

ANNUAL REPORT 2023

January 28, 2024

MISSION STATEMENT

*We are a church centered in Christ,
inviting all into a community of worship,
nurturing all to be disciples of Jesus.
Together we reach out to make a difference here and
throughout the world.*



OUR SAVIOR'S LUTHERAN CHURCH

West Salem, Wisconsin

www.oursaviorswestsalem.org

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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THE ORDER OF BUSINESS

Sunday, January 28, 2024 – 11:30 a.m.

President Jeff Haldeman, presiding

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

DEVOTIONS

VIDEO GREETING FROM BISHOP MALPICA

MINUTES of last Annual Meeting, January 29, 2023

REPORTS

1. Pastors
2. President's and Church Council
3. Committees, Ministries, and Other Reports
4. Financial

ELECTIONS

- Congregation Council – three for three-year terms
- Endowment Fund Committee – one for a three-year term
- La Crosse Synod Assembly voting member – four for one-year terms
- Sugar Creek Bible Camp – two for one-year terms
- Eagle Crest Communities – two for one-year terms

NOMINATING PROCESS

NEW BUSINESS

- Building Project and Capital Campaign Update
- Approval of storm damage repair – Resolution #1
- Approval of the 2024 Budget – Resolution #2
- Approval of Mission Endowment Proposal – Resolution #3

OTHER BUSINESS

CLOSING PRAYER

Our Savior's Lutheran Church
Annual Meeting Minutes
January 29, 2023

President Jen Linse called the meeting to order at 11:40 AM. There were 33 in attendance.

Agenda: A motion was made and seconded to approve the agenda as presented. Motion carried.

Devotions: Pastor Jean led devotions.

Greeting: A video greeting from Bishop Felix Malpica was shared. Pastor Jon noted Assistant to the Bishop, Pastor Dione Stepanek, will be here to preach in early May.

Minutes: President Linse drew attention to the minutes of the January 30, 2022 annual meeting, which were approved by the Congregation Council at its February 14, 2022 meeting.

Reports: The following reports were noted: Pastors, President and Council, Committees, Financial, and other reports.

- A motion was made and seconded to receive the ministry reports as presented, and to accept the 2022 budget report and other financial reports for 2022. Motion carried.

Elections: President Linse noted the nominations in the annual report.

- Congregation Council (four to elect to three-year terms) – Jaime Fortier, Bonnie Gensch, Carolyn Karl, Chad Vick
 - A motion was made and seconded to close nominations for all council positions. Motion carried.
- Mission Endowment Fund (two to elect to three-year term) – Katie Drury, Scott Thompson
 - A motion was made and seconded to close nominations for Mission Endowment Fund. Motion carried.
- 2023 Synod Assembly voting member (four to elect to one-year term) – Jen Linse, Jaime Fortier

President Linse called for nominations from the floor. Hearing none, it was noted that in the absence of four persons elected, the Congregation Council would appoint the remaining voting members.

 - A motion was made and seconded to close nominations for Synod Assembly voting member. Motion carried.
- Sugar Creek Delegates – Jeff Haldeman, Naoko Giblin
 - A motion was made and seconded to close nominations for Sugar Creek delegates. Motion carried.

- Eagle Crest Communities Delegates – Carolyn Karl, Jim Michelson
 - A motion was made and seconded to close nominations for Eagle Crest Communities delegates. Motion carried.
 - A motion was made and seconded to direct the Secretary to cast a unanimous ballot for those nominated. Motion carried.

Nominating Process – President Linse noted that we have not had a Nominating Committee the past few years, instead following a different process of securing nominations. If there is a desire to have a committee, we need six persons to volunteer to serve on the committee. If not, we will move forward again this coming year as we have the past few to secure nominations. Having no one step forward to be on the committee, President Linse determined that we will continue the same process.

New Business –

- **2023 Budget (Resolution #1)** – President Linse presented the proposed 2023 budget, and asked Pastor Jon to review the budget. He noted that while 2022 ended right about even, the 2023 budget is significantly higher and poses a greater challenge.

Pastor Jon noted electronic giving is up significantly. He stated mission support remains static; the budgeted amount for a potential Wednesday night worship was reduced. It was noted the Administration Committee carefully budgeted for the Youth Ministry position and how that ministry will evolve in the new year.

Pastor Jon also answered questions concerning several budget line items.

Pastor Jon mentioned the Audit Committee was reactivated in 2022 and all was found to be in order. The Committee will audit the books on a routine basis going forward. They still need to audit the Mission Endowment Fund Committee books.

Pastor Jon shared that we have received a gift of close to \$60,000 from Jean Anderson McCall - \$50,000 to be put into an endowment with the interest to be used for Sugar Creek Camperships and named the Helen Anderson Friell Campership Fund. The balance of the money will be directed to the Tech Project.

- A motion was made and seconded to adopt the 2023 budget as presented. Motion carried.
- **Mission Endowment Fund Disbursement** – President Linse noted, per the action at the 2022 Annual Meeting, the Mission Endowment Fund disbursements are proposed by the Committee and acted upon by the Annual Meeting. President Linse shared the proposed 2022 Endowment disbursement. Eric Ender shared about the Fund and also thanked Linda Arentz for preparing a detailed spreadsheet that lists all of the disbursements since the fund began in 2002.
 - A motion was made and seconded to adopt the 2023 Mission Endowment Fund disbursement as presented. Motion carried.

- **Building Needs** – We had hoped to have a more formal presentation about our building needs, but due to time constraints that was not possible. Instead, Pastor Jon gave an update on building needs.
 - Tech Project – Good news, we are working with a new company (from Platteville) and progress is being made. Materials have been ordered, measurements completed, still having supply chain issues receiving the items, however the company is optimistic they will be able to begin work around Easter. Pastor Jon thanked Dean Olson for all of the time and work he has done on this project.
 - Upcoming Big-Ticket items:
 - ✓ Roof – The flat roof is 25 years old, with a normal life expectancy of 15-20 years. We have had several leaks again. The pitched roof is 15 years old, and should be fine for now.
 - ✓ Parking Lot – The “new” lot needs to be paved and the existing lot is showing signs of age and we may want to pave it all at the same time.
 - ✓ Tuck pointing and weather stripping
 - ✓ Ceiling tiles – As the old ceiling tiles are showing their age and some have been damaged by roof leaks, they are falling down. The new ones used to replace them are not fitting in the existing tracks due to being a slightly different size. Conversation about replacing them all.

The Property Committee has been in conversation with Jason Stefferud (engineer with DBS Group). Jason will come in and do an assessment, along with cost estimates (not bids), for the projects. This information will be shared with the congregation when it becomes available.

Adjourn

- A motion was made and seconded to adjourn the meeting at 12:20 PM. Motion carried.

Pastor Jon closed the meeting with prayer.

Respectfully submitted,
 Carolyn Karl
 Congregation Council Secretary

2023 Congregation Council Members

<u>NAME</u>	<u>TERM EXPIRES</u>	<u>TERM</u>
Jaime Fortier	2026	Second
Bonnie Gensch	2026	Second
Naoko Giblin	2025	First
Jeff Haldeman	2025	First
Alison Hemker	2025	Second
Tiffany Janisch	2024	First
Carolyn Karl	2026	Second
Jen Linse	2025	Second
Brenda Skittone	2024	First
Chad Vick	2026	Second
Michelle Witte	2024	First

Officers of the Church Council and the Congregation

President: Jeff Haldeman
Vice-president: Brenda Skittone
Secretary: Alison Hemker

Church Staff

Senior Pastor: Jonathan Schmidt
Associate Pastor: Jean Schmidt
Administrative Assistant: Kris Seeger
Treasurer: Jill Iliff
Music Director: Linda Berg
Musicians: Linda Berg and Laurie Noelke
Senior Choir Director: Eric Sorenson
Choir Accompanist: Linda Berg
Financial Secretary: Karen DeSchepper
Custodian: Josh Corning

Senior Pastor's Report

Before I start, I just read Pastor Jean's report. Wow, are we different! She covered stuff I didn't, so I invite you to read her report to hear about lots of other things that were a part of our ministry this past year.

As for me, I'm looking out the window, and noticing that all is white. The recent storms have provided us with something we haven't seen for a while – snow! The "mid-January norm" has returned. All is back to the way it was.

Well, maybe, or maybe not. I'm no farmer, but I am aware that farmers want snow. Snow that when it melts in the months to come will add moisture to the soil in preparation for the spring planting. We have some snow – but not nearly enough yet. We are not back to the way it's been.

But what if this is the new norm? What if, with climate change, we don't get the moisture we once did? In Upper Michigan, among the Finns, they'd say it's time for the "Heikki Lunta snow dance," to get a bit more on the ground.

Sorry, but it never worked up there, and it's not going to work here. If this is in fact the new norm, then farmers and the rest of us will need to figure out how we respond.

That might be where we are at in the church these days. The old norm is gone. We know that. Covid took care of it. I pondered that in last year's report.

The old normal is gone, but the new normal is still not yet evident. The rhythms of life are still changing, and haven't stabilized. In other words, change is still happening! We just don't know yet where we will land. And when we do land, if we will land on our feet!

I'm not totally certain, but I think we are beginning to see the new norm. And that new norm means things have changed. Some of the change is stuff we don't like. And all of the change is change. And we don't like that either. But some of the change, some of the new normal may not be all that bad. It's just different.

But (spoiler alert here), in the end, like I said a year ago:

Yet, despite all the change, one thing has not changed. "Jesus is Lord and Savior."

So, let's take a bit of a tour here, and check out church life here at Our Savior's. Church life means mission and ministry, and community and relationships. But let's do that with an eye toward the new normal and how that is playing out in our discipleship as a faith community, as a bunch of flawed and sometimes broken followers of Jesus.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

In 2022 we adopted a set of "guiding principles," a statement of those fundamental values that we want to order our life and our work as a community of faith. In a sense they are new for us, but when I read through them, seems to me this is what we at Our Savior's have sought to be for a long time now. Sort of the old normal becoming

defined as we move into a new normal. And so, even though it's old stuff (or as old as one year can be), it's still worth repeating. After all, moving into a new normal, these are the things we value as core to who and what God calls us to be.

1. *Jesus is Lord and Savior. (I told you it would come up again!)*
2. *All are welcome, and we are intentional about that welcome.*
3. *God gifts and calls every one of every age to be a difference maker in the world.*
4. *We treasure the gift of creation and embrace the call to protect God's world.*
5. *We value the gathering of God's people in worship and all our ministries.*
6. *We seek the guidance of the Holy Spirit in a world that has changed dramatically.*

Keep these in mind as we look at where we are and where God is moving us.

