the Father, Son and Holy Spirit to guide our path into the year ahead!

Expense Summary – beginning balance		\$3600.00
Expenses	Worship resources & supplies	\$2478.19
	Summer Celebrations expenses	\$1769.59
	License	\$529.00
	Piano tuning	\$306.50
Total expenses		\$5083.28
Deposit from Lenten Books		\$199.00
Ending balance		-\$1284.28

Annual Report for the 2023 Calendar Year

Worship/Music Ministries and Technology Ministry

The 2023 year has brought continued growth and positive changes!

In the **worship/music** areas, the “Busker Band” is blossoming with a very committed group of young folks. They share their worship leading in a limited schedule. An electronic drum kit was recently purchased as an addition to the resources for this group.

Our 6:30 Wednesday Worship, “Koinonia”, is held most Wednesdays from September through May. The Koinonia experience continues to flourish and begins with a meal, followed by worship and then faith formation opportunities for all ages. All ages of friendly faces serve the meal. Our younger families are embracing this mid-week worship service as it offers them a worship opportunity other than the weekend which is heavily scheduled for most families. The younger folks are volunteering to lead worship elements and man the sound booth. It is a joy to be a part of the energy that this informal worship brings!

Our Sunday morning worship services have been a mix of tradition-based worship and some newer styles and resources. We offered several ‘sermon series’ that extended our comfort zones a bit! Special worship experiences during the year included: Ash Wednesday, Holy Week services including Maundy Thursday worship and Good Friday Stations in open house style, three Easter Festival Worship services, Pentecost, Reformation & Confirmation, All Saints Sunday, Thanksgiving Eve, Longest Night, and three Christmas Eve worship services.

We continued our tradition of holding an outdoor worship service in the park during the summer and expanded on worshipping beyond our walls. Unfortunately, this year the weather did not cooperate! June’s worship was planned to be held at the downtown pavilion but needed to move back to our sanctuary due to a rainy, windy, very chilly morning; July’s worship at Centennial Park also had to be held at the church building but this time because of very poor air quality; but, thankfully, the August worship at The Barn could be held as planned!

Another beloved tradition that continues is the Wednesday Lenten services with Evening Prayer services and, of course, the Lenten meal before the service.

Updates on our music groups: The ‘small but mighty’ Chancel Choir under Rich Besel’s leadership has re-grouped and is now titled “Voices of Praise”. They currently are scheduled three times throughout the church year with limited, targeted practice sessions. As hoped, this has allowed more singers to participate! The Bell Choir directed by Louise Claussen rehearses on a regular basis and when possible, shares in worship once a month. The choir consists of a core of ALC members and is often enhanced with community folk as substitutes. We were able to assemble an Instrumental Group for Christmas Eve in 2023. In addition, many musicians were able to assist and enhance our three Christmas Eve services.

Our faithful group of worship leaders consists of Aubrey Anderson, Kris Besel, Rich Besel, Ellie Hallquist, Dan Horn, Jocelyn Horn, and Karla Kirkeby. The leaders from the piano and/or organ are Cindy Anderson, Sherri Isder, and Sylvia Andersen. The Busker Band assists whenever possible.

In May, we had the honor of hosting the Inaugural Concert for WAYO – Worthington Area Youth Orchestra – under the leadership of Zac Paulsen and Morgan Rukstales. The concert was held in the sanctuary with an after-concert social time in the Gathering Room. Our facility proved to be a very concert-friendly venue. Opening our doors to the community for hosting events was one of the goals of the remodel.

The **technology team** has been busy upgrading and maintaining the equipment under their care. Currently, a project to enhance the livestream and recording capabilities is underway. Fun fact: The original installation of this sound system was happening at this time ten years ago! Remember how we watched the booth area take shape under the guidance of RDI and our woodworkers who repurposed several pews for use? The original pew ends with the engraved crosses were incorporated into the design, too! We began using the system in worship in early February of 2014.

Worship services rest on the shoulders of MANY volunteers from Greeters and Ushers to Readers to Musicians to Communion preppers and servers along with many other roles. If at any point, you feel the nudge to participate in this area of ministry, please contact either of the Pastors or myself.

We have often commented that even on our 'bad days', we are blessed to have the support of the entire congregation through volunteering and/or financial support! This is noticed and we are so grateful for this solid foundation. We thank you from the bottom of our hearts!

In conclusion, Colossians 3:16-17 sums up our year beautifully (emphasis mine): *¹⁶ Let the word of Christ^[a] dwell in you richly; teach and admonish one another in all wisdom; and with gratitude in your hearts sing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs to God.^[b] ¹⁷ And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.*

Respectfully submitted,
Sylvia Andersen, ALC Staff

Children & Family Annual Report 2023

Mission:

To provide meaningful opportunities for children and their families to grow in their faith together.

