

ANNUAL REPORT 2023



Evangelical
Lutheran Church
in America

A MESSAGE FROM PRESIDING BISHOP ELIZABETH EATON



Dear friends in Christ,

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

ANNUAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING

OPENING LITURGY

Son of God, Eternal Savior

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

And also with you.

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

Receive our prayer, O God.

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

Receive our prayer, O God.

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

Receive our prayer, O God.

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

Receive our prayer, O God.

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

Receive our prayer, O God.

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

Receive our prayer, O God.

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

Receive our prayer, O God.

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

Amen.

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

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

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

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

Evangelical Lutheran Worship, 655

Text: Somerset C. Lowry

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

arr. Julius Röntgen

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Annual Report 2023



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**Bethel Lutheran Church
Annual Meeting Agenda
Sunday, January 28, 2024
9:45 AM**

- I. Call to Order
- II. House Count (Quorum of 60)
- III. Opening Devotion
- IV. Approval of the 2023 Minutes
- V. Reports of the Senior Pastor, Council, Treasurer, Staff and Committees
- VI. Elections (Nominating Committee)
 - a. Council Positions
 - i. Personnel
 - ii. At Large
 - iii. Worship and Arts
 - b. Endowment Committee (2)
 - c. Nominating Committee Chair
 - d. Cannon River Conference Assembly Representatives (2)
 - e. Southeastern Synod Assembly Representatives (2)
 - f. Lutheran Home of the Cannon Valley (NRC) Representatives (2)
- VII. Approval of the Budget
- VIII. Unfinished Business
- IX. New Business
- X. Closing Prayer

**Bethel Lutheran Church
Minutes of the Annual Meeting
Sunday, January 29, 2023 at 9:45 am**

President Bill Hoekstra called the meeting to order at 9:47 am and presented the adjusted agenda for the meeting.

Pastor Inger offered an opening prayer.

A motion was made by Pat Stahly and seconded to accept the agenda presented. The motion carried.

A motion was made by Don Pavek, seconded by Knight Stanley to approve the minutes of the 2022 Annual Meeting. The motion carried.

Finance Committee Chair, Jared Plotz, presented the financial report. A resolution was presented for allocation of the budget surplus from 2022 as follows:

- \$7,000 to go to the Refugee Fund for refugee family expenses
- \$3,300 to go to the Organ Renewal Fund for Phase II of the renovation of the organ
- \$7,000 to go into Capital Reserves
- \$3,300 to go into the Good Samaritan Fund

A motion was made by Lois Stratmoen and seconded to adopt the resolution. Following questions and discussion, the motion carried.

Jared Plotz presented the 2023 Proposed Budget.

A motion was made by Marv Farmer, seconded by Michelle Vosejka to accept the proposed budget. Following discussion of the changes in transportation options for Bethel Youth trips, the motion carried.

President Bill Hoekstra recognized and offered appreciation for the outgoing committee chairs for their tireless work on behalf of Bethel. He thanked the entire council for their excellent work in a challenging year, as well as the congregation for their support in all areas of the mission of the church.

Bill Hoekstra presented the Bethel Lutheran Church 2023 Annual Meeting Ballot which included nominations for the following.

Council positions:

- Finance – Barb Fowler; At Large – Congregational Life: Cindy Kreis; Trustee – Blair Fowler;
- Stewardship – Joel Leer; Nominating Committee Chair – Nominations from the floor; SE Synod
- Assembly Representatives, Jan & Pat Stahly; Lutheran Home of the Cannon Valley (NRC) Representatives – Nominations from the floor

There were no nominations from the floor.

A motion was made by Pat Stahly, seconded by Knight Stanley to accept the ballot presented. The motion carried.

Bill Hoekstra gave “Overview and Opportunities” Highlights, demonstrating that Bethel is a very active and engaged congregation.

Pastor Inger closed with prayer.

A motion was made by Chelsey Headrick and seconded by Scott Broughton to adjourn. The motion carried. The 2023 Annual Meeting adjourned at 10:25 am.

2023 Statistical Report

Sunday Services: During 2023 services were offered at 8:30 a.m. and 10:45 a.m.
 In the summer, the second service moved to 10:30 a.m.
 The first service was livestreamed and recordings were available later on our YouTube channel.

Special Services:

Wednesday Lent (15)	Palm Sunday (2)	Maundy Thursday (2)	Blessing of the Pets (1)
Good Friday (2)	Easter Sunday (3)	Welcome Pastor Ben (1)	All Saints Day (2)
Christmas Eve (4)	Christmas Day (1)	Holy Wednesday Remembrance (1)	
Alleluia Fun Run (1)	Private Baptism (1)	Confirmation (1)	

Membership	<u>Baptized</u>	<u>Confirmed</u>
2023	991	778

Average Weekly Worship Attendance:

<u>2016</u>	<u>2017</u>	<u>2018</u>	<u>2019</u>	<u>2020</u>	<u>2021</u>	<u>2022</u>	<u>2023: Live-Stream</u>	<u>2023</u>
480	472	431	415	591	221	265	293	52

Pastoral Acts 2023

Funerals (12)

Janet Pritchard, Don Nelson, Rv. Henry C. Mueller, Allan Berg, Nancy Jean Nelson, Jennifer Ringler, Michael Gerard Fox, Thomas Floyd Coffield, Roger Tenney, Luther Tweeten, Tina Schultz, and Jerry Williams