WORSHIP

Worship attendance is not what it once was, here or anywhere. In all denominations worship has declined over the past 30-40 years. That was already happening before Covid, and Covid seemed to accelerate that. Just look around on Saturday/Sunday. Once we had 100+ at multiple services. Now, we are averaging less than 200 each weekend in the building. That is our new normal.

But there is more to the story. Our culture is not as "church-centered" as it once was, and we have many more diversions and distractions in the world around us. That is our new normal. But the new normal also means a different kind of worship. Consistently each week we have 25-30 views of our YouTube worship, which experts say translates into 45-55 individuals. And now we have "livestreaming," which is gradually attracting viewers too. So far, an additional 5-10 views (and maybe 10-20 individuals?). Surprisingly, though our in-building numbers are down, when you add in the estimates of online, the numbers are about where they were pre-Covid, meaning ... we haven't lost much. Instead, a new way to worship. And new possibilities. More on that later.

Meanwhile, over the past year we have had a lot of visitors and new folk checking us out. Some have found this to be a place that works for them. Some have not. That's OK. We are not called to be everything for everyone. And still others have been here, and will be back, but in our changed world that may be a while. That's the new normal. Still, a normal with hope and promise, with possibilities and potential.

Finally, the new normal, moving us to new ways to worship, has opened up new and increased ministry. For example, during Covid we stopped "passing the plate," opting to place the plate at the entrance to the sanctuary. People have gotten used to that, even looking for the plate on Christmas Eve when, with a fuller house, we opted to pass the plate. But ... unexpectedly ... something happened. Because we still wanted to have the "hungry jar" offering, we offered that opportunity without the competition of passing of the plates. As a result, kids are bringing up the "cash," but also "shaking down" the adults – and hungry jar offerings in 2023 were three times what they were in 2019! And all of that goes to missions and ministries we support. The new normal isn't always a negative!

EDUCATION

In a new normal Christian education, or “faith formation” seems to be faltering. As our culture moves church to the sidelines and replaces church life with sports, activities, and other distractions, we have fewer kids in Sunday School and Confirmation (having smaller families than previous generations doesn’t help!). But ... were you there on Easter when the Sunday School kids sang ... and have you been present at our “after school dinner” when kids lead the prayer (not the pastor)? Numbers are down, perhaps, but energy and enthusiasm are still present. The new normal. And maybe too, the opportunity to embrace new models and new ways to share faith!

YOUTH MINISTRY

Part of our changing world is that kids are increasingly busy with activities outside of school. Sports, music, and other possibilities make for a very full and packed schedule. Meanwhile, unlike previous generations, kids have access to transportation and don’t need the church to organize outings for them. They do that already!

So, if that’s the new normal, what do we do? In 2023 we engaged Rachel Holthaus to work on some new discipleship-oriented approaches to youth ministry. Rachel’s work had limited success, but there was some success, and some hope in her work. Rachel has determined that this is not where God is calling her and she has resigned from the position, but her work is still “in the air.” In late January I will be gathering some parents and kids to give some thought as to where we go with our youth ministry. I will offer three thoughts to the group gathered:

- Discipleship is what we are about. How do we develop disciples among our young people?
- Depth of experience for a few kids is worth more than something “surface-y” for a lot of kids.
- Develop kids as disciples who will become the “yeast” for their generation.

I do not know where this will take us, but that’s OK. The Spirit knows! Meanwhile, we will seek to be faithful to God’s calling, valuing and treasuring all of God’s gifts, especially those of our young people.

And don’t forget the small ways youth ministry happens – like the elementary children reading prayer petitions in church, the music ministry of our Sunday School children (thank you, Naoko Giblin and Linda Berg!), and the kids we send to Sugar Creek.

STEWARDSHIP

First of all, ***thank you!*** Thank you to all of you who have been so faithful in supporting the work we do together. We really do make a difference. Lives in our own backyard and around the world are changed because of the work we do together.

We ended 2023 with an increase in income, but an overall deficit. That is a challenge for us in the year to come. While we are focusing on some building needs (more on that in a moment), we still want to keep our overall mission support healthy.

At the same time, we remember that stewardship is year-round, and it's about the whole person not just the checkbook! YOUR stewardship is about how you use ALL that God has entrusted to you – yes, your money, but also your time, energy, skills, and abilities. In short, stewardship is about your entire being, all the time. And in the end, good stewardship IS faithful discipleship!

One final word about stewardship and faithful discipleship ... we thank God for Jean (Anderson) McCall, a niece to Helen Friell, who grew up at Our Savior's many years ago. As an honor to Helen, Jean shared a significant gift of around \$60,000 with us, most of which was placed in the Helen Anderson Friell Campership Fund, to assist with sending kids to Sugar Creek. What a great way to live out faithful discipleship ... while nurturing young disciples in their faith! *Note: after completing my report, but before printing, we received word that Jean has passed away. Now, she gets to be with Jesus!*

OUTREACH

Again, this year, outreach in many forms was alive and well at Our Savior's. There may be a new normal in our world, but this has not changed. The choir visiting facilities at Christmas, Beer and Hymns out in public, Feed Our Children, the Corn Roast, quilting and prayer shawls, the many ways we support the food pantry and other community ministries, all part of Our Savior's out in the world, connecting with people and meeting needs. But also, our financial support of ministries and programs that meet human needs, through the Norwegian Dinner, the Mission Endowment Fund, the Hungry Jar, the World Hunger Appeal, our budgeted support of synod, Sugar Creek, LuMin (campus ministry) and Causeway – just so many ways to be a part of God's work in the world!

COMMUNITY

Our Savior's has always been involved in the community. Check out the Outreach section above. But not all our involvement has been "just us." We are hosts to the community Care and Share Food Pantry, and Feed Our Children provides an opportunity for the community to be a part of serving kids. We have also supported West Salem Community Assistance (I am the treasurer for the organization), and we've been a spot for kids seeking to earn NHS hours or do their Panther Packet (the old "SEP").

But this past year we did something new, another part of the "new normal?" We gathered for Thanksgiving Eve worship, inviting our friends from the Presbyterian Church and St. Teresa, with a "pie social" afterward. That went so well that St. Teresa had us all over in December to share as a community in Advent worship. The clergy are pondering what we do next, and we will continue to seek ways to connect our communities of faith. Yes, a part of the new normal!

TECH PROJECT

Finally! The Tech Project is complete, and we have ... a new normal. Some of the project is "new old stuff" – like an improved sound system (I've already had some folk tell me they can hear so much better!). And much better recording of worship, both

audio and video, for DVDs and for YouTube. And the connection to the overflow seating in the Gathering Area is also much improved.

But there's also a lot of new stuff there. We now livestream 10:30 worship as well as post a recording on YouTube. And it works! Like the family visiting grandma out of town on Christmas Eve, who could join us live. Or the funeral later this week (as I write this) where the livestream will allow distant family to join a life event. Or weddings in the future that will be able to do the same. Try it out sometime when you are unable to be with us for weekend worship – the link is on the home page of the web site, or check out the YouTube videos to see the quality of the system.

And then the projector that allows us to show pictures and videos on the large screen in the sanctuary. We have already used that, but Pastor Jean and I will need to "live into" the possibilities and think a bit differently about sermons and worship in general, remembering that we now have this resource. All part of the new norm.

Two things to note:

- The projector/screen will not replace the bulletin and hymnal.
- We will need people to work the system, so if you are interested speak with Dean Olson or one of the pastors. It's really not that complicated – hey, even I can work it!

Finally, a HUGE THANK YOU to Dean for all of his work, first in getting the tech system in place, getting it to work for us, and for operating it each week.

BUILDING ISSUES

In 2023 we tackled a number of building issues, and created a plan for coming years. The list looks something like this:

- 2023 – flat roof, lighting in front of the building, tuckpointing and caulking
- 2024 – ceiling tile in Gathering Area
- Beyond 2024 –
 - Parking lot - paving the gravel lot and repaving the other lot
 - Organ replacing (our 30-year-old organ is "sounding" its age)
 - Pitched roof over the sanctuary will need to be replaced in 5+ years
 - Sanctuary air conditioning is over 30 years old – how long can it go?

To make all that happen we have begun a capital appeal, with a target of somewhere around \$500,000 over six years. We are off to a great start, with close to \$100,000 either given or pledged. Along with \$70,000 or so already on hand the 2023 phase is close to covered. Your continued gifts will help us move into the next phase.

What's happened so far?

- New lighting in front is complete – and it looks great!
- A signed contract for the flat roof and the tuckpointing is in place, though the July hail storm pushed the work back to spring of 2024.
- The ceiling tile will be addressed after the flat roof is complete – we are hoping to get a work crew together for a day of ceiling tile replacement.

- Several “holes” in the gravel parking lot have been filled, and the lot as a whole will be re-graveled in spring to keep that workable until it can be paved.

And then ... July 28. West Salem was hit with what old timers called the worst hail storm in town that they can remember. 3½ inch hail. We suffered window damage, but the bigger damage was to the pitched roof and the siding on the steeple, as well as roof damage to the rental house and garage to the south of the church building. Insurance has covered a significant amount, but we are still negotiating that with the contractor and insurance company. In some ways this is a bit burdensome – we will need to cover some of the costs, based on our insurance policy. But on the other hand, the pitched roof was part of our plan for the next few years, and insurance will cover a chunk of that. So, sooner than we had expected, but it won't cost us as much in the end.

FINALLY

After all that ... what else is there to say ... but thank you? So ...

- **Thank you** to all of you who as partners in this community of faith have been drawn together by the Holy Spirit and blessed in both our work and our care for each other. You are treasured gifts of God to me!
- To all who have shared in leadership ... members of the Congregation Council and especially Jeff Haldeman, our president, and all who have taken on roles of leadership and service in the ministry we carry out ... like the Apostle Paul, all I can say is **“thank you!”** (Check out Philippians 1:3-5).
- **Thank you** to our staff who work hard for the gospel, and work well together! From finances with Jill (treasurer) and Karen (financial secretary), to building upkeep with Josh (custodian), Elliott (lawn mower), and Tony (after school dishwasher), to music with Linda (music director and lead musician), Laurie (handbells and assistant musician), and Eric (choir director). And then a *very special thanks* to Kris our administrative assistant! Thank you to all of you!
- **Thank you** to Pastor Jean and to Rebecca! I cannot tell you how much you have meant to me, both in the role as pastor and PK, but simply as loving and caring family. Really, for me at least, it doesn't get much better than that – other than one last thank you ...
- **Thank you** to a good and gracious God, who through Jesus and the Holy Spirit renews and restores me daily. And with all the “new norms,” this is one that has remained constant! Never ending, never changing, always present ...

The new norm, becoming clear that the world has changed, but that we are still always held in the care of God, called to proclaim life, empowered to be faithful.