2023 Year-In-Review

50 students are registered for Faith Formation this year. Sunday mornings offer a traditional Sunday school setting, with **15-25 students** who attend regularly. Wednesday's Ignite class – focusing on God's amazing world, through science-based lessons – engages **15-20 kids** each week, and often includes a couple non-ALC kids, invited by friends.

Through the continued generosity of Lutheran Women, we presented **21 Bibles** to **4** preschoolers, **8** first graders, and **9** third graders. Third graders also attended a Bible orientation class in October. In December, **4** of our fifth-grade students made chalices in preparation for their First Communion.

Children & Family Ministry strives to engage kids (and their families) in meaningful ways. In the span of a year, we offer **26** Sunday school lessons, **22** (Wednesday night) "Ignite" lessons, **3** Inter-generational events, **1** community-wide event, and a VBS option. This year, for VBS, we teamed up with **4** local churches to provide a "Community Kids Camp" hoping to reach area kids who normally do not attend VBS programming. We registered **90 students**, with about **75 students** attending each evening. We served an average of **110 meals** per evening.

Our Fall Festival – at The Barn – treated **75 guests** to a fall-themed meal, followed by crafts, games, scarecrow decorating, and a scavenger hunt. To kick off Advent, we hosted a community-wide Journey to Bethlehem event, welcoming **124 guests** into "Bethlehem" to share in the hope and joy of the season. The following Sunday, **35 additional guests** traveled through the stations. This event was the epitome of "intergenerational", and we hope to offer it again.

Children's Ministry requires many hands! Thank you to the **7 teachers** who rotate, to lead Sunday school, each week, and the many volunteers who help with events. The Journey to Bethlehem event, alone, required **19 station leaders**, **3 set-up volunteers**, and **12 people** on the tear-down team.

***A gigantic thank you** to all who give of your time, energy, and talents to make Children's Ministry happen. And to those who support Children's Ministry, financially...
With your help and God's wisdom, we can discern new paths to
nurture faith, fellowship, and service.*

Report of Coordinator of Volunteer Ministries

Our Stewardship theme, *“Day by day they broke bread together with glad and generous hearts,”* describes the sense of community and concern for each other which the early Christians demonstrated. The verses prior to this account in Acts 2:43-47, also describe how the believers voluntarily combined their resources and shared them with those who were needy. Do you suppose they designated a small group to collect and count the offerings which were so generously given? Certainly someone in the early Church was accountable for counting, recording and handling the funds appropriately!

Are YOU willing to be such a person in our congregation now over 2,000 years later?

At ALC, we call these members who count, record and handle the funds appropriately the **FINANCIAL COUNTERS**. We respect and trust these folks who demonstrate accountability, confidentiality, timeliness, accuracy and uniformity with our offerings. AND we could use more of them! Perhaps you are willing to join the work of the counters?

What are the Counters’ responsibilities?

Counters are divided into teams of four typically, and each team is responsible for handling the offering three months of the year with one member serving as captain.

In the church building, they count the offering either on Sundays or Mondays.

They add up the offerings, double check their work and complete the provided summary sheet using the suggested practices.

A deposit slip is prepared and taken to the bank by the captain.

They maintain confidentiality about offerings received.

THANK YOU to our current financial counters!

<u>Team 1</u>	<u>Team 2</u>	<u>Team 3</u>	<u>Team 4</u>
Jean Bastian	Scott Langerud	Donna Cargin	Linden Olson
Nancy Marco	Heidi Langerud	Pam Handevitd	Grant Sorensen
Pat Remme	Maynard Townswick	Diane Levine	Dave Skog
Mary Turner	Jeanene Townswick		Karen Skog

Does this sound like an opportunity for YOU?

As you can see, having an accounting background is not a requirement! What IS required is a willingness to share your time and to assist in the appropriate handling of offerings. The goal is to increase the size of the teams so that work is distributed among more members. Please know that absences are inevitable. *Are you able to answer this call?*

If so, please contact me (karenpfeifer351@gmail.com or 360-1361) or contact the church office (376-5264). *Thank you for your willingness in 2024!*

CONGREGATION REPORT

FOR THE YEAR ENDING DECEMBER 31, 2023

FORM A

This report should be filed online. Connect to the website (ELCA.org/congregationreport) and enter your congregation's ID and password (printed below). If you are unable to file electronically, complete this paper form and return it to your synod office by March 1, 2024.

Latest report on file: 2022

1. Baptized membership at end of 2022

2. Baptized members received during 2023

- a. By baptism: children (15 yrs. and younger).....
- b. By baptism: adults (16 yrs. and older).....
- c. By affirmation of faith.....
- d. By transfer.....
- e. From other sources and statistical adjustment.....
- f. Total members received this year.....