Baptisms (12)

Caroline Arnold, Harper Beardmore, Rio David Nicholas Benson, Jeff Haefner, Julia Haefner, Ben Martinez, Hattie Martinez, Noah Alan Niemann, Emmett Thomas Niemann, Layne Nystuen, Freya Porath, and Mara Powell

Confirmations (18) October 15, 2023

Abigail Atzinger, Fletcher Aylin, Evelyn Bauer, Maxwell Boardman, Eloise DeBus, Matthew Haefner, Jaelyn Holz, Boden Jenkinson, Annika Johnson, Karina Johnson, Mason William Muench, Erik Radtke, Keegan Gabriel Resendiz, Rayne Rimpila, Isaac Erlo Schleif, Grant Joseph Selchow, Cassandra Thomas, and Tara Alaniz

Church Staff

Inger Hanson (*Pastor and Administration*), Ben Schori (*Associate Pastor*), Phil Ruud (*Visitation Pastor*), Blair Fowler (*Building Manager*), Brenda Rabbe (*Director of Children's Ministry*), Brent Kivell (*Video Producer*) Caroline Smith (*Finance Associate*), Cindy Carlson (*Resonance Bell Choir Director*), Janice Lehmkuhl (*Communications Manager*), Jill Mahr (*Director of Children's and Youth Bell Choirs*), Juley Jenkinson (*Director of Early Childhood Faith Formation*), Kristi Larson (*Director of Youth Ministry*), Sam Dwyer (*Director of Technology*), Marv Farmer (*Custodian*), Megan Engel (*Director of Music and Worship*), Mimi De Rosas (*Office Manager*), Peter Schleif (*Adult Choir Director*).

New Members Received (59)**January 2023 :**

Paul and Brenna Nystuen and their son Layne, Steve Cloud, Jeanne Cloud and Donovan Pautcke, Mark and Joan Ekeren, Jason and Samantha Niemann and their children Harper (3), Noah (1), and Emmett (1.5 months), Mike and Mary Nitz, Andrew Peter and Tallie Berkvam Peter, Ivy and Ray Reinholtzen.

June 2023 — Pentecost:

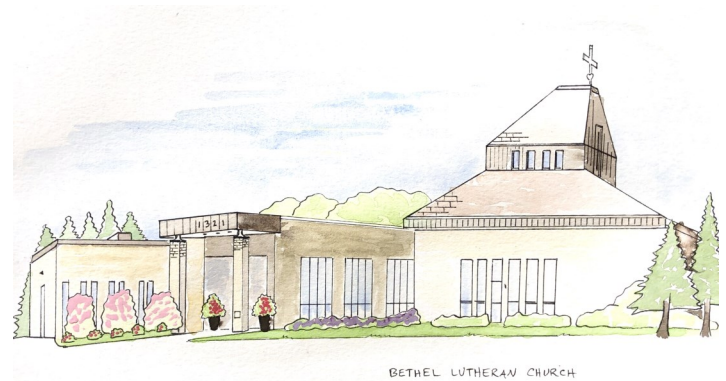
Mark & Cathy Penning, Pete & Lori, Isaac, Ian Schleif and Duane & Barb Uhl

October 2023 — Reformation:

Scott Dennison & Linda Dahl & Grace, Reino Paananen, Jamie & Jodi, Charlotte & Addison Doeden, Tyler, Kori, Norah & Mara Powell, Lee Engquist, Don & Carol Schutz, Cal & Lynne Feine, Ben, Melissa, Johanna & Isla Schori, Martin Ortiz Santos, Jesica Garcia & Dylan, Julie Seedorf, Kari, Grant, Quinn & Griffin Hemmingsen, Rebecca Terry, Maria & Presley Martins, Bob Thacker, Darlene Mikkelsen and Barb & Darrell Van Loenen.

Formal Transfers Out 2023 (22):**Church Council:**

William Hoekstra (*Congregation President*)
 Darlene Broughton (*Mission & Justice*)
 Barb Fowler (*Finance Committee*)
 Joel Leer (*Steward*)
 Chris Bussmann (*Kitchen*),
 Blair Fowler (*Trustee & Building Manager*)
 Phyllis Larson (*Personnel Officer*)
 Peder Jothen (*Worship and Arts*)
 Cindy Kreis (*Congregational Life*)



Drawing by Allison Albright

Senior Pastor — Inger Hanson

In 2023, much hard work came to fruition that gives the congregation a strong foundation for the future.

Key staff positions were filled:

Kristi Larson agreed to stay on as our youth director (January)

Rev. Ben Schori accepted the call to be our associate pastor (beginning in August)

...and created!

Rev. Phil Ruud agreed to continue at Bethel as a ¼ time visitation pastor.

These are integral roles for a congregation of Bethel's size. Still, personnel is a significant expense, and I appreciate Personnel and Council's prayerful prudence and the congregation's flexibility as we move forward. I am confident that together the pastors and office manager can meet our communication needs, but it won't be the same as having a communications manager. A big thank you to Janice Lehmkuhl for her work on the *Blaze*, the *Weekly*, and the website.

A big thank you to Phyllis Larson and the Personnel Committee, as well as Ben Fisher and the Call Committee, for all their work behind the scenes.