In Christ,

Pastor Jon

Associate Pastor's Report

It's hard to believe another year has gone by and it is time to be writing this annual report. 2023 was a year to continue living into our new normal, trying new things, tweaking old things, and moving forward.

For literally years we have been anticipating our new tech project – audio and video – and we were so excited to see it installed this summer. There is a huge learning curve to operate the system and to take advantage of all that the system can do. We have been having fun discovering new capabilities. Livestreaming of worship started on Christmas Eve, and the livestreamed service will now be the service recorded for the website. We thank Dean Olson for his tireless dedication to making this happen, for continuing to discover new possibilities, troubleshooting glitches, and teaching others to operate the system. If you are a “techie”, come be a part of this exciting new ministry!

Beer and Hymns was brought back this year, but in a new location – the back room of Hunter's Last Chance Bar & Grill. Don't you just wonder what those sitting at the bar guzzling their beer, cheering on their favorite sports team, are thinking as they are hearing “churchy” music coming from the party room?! We gathered early in the year to help with the mid-winter blues. Mid-summer we brought our lawn chairs and gathered at the Iliff's home around a campfire, complete with snacks and s'mores, singing Bible camp songs. And, then we headed back to Hunter's in December to sing Christmas carols, as we imbibed on our favorite drinks and a slice of pizza. If you like to sing, even if you “can't”, come and join us for an hour of fun and music! Members of the SOS band and guitar class do a great job leading us.

In an effort to creatively get people back into the building for something fun, we had our first Mardi Gras Event – the last hurrah before Lent. Those who submitted recipes for my sabbatical reconnecting cookbook were invited to make up a batch of their favorite recipe and bring it to church for people to sample. Prizes were given for the “fan favorites”. There were also Mardi Gras activities for the kids ... but they didn't want to miss out on the food either! There wasn't a huge crowd, but for the first time, we thought it was good! Everyone seemed to have fun ... the food was yummy ... and we are looking forward to our second “annual” event in 2024.

I spend most of my time working with the Sunday School children, but there are times I get to be a part of confirmation ministry as well. In addition to being present for After School time and helping our parents with the meal, I also teach a couple of electives, including working with the students to lead worship for Hanging of the Greens. A highlight of confirmation is being a part of the Spiritual Gifts class. It gives me an opportunity to get to know our kids in a different way, through the eyes of others who know them better than we do – I learn a lot and have fun doing it!

As pastors, we meet monthly with our colleagues from the Presbyterian Church and St. Teresa of Kolkata. We enjoy our time together. This year we tried something new ... ecumenical worship experiences. We hosted the Thanksgiving Eve worship and St. Teresa's hosted an Advent worship. There was an ecumenical choir at both services made up of a lot of talented musicians from our congregations – and they sounded

awesome! We had a pie social following Thanksgiving worship and there were Christmas cookies and hot chocolate following the Advent service. Again, so many talented pie makers and bakers in our congregations. These ecumenical services were well received, and we are already making plans for 2024.

In the spirit of ecumenism, Pastor Jon and I were both asked to preach and lead worship at the Presbyterian Church this summer when Pastor Dan was on vacation. That was a fun experience, although a bit nerve-wracking for me when I thought I had left my children's message props at home ... only to find, after a cold sweat, that I had, in fact, brought them and just misplaced where I had put them!

This year we were in town for the National Night Out sponsored by the Police Department. We had great folks from Our Savior's who hosted the OSLC table at the event, while we hosted the Community Assistance Fund table. What a great way to meet folks in the community and get to know our neighbors.

June Dairy Days is another fun way to connect with people. The parade is always worth watching, and then heading down to the park to feast. Working at the food booth is fun too!

Once again, the corn roast was a huge success – lots of people enjoying a hearty meal, tasty corn perfectly grilled, and people working together – all to show our appreciation for our community neighbors. It is always interesting chatting with people – it is obvious people anxiously await this annual event.

In an effort to get people connected or reconnected in the life of the congregation, whichever it might be for you, we reinvented the dreaded "Time and Abilities/Talents Inventory". People were asked to share which ministries may be of interest to them, and have been or will be invited to become a part of the activities associated with them. Rather than automatically signing people up for things – *okay, so there are a few things we have to do that* – we have opted to invite people to sign themselves up if they really want to participate. If people really want to be a part of something, we trust they will step forward and let us know. Trying to keep track of everyone's schedules is time consuming and maybe not the best use of our time.

At synod assembly in June each congregation was paired with a congregation from a different conference, a different geographic area, and invited to create a relationship, to learn about each other, and connect in person. We were paired with Bethany in Mauston. Pastor Jon and I, along with several of our members, traveled to Mauston, and Pastor Jon preached. A couple of weeks later, Pastor Joan Wittrock and several of their members, came to Our Savior's and she preached. They came with letters from their members, inviting us to develop "pen-pal" relationships. You may have noticed we pray for our "living faith partners at Bethany Mauston" each week during worship. We also exchanged gifts – we created two framed pictures of both congregations, keeping one set for us – and they gifted us with two beautiful hand-made crosses, representing each congregation. You can see the crosses and picture displayed on the wall by the library. We will try to think of other ways to connect as time goes on.

While we prefer to focus our energy and resources outside of our walls, to help others and do ministry in our community and around the world, there comes a time when we

have to take stock of what we have and make sure “our house is in order” which allows us to reach beyond. With that in mind, we have embarked on a three-year capital campaign to help us be good stewards of the building that we have been entrusted with. A building that allows ministry to happen. Taking care of the building is not glamorous and sometimes its hard to see what fixes have been made, but if you look around, you might notice ... the new lighting in the front of the church and the parking lot allows us to see so much better and creates a safe environment; when the flat roof gets fixed, we won't be like Chicken Little and have to worry about when the sky (or in our case, the ceiling and ceiling tiles) will fall down; we won't have to worry about putting buckets on the floor to catch the water streaming down from the ceiling; when we replace the ceiling tiles, we won't have to see the eyesore of stained or missing tiles, or worry about mold in the air; whose going to notice the tuckpointing of the brick and caulking around the windows, until you realize we aren't losing heat and money out the cracks, and there isn't a cool breeze coming in; when the parking lot is repaved there won't be craters to swallow up your tires or the kids' basketballs, or fall into ... no, not glamorous, but something we need to do with your help.

One thing that 2023 will be remembered for in West Salem history is the storm of July 28th. One would be hard pressed to find anyone in the village who wasn't affected in some way by the storm, including the church. The stained-glass window and other windows have been repaired, and we are awaiting work on the steeple and pitched roof ... some of the work covered by insurance, some not. The storm moved up the work on the pitched roof that was on the agenda “for another day”, but now that day is here.

I continue to be involved outside of Our Savior's in both church related ministries and community-based organizations.

Almost since we arrived here I have been an elected member of the Synod's Evangelism Committee. With Covid and the “new” Assistant to the Bishop needing to get settled and comfortable with her responsibilities, we had been on a bit of a hiatus, but this year we have been making steps to get restarted, trying to discern our purpose, goals, and direction.

I am in my second year serving as Dean of the West Conference of the LaCrosse Area Synod. This has been a fun and rewarding experience. I have appreciated the opportunity to be a part of what's going on in the synod, sharing information with our congregation, and having a better understanding of how things work.

Pastor Jon and I have so much fun being a part of the Scholastic Book Fair at the Elementary School. It warms our hearts when “our” kids see us and run up to say Hi! It's fun to see them in their school environment and see them with their friends. Since we both enjoy watching football, we made a point to get to several football games this fall. It doesn't hurt that we get to watch several of “our” kids and get to see families supporting them. One of these days we need to catch a volleyball game, or a basketball game, or a baseball game ... For the fourth year, I was privileged to be able to serve as a judge for the High School Senior Exit Project presentations. We truly do have some amazing kids here in West Salem (I may be a bit partial?). The Senior Exit Projects are a time of learning for me too. The kids come up with some very interesting and unique projects. This is an activity I look forward to being a part of.

Outside of the church, I continue to serve as a community member on the Institutional Review Board (IRB) at Gundersen Health Systems, which I have done for about 10 years. I enjoy being able to keep my finger in the healthcare realm. While the work is interesting, it can be overwhelming at times. They are restructuring the committee, so we will see where that takes us going forward.

As we look to ministry in 2024 we are setting our sights on bringing back yet more ministries that have been on hiatus for a while ... making homemade bread for communion ... reorganizing the Senior Ministry Team and planning OWLs events ... revitalizing the Mom's Group for support and fellowship ... PLUS, empowering people to share ideas and run with them ... encouraging people to sign up and participate in ministries ...

For those who are new to Our Savior's during the past couple of years, for those who are looking for something new to get involved with ... we have a place for you! Old ministries, new ministries ... you are always welcomed, encouraged, invited to be a part of things ... let us know your passion!

Nothing happens in this place without YOU! Thank you for sharing your time, talents, and resources to make ministry happen ... whether you serve on a committee or a task force, teach our young ones, are a part of making music, care for our property, provide wisdom and advice, are a source of encouragement and support, study, pray, worship ... we appreciate you!

Thank you to our staff ... Kris Seeger, Josh Corning, Linda Berg, Eric Sorenson, Laurie Noelke, Jill Iliff, and Karen DeSchepper. Your presence and work, as well as your support and encouragement has been a gift to me personally and to this congregation.

Thank you to the two people who keep me going, who support me and encourage me, who are always there for me, who I love more than anything ... Thank you Pastor Jon and Rebecca!

And, thank you Jesus, for seeing me through the grief of loss, the joy of new life, and the hope of the future.

Blessings on our ministry together,

Pastor Jean

MINISTRIES

Worship Helpers – Having the people of God sharing their gifts during worship is absolutely wonderful – not only for those being served, but also for those doing the serving. We welcome all who want to be a part of the ministry here in this place!

With the amount of new people visiting Our Savior's, their first impression is critical ... and that is exactly what our **Welcoming Team** does ... they are the face of Our Savior's when they greet and welcome all who come through our doors.

Our **Worship Assistants** (aka acolytes) have been doing a great job not only lighting/extinguishing the candles, but also helping to serve communion. Sharing the Lord's Supper knows no age boundaries.

Communion Assistants continue to be a vital part of sharing the Lord's Supper – preparing the elements and serving Communion.

With the new recommendations by the Audit Committee, those serving on the Welcoming Team and as Communion Assistants also are responsible for putting the offering in the safe at the end of worship.

Home Communion Ministry – Delivering communion and visiting our shut-ins has always been an important ministry at Our Savior's. After being "down" during the many Covid months, this ministry was restarted in February 2023. Our homebound members always appreciate being remembered and being visited – not just by the pastors. And truth be told, those doing the visiting also appreciate connecting and the stories shared.