	1574
9	
0	
3	
8	
0	
	+ 20
17	
3	
0	
	- 20
	= 1574

3. Baptized members removed during 2023

- a. By death.....
- b. By transfer.....
- c. For other reasons and statistical adjustment.....
- d. Total members removed this year.....

4. Baptized membership, end of 2023

5. Total confirmed membership, end of 2023 1416

6. Number of baptized youth who were confirmed in 2023 3

7. In 2023, the number of weeks this congregation worshipped:

- a. On-site (in person) 52
- b. Online (via streaming) 52

8. Average weekly worship attendance in 2023:

- a. On-site (in person) 186
- b. Online (via streaming) 330

9. Total number of people (including children) actively participating in the life of the congregation in 2023 315

10. Race/ethnic origin of ACTIVE PARTICIPANTS. Must equal active participants on line 9:

African American/Black	African National/African Caribbean	American Indian/Alaska Native	Arab/Middle Eastern	Asian/Pacific Islander	Latino/Hispanic	Multiracial	White	TOTAL
1	0	0	0	0	0	15	299	315

Verify the following congregation information (items 11-15 and the congregation's mailing address). Corrections can be made below or online at ELCA.org/tools/updatecongregation.

11. Phone: (507) 376-5264

12. Fax:

13. Email: office@worthingtonalc.org

14. Website: http://www.worthingtonALC.org

15. Location address describes where the church or place of worship is physically located. This may differ from the mailing address, but must identify a street name.

American Lutheran Church
915 Winifred St
Worthington, Minnesota 56187-1554

Congregation's mailing address
American Lutheran Church
915 Winifred St
Worthington, MN 56187-1554

If you do not file electronically, return Form A to the synod office at:
Southwestern Minnesota Synod, ELCA
PO Box 499
Redwood Falls, MN 56283-0499

16. Languages in which this congregation regularly conducts liturgies (make 1 the most-used language, 2 the next most-used language, etc.). Do not include languages used for special services or by others using the building.

1) English 3) _____
2) _____ 4) _____

17. What assistance does this congregation provide to people with disabilities? (check all that apply)

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Wheelchair access throughout the building(s) | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Sign language interpreters |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Braille worship materials and signage | <input type="checkbox"/> Mental health ministries |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Large print worship materials | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Ministry with people with developmental/intellectual disabilities |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Assistive devices for the hard of hearing | <input type="checkbox"/> Specialized faith formation for children or adults (ADHD, autism, dyslexia, etc.) |

INFORMATION ABOUT THIS CONGREGATION'S FINANCIAL STEWARDSHIP (Please round all figures to nearest dollar. Omit cents. The Financial Stewardship Worksheet included in the packet provides specific descriptions of each line item.)

18. Receipts during 2023

a. Regular giving	\$ 441,637
b. Designated giving	\$ 15,200
c. Earned income (any source)	\$ 0
d. Grants (any source)	\$ 0
e. All other receipts	\$ 41,124
f. TOTAL RECEIPTS	\$ 497,961

19. Assets as of December 31, 2023

a. Church real estate	\$ 8,500,000
b. Endowment and memorial funds	\$ 0
c. Cash, savings, bonds, etc.	\$ 246,571
d. All other assets	\$ 5,868
e. TOTAL ASSETS	\$ 8,752,439

20. Total indebtedness as of Dec. 31, 2023

\$ 578,848

21. Budgeted/projected 2024 Mission Support

\$ 50,000

22. Gifts from the estates of deceased individuals received during 2023

a. Number of gifts received	3
b. TOTAL VALUE of gifts received	\$ 60

23. Disbursements during 2023

a. Current operating expenses	\$ 449,703
b. Capital improvements	\$ 0
c. Payments on debts	\$ 240,724
d. Mission Support (regular synod benevolence)	\$ 33,641
e. Other benevolence sent directly to the synod (for any synod or churchwide appeal including ELCA World Hunger, Lutheran Disaster Response, Missionary Sponsorship, etc.)	\$ 13,867
f. Other benevolence sent directly to the churchwide organization (for any churchwide appeal including ELCA World Hunger, Disaster Response, Missionary Sponsorship, etc.)	\$ 0
g. Benevolence sent directly to any of the following:	
1. An activity in another country including a missionary, a congregation, a companion synod, a hunger program, disaster response, etc.	\$ 0
2. Camps	\$ 700
3. Campus ministry	\$ 0
4. Colleges	\$ 0
5. Seminaries	\$ 0
6. Social service group, agency, or institution	\$ 0
h. All other benevolence sent directly to the recipient	\$ 0
i. Other expenses and realized losses	\$ 0
j. TOTAL DISBURSEMENTS	\$ 738,635



Shetek Lutheran Ministries

14 Keeley Island Dr.

Slayton, MN 56172

(507)-763-3567

camp@shetek.org

www.shetek.org

Executive Director – Marv Nysetvold

Program Director – Lexie Blaschko

Greetings from your camp – Shetek Lutheran Ministries!