Key support systems got up and running:

streamlined financial reporting through Lighthouse Strategic Solutions

church management through Breeze

Much thanks to Barb Fowler and the Finance Committee's leadership, and to super volunteers Kelly & Marci Groenewold for lending their time and expertise getting Breeze set up to really work for Bethel, patiently teaching others, and assisting staff and committees with volunteer sign-ups and more.

With these tools now in place, and Stewardship's plans to educate and engage you, I am hopeful that in 2024 the congregation can avoid the operating budget shortfalls we experienced in 2023.

The team is beginning to meld together, and I am enjoying sharing the load. While I knew I would enjoy alternating preaching and presiding responsibilities with an associate, I had not anticipated the relief I would get not preparing announcements every week! More seriously, I am especially excited that Bethel's varied and vibrant ministries are getting more focused pastoral attention. Currently, Pastor Ben is leading Limitless Chapel on Wednesdays and is the primary pastoral advisor for Stewardship, Mission & Justice, Creation Care, RIC, Homes for God's Children, and Kitchen committees. He is also taking the lead on a newly formed AV Update Task Force. I am better able to focus on pastoral care and being the pastoral advisor for Personnel, Finance, Endowment, Congregational Life, Worship & Arts, Funeral committees, the Refugee Welcome team and the Nourishing Vocation Project.

Even as we were doing this important organizational work, 2023 was an exciting year in ministry.

SERVICE. We are just over a year into our sponsorship of a family seeking asylum – a huge undertaking. We are learning so much (about our neighbors, ourselves, our community, our immigration policies and procedures) in this ministry. A special thanks to Jane Runzheimer for her leadership, to the dedicated team, and to all the transportation volunteers who are helping the family connect in Northfield.

We also supported our neighbors through the March Food Drive, the Alleluia 5K, the Garage Sale, summer Habitat builds, the Good Samaritan Fund, the "Hope for the Holidays" cards for immigrants and more.

LEARNING. The Sunday education hour options expanded this fall, with "Bible Deep Dive" (a text study with the preaching pastor) being offered alongside "Bethel Presents" and "faith flow." A Mission & Justice series led to the adoption of Bethel's land acknowledgement; the two part "Minority Representation in the Church" opened



our eyes to the growing edges of authentic welcome. Thanks to all our presenters, and to Barb Farmer and team for their careful work encouraging us in life-long faith formation.

COMMUNITY. In the summer, we started the **Nourishing Vocation Project (NVP)** – a St. Olaf / Lilly Endowment supported program to help us connect to God and to one another, that we might act with a greater sense of purpose both in our individual lives and as a congregation. NVP material is woven through different aspects of our life together – education, fellowship, and worship this year. Thank you to Cindy Kreis, Barb Farmer, Juley Jenkinson, Marci Groenewald, and Megan Engel for helping sift through and tailor the resources.

In the first phase – **“Getting to Know You”** we focused on connection. I heard from visitors (who became new members!) that the quick but authentic conversations helped them connect on a deeper level, or, changed college students’ impressions of what Christians talked about. We also have a lot to say – and that gets noisy! Hearing was sometimes difficult. Other members struggled for other reasons. Whether you experienced those moments as joy or challenge, thank you for experimenting with us. Thinking about values, openness and call, attention, regret, and experiences of the holy as individuals set us up for thinking about **“Who We Are Together”** – the second phase of the project, begun on Reformation Sunday.

In the November congregational workshop, ten groups brainstormed the values they identified with Bethel, and shared how they understood the congregation living them out. I was especially delighted by how the inclusion we claim in our welcome statement was embodied: a new, youthful staff member joined the conversation at my table, and another table worked bilingually. Among all the groups, some words consistently surfaced, but could also have different layers. For instance, community for some meant fellowship within the congregation and the bonds formed in small groups and outings. For others, community included neighbors beyond the congregation, and our mission and justice efforts. While there are different nuances, worship and community emerged as central to who we are at Bethel.

WORSHIP. I am treasuring your awareness of the centrality of worship in our lives together. It is in how you lift up your voices or engage a sermon. It is in the talent you share in worship – the musical gifts and rehearsals. It is in the silence you held in Holden Evening Prayer this Advent – and the record attendance of those services. And I have noticed that many of you are even joining me in wearing the colors of the liturgical seasons – something that can be both light-hearted and a way of orienting to God’s time and activity. Because of course, worship ultimately includes our lives outside the sanctuary.

During Advent, we asked what God might be asking us to be open to, what God might be calling us from, or to. With key staff positions filled, “openness” feels more possible. Ideas that had been on hold are getting attention and energy. For instance, Brenda (with support from Pastor Ben) is piloting a “Children’s Church” option during the second service. Our partnerships with the other Northfield ELCA congregations can deepen – building on our Joint Thanksgiving service and JTerm efforts, in 2024 we’re having a joint summer camp at Good Earth Village, and there’s even a plan for coordinated summer trip for all ages to Holden Village in early August. There will be more “Sing Boldly!” events at the Contented Cow.

Finally, my deep gratitude to leaders whose particular tasks are ending. Ben Fisher stalwartly chaired the call committee (again!) and I trust his expertise in teambuilding and insights into myself and Pastor Ben as individual leaders. Chris Bussmann’s wisdom and problem solving will be very missed on council (but we get to enjoy his culinary genius and work ethic leading Bistro through the school year!). As chair of Personnel, Phyllis Larson has navigated myriad challenges with firmness and grace, and has been shoulder and sounding board for me.