Altar Guild – A faithful group of ladies (*spoiler alert* – men can also be a part of this group!) serve to prepare the altar for worship, making sure the paraments are the correct color, hanging liturgical-season appropriate banners, and filling the candles. They also get the communion ware out and set for the communion assistants. We try to have teams of two, serving for one month at a time, and depending on how many teams we have, most serve about two times a year. Our numbers have dwindled over the years, and we would welcome others to join us – *it's really not that hard a task!*

Prayer Ministry – We have a faithful group of people lifting up prayers for those who are hurting, grieving, and celebrating. Because we communicate the prayer requests via email, you don't have to live locally to participate – in fact, we have a faithful pray-er in Waunakee! Prayer requests are received at church and then Pastor Jean sends them out to the pray-ers. We are very conscious of privacy – sometimes we pray for the person by name, sometimes we use a "different" name, and sometimes we don't use a name at all – God knows who they are. Those lifted up in prayer don't have to be members – we pray for all of God's people wherever they may be.

Senior Ministry – From the outside looking in, it may appear not much is going on for our “seniors”, but things are happening. We thank Carolyn Karl for faithfully delivering DVD’s of the worship service to several of our shut-ins every week. Birthday and holiday greeting cards are sent to our “over 80” crowd, letting them know they are never far from our thoughts. Our Sunday School children create and send greeting cards to their classroom grandparents. The Pastors conduct monthly worship services at Lakeview, Salem Terrace, and Mulder’s. We thank Ilene Pavelko and Ann Sprain for providing the music for those worship services. Just before Covid hit, we were in the process of getting parish nurse activities introduced – i.e. periodically checking blood pressures, informational articles in the newsletter, etc. Moving forward with this is a goal for the new year. We would also like to plan some activities for our “Older, Wiser Lutherans” (OWLs).

As we get things going again, we will need “new” faces to be a part of our planning team. Let Pastor Jean know if this is a ministry you would like to be a part of.

The **Senior Connections** group meets at Linda’s Bakery on the second Tuesday of the month for coffee, sweet treats, and conversation. You are welcome to join them!

College Ministry – Keeping connected with our college students is important to us. This is a group of young adults whom we have walked with since Sunday School days through confirmation and high school. In an effort to let them know they continue to be in our thoughts and prayers, Pastor Jean sends them a note and gift card at semester exam time. This is only possible if we have their campus address, which we rely on students and parents to provide to us. We look forward to connecting with these young people when they are home for the holidays and summer.

Sunday School –

Sunday School is one of the highlights of the week for Pastor Jean ... getting to see the kids’ smiling faces, feel their energy, and help them know that Jesus is always with them. We continue to use the *Whirl* lectionary-based curriculum from 1517 Media. The material is easy to use and well liked by the teachers, and the kids enjoy watching the videos to see what their “friends” are up to. Because the lessons repeat every three years, following the lectionary cycle, it is also economical and allows us to be good stewards of our resources, as un-used material can be recycled the next time around. We have a great group of dedicated teachers, several who come back year after year – and this fall we welcomed three new teachers who joined us – what a gift they all are to our children and to our congregation!

We were excited to be able to have music all year – thank you to Linda Berg and Naoko Giblin. The kids love to sing, and the congregation loves to hear them singing

during worship. They have worked on a couple of pieces along with the Senior Choir, and together they really rock the house!

Our numbers were a bit smaller this year, but that is partly due to a smaller number of children in each grade, and partly due to the fact our families lead busy lives, even on the weekend. We love having our kids here when they can be!

This year Jon Iliff, one of our high school seniors, volunteered to coordinate the Christmas program for his Panther Portfolio Project (formerly known as the Senior Exit Project). He chose "*Follow the Star*", which he remembered participating in several years ago when he was a student in Sunday School. The program was held during the 10:30 AM worship service on Sunday, December 10th. The kids worked hard for many weeks preparing for the program, and they did a great job! We are grateful to Jon, our teachers, musicians, and helpers for making this possible, and to our parents for getting the kids to practice as often as they could.

Thanks to a generous memorial donation, we continue to gift our little ones with a *Frolic Bible* at the time of their baptism. Our PreK children received a *Whirl Story Bible* in worship this fall. A highlight for Pastor Jon is doing the Bible Workshop with our 3rd grade children and their parents, and then presenting the Bibles during worship. The students use these Bibles in 3rd-5th grade Sunday School and 6th grade confirmation.

We had fun in the fall reconnecting with our Sunday School classroom grandparents, and getting to know our newly "adopted" grandparents. Our grandparents also joined us for our end of year ice cream social in May.

We are grateful to our Sunday School teachers for faithfully and enthusiastically sharing their love of Jesus and their love for our kids. They are great witnesses! We thank them for all of their time and effort being a part of this ministry. They are truly a gift to our children and to this congregation. If you see them around be sure to thank them! Thank you ...

Sunday School Staff 2023-2024

Pre-K & Kindergarten: Jen Evenson and Audrey Schlifer

1st Grade: Jessalyn Hickey

2nd Grade: Amanda Vick

3rd Grade: Lindsey Gilberts

4th Grade: Stacey Sjoquist

5th Grade: Eric Iliff

Substitutes: Erin Hebrink, Brenda Skittone, Mariette Stefferud

Confirmation Youth

Confirmation instruction and faith formation continued, with the goal of nurturing disciples of Jesus. Corey Sjoquist worked with 6th graders again on the basics of the Biblical story, while Pastor Jon was the primary instructor for 7-9th grade, teaching catechetics and working on discipleship. A number of new kids joined us, and 19 9th graders affirmed their baptism in worship on April 30.

As the year went on, some changes occurred, some planned, and some just gifts!

- After School continued, and grew! During 2022/23 we had up to ten kids participating in the time after school and the meal prior to class. After School, however, more than doubled as the 2023/24 year began. Routinely we have 25+ kids at dinner. That means a HUGE thank you to all the parents who have shared in the task of preparing and serving a meal. Each week we make sure the kids express those thanks!
- As dinner begins each week, we start with prayer. Only once or twice has Pastor Jon led the prayer, with some very thoughtful and expressive prayers offered by the kids.

The biggest change, however, is in the timing and structure of the program. After some consultation during the summer, followed by conversation at the Congregation Council, we decided to make some changes to the program, with the 2023/24 year being a year of transition:

- Affirmation of Baptism now takes place at the end of 8th grade instead of 9th grade.
- 7th and 8th graders no longer have class together, and 8th graders will no longer have electives, but over the two years both grades will continue to participate in the food drive for the food pantry, and take a "servant leadership" class twice a year with Becki Murphy leading the class.
- Small groups will no longer be a part of the program. We grieve a bit this loss as small groups have been a very valuable part of our ministry. We also recognize, however, that in our world today it is not appropriate to have a group of kids with a single adult present, and to get two adults for each small group would be very difficult. Not having small groups opens up some of the time to complete the program in two years rather than three.

Moving forward we may adjust the program again depending on the outcome of some of our youth ministry conversations. We thank all the adults who are a part of the work we do together, including the parents who share the meal with the After-School crowd, and those who join us in the classroom, either as parent helpers or leading an elective course. A special thanks to Corey Sjoquist for his continued faithfulness in working with the 6th graders as he starts them off with a solid Biblical grounding.

Pastor Jon

Worship and Education Participation for 2023

Worship continues to "live into a new norm." Our in-building worship is lower than it once was, but our online presence has increased. Together our worship participation is about where it was five years ago. And now, not only are worship services recorded and available anytime, they are also livestreamed. If you are unable to be with us, check it out - 10:30 worship livestream with the link on the homepage of our web site; or anytime on our YouTube channel, with the link also available on our homepage or our video page.

Worship

Weekly in-building worship average	158
Estimated virtual worship over a 7-day period	<u>71</u>
TOTAL worship participants each week	229

Special services

Ash Wednesday	38
Lent (5-week average)	71
Maundy Thursday	123
Good Friday (2 services)	93
Easter – in building (3 services)	464
– online estimate	161
Thanksgiving Eve (Ecumenical @ OSLC)	138
Advent (1 service)	65
Christmas Eve – in building (4 services)	517
– online estimate	140
Christmas Day	41

Total Christian Education participants for 2023

Sunday School	49	
Confirmation	70	
Bible Study	18	<i>(includes Wednesday study and WELCA Ruth Circle)</i>

Pastoral Acts

Baptisms

Elyse Marie Aguiar
Emersyn Leigh Plenge
Jalen Joseph Kaiser
Louise Lee Vike
Norah Jane Larson
Preston Frederick Herman

Funerals/Deaths

Delmar D. Pettis
Doris L. Yeske
Jeffrey D. Stellick
Valgean A. Anderson
Marilyn L. Romskog
Mary E. Kokott

LaVerne D. Bjerke
Mavis E. Valley
Richard A. Marking
Paula Hase Mickelson
Robert M. Roraff
Lowell R. Hehl

Richard E. Storandt
Darla N. Grove
Lydia M. Ferguson
Thomas W. Niemeier

Marriages

Boston Goodenough & Delaney Hanrahan

Confirmations

Danielle Christianson	Dayne Langrehr
Baylee Faucett	Autumn Loging
Bennett Fennigkoh	Olivia Maki
Jaxson Hauser	Hayden Massman
Aidan Hillyer	Nathan Premo
Parker Hunter	Breanna Smith
Erin Jones	Emelia Tlustosch
Lydia Jothen	Brandon Wiese
Spencer Kammel	Dylan Wiese
Tyson Labus	

New Members

Jane Brenengen Reinl
Rita Gollnick
Rose Severson
Gerald Greeno
Jerad & Karly Baganz, along with children
Beau, Brynneleigh, and Bailey

Transfer Out

Jon & Holly Rigotti
Coltyn & Cayden Literski

Residents of Nursing Homes & Independent/Assisted Living Facilities

*(as of December 31, 2023)

Mill Street Manor

Arlan Gilbertson
Lana Helgeson

Salem Terrace

Vernetta Moe
Norma Piper
Velma Schmidt

Mulders Healthcare

Virgil Mikkelson

Onalaska Care Center

Helen Friell

Bethany St Joseph

Mary Storandt

Morrow Home

Eva Farris
Cristi Johnson
Luella Pierce
Judi Rogness

Eagle Crest South

Bobbie Broughton
Joe & Carol Stekel

Havenwood of Onalaska

Carolyn Karl

Nominations

Congregation Council

Three to elect to a three-year term

- Tiffany Janisch

Tiffany has been married to Jeremy for 22 years and they have 2 daughters. Madeline attends UW Stevens Point and Ella is a senior at Bangor High School. Tiffany works for CESA 4 providing Occupational Therapy services in the schools. She has enjoyed being involved in Our Savior's as a confirmation group guide and council member, making the Thanksgiving baskets for the shut-ins, helping with preparation for the Norwegian Dinner, and has recently taken over the school kit project.