This summer we served 770 total campers, which includes our youth campers, cross-generational campers and our SOS campers. We are close to serving as many campers as before the pandemic. 2023 was a 24% increase in camper numbers over 2022 and about 94% of the campers we had in 2019. One of our greatest challenges continues to be finding young adults who are willing to serve for the summer. Our summer ministry team of 20 young adults served faithfully this summer and grew in their faith and in their leadership skills. We were blessed with 7 international counselors this past summer from the United Kingdom, Jamaica, Zambia, Mexico, Zimbabwe and two from South Africa. Shetek will be inviting several international counselors in 2024 also.

Our "Building on the Foundation" capital campaign continues with primarily the congregational phase. Several congregations have run successful campaigns in their congregations so far. We will be contacting all our 100 member congregations to give them the opportunity to participate. We continue to visit with prospective major donors, those who give or pledge \$5,000 or more for the campaign. We have met our phase 1 goal of \$1,500,000 and our total so far in cash and pledges is about \$1,613,000 as we work towards our challenge goal of \$2,000,000. The new lodge is done and is being used by a variety of different groups from scrapbooking groups, Scout groups, family gatherings and college students. The Property Committee and Board are working on plans for the first new cabin and we hope to begin construction in the spring.

Some improvements in 2023 – we upgraded the sound system in the chapel, replaced the reverse osmosis system in the Dining Hall, had to replace the motor on the pontoon, repaired the east wall of the chapel and painted it, painted 3 cabins along with the office, and removed several trees.

I am thankful for our year round staff who continue to work as a team to serve our guests and campers and provide great hospitality. Shetek welcomed Gaelyn Gernentz in March to our Housekeeping team, Deb Ness in June to our Summer Food Service, Joe Koenigs in June to our Maintenance team, and Alexandra Cowell began in September on our Housekeeping team.

We are so grateful for the many campers and guests that came this year. Shetek has impacted so many lives over the years. One of our Counselors in Training (CIT) had this to say about last summer.

"I feel closest to God when I am at camp. I consider camp to be my second home during the summer. This summer, I felt called and was able to have the opportunity to spend about 6 weeks volunteering at camp and I learned a lot. I learned how to respond to stressful situations better, I was able to make, renew, and grow friendships, and I strengthened my leadership skills by helping lead activities like games, worship, reading scripture, and more. I feel that I grow in my faith on a deeper level and grow closer to God everyday there."

Shetek continues to receive estate gifts periodically, which we are very thankful for. Over the years, these thoughtful gifts have really benefitted the ministry at Shetek. If you're interested in finding out more about how to support Shetek in this way, please let us know. We have access to a gift planner at no cost to our donors.

Thank you for your support and prayers!

Marv Nysetvold, Executive Director

Shetek's Board of Directors in 2023 – Ashley Benson, Lindsey Cartwright, Tyler Egge, Pastor Bailey Landa, Logan Gooch, Sarah Kirchner, Pastor Jeanette McCormick, Leon Mortland, Pastor Elizabeth Pagnotta, Pastor Juanita Parker, Pastor Michael Stangeland.

Shetek's staff in Dec. 2023 – Lexie Blaschko, Sandy Carlson, Tom Carlson, Katie Chapman, Alexandra Cowell, Nora Dahlhoff, Michelle Flanagan, Gaelyn Gernentz, Sharon Haugen, Mike Kastner, Joe Koenigs, Jean Larson, Deb Ness, Marv Nysetvold, Jessica Van Dam, Jane Wahl.

In 2023, We Celebrated the Baptisms of : Drake Getting, Brooklyn Klosterman, Lainey Maurer, Morgan Clausen, Kaylee Clausen, Anthony Yanez, Lincoln Eshleman, Lillian Kramer, Zion Ordaz

In 2023, We Celebrated the Confirmations of : Jesse Ling, Lucas Hohenstein, Gracie Dickman

We Welcomed New Members: Cindy Scott, Matt, Steph, Rylan, Ellie & Bella Fletcher, Richard & Sarah Lehman

We Celebrated New Marriages of: Blake & Myah Schroeder

We Mourned the Loss of These Loved Ones: Rich Pederson, Janet Haugen, Jill Herreid, Betty Herreid, Todd Herreid, Jim Larson, Darwin "Joe" Johanson, Martin Aaser, Nick Williams, Mavis Hoffman, Jo Strube, Mel Hamman, Dorothy Hoeft, Gloria Lindquist, Dorothy Koehn, Frank Hanbury

On December 31, 2023, our total baptized membership was 1574. Our total confirmed membership at year end was 1416.