DIRECTOR OF MUSIC AND WORSHIP — Megan Engel

As I joyfully reflect on 2023, I give thanks for the many gifted and generous individuals who make our worship and music life here at Bethel so incredibly special for all. From working with so many fabulous musicians and worship leaders, to the incredible support of the second phase of the organ renewal project, I am continually in awe of this faith community. THANK YOU to our fabulous worship assistants, musical ensemble directors, special musicians, and all who contribute to our worship life. I am eagerly looking forward to the year ahead. Here are some distinctive highlights of the past year.

THE ORGAN RENEWAL PROJECT—PHASE 2



The organ console before Phase 2



"Where did the console go?"



The 'carcass'



The updated console



NOURISHING VOCATION PROJECT

We began weaving the Nourishing Vocation Project into worship mid-summer. I enjoyed how the NVP themes enabled long term planning and connections between liturgical seasons. I was also delighted (but not surprised) that our worship life together is one of our top values as a community.



Holden Evening Prayer had record attendance this Advent. Special thanks to Claire Larson and Deonne Gray for taking these services to another level with the French horn and violin.

WORSHIP & ARTS COMMITTEE: ADVENT/CHRISTMAS PLANNING RETREAT

To involve more folks in worship planning, the pastors, youth director, and some Worship & Arts folk met in August to think together about Advent and Christmas. One result: the new white banner that proclaimed Christmas so brilliantly! Looking forward to future retreats



Acolytes, Assisting Ministers, Musicians and Pastors have been enjoying the handmade Bethel crosses crafted by Rev. Bob Kaul. Similar crosses were incorporated into our home communion kits to support that ministry.



Your organist enjoys liturgically correct footwear.

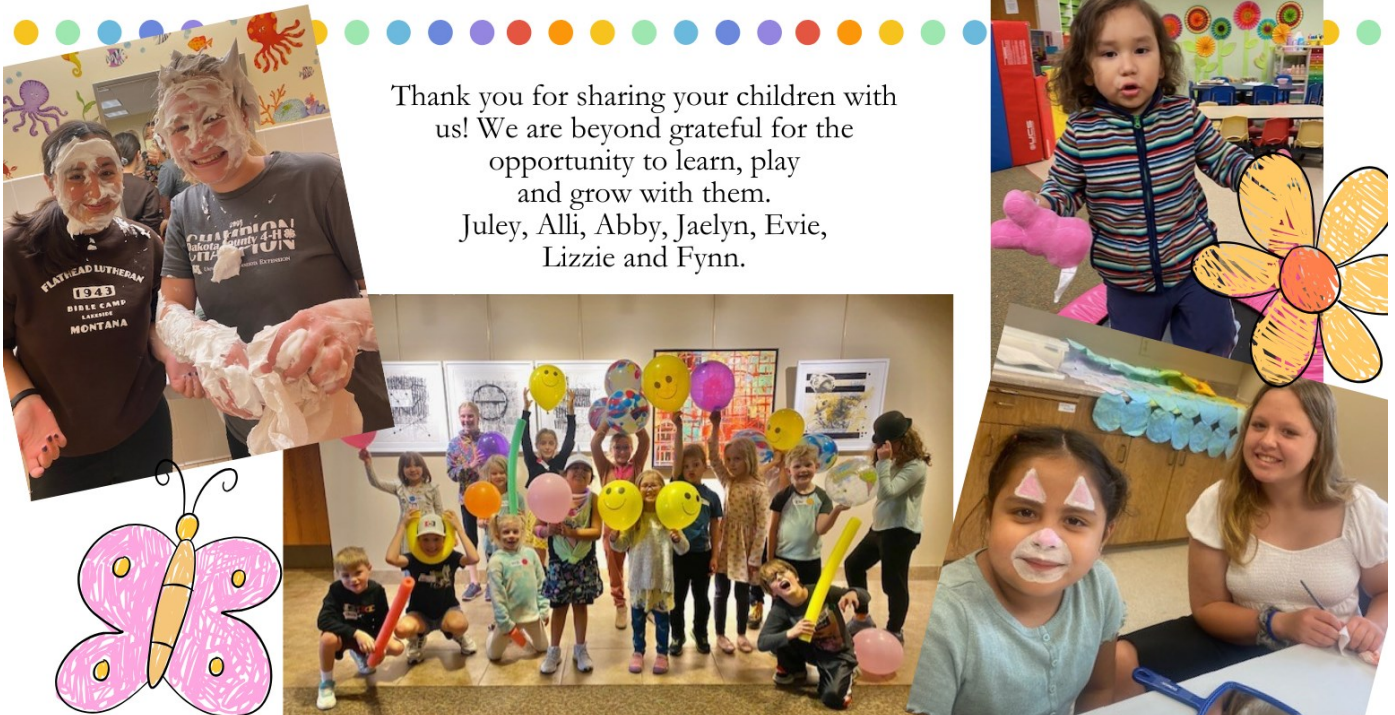
Early Childhood Ministry/Nursery — Juley Jenkinson



2023 has been another wonderfully delightful year in the Nursery! We work hard to foster an environment that is loving, inclusive, spirit-filled, and fun all while sharing Christ's LOVE with a big heart.