- Brenda Skittone

Brenda grew up in West Salem and at Our Savior's, but returned to the area and the congregation four years ago. She works at the Ace Hardware Support Center. She has served on the council for one term. Brenda also sings in the choir, ushers, serves Communion, and subs as a Sunday School Teacher.

- Jerry Greeno

Jerry is a native of Tomah. He has an Associate's Degree in Mechanical Design, and his career was in supply chain management. He moved to West Salem 1 ½ years ago from Madison, where he was an active member of Luther Memorial for over 20 years.

Mission Endowment Fund Committee

One to elect to a three-year term

- Lee Friell

2023 LaCrosse Area Synod Assembly Voting Members
(June 7-9, 2024 in Warrens/LaCrosse)

Four to elect to a one-year term

- Jeff Haldeman
- Melissa Haldeman
- Carla Burkhardt
- Jaime Fortier

Delegates to Sugar Creek Bible Camp

Two to elect to one-year term

- Naoko Giblin
- Jeff Haldeman

Delegates to Eagle Crest Communities
(formerly Bethany Lutheran Home Corporation)

Two to elect to one-year term

- Carolyn Karl
- *Nomination from the floor or council appointment*

President's Report

When I look back over the past year of 2023, I am amazed at the variety of things that Our Savior's Lutheran Church is involved with. We are so fortunate that so many of you are willing to share your talents and efforts with us.

Financially we are in reasonably good shape but as you can see in the financial report we did miss our budget by approximately negative 3%. Now that isn't bad, but I'd prefer that we missed our budget on the positive side. My challenge for the congregation is that we really need to think about the work that God has called us to do – so many of us are so blessed by all that God has provided. I cannot emphasize enough the importance of committing to weekly/monthly/annual giving to meet the vision that we have created in order to carry out God's work.

After many delays beyond our control the new video equipment (Tech Project) is now up and operating for live streaming of our service. I have personally witnessed the hard work that has gone into this and very much appreciate the efforts that Dean Olson has gone through. Just think – we are now able to reach out to literally most of the world – Most important is that our members that are not able to gather in the building have an option to be part of the service.

We officially entered our first capital improvement campaign in a very long time (approx. 30 years) and guess what? We are doing this ourselves with the help of a very devoted team and of course with God's guidance. We have already taken care of the lighting outside, we have upgraded our electrical panels in the church, we have installed a new water softener and water heater to serve the downstairs kitchen, and we are now working very hard at raising money for a new flat roof to be completed this Spring.

But wait there is more!!! We have plans for replacing the pitched roof, brick tuckpointing, re-seal exterior windows and doors, addressing our aging organ needs, parking lot replacement, and replacement of existing ceiling tiles in the gathering area. Of course, this will take years to complete but with everyone working together it will happen!! I am 100% sure.

We all remember the hail storm of the Summer of 2023. Yes, OSLC was hit by the storm like so many of us. The good news is that we have insurance – the bad news is that we are now having to move the replacement of the pitched roof up in our time table. Insurance will cover a large percentage of it but we have to pay the difference which is an earlier expense than what was planned.

As we look forward to 2024, we will be experiencing more ways to reach out to our faith community and the world. We continue to have new people worshipping with us on a regular basis. There are many people out there who are searching for God. Some know it – some only feel something is missing in their lives. The hope they seek, the need for something different, may be filled, perhaps it's with us, at Our Savior's Lutheran Church, and is only an invitation away.

If you have events or ideas you'd like to initiate or share, please talk to our Council. We have a lot of energy and want to keep the wonderful momentum going.

Respectfully submitted,
Jeff Haldeman, Congregation Council President

Music Ministry

Music is an important part of the ministry of our congregation. Music is one of the ways we can communally express our faith in the God who deserves the highest praise. We make a conscious effort to coordinate the message of the service between the Word and the music.

This year included many collaborative efforts: The Senior Choir and Sunday School Choir sang together at the end of October, and The Senior Choir and Bells of Joy prepared a congregational hymn accompaniment for All Saints Day. We had ecumenical choirs with St. Teresa's and the Presbyterian Church for the Thanksgiving Eve service in November and the Carol Sing in December. The Senior Choir also went caroling at Salem Terrace, Mill Street Manor, and Mulder's Nursing Home.

High school and adult musicians accompany choir anthems or provide special music for services. The Bells of Joy prepare selections to enhance the worship services. The SOS Band plays for Festive Fourth worship services and played for Gospel on the Green at the Lion's Shelter in August. Guitar classes are offered on Sundays to anyone interested. The Sunday School choirs meet between services on Sundays and sing for church services. We had several genres of Beer & Hymns (including campfire and Christmas) where we met to sing hymns and enjoy fellowship. Members of the guitar group showed up in force to accompany us!

Two sessions were offered in which piano players were invited to play their piano pieces on the organ, and it was fun to see what they could do.

We are fortunate to have so many talented people in our congregation, and we invite anyone interested to join us!

Respectfully submitted by, Linda Berg

Bells of Joy

Bells had a great year and we have gained some new players. We performed for Ash Wednesday and Palm Sunday. In November we performed with the choir and performed again in December. We are always welcoming new players if anyone wants to give it a try.

Respectfully submitted by, Laurie Noelke

Audit Committee

Members of the 2023 Audit Committee were Dorene Jensen, Sharon Olson, and Jim Anderson. The Audit Committee's ministry is to provide reasonable assurances that good stewardship is being used in handling and accounting for the funds and other assets of Our Savior's Lutheran Church. The committee met three times and completed an audit of the church's accounts and financial practices. In conducting the audit, the committee reviewed the WELCA Account, the Youth Account, the Mission Endowment Fund and selected months of the General Fund Account. The committee also reviewed procedures for handling, counting and depositing offerings as well as payroll procedures; procedures for accounts payable and payments to vendors; IT access and backup procedures; and Scrip card and Youth Account procedures. The committee found that procedures and internal controls in place are generally adequate to protect the church's finances and only a handful of minor procedural changes were recommended to the Council for their consideration. There were no account irregularities identified.

Respectfully submitted,
Jim Anderson, Audit Committee Member

Lutheran World Relief School Kits & Personal Care Kits

The congregation again supported the Lutheran World Relief School Kit Project in 2023. We were able to complete 111 kits, an increase of 10 kits from last year! The Wednesday after school confirmation student volunteers assisted with counting and bundling pens & pencils, sorting items, and the final building of the kits.

All LWR donations were boxed and transported to Good Shepherd Lutheran Church in La Crosse on October 14th. From there they were to be trucked to the LWR warehouse in South St. Paul, MN, for redistribution. In previous years they have gone to Lebanon, Rwanda, Georgia (the country), the Bahamas, and Honduras.

Thank you to everyone who helped make this project a success! We look forward to continuing this project in 2024.

Respectfully submitted,
Tiffany Janisch

Summer Lunch Program – Feed Our Children – West Salem

Our little corner of the church basement is all cleaned up for the season. I want to send out a huge thank you to all of the members of our congregation who have made this season's Summer Lunch Program possible. Many of you volunteered your time preparing, serving, or delivering.

Many of our most needed item donations came from our congregation and that really helps keep our overall costs down quite a bit. As we all know, prices for many things are much higher than they have been in the past. Large donations came from the West Salem Lions, Hansen's IGA, West Salem Schools, Linda's Bakery, Decker Design Inc., Marine Credit Union, and many memorials and individuals. We also applied for and received a significant grant from Kwik Trip this year which was all the milk for breakfasts and lunches for two weeks and most of the produce also. The Community Care and Share Food Pantry provided bags of meal items for all of our pickups and deliveries - twice!

This year we had 7 weekly leaders, representing Our Savior's - Abby Johnson, Carla Burkhardt, Judy and Phil Gilbert, and myself; from St. Teresa's of Kolkata - Cheryl Lang; from Prince of Peace - Sherie Brunk; and from the Presbyterian Church - Nick Miller. Their help in organizing a week or two of volunteers is very helpful. Connie Pinski shared her Thrivent grant with us and shopped for produce several weeks in a row.

On a personal note: before the season began I was invited to attend a LaCrosse County meeting regarding food insecurity. Various organizations were represented at that meeting including the Food Pantry. Strengths and gaps were discussed, and partnerships were made. One of the ways that we make a big difference is by partnering with the Boys and Girls Club of West Salem. They provide structured and supervised activities throughout the summer and we are able to get food to those kids. Nothing that we send there is wasted. If there are ever any leftovers, they are used the next day. Throughout the summer, we have received many words and notes of thanks. Our delivery drivers came back with positive feedback almost every time. Working in various ways every week in the summer really allows me to personally witness the good of so many. Thank you for your support in providing this service.

Respectfully submitted, Angie Hemker

This year in numbers:

- 11 weeks
- 21 serving days
- 6 weekly leaders
- 160 lunch meals served daily (on average)
- 1,197 breakfast bags were distributed
- 130 volunteers

Editor's Note: A special thank you to all from Our Savior's and the community who make this program so successful. And ... a very special thank you to Angie Hemker for ALL the work she puts in to plan, organize, and coordinate this very special ministry. Angie, you are a gift to us and to West Salem!

Community Care & Share Food Pantry

In 2023 we saw an increase in the number of families/individuals using our pantry. Our guests come from Rockland, Bangor, Barre Mills, Mindoro, in addition to West Salem. We continue to be open every Saturday 10 am-12 pm. We did try an evening open time in '23 but it was not utilized so we are no longer open during the week.

We are very thankful for the support of our community with food drives and donations of food & personal care items. We are also very thankful for monetary donations that allow us to purchase vouchers to give out for bread, eggs, juice, milk & meat. We continue to focus on nutrition. Almost weekly trips to The Hunger Task Force provide fresh fruits & vegetables and occasionally meat. We appreciate the gardeners who share their bounty with us. This year we had a senior whose Senior Exit Project involved growing & bringing us vegetables. The two High School students who are fluent in Spanish continue to help us with Spanish speaking families. What a blessing they are to us. We will miss them after graduation.

All this providing of food to those who need support would not be possible without our dedicated community volunteers who help with food distribution, marking, shelving food, and organizing the pantry. Thank you all for the hours of work you put in.

Respectfully submitted, Melody Schmitz, Board Member

ELCA World Hunger

According to UNICEF (March 2023), 2.2 billion people still do not have access to safe drinking water. "Safe water" means having water at home, whenever needed, and free from contamination. This year our World Hunger Water Project kicked off at Synod Assembly. Churches were given a water bucket with the instructions to decorate and fill it with donations for the right of all people to have clean water. Pastor Jean got the Sunday School classes excited by collecting offerings to equal water droplets to fill pails. Joining with them, our goal is to raise enough money to support the digging of three wells (\$2500/well).