*Marriage of non-members held at American Lutheran Church.

**Marriage of members held elsewhere with an American Lutheran Church pastor officiating.

***Memorial services were held elsewhere.





*For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ.....
Now you are the body of Christ and individually members of it. – 1 Cor. 12.*

One of the great joys of my call is to visit the congregations across this synod. Our territory includes vast plains, rich agricultural land, hilly vistas, quiet lakes, and powerful rivers. God planted our congregations in cities, open farmland, and towns. We are very different from each other; yet in Jesus Christ, we all are one.

As we've journeyed together this year, we have been united by focusing on the WORD: Jesus - the Word-made-flesh, and the word of Scripture – as the source and center of our lives.

- **Embody the Word.** Synod Assembly 2023 brought over 365 voting members together in-person for the first time in 4 years! We rejoiced to sing again in Christ Chapel, passed the 2025 budget, and elected new leaders. And plenary speaker Matt Bloom helped us consider wholistic wellness in daily life.
- **Serving the Word Today.** Rostered ministers gathered for the Fall Theological Conference and considered how the Word is served (our calling to serve Christ) and how we deliver or serve-up the Word to people in our presiding and preaching. Presenter Jason Moore provided insights that can transfer in some way to all of our congregations, as we serve the Word both in-person and online in our both/and world today.
- **Living the Word Today.** Equipping Congregations Day 2023 gathered participants at Vinje Lutheran in Willmar to discover ministry resources – from stewardship to hospitality – to take back home. Luther Seminary Professor Rolf Jacobson led participants to look for the gifts of the Holy Spirit who is at loose in our world today.

Those actions – **Embody, Serving, and Living the Word Today** - provide the framework for reviewing this year and leaning into the next.

Embody the Word

Thank you for the way you, as beloved children of God, embody the word in your congregations and daily callings. You are engaging in ministry that is vital to the lives of your participants and the larger community. Although many of us are still exhausted from pandemic adaptations, congregations are emerging from these difficult years with a clearer sense of who we are and what God is calling us to be and do today. The dedication of our church leaders to ministries of word and sacrament and serving, to compassion, mercy, and justice - has never been greater.

As we review the past year, one place to turn is the numbers. No, it's not all about the numbers, but trends do tell a story, whether in our households, businesses, or congregations. A synod's responsibility is to note the trends occurring among our congregations because these numbers represent real people, hearing the story of God's love in Jesus Christ.

The most recent statistical summary for congregations comes from the annual reports you completed for 2022. Of the 229 congregations in the SW MN Synod in 2022, 166 filed an annual report; 63 filed no report. When the annual report information comes to you in January, please direct the info to others in your congregation who can assist. Talk with your Church Council about the trends you are seeing. Return the form. And then know you have helped us reach a target of 100% responses this year! Thank you!

For numbers-lovers

	2021	2022
Baptized members:	100,421	97,689
Ave. baptized/cong.	439	428
Baptisms age 16+	13	24
Affirmation of Faith	290	353
Transfer in	862	1093
Baptized Received	2,207	2,594
Active Participants	48,944	48,875
Ave. wkly worship on-site	10,662	12,918
Ave. wkly. worship online	14,326	9,554
Ave. att. per cong. on-site	55	64
Ave. att per cong. online	103	70



What stories do those figures tell? There is the cultural trend of fewer people connecting with a faith community. But these numbers also represent stories of outreach as adults are welcomed through Holy Baptism as hospitality is extended and new members are received, and as people are drawn to worshipping together both in the room and online.

Generosity

We know there is great generosity in our congregations! Although earned income for congregations was challenged last year everywhere, regular giving and other receipts increased. Over the pandemic years, many congregations held special appeals to upgrade technology – what a gift!

You have an impact on human lives every day. Each week in the announcements, try telling a brief story about one of your ministries. Share a photo on a screen. Thank people for their generosity and the difference they are making. If you are looking for resources to help affirm your people's generosity, check out the synod website under the "Generosity" tab! (<https://swmnelca.org/congregations/generosity-stewardship/>)

Thank you for the generous Mission Support you shared in 2022. Although current 2023 figures won't be known until after the fiscal year ends January 31, we have seen a significant decrease in Mission Support this year. Why? We know that the cushion of PPP money is used up. Everything costs more. Some of our congregations' most generous givers are passing away or face high costs for elder care. And there is the tendency that when faced with financial challenges, congregations choose to direct funds close to home. Whatever the reason, we will continue to wisely steward the resources we receive and are committed to prioritizing providing pastoral care of congregations and rostered ministers. Like you, we know that challenges can also lead to doing things in new ways, and we trust in God's creative Spirit as we plan for the future. Thank you for your generosity.