●●●●●● Nursery 2023 Highlights: ●●●●●●

- We have seen an uptick in Sunday and Wednesday attendance in the nursery. It has been a joy to have a room full of happy and energetic kids again.
- The Nursery hosted Parents' Night Out in March with 25 kids in attendance and a Parents' Morning Out in December with 33 kids in attendance. This has always been an event that the Nursery staff greatly looks forward to. We were thrilled to be able to offer these fun events again.
- Our weekly Sunday FUN-Day themes continue to be a hit amongst the the children and staff in the Nursery. We want kids to look forward to coming to church and spending time in the Nursery so these themes (i.e. Messy Play Day, Camp Jesus, Recycling is RAD, etc.) make Sundays feel extra FUN!
- Introduced Spanish versions of Bible stories and music to our regular programming.
- Creating a large canvas mural as a group art project.



Thank you for sharing your children with us! We are beyond grateful for the opportunity to learn, play and grow with them.
Juley, Alli, Abby, Jaelyn, Evie, Lizzie and Fynn.

Director of Children's Ministries — Brenda Atzinger

Well friends, we have managed an entire calendar year of 3D ministry. Yay us! It is so good to see your faces, to high five, fist bump and hug in the hallways. We saw tremendous growth in participation over the course of 2022 and we have maintained that steady participation in 2023 as well.

We have welcomed new leadership and energy into Children's Ministry with Pastor Ben's presence. His visions have aligned beautifully with Bethel's values for children, and it has been a joy to create and renovate together. Limitless Chapel has a camp worship feel now and the kids have engaged at a whole new level in this style of worship. Camp is near and dear to Pastor Ben's heart in general. We sensed a summer camp change was needed, so a new partnership has been born with Good Earth Village in collaboration with our sister congregations to claim a "Northfield Week". Our last co-visioned project is now underway with Children's Church during the late service. This is a new option for elementary-aged children to attend part of worship with their family, then leave for a child-centered worship and activity time before rejoining the congregation. For those families who struggle to attend both Sunday School and worship, or those whose kids may simply appreciate an alternative, we hope this provides value to our families. We will learn soon whether this fills an ongoing need for Bethel.

We continue to provide special Sunday School parent-child events for Grades 1-3, and Retreats for Grades 3-5 covering Baptism, Worship, and Holy Communion. Family Sunday School Events have also continued with sledding in the winter, our Easter Egg and Story Event on Palm Sunday, and a Spring Grand Finale at the Arboretum. This year we added a park playdate over MEA weekend.

Despite frustrating air quality issues, we managed to hold our Family Vacation Bible School as a joint effort with St. John's, St. Peter's and Emmaus once again. Weather and air conditions affected attendance, but it was greatly enjoyed by those present.

During Limitless we created Easter, Valentine's Day, Thanksgiving and Christmas décor for our friends at the Northfield Retirement Center. We also shared Christmas cheer with a caroling field trip to the NRC in December. We are intentional about serving others.

Speaking of Christmas, we had approximately 60 children participating once again from the combined Sunday School and Limitless ministries in our double cast Christmas Program. It is great fun and meaningful chaos to share this timeless story with the children and congregation in fresh ways.

Thank you for sharing your children with us. Thank you for financially supporting children's ministry. Thank you for volunteering and praying. We are intentionally raising incredible adults. As always, we're in this together.



Director of Youth Ministries — Kristi Larson

Last summer the Children Youth and Family (CYF) staff had some big conversations. Who are we and where do we want to put our attention and resources? What are a few values we want to focus on to help the young people in our community grow? What is already woven into the fabric of who Bethel is as a faith community?

We came up with five core commitments: Faith. Inclusion. Relationships. Generosity. Worship. Here are a few of the ways Bethel Youth have grown in these 5 commitments in the year 2023.

At Bethel Lutheran we aspire to grow in...

Faith – Before last summer I had never been to Flathead Lutheran Bible camp but the thing I heard repeatedly was how much everyone who attends grows in their faith. And this trip did not disappoint! Not only did the 28 kids who attended talk about how they grew to understand Christ more, but their stories, the beautiful landscape and all the laughter allowed the 5 of us adults to spend time basking in the spirit as well.

Inclusion – If you walk by the youth room between 7:00 and 8:00 on a Wednesday evening you will see 20-30 high school kids playing games, sharing highs and lows, and laughing. But you might not recognize everyone in the room. That's because several of them are not from families that attend Bethel. Rather, they are friends the kids have invited who feel comfortable enough to join us each week. Because at hangtime (and at Bethel) all are welcome.

Relationships – Up the mountain the 11 soon-to-be-confirmed 10th graders (and two adults and two counselors) went with their bags filled with gear and their eyes filled with apprehension. That's how they left for Christikon Lutheran Bible Camp. Five days later the same people returned sunburnt, bug-bitten and in desperate need of a shower but very changed. They were more respectful of one another, kinder and better listeners. Perhaps relying on others means that friendship becomes something deeper. Whatever it was, relationships were formed on that mountain.



Generosity – In 2023, the theme of the March Food Drive was “Frozen” with Elsa, her friends and even the three bears. But around all that silliness something amazing happened. Over \$18,000 was raised to support hungry families in our community! But equally as important is that our kids got to not only witness all of that generosity, they got to be the leaders! Thanks be to God!



Worship – On the last Sunday of each month our kids get to help lead worship by reading, ushering and serving communion. Those who participate gain a greater understanding and respect for how and why we worship while being leaders themselves.