During Advent, we set up a mini market selling coffee from Bean Juice, a female-owned local small business; Equal Exchange chocolate; Advent calendars from Finnottes, a local family nut and chocolate shop; and collecting donations for water drop ornaments. Brenda Skittone has been faithful selling Scrip Cards to also raise funds for water. Every time you turn on your faucet and clean water comes, know we are fortunate!

Water is Life!

Respectfully submitted by, Judy Gilbert

Outreach Committee

Outreach continues with our annual events of the year. The June Dairy Days Fun Run was treated to a beautiful morning for all the participants! About 85 runners and walkers bettered their health while helping our community! Our share of the proceeds was evenly split between World Hunger and funds for the roof.

This summer we assisted Feeding Our Children for two weeks. This entailed four days, 9:00 am -1 pm, making healthy lunches and distributing the meals to numerous school children.

The Community Corn Roast in August was well attended with 400+ guests! The day, too, was beautiful and the corn - delicious!

Thank you to all who volunteered to make these events fun and successful!

Our church community is reaching out!

Respectfully submitted by, Judy Gilbert

Social Committee

The Social Committee engages in several ministries throughout the year ...

Coffee Hour – Coffee Hour has continued all year round, even during the summer months. Many people have stepped up to the challenge assisting with baking and serving between services. Coffee hour is an excellent way to reconnect with your fellow church family members and meet new ones.

Easter Breakfast – A simple Easter breakfast consisting of fruit, sausages, rolls, coffee, and juice was served between the sunrise and 8:30 service. Mike & Nate Premo, Carla Burkhardt, and Bonny Goodenough assisted Jeff & Melissa Haldeman with cooking, serving and decorating.

Tree Trimming – Jeff & Melissa Haldeman coordinated the decorating of the Sanctuary and Gathering area. Once again Jon & Lynn Labus picked out two beautiful trees to grace our Sanctuary. Thank you to all the youth volunteers who assisted with setting up and tearing down. Special thanks to Carla Burkhardt for all her hard work (and her truck).

Gospel on the Green – Gospel on the Green was held in August, and this year we brought back the potluck following worship. Thanks to Wendy Amundson for coordinating the meal.

Respectfully submitted by, Melissa Haldeman

WELCA

Ruth Circle - meets monthly on the third Monday at 9 am at Salem Terrace in the kitchenette. All Our Savior's women are invited. In 2023 our offerings of \$1,200 were distributed to 10 ministry organizations. The winter/spring 2024 Bible study is: "Scripture and nature: Teachers of faith" by Rev. Sara Olson-Smith.

Respectfully submitted by, Connie Blunck, Chairwoman

Dorcas Sewing Circle - The Dorcas Quilting had a very successful year in 2023. We surpassed the previous year of 300 quilts by completing and sending 310 quilts to Lutheran World Relief. The cost of the shipping was paid for by the Hungry Jar collections.

We meet every Wednesday afternoon from 1-3 pm in the church basement. Our group consists of 8-12 women and we welcome any additional help. No experience is needed as we will teach you all you need to know. If you can't attend on Wednesdays, material can be taken home to be cut or sewn. We also accept donations of sheets for backing and filler, thin blankets for filler, and any material that can be sewn into quilt tops.

Respectfully submitted by, Maryrose Hetland, Quilter

Norwegian Dinner

318 dinners were sold with a combination of meatballs and lutefisk or just meatballs. The meal was served restaurant style. The dinner committee included Lynette Ender, Inger Michael, Bonny Goodenough, and Jon & Maryrose Hetland. The bake sale was managed by Melody Schmitz.

Profits were \$5,500. Distributed as below:

Tent City Project	\$750
World Hunger	\$500
Lutheran Social Services	\$500
Sugar Creek Bible Camp	\$300
LuMin	\$300
Salvation Army	\$250
Lutheran Disaster Relief	\$500
St Clare Health Mission Sparta	\$500
LaCrosse Warming Center	\$500
LWR Quilt shipping	\$ 50
OSLC Camperships	\$300
Summer Lunch	\$300
Sleep in Heavenly Peace	\$250
Care/Share Food Pantry	<u>\$500</u>
Total:	\$5,500

Respectfully submitted by, Lynette Ender

Mary & Martha Prayer Shawl Ministry

A group of 4-6 women meet in the Koinonia Room on the 1st and 3rd Tuesday of each month knitting or crocheting "shawls of comfort". If they don't meet, Kris in the church office is notified. When members aren't able to meet in person, they continue to produce the shawls at home and bring them to church. Upon completion of a shawl, the group offers prayers for whoever will receive it. Before a shawl is gifted to someone, the shawl and the person who is to receive it are blessed during a worship service.

Prayer shawls are available for anyone – not only members of this congregation – who need to be wrapped in the love of Jesus for any reason (illness, hospitalization, shut-ins, adult and non-infant baptisms, those suffering grief, parents of high school graduates, etc.). If you are aware of anyone who could benefit from being wrapped in this love, please notify one of the pastors.

The group will gladly receive gifts of yarn for making the shawls and monetary gifts for purchasing yarn.

Anyone who would like to be a part of this group is always welcome!

Respectfully submitted, Carol Wittenberg

Mailing Crew

The Mailing Crew meets on the last Wednesday of the month at 8:30 a.m. to assemble the Newsletter. The crew has found it a time of work and fellowship as they stuff and label the newsletters. We thank Connie & Larry Blunck, Bev Bockenbauer, Carolyn Karl, Judy Morzinski, and Carol Thompson for helping put the newsletter together. Their help is invaluable. If you are interested in being a part of the mailing crew, call the office and talk with Kris 608-786-0030.

Respectfully submitted,
Kris Seeger, Administrative Assistant

Mission Endowment Committee

In 2023 the Mission Endowment Committee recommends for Annual Meeting approval for distribution of \$18,800 to the organizations listed below. This year we were curious about what these organizations did with our donations. We made some fact-finding visits to the local charities and brought back information to our committee. These visits did somewhat influence our donations for this year as we thoughtfully evaluated our donations according to the guidelines set by the continuing resolution of the congregation. We focused on giving locally and supporting causes close to home. The Endowment Fund has allowed Our Savior's to distribute in excess of \$258,000 since being established in 2002.

We would like to sponsor a "build" for Sleep In Heavenly Peace, the group who builds beds for kids sleeping on the floor, and invite our community to participate. More information will be forthcoming.

Donations are always welcome. We receive gifts as memorials, bequests, wills, and honoring of family events like birthdays & anniversaries. We also always appreciate suggestions of new causes, groups or activities that could use our support.

Members of the Endowment Committee are: Lee Friell, Jeff Rich, Scott Thompson, Katie Drury & Melody Schmitz.

Respectfully Submitted
Melody Schmitz, Chairperson

This year the proposed distribution of funds is as follows:

Care & Share Food Pantry	\$750
Clothes Closet - Our Savior's La Crosse	\$500
New Horizons	\$1,000
La Crosse Warming Center	\$2,000
Sleep in Heavenly Peace	\$1,000
Sleep in Heavenly Peace – build support (held)	\$250
St. Claire Health Mission	\$1,000
St. Claire Health Mobile Clinic	\$600
ELCA World Hunger	\$2,000
Sugar Creek Bible Camp	\$2,000
Sugar Creek Camperships (for OSLC kids)	\$1,000
LaCrosse Area Synod Children's Ministry Video Project (will be held back to see if this project happens)	\$700
OSLC Capital Improvements	<u>\$6,000</u>
Total	\$18,800

Respectfully Submitted,
Melody Schmitz, Chairperson

Mission Endowment Fund 2023 Financial Report

Assets

ELCA Endowment Fund Pooled Trust (338.993240 shares)	\$454,816.13*
* Share value as of September 30, 2023 @ (\$1,341.67)	
River Bank Money Market Checking **	\$ 0
River Bank Easy Checking Account **	\$ 0
Union State Bank Checking Balance	\$25,568.14

Income

Checking Account Interest (Union State Bank)	\$ 13.83
Contributions/Memorials	\$675.00
ELCA Endowment Fund Pooled Trust Dividends	\$18,618.80
Miscellaneous (balance of River Bank funds)	\$6,345.70

Expenses

Miscellaneous	\$85.19
2022 Distribution approved at the Annual Congregation Meeting (1/29/23) (disbursed from River Bank Account prior to closing)	\$18,300.00

2023 Proposed Distribution to be approved at Annual Congregation Meeting (1/28/24)
to be distributed in 2024 \$18,800.00

** River Bank accounts closed 3/1/2023 and money moved to Union State Bank

Respectfully submitted by, Lee Friell and Jeff Rich
MEF Financial Secretaries

Asset Report – 2023 Youth Account

Account #	Account Name	End of year Balance
Assets		
1.77.000	Youth – Union State Bank Checking	\$28,457.84
Liabilities		
2.77.700	Pass Through Accounts	0.00

2023 FUND REPORT

Youth Account

		Beginning Balance 1/1	Income	Expense	Ending Balance 12/31
3.77.100	General Fund Balance	\$22,889.23	\$279.05	\$0.00	\$23,168.28
3.77.200	Scrip Card Fund Balance	(\$10,181.44)	\$24,804.00	\$20,695.00	(\$6,072.44)
3.77.300	Student Fund Balance	\$10,049.55	\$929.70	\$0.00	\$10,979.25
3.77.350	World Hunger Fund Balance	\$0.00	\$382.75	\$0.00	\$382.75

2023 Pass Through Accounts

Youth Account

	Beginning Balance 1/1	Income	Expense	Ending Balance 12/31
General Pass Through	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00

2023 Our Savior's Scrip Card Sales Report

Thank you to Pastor Jon, Pastor Jean, Kris and Brenda Skittone for selling scrip cards.

Summary/comments:

Sales increased over 2022 and 4th highest sales since starting in 2016

- **Woodman's** cards are 70% of sales
- **Festival** has been discontinued.
- **Kwik Trip**
 - The amount in inventory is limited as the value decreases after 1 year of purchase
 - Competition from other organizations – i.e. school groups

2023	Sales	Profit	Profit Margin
Culver's	\$ 615.00	\$ 61.50	10%
Festival	\$ 200.00	\$ 6.00	3%
Kwik Trip	\$ 6,570.00	\$ 328.50	5%
Kwik Trip Car Wash	\$ 432.00	\$ 192.00	\$16 per card
Ship Shape GC	\$ -	\$ -	0%
Woodman's	\$ 18,500.00	\$ 925.00	5%
Total	\$ 26,317.00	\$ 1,513.00	6%



If you are interested in becoming part of the team, please contact Pastor Jean.