If you have not yet sent in a Mission Support contribution for this year, will you please consider a gift yet in January? And if you have not yet returned a Mission Support Intent form for 2024, please do so. We are deep in planning the 2026 budget that will be presented at the 2024 Synod Assembly, and your planning will help us do our best planning, as well. Thank you!

Serving the Word Today

Thanks be to God for all the Lay and Rostered Ministers leading our congregations today. They are serving Jesus and serving the Visible and Spoken Word to people in worship in this synod and far beyond. Our synod includes 300 rostered ministers, half of whom hold active calls in congregations, specialized calls, and synod calls.



This year, we celebrated the ordination of 5 new pastors: Rev. Chad Duffy, Rev. Mort Meyenberg, Rev. Stefan Swanson, Rev. Bob Ossefoort, and Rev. Sarah Zender. We consistently welcome more rostered ministers to this great synod than we see move away.

One of the greatest challenges for congregations and synods today is securing rostered minister leaders who can “serve the Word” in their context. Today, seminaries are seeing approximately half the number of enrollments they did 15 years ago. The good news is that congregations are embracing the gifts of their people and becoming less pastor-dependent than we were. The other piece of good news is that more lay leaders are sensing the Holy Spirit nudging them to consider part- or full-time ministry – often as a second career; and they are bringing incredible skills and life experiences into these new callings today.

TODAY, I pray that God will “send laborers” into this new and changing vineyard of ministry. My mentor, Rev. Dick Vangerud, often spoke of an initiative of our predecessor church body (The American Lutheran Church) called, “Men for the Ministry.” Yes, back in the 1960s, the initiative was only about “men” for the ministry! But back then, congregations prayed that God would raise up new leaders. Pastors encouraged those they knew to consider ministry as a life calling. Since we can’t grow pastors on trees, this is what I ask you to do:

- Pray in weekly worship and in your own devotions that the Holy Spirit would move hearts for people to consider part- or full-time ministry.
- Notice the people of any age in your church who might have the faith, temperament, and gifts for ministry. Affirm their strengths. Ask them if they might pray about and consider ministry in their future.

We are grateful for the ministry of Gifts of Grace that helps rostered ministers reduce the debt from their seminary training, and for the scholarships that are available from so many sources – including this synod, our seminaries, and the ELCA church-wide. Thank you!

For congregations who have rostered ministers leading you, please take care of them by providing appropriate compensation (see our synod compensation guidelines) and benefits. Encourage them to take sabbath time away from work and make use of continuing education growth. Got a concern? Talk to them, not about them. Give them a word of thanks for their ministry, which they serve 24/7.

Whether there are lay or rostered leaders serving the word with you today, strive to live together as the body of Christ. Nothing is more draining of leadership or destructive of Christian community than behaviors which tear apart the body of Christ. At the end of chapter 12, St. Paul tells the Corinthians, “And I will show you a still more excellent way.” And that is the way of love - the way of Jesus.

Living the Word Today

These are interesting times to be called and sent by the Triune God to live the Word today! The territory of our synod is described by the state demographer as including areas that are entirely Rural, Town/Rural Mix, Urban/Town/Rural Mix, and Entirely Urban. "Cities, farms, and towns together." As demographic trends continue, the report asks, and we as the church can ask:

- How will we support the many older adults who are part of our communities who may live farther from services and family support?
- How will we respond to labor force shortages as more Boomers move into retirement?
- How can our churches help our distinct communities to be more attractive to new residents?
- How can churches make a difference in communities with growing racial and cultural diversity, and create connections and belonging?

Those gifts of the Spirit (1 Cor. 12) will lead the way as God continues to reform us to live the Word today.

This fall we celebrated the reactivation of our relationships with our friends in the South Eastern Diocese of Southern Africa. Four guests came to be with us here in Sept. -Oct., and then five leaders from SW MN made the journey to South Africa and were blessed by warm hospitality, joy in our friendships, and new opportunities to accompany one another in Christ. Another gift!

I am grateful for the leadership of our Synod Council, taking seriously its responsibility to be faithful stewards of our resources of staffing, facility, and funding. I am excited to work together with them on the Council's commitment to "*empower Christian communities to join in God's mission of reconciliation: listening intentionally, loving unconditionally, serving others authentically, and faithfully healing creation.*" They have been focusing on the strengths, opportunities, aspirations, and results they see in this commitment, and are eager to live out this vision with you in the coming year.