Looking forward:

In 2024 we want to keep these commitments at the front and center of our ministry. And that's where you come in. The staff can't do this alone, even with the most wonderful volunteers and devout parents. Instead, we need kids to see you as a community place stock in these commitments. Don't tell them, show them. It will impact them much more than you think.

Thank you for your continued support this year. Not only do you generously give of your time and resources, but you care so deeply about the wonderful kids we have at Bethel. Thank you for continuing to encourage, pray for and love these beloved children of God.



Building Manager — Blair Fowler

As we finish 2023, we find that our expenses have continued to rise. The utility costs have increased over 15% to 20% this past year and the property insurance has increased by 20%. We were also advised that property insurance companies have changed how they insure for roof repair, resulting in a separate roof repair deductible of \$75,000.

The following projects were completed this year:

- Phase II of the Organ Upgrade was completed, which included general upgrades, electrical and new controller upgrades. Phase I was paid from the Capital Reserve fund and Phase II was covered by member donations.
- The outdoor stage was rebuilt to be a permanent structure.
- Heat elements in a couple of our rooftop units were replaced.
- A new sidewalk was built from the patio to the stage, and we replaced some broken sidewalk on the west side.
- The handbells and chimes were completely refurbished for the first time in 21 years. LED lighting was finalized in the center and east pods to finish a multi-year project. The entire church building now has LED lighting.

Special thanks to volunteers who are always available when we need help. All of them have special talents: carpenters, plumbers, electricians, and painters, so we are able to handle a lot of the projects in-house which saves Bethel a considerable amount of money. And a special thank you goes to Alice and Merle Burmeister for their continuous work on our grounds.

As Bethel continues to grow, it is important to remember that any projects or improvements to our church building need to have approval from staff, Church Council or Finance Committee.



Notes

Congregational President — Bill Hoekstra

Blessings and peace to you!

First Peter 4:10-11 says, “Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God’s grace in its various forms. Do not be slothful in zeal, be fervent in spirit, serve the Lord.” For me, these verses are a call to challenge and urge us to glorify God on earth, by selflessly using our talents and abilities in whatever form we can embody. Each day of the week, Bethel members selflessly demonstrate their gifts. I know our community feels the benefits. This past year has been no exception.

During 2023, Bethel members continued their long history of helping to create change for the better. We began reconditioning our organ, a much overdue task that meaningfully and powerfully contributes to enhancing our worship. Further, our musical ministry remains a powerful accentuation within our worship. Our church welcomed a new associate pastor, Pastor Ben Schori, to complete our ministry staff. This allows us full and effective pastoral leadership within our church. Pastor Phil Ruud continued supporting ministerial outreach, growing a deeply needed service to our congregation. With the addition of Pastor Ben and the work of Pastor Phil, leadership and management of the church is now finally balanced for Pastor Inger Hanson. Bethel U continued to inspire and challenge us to more fully live into our faith, and our children’s and youth ministry kept very active. Additionally, ministry and small group leaders came together for the second year of Bethel’s Leadership Summit to share and create ideas.

God calls us to love all people with open arms. Bethel is committed to this path as shown through several initiatives this last year aimed at inclusion and love for the whole community. Adopting a Statement for the Prevention of Interpersonal Harm for groups within Bethel as well as a Land Use Acknowledgment stand out as powerful examples. Well attended Bistro dinners; support for the challenges facing Viking Terrace community; a trip to the Southern US border; generous giving to the community and the CAC; sponsorship of a family in need of asylum; support for Habitat for Humanity; presence at Pride in the Park; worshipping with other local Lutheran churches during Thanksgiving and the Bethel Fun Run; and our growing congregation attendance serve as just a few of the many examples of this commitment. While our congregation does not act to seek recognition, Bethel was a grateful recipient of the Servant of Christ award from Lutheran Social Services signifying the community’s awareness of our church’s work.

For the first time, Bethel carries an operating deficit into the new year. This represents a growing need for our church to be mindful, flexible, and adaptive. With spirit-led giving, a portion of the deficit was generously covered by year’s end. Additionally, the church council is exploring ways to engage our evolving congregation, manage church budgetary needs, and foster growth for our faith development. This exciting prospect is leading us to new and creative thinking. For example, we are becoming increasingly energy efficient and environmentally aware as a church; we are finding ways to be more efficient within our administration; we are striving to be more inclusive of diversity to reflect our increasingly diverse community; and we are working to make church giving far more accessible and user friendly. Further, 2023 blessed us with a large endowment gift allowing us to think creatively and generously into the foreseeable future without requiring use of our operating budget.

Our church is humming and bursting with joy and energy! I challenge you to choose a Sunday or Bistro night, take a deep breath, close your eyes, and connect to the energy of God’s hand resonating throughout our church. It’s in the music, the Sunday school classrooms, Bethel U, small group ministry, Bistro meals, and worship. THANK YOU for everything you do for Bethel; you *are* the hands and feet of Jesus! Praise be to God!

Finance Committee — Barb Fowler

Members — Jared Plotz, Bill Hoekstra, Lee Runzheimer, Lois and Noel Stratmoen, Brian Haefner, Andrew Jorgenson, Heidi McCormick, Joel Leer, Blair Fowler and Pastor Inger Hanson, ex officio

It was a challenging year for Bethel's finances with much communication and discussion surrounding the operating fund deficit. In October 31, the deficit had climbed to \$79K. Thankfully, Bethel members increased their giving and by year-end, the deficit was reduced to \$17,008. Years of annual surpluses, set aside in the operating reserve account, will be used to cover this shortfall.