Thank you for supporting World Hunger and Youth programs.

Prepared by Linda Arentz

January 4, 2024

Submitted by Scrip Team Members

Linda Arentz

Tracy Skrentny

Jan Wee

Asset Report – 2023

WELCA Account

Account #	Account Name	End of year Balance
Assets	WELCA – Union State Bank Checking	\$6,403.73

2023 FUND REPORT

WELCA Account

		Beginning Balance 1/1	Income	Expense	Ending Balance 12/31
3.88.100	WELCA General Fund Balance	\$247.59	\$3,350.75	\$19.95	\$3,578.39
3.88.200	Norwegian Dinner Fund Bal	\$0.00	\$8,206.50	\$8,181.69	\$24.81
3.88.300	Ruth Circle Fund Balance	\$266.00	\$1,027.00	\$1,200.00	\$93.00
3.88.400	Quilting Fund Balance	\$2,295.47	\$437.06	\$25.00	\$2,707.53

2023 Recipients - Ruth Circle

New Horizons	\$100.00
Lutheran Disaster Response	\$200.00
Lutheran Campus Ministry	\$100.00
Lutheran World Relief	\$100.00
Sugar Creek Bible Camp	\$100.00
WS Community Assistance	\$100.00
LaCrosse Area Synod WELCA	\$100.00
Katie Beckett/Parenting Place	\$100.00
WELCA Katie's Fund/Thank	\$200.00
Children's Vision	\$100.00
Total Donation	\$1,200.00

2023 Recipients - Norwegian Dinner

ELCA World Hunger	\$500.00
Lutheran Disaster Response	\$500.00
LWR Quilt Shipping	\$50.00
Lutheran Social Services	\$500.00
Sugar Creek Bible Camp - general	\$300.00
SCBC - OSLC Camperships	\$300.00
LaCrosse Tent City Kits	\$750.00
Lutheran Campus Ministry	\$300.00
Salvation Army	\$250.00
St. Clare Mission - Sparta	\$500.00
LaCrosse Warming Center	\$500.00
Sleep in Heavenly Peace	\$250.00
Care & Share Food Pantry	\$500.00
OSLC Summer Lunch Ministry	\$300.00
Total Donation	\$5,500.00

2023 Budget Report 2024 Proposed Budget

INCOME

	2023 Budget	2023 Actual	2024 Budget	\$ Change	% Change
General Envelope	\$215,000.00	\$199,056.29	\$215,000.00	\$0.00	0.00%
Loose	\$1,600.00	\$1,960.93	\$2,000.00	\$400.00	25.00%
Electronic	\$102,500.00	\$105,808.19	\$110,000.00	\$7,500.00	7.32%
Initial	\$700.00	\$235.00	\$250.00	(\$450.00)	-64.29%
Advent	\$850.00	\$510.00	\$500.00	(\$350.00)	-41.18%
Christmas	\$6,000.00	\$2,520.00	\$4,000.00	(\$2,000.00)	-33.33%
Lent	\$1,750.00	\$1,705.00	\$2,000.00	\$250.00	14.29%
Ash Wednesday	\$1,200.00	\$360.00	\$400.00	(\$800.00)	-66.67%
Holy Thursday	\$250.00	\$487.00	\$500.00	\$250.00	100.00%
Good Friday	\$650.00	\$445.00	\$500.00	(\$150.00)	-23.08%
Thanksgiving	\$375.00	\$563.00	\$600.00	\$225.00	60.00%
Prepaid	\$13,362.00	\$9,000.00	\$9,000.00	(\$4,362.00)	-32.64%
Thrivent Choice	\$1,300.00	\$1,340.00	\$1,350.00	\$50.00	3.85%
Lutheran	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	0.00%
Interest-General	\$10,000.00	\$11,437.25	\$10,000.00	\$0.00	0.00%
Sunday School	\$400.00	\$310.00	\$400.00	\$0.00	0.00%
Special Event	\$0.00	\$375.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	0.00%
Rental	\$6,850.00	\$7,050.00	\$7,750.00	\$900.00	13.14%
Interest-Parsonage	\$9,000.00	\$8,759.60	\$9,000.00	\$0.00	0.00%
Easter	\$3,000.00	\$5,600.00	\$6,000.00	\$3,000.00	100.00%
Amazon	\$0.00	\$83.41	\$0.00	\$0.00	0.00%
Offset	\$0.00	\$52.61	\$0.00	\$0.00	0.00%
EFT Processing	\$0.00	\$87.41	\$100.00	\$100.00	0.00%
TOTAL INCOME	\$374,787.00	\$357,745.69	\$379,350.00	\$4,563.00	1.22%

EXPENSE

	2023 Budget	2023 Actual	2024 Budget	\$ Change	% Change
La Crosse Synod	\$32,000.00	\$32,000.04	\$32,000.00	\$0.00	0.00%
Campus Ministry	\$3,000.00	\$3,000.00	\$3,000.00	\$0.00	0.00%
Sugar Creek	\$2,500.00	\$2,624.97	\$2,500.00	\$0.00	0.00%
Community Assistance	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	0.00%
Causeway	\$800.00	\$800.00	\$800.00	\$0.00	0.00%
WS Fire Dept	\$200.00	\$200.00	\$200.00	\$0.00	0.00%
Mission Total	\$38,500.00	\$38,625.01	\$38,500.00	\$0.00	0.00%

	2023 Budget	2023 Actual	2024 Budget	\$ Change	% Change
Salary, Senior	\$63,520.00	\$63,520.08	\$66,700.00	\$3,180.00	5.01%
Benefits, Sr Pr	\$28,523.00	\$28,535.48	\$28,456.68	(\$66.32)	-0.23%
Housing, Sr Pr	\$13,890.00	\$13,890.00	\$13,890.00	\$0.00	0.00%
Cont Ed, Sr Pr	\$800.00	\$74.20	\$800.00	\$0.00	0.00%
Books, Sr Pr	\$300.00	\$158.43	\$300.00	\$0.00	0.00%
Synod Mtg, Sr Pr	\$400.00	\$325.22	\$400.00	\$0.00	0.00%
FICA Sr Pr	\$4,184.00	\$4,184.16	\$4,184.00	\$0.00	0.00%
Senior Pastor Total	\$111,617.00	\$110,687.57	\$114,730.68	\$3,113.68	2.79%
Salary, Assoc Pr	\$41,000.00	\$41,000.04	\$41,000.00	\$0.00	0.00%
Benefits, Assoc Pr	\$22,058.00	\$22,070.96	\$21,331.08	(\$726.92)	-3.30%
Housing, Assoc Pr	\$10,725.00	\$10,725.00	\$10,725.00	\$0.00	0.00%
Cont Ed, Assoc Pr	\$800.00	\$137.07	\$800.00	\$0.00	0.00%
Books, Assoc Pr	\$300.00	\$21.69	\$300.00	\$0.00	0.00%
Synod Mtg, Assoc Pr	\$400.00	\$761.15	\$400.00	\$0.00	0.00%
FICA, Assoc Pr	\$3,231.00	\$3,231.08	\$3,231.00	\$0.00	0.00%
Assoc Pastor Total	\$78,514.00	\$77,946.99	\$77,787.08	(\$726.92)	-0.93%
Secretary	\$28,000.00	\$26,960.53	\$28,800.00	\$800.00	2.86%
Youth and Family	\$10,750.00	\$1,515.00	\$5,500.00	(\$5,250.00)	-48.84%
Music Coordinator	\$4,680.00	\$4,680.00	\$4,820.00	\$140.00	2.99%
Organist	\$15,300.00	\$14,842.00	\$15,836.00	\$536.00	3.50%
Choir Director	\$6,240.00	\$6,240.00	\$6,427.00	\$187.00	3.00%
Maintenance	\$10,000.00	\$12,319.02	\$12,700.00	\$2,700.00	27.00%
Treasurer	\$4,900.00	\$4,899.96	\$5,047.00	\$147.00	3.00%
Counter	\$2,035.00	2,034.96	\$2,065.00	\$30.00	1.47%
Dishwasher	\$450.00	\$240.00	\$400.00	(\$50.00)	-11.11%
FICA	\$6,300.00	\$5,653.12	\$6,211.42	(\$88.58)	-1.41%
Lay Salaries	\$88,655.00	\$79,384.59	\$87,806.42	(\$848.58)	-0.96%
Conference/Conventio	\$800.00	\$600.00	\$800.00	\$0.00	0.00%
Property Insurance	\$6,000.00	\$6,462.00	\$7,000.00	\$1,000.00	16.67%
Workers Comp	\$2,000.00	\$1,526.00	\$2,000.00	\$0.00	0.00%
Pulpit Supply	\$500.00	\$437.32	\$500.00	\$0.00	0.00%
Administration	\$9,300.00	\$9,025.32	\$10,300.00	\$1,000.00	10.75%

	2023 Budget	2023 Actual	2024 Budget	\$ Change	% Change
Postage/Petty Cash	\$2,750.00	\$3,440.00	\$3,250.00	\$500.00	18.18%
Office Supplies	\$3,000.00	\$3,153.31	\$3,000.00	\$0.00	0.00%
Copier Supplies	\$1,000.00	\$964.11	\$1,000.00	\$0.00	0.00%
Office Equipment	\$250.00	\$78.61	\$250.00	\$0.00	0.00%
Software	\$600.00	\$519.00	\$600.00	\$0.00	0.00%
Auto Expense	\$2,000.00	\$2,536.15	\$2,250.00	\$250.00	12.50%
Internet/Telephone	\$2,750.00	\$2,626.92	\$2,750.00	\$0.00	0.00%
Other Expenses	\$12,350.00	\$13,318.10	\$13,100.00	\$750.00	6.07%
Gas	\$5,000.00	\$4,905.57	\$5,000.00	\$0.00	0.00%
Electric	\$6,000.00	\$6,556.97	\$6,600.00	\$600.00	10.00%
Water/Sewer	\$1,000.00	\$1,055.20	\$1,100.00	\$100.00	10.00%
General Maintenance	\$10,000.00	\$13,126.29	\$12,000.00	\$2,000.00	20.00%
Green Thumb	\$400.00	\$160.00	\$200.00	(\$200.00)	-50.00%
Building	\$22,400.00	\$25,804.03	\$24,900.00	\$2,500.00	11.16%
Outreach Committee	\$1,200.00	\$831.49	\$1,000.00	(\$200.00)	-16.67%
Lutheran Subscription	\$550.00	\$188.37	\$0.00	(\$550.00)	-100.00%
Senior Ministries	\$250.00	\$224.44	\$250.00	\$0.00	0.00%
OWLS	\$100.00	\$0.00	\$100.00	\$0.00	0.00%
Outreach	\$2,100.00	\$1,244.30	\$1,350.00	(\$750.00)	-35.71%
Parish Activities	\$500.00	\$744.67	\$750.00	\$250.00	50.00%
Social	\$500.00	\$744.67	\$750.00	\$250.00	50.00%
Stewardship Comm	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$250.00	\$250.00	#DIV/0!
Envelopes	\$1,300.00	\$1,236.06	\$1,300.00	\$0.00	0.00%
Electronic Giving Fee	\$1,200.00	\$1,173.15	\$1,200.00	\$0.00	0.00%
Stewardship	\$2,500.00	\$2,409.21	\$2,750.00	\$250.00	10.00%
Music Supplies	\$500.00	\$439.00	\$500.00	\$0.00	0.00%
Worship Supplies	\$2,750.00	\$2,038.43	\$2,500.00	(\$250.00)	-9.09%