I conclude this report by expressing my sincere **thanks and gratitude** to the synod staff who embody, serve, and live the Word each day:

Rev. Heather Culuris – Synod Minister, Tammy Schacher – Executive Assistant, Kristin Bakeberg – Communications Coordinator, Maggie Berggren – Administrative Assistant, and Rev. Dr. Troy Pflibsen – Director for Evangelical Mission. They walk beside you in ministry with wisdom and joy. We are grateful for the ministry of Youth Ministry Coordinator Rev. Nikoli Falenscheck, who served with us for the past year. And we continue to grieve the passing of our colleague and friend, Pr. Naomi Mahler, who brought energy, courage, and faith to her many ministries and lived out + SOLI DEO GLORIA! each day.

Thank you for the privilege of embodying, serving, and living the Word together with you as the Southwestern Minnesota Synod, ELCA.

Holy God, we praise you for calling diverse people into your church and its ministries. Uphold all leaders with your strong and loving arms. Empower ministers to serve your people with the word of scripture, the water of life, the meal of grace, and deeds of love and mercy and justice. Equip them with both beloved traditions and fresh ideas; grant them joy in their tasks; and renew them daily by the Spirit of Jesus Christ, the Word among us, now and forever. Amen. (adapted from ACS, p. 46).

+ with grace, peace, and love,



Rev. Dee Pederson, D. Min

Bishop, Southwestern Minnesota Synod, ELCA



Southwestern Minnesota Synod
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America



ALC STATEMENT OF OPERATING (BOX 1) REVENUE AND EXPENSES AND 2024 BUDGET

	1/3/2024	ACTUAL	ACTUAL	ACTUAL	BUDGET
	updated 1-24-24	2021	2022	2023	2024
REVENUE					
1	DONATIONS TO BOX 1 + TRANSFERS	\$ 421,389	\$ 458,957	\$ 441,637	\$ 500,000
2	OPERATING REVENUE NON-SYNOD	\$ 6,434	\$ 8,925	\$ 15,200	\$ 15,000
3	MISC./LOAN PROCEEDS PPP NOW FORGIVEN	\$ 150			
4	CHURCH USE REVENUE OTHER	\$ 5,156	\$ 17,952	\$ 31,693	\$ 30,000
5	TOTAL REVENUE	\$ 433,129	\$ 485,834	\$ 488,530	\$ 545,000
EXPENSES					
BENEVOLENCE					
6	TOTAL MISSION SYNOD SUPPORT	\$ 40,346	\$ 45,647	\$ 33,641	\$ 50,000
PERSONNEL					
7	TOTAL SALARY AND HOUSING	\$ 215,676	\$ 294,425	\$ 347,308	\$ 371,700
COMMITTEES AND COUNCIL					
8	ALTER COMMITTEE	\$ 993	\$ 1,593	\$ 1,487	\$ 1,800
9	LIBRARY BOARD		\$ 177	\$ 79	\$ 200
10	PARISH ED (BIRTH-5)	\$ 695	\$ 6,932	\$ 3,500	\$ 3,500
11	YOUTH MINISTRY (6-12)	\$ 7,138	\$ 5,714	\$ 3,500	\$ 3,500
12	ADULT MINISTRY		\$ 346	\$ 365	\$ 400
13	STEWARDSHIP	\$ 1,437	\$ 2,491	\$ 2,647	\$ 3,000
14	WORSHIP AND MUSIC	\$ 2,258	\$ 4,447	\$ 5,083	\$ 5,200
15	MISSION AND MINISTRY		\$ 1,265	\$ 169	\$ 200
16	COUNCIL EXPENSE	\$ 457	\$ 2,572	\$ 6,602	\$ 400
17	TECHNOLOGY	\$ 7,457	\$ 5,905	\$ 3,177	\$ 5,000
18	CARES MINISTRY TEAM		\$ 359	\$ 578	\$ 1,000
19	TOTAL COMMITTEE/COUNCIL	\$ 20,435	\$ 31,801	\$ 27,187	\$ 24,200
CHURCH FACILITIES					
20	CUSTODIAL SUPPLIES	\$ 593	\$ 407	\$ 467	\$ 500
21	INSURANCE	\$ 13,844	\$ 13,290	\$ 15,846	\$ 16,400
22	MAINTENANCE INTERIOR	\$ 9,660	\$ 24,634	\$ 21,809	\$ 21,000
23	MAINTENANCE EXTERIOR	\$ 2,763	\$ 3,669	\$ 2,069	\$ 2,500
24	SNOW REMOVAL AND LAWN CARE	\$ 8,037	\$ 9,116	\$ 9,400	\$ 9,400
25	OFFICE SUPPLIES	\$ 4,186	\$ 6,915	\$ 3,038	\$ 3,500
26	OFFICE EQUIPMENT/copier, computers	\$ 10,704	\$ 11,455	\$ 10,422	\$ 10,500
27	PASTORAL CARE MATERIALS	\$ 1,494	\$ 152	\$ 93	\$ 250
28	POSTAGE	\$ 1,576	\$ 2,104	\$ 3,150	\$ 3,200
29	TELEPHONE	\$ 2,742	\$ 3,318	\$ 2,675	\$ 2,700
30	NATURAL GAS	\$ 4,705	\$ 13,403	\$ 8,942	\$ 10,000
31	CITY UTILITIES	\$ 16,370	\$ 16,973	\$ 18,301	\$ 18,500
32	MISC. /Real Estate tax/bank charge/other	\$ 704	\$ 1,229	\$ 961	\$ 650
33	TOTAL CHURCH FACILITIES	\$ 77,378	\$ 106,665	\$ 97,173	\$ 99,100
34	TOTAL EXPENSES	\$ 353,835	\$ 478,538	\$ 505,309	\$ 545,000
35	NET REVENUE	\$ 79,294	\$ 7,296	\$ (16,779)	\$ -