Revenue and Expenses ...

Offerings and other revenues totaled \$931,275. This was 3.5% increase over last year but less than actual expenses of \$948,283 by \$17,008.

** On-line giving represented 44% of total offerings.

** Interest and dividend income totaled \$20,855 due to investing our available cash in US Treasury bills thereby earning 4.5 to 5% interest. This level of income will likely not be sustained in the long term so this is not an income source we should count on.

Expenses totaled \$948,283 which was a 5.4% increase over last year but only \$1337 below the 2023 budget of \$949,620.

** Personnel and Administration expenses totaled \$695,420 which represented 73% of total expenses. The increase over last year was led by adding staff, higher benefits and a full year of the contract for financial services with Lighthouse Strategic Solutions.

** Facilities expenses of \$115,161 represented 12% of total expenses. The increase was due to higher than normal utility costs, record-setting snow and insurance expenses.

** Benevolences paid from the operating budget totaled \$68,422 and those paid from dedicated non-budgeted donations totaled \$115,459 for a grand total of \$183,881. This is 20% of total offerings.

Capital projects

** \$45,500 was spent on capital projects from the Capital Reserve Fund. Projects included: purchasing AV equipment in the sanctuary and AV room, having the bells and chimes professionally refurbished, and upgrading the outdoor stage and associated concrete work.

** Phase II of the organ renovation project was completed. The cost of \$32,500 was paid from donations to the dedicated organ fund. The balance in this fund is \$12,987.

Endowment Fund ...

The Bethel Endowment Fund balance as of November 30, was \$505,626. Bethel was the beneficiary of a large estate gift, which is invested with other Bethel Endowment funds in the ELCA Endowment Fund Pooled Trust. This fund will produce annual payouts of about 4% of market value, enabling the Endowment Committee to begin making annual awards for projects not part of the operating budget.

Blackbaud, our former financial provider, agreed to sever the 5-year contract resulting in a savings of \$20,000.

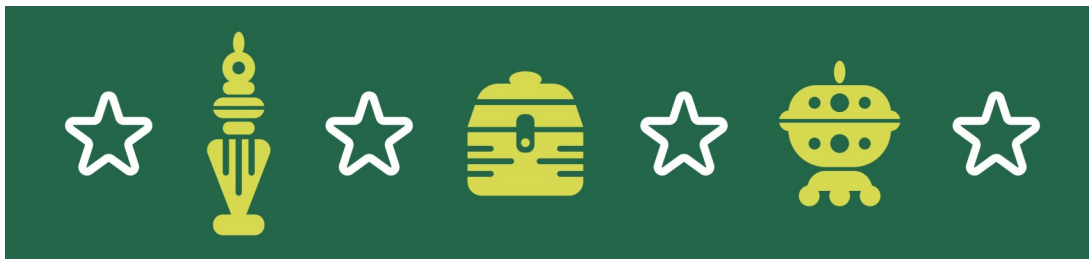
We have submitted our application for the Employee Retention Credit from the IRS. The credit could be \$107,000; however, it may be several months before we receive the funds.

Two Bethel members completed the 2022 audit of procedures and no material weaknesses or discrepancies were found.

You will find more detail in the **financial reports beginning on page 34**. If you have any questions, please contact a member of the committee or bring them to the Budget Meeting on January 21.

At the Budget Meeting, the 2024 Budget will be presented. Each year, the Finance Committee and the Church Council set the budget, based on discussions with the Personnel committee and other budget managers, at a level they view as needed to run the church. Please come to hear the detail of this important commitment.

It is a privilege to oversee the funds that you so generously give to support the work of Bethel and to donate to many other causes. Visitors are welcome at our meetings on the second Thursday of each month. If you have a question, feel free to contact a committee member or email Caroline Smith, Finance Associate, at csmith@bethelnorthfield.org.



Bethel Endowment Committee — Ryan Blumhoefer

Committee Members — Mari Aylin, Ryan Blumhoefer, Barb Fowler, Steve Engle, John Larson, Randy Peterson, Kevin Fink and Pastor Inger

2023 was an exciting year for the Bethel Endowment in many ways:

We awarded our first grant in early 2023. Jessica Labenski received an award of \$900 to be used for her Candidacy Fee to the Southeast Minnesota Synod, as she began her faith journey to become an ELCA minister.

The Endowment received a gift of \$440,000 from the Estate of Donald Nelson in late summer, and we added these funds to the Bethel Endowment Fund account being managed by the ELCA. This generous gift will allow us to make countless meaningful grants in the future.

The balance of the Endowment Fund being held in our account at the ELCA on December 31, 2022, was \$37,495.26. The balance of the Fund on November 30, 2023, was \$501,381.83.

The Endowment Committee is currently in the process of reviewing applications for grants to be issued in January 2024. We received 11 grant applications, which was a substantial increase from last year. We are planning to distribute \$10,000, with final decisions to be made before year end.

In prior years, our goals focused on providing education to the congregation about the Endowment Fund, growing the Fund balance and making an initial distribution. In 2024, we will continue providing education about the Fund and its long-term benefits, and we hope to continue growing the Fund. In addition, we also now have the benefit of being able to make considerable gifts from the Fund that will make a difference in our congregation and outside the walls of Bethel.

As always, if you have any questions about the Endowment Fund or would like to discuss the possibility of making a gift to the Fund, please feel free to reach out to any member of our committee.

Stewardship — Joel Leer

Committee Members: Joel Leer, Pam Vig, Becky Benedict, Ben Chadwick, Kevin Christopherson, Scott Broughton, Pastor Ben Schori and Allan Reichardt

This was a year of transition for the Stewardship Committee as long-time member and chair Gordy Olson stepped away. We continue to be grateful for Gordy's leadership in this endeavor over the years and continue to benefit from his knowledge, expertise and kindness.

We have had many rich conversations about the financial direction of Bethel and what role the Stewardship Committee can and should play. Historically, Stewardship has been about finding ways to maintain and increase congregational giving. The current committee, however, sees its mission as being about much more than raising money. Rather, stewardship is really about helping to ensure that the church is a vibrant community full of life and energy in praise of our God.

To that end, the committee focused on the following key initiatives this year:

Breeze – With the tremendous work of Kelly & Marci Groenewold, the new church information management system has gotten off the ground. Thank you, Kelly and Marci! Our committee worked to establish in-church opportunities for congregation members to get their profiles created in Breeze so that our church staff can better communicate with and organize congregants to better and more completely serve the needs of the church. If you somehow missed the memo, please get the information you need to get activated in Breeze. Otherwise you'll miss out on important church information!

Time & Talent – In order to know how people can and are willing to serve, we need to know the time and talent you have to offer Bethel! This important worksheet is still stuck in the paper era, but our committee is working to move it not only into the digital realm, but also into Breezel! Our hope is that we can then better know and sort the time and talents this incredible congregation has!

Budget Gap Closure – As the year progressed, it became clear that Bethel was dealing with a significant budget gap. Stewardship was enlisted to provide written updates and pleas, and temple talks aimed at both educating the congregation members and asking them to prayerfully consider their giving in an effort to close the gap. As of this writing, we are cautiously optimistic that we can make our budget by year's end.

Giving Evolution – As we head into 2024, we will be harvesting data from the church to look at giving trends in an effort to see if we can maximize online giving, educate congregants more thoroughly about the economic needs of the church, and work toward a more evenly distributed pattern of giving across the months. Currently, giving patterns make for some stressful budget questions among our staff. We hope to help the congregation move in a direction that allows staff to focus on less on budget concerns and more on the life and work of the church.

The Stewardship Committee asks for your prayers and thanks you for your continued generosity!



Personnel Committee — Phyllis Larson

Members — Phyllis Larson, Tricia Lancaster, Connie Nelson, Katy Schuerman, Bo Aylin and Dan Rustad

There were staff changes this year, too:

- Kristi Larson became our full-time Director of Youth Ministry
- Pr. Phil was asked to continue as our part-time Visitation Pastor
- Pr. Ben Schori was called as Bethel's Associate Pastor and started on August 1
- Sam Dwyer replaced Liam Fisher as our part-time AV Manager, beginning in October

Pr. Inger and various members of the Personnel Committee conducted staff reviews for all staff working half-time or more.

We completed our review and revision of the *Employee Handbook* at the end of May, 2023.

We looked carefully at the personnel section of the annual budget and discussed over a period of several months how we could get the church's work done with a leaner staff. This resulted in the decision at our November meeting to eliminate the Communications Manager position, and redistribute tasks for the *Weekly*, the *Blaze* and the website among the two pastors and the Office Manager.

When our Office Manager Mimi de Rosas needed a short-term medical leave in the fall, Lois Cary and Juley Jenkinson stepped in and kept the office running smoothly. I am deeply grateful to the two of them for their willingness to extend themselves on behalf of the congregation! It wasn't an easy task they took on!

I want to thank Janice Lehmkuhl who has served so ably as our Communications Manager. She put her own stamp on our publications and communications, and worked hard to provide an attractive guide to happenings at our busy church. The congregation will miss her work, but the staff will miss her even more because of her warmth, kindness and compassion.

The work of the Personnel Committee Chair is made much lighter by the dedication and competence of committee members: Tricia Lancaster, Connie Nelson, Katy Schuerman, Bo Aylin and Dan Rustad. I couldn't have done the work without their support, and that of Pr. Inger and Bill Hoekstra!



Call Committee Report 2022 — Ben Fisher

Members — Doug Casson, Barb Farmer, Kevin Fink, Kay Lee Henderson, Gary Lewis, Angie Matthews, Brooke Plotz and Tove Sorensen

The call committee was tasked to find a candidate for the Associate Pastor/Deacon position for Bethel Lutheran Church. After a year-long process, re-writing the Ministry Site profile for Bethel, meetings with representatives from the Southeastern Minnesota Synod, reading through Rostered Ministry Profiles of individual candidates, and conducting interviews with several candidates, the call committee offered the call of Associate Pastor to Rev. Benjamin Schori. A congregational vote took place in late May and the congregation voted to call Pastor Ben to fill the position. He accepted the position and was installed August 6. We are happy to welcome Pastor Ben and his family to Bethel.

Worship and Arts Committee — Peder Jothen

Members — Karna Hauck, Dean Neuberger, Lois Stratmoen, Carol Lysne, Tania Will, Wendell Arneson and Marci Groenewold