	2023 Budget	2023 Actual	2024 Budget	\$ Change	% Change
Devotional Materials	\$625.00	\$654.69	\$650.00	\$25.00	4.00%
Worship Licenses	\$1,400.00	\$1,451.29	\$1,500.00	\$100.00	7.14%
Wednesday Worship	\$2,500.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	(\$2,500.00)	-100.00%
Worship	\$7,775.00	\$4,583.41	\$5,150.00	(\$2,625.00)	-33.76%
Parish/Adult Ed	\$0.00	\$30.06	\$0.00	\$0.00	#DIV/0!
Sunday School	\$1,800.00	\$1,220.81	\$1,500.00	(\$300.00)	-16.67%
Confirmation	\$600.00	\$329.17	\$350.00	(\$250.00)	-41.67%
Education	\$2,400.00	\$1,580.04	\$1,850.00	(\$550.00)	-22.92%
Youth Program Suppor	\$750.00	\$49.19	\$750.00	\$0.00	0.00%
Sugar Creek Campers	\$3,000.00	\$3,000.00	\$3,000.00	\$0.00	0.00%
College Student Suppo	\$500.00	\$230.00	\$400.00	(\$100.00)	-20.00%
Family Ministries	\$250.00	\$235.45	\$250.00	\$0.00	0.00%
Youth	\$4,500.00	\$3,514.64	\$4,400.00	(\$100.00)	-2.22%
TOTAL EXPENSE	\$381,111.00	\$368,867.88	\$383,374.18	\$2,263.18	0.59%

Asset Report – 2023

Church Accounts

Account #	Account Name	End of year Balance
<i>Assets</i>		
1.00.200	Interest Checking Account	256,197.86
1.00.608	ELCA Pooled Trust – General*	373,963.40
1.00.609	ELCA Pooled Trust – Parsonage*	<u>213,976.26</u>
<i>Total Assets</i>		\$844,137.52
 <i>Liabilities</i>		
2.00.200	Federal tax deposit	1,560.74
2.00.300	State Withholding tax	345.12
2.00.900	Pass Through Accounts+	<u>2,888.11</u>
<i>Total Liabilities</i>		\$4,793.97

*These balances are as of November 30, 2023 based on the statement from ELCA Endowment Pooled Trust. The December 31, 2023 numbers will not be available until 23 business days in to January/February. The numbers will be updated once they are received to reflect the correct ending balance of 2023 and will show on the 2024 annual report.

Update to 2022 Annual Report Asset Report -

1.00.608 ELCA Pooled Trust – General –	
End of Year Balance reported in 2022 Annual Report	\$299,386.95
Interest as of 12/31/22 added in February 2023	\$15,417.92
Actual End of Year Balance (12/31/22)	\$314,804.87
1.00.609 ELCA Pooled Trust – Parsonage –	
End of Year Balance reported in 2022 Annual Report	\$197,908.97
Interest as of 12/31/22 added in February 2023	\$10,191.97
Actual End of Year Balance (12/31/22)	\$208,100.94

+ Includes monies designated for College Scholarship and Sugar Creek Campership Support donations, and Sunday School offering.

2023 Fund Report

	Jan 1	2023	2023	Dec 31
	Balance	Income	Expense	Balance
3.00.000 General Fund	\$145,531.51	\$357,658.28	\$368,867.88	\$134,321.91
3.01.100 Building Fund	\$10,538.35	\$37,389.58	\$2,619.10	\$45,308.83
3.01.102 Facility Needs Fund	\$0.00	\$9,430.79	\$2,478.13	\$6,952.66
3.01.103 Cap Improvements	\$9,435.12	\$0.00	\$3,448.42	\$5,986.70
3.01.104 Emergency Fund	\$5,020.25	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$5,020.25
3.01.105 Equip Repl Fund	\$1,156.23	\$0.00	\$415.63	\$740.60
3.01.106 Insurance Claim Fund	\$0.00	\$70,435.07	\$0.00	\$70,435.07
3.01.200 <i>New Facilities/Programs</i>				
3.01.201 New Fac/Programs	\$40,682.47	\$0.00	\$31,385.28	\$9,297.19
3.01.202 Youth Program	\$7,966.14	\$1,200.00	\$0.00	\$9,166.14
3.01.300 Building Centennial Fund	\$22,872.08	\$16,960.00	\$0.00	\$39,832.08
3.02.102 Johnson House South	\$3,750.83	\$3,300.00	\$2,130.09	\$4,920.74
3.02.103 Market Gain-ELCA PT Parsonage	\$208,100.94	\$13,201.28	\$7,325.96	\$213,976.26
3.03.100 <i>Memorial/Bequest Fund</i>				
3.03.101 Bequest	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
3.03.102 Memorial Fund	\$41,775.79	\$3,317.00	\$0.00	\$45,092.79
3.03.103 To Be Designated	\$2,310.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$2,310.00
3.04.101 Eggen Seminary Scholarship	\$8,382.96	\$335.28	\$0.00	\$8,718.24
3.04.102 Eggen-Anderson Camper Fund	\$2,328.12	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$2,328.12
3.04.103 Meyer/Lewis Scholarship Fund	\$3,973.80	\$158.94	\$0.00	\$4,132.74
3.04.105 Marking Scholarship Fund	\$20,396.31	\$803.85	\$300.00	\$20,900.16
3.04.106 Michelson Scholarship Fund	\$59,955.08	\$2,334.20	\$1,600.00	\$60,689.28
3.04.107 Moe Scholarship Fund	\$1,757.82	\$70.31	\$0.00	\$1,828.13
3.04.108 Piper Scholarship Fund	\$500.00	\$500.00	\$500.00	\$500.00
3.04.109 HAFriell Campership Fund	\$0.00	\$50,000.00	\$0.00	\$50,000.00
3.05.101 Dir-Youth/Family Salary Fund	\$4,646.67	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$4,646.67
3.05.102 Sabbatical Fund	\$58.45	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$58.45
3.05.103 Medical Reimbursement Fund	\$875.00	\$1,150.00	\$97.85	\$1,927.15
3.06.101 Choir Fund	\$3,731.64	\$190.00	\$0.00	\$3,921.64
3.06.102 Confirmation Bibles Fund	\$1,674.38	\$0.00	\$544.75	\$1,129.63
3.06.103 Disaster Relief Team Fund	\$2,135.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$2,135.00
3.06.104 Education Fund	\$3,282.97	\$100.00	\$125.81	\$3,257.16
3.06.105 Coffee Fellowship Fund	\$1,017.83	\$460.00	\$700.00	\$777.83
3.06.107 Green Thumb Fund	\$765.00	\$25.00	\$0.00	\$790.00
3.06.108 Music Fund	\$1,674.77	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$1,674.77
3.06.109 Senior Ministry Fund	\$1,381.65	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$1,381.65
3.06.110 Social Fund	\$2,523.89	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$2,523.89
3.06.111 Youth Ministry Fund	\$9,291.21	\$0.00	\$829.40	\$8,461.81
3.06.113 Summer Lunch Fund	\$1,147.85	\$3,561.86	\$4,337.07	\$372.64
3.06.114 Youth Mission Scholar Fund	\$2,881.10	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$2,881.10
3.06.115 Confirmation Fee Fund	(\$627.67)	\$90.00	\$0.00	(\$537.67)
3.06.116 Long Education Fund	\$3,200.04	\$0.00	\$112.42	\$3,087.62

3.06.117	SEP Resource Fund	\$200.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$200.00
3.06.118	PLC Fund	\$520.00	\$0.00	\$53.80	\$466.20
3.06.119	Conf-Servant Leadership Fund	\$500.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$500.00
3.06.201	Administration-Bequest Fund	(\$262.86)	\$0.00	\$0.00	(\$262.86)
3.06.202	Outreach-Bequest Fund	\$5,626.74	\$32.50	\$0.00	\$5,659.24
3.06.203	Stewardship-Bequest Fund	\$1,748.03	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$1,748.03
3.06.204	Worship Fund	\$297.53	\$1,000.00	\$0.00	\$1,297.53
3.06.301	Library Fund	\$1,944.38	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$1,944.38
3.07.101	Market Gain-ELCA PT General	\$37,685.26	\$21,962.00	\$12,803.47	\$46,843.79
Total Funds					\$839,343.54
Total Liabilities					\$4,793.97
Total Liabilities and Fund Balance					\$844,137.51

Ministry Giving – 2023 (Via Pass Through account)

Ministry Supported	Amount
ELCA World Hunger	4,734.00
Lutheran Campus Ministry	1,415.00
OSLC Summer Lunch	220.16
Lutheran World Relief	880.00
Lutheran World Relief – Emergency Fund	268.16
Lutheran World Relief – School Kits	334.04
Lutheran World Relief – Quilt Shipping	804.33
Lutheran Disaster Response	591.32
Sugar Creek	880.00
OSLC Camperships – Sugar Creek	754.58
New Horizons	444.69
OSLC LaCrosse Clothes Closet	329.52
Sleep in Heavenly Peace	2,051.63
Jail Ministry	361.36
Care & Share Food Pantry	1,135.00

RESOLUTIONS

RESOLUTION #1

Recommended by the Congregation Council

Resolved, that the proposal from DBS Group and Ledegar Roofing for repair of storm damage to the church be accepted, at a cost not to exceed \$115,000;

And be it further resolved that the repair of the rental house and garage be delayed until further examination of the buildings later in the year.

RESOLUTION #2

Recommended by the Congregation Council

Resolved, that the proposed budget for 2024 in the amount of \$383,374.18, including mission support and salaries, be adopted.

RESOLUTION #3

Resolved, that the congregation approve the proposal from the Mission Endowment Fund Committee for the 2023 disbursement as presented.

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.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Elizabeth A. Eaton". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

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