American Lutheran Church

Box 1 / Committee / Other			Box 1 and Committee Expenses	
Box 1 income	\$ 441,637.00		Hospitality	\$ 6,330.21
Box 1 Non Synod	\$ 15,200.00		Adult Education	\$ 364.71
Operating Revenue		\$ 456,837.00	Parish Ed	\$ 8,220.16
Committee Income			Purchase of Gift Cards	\$ 59,375.00
New Youth Director	\$ 8,483.42		Lutheran Women	\$ 15,704.95
Community Care/Befriender	\$ 489.00		Youth Expenses	\$ 16,938.96
Worship / Music	\$ 199.00		Personnel	\$ 347,308.08
Endowment	\$ (13,750.00)		Cares Ministry	\$ 578.50
Sale of Gift Cards	\$ 65,250.00		Altar Committee	\$ 1,487.45
Parish Education	\$ 5,452.43		Library Expenses	\$ 79.46
Youth Funds	\$ 11,913.78		Stewardship	\$ 2,647.14
Lutheran Women	\$ 12,072.75		Worship and Music	\$ 5,083.28
Total Committee Income		\$ 90,110.38	Church Facilities Expense	\$ 98,302.69
Other Revenue			Technology	\$ 2,888.17
Misc Income	\$ 1,465.20		Synod Mission Support	\$ 33,641.00
Church Use	\$ 525.00		Total Expenses	\$ 598,949.76
Special Projects	\$ 345.00		Total Revenue	\$ 578,909.93
Meals/Holidays/Special Off	\$ 22,261.62		Total Expenses	\$ 598,949.76
Hospitality	\$ 7,365.73		Net Loss	\$ (20,039.83)
Total Other Revenue		\$ 31,962.55		
Total Box 1/Committee/other		\$ 578,909.93		

[illegible]

Box 3			
Box 3 Income		\$ 10,055.00	
Campership Offering		\$ 2,499.00	
Missionary Offering		\$ 300.00	
Food Shelf		\$ 10,739.00	
Other Income		\$ 4,355.00	
Total Revenue		\$ 27,948.00	
Box 3 Expenses			
Missionary Support		\$ 169.14	
Campership Support		\$ 1,220.00	
Food Shelf Support		\$ 9,434.00	
ELCA World Disaster		\$ 730.00	
Every Meal		\$ 6,619.57	
Msc Benevolence		\$ 534.55	
Total Expenses		\$ 18,707.26	
Total Income		\$ 9,240.74	

Box 4			
E J Scholarship		\$ 1,450.00	
ALC Scholarships		\$ 26,275.00	
Reimbursable Revenue		\$ 1,119.00	
Total Revenue			\$ 28,844.00
Reimbursable Expenses			
E J Scholarships			
ALC Scholarships		\$ 10,800.00	
Other			
Total Expenses			\$ 10,800.00
Net Income			\$ 18,044.00

Summary 2023				
Box 1	\$ 578,909.93	\$ 598,949.76	\$ (20,039.83)	
Box 2	\$ 248,380.40	\$ 240,576.65	\$ 7,803.75	
Box 3	\$ 27,948.00	\$ 18,707.26	\$ 9,240.74	
Box 4	\$ 28,844.00	\$ 10,800.00	\$ 18,044.00	
Net for 2023	\$ 884,082.33	\$ 869,033.67	\$ 15,048.66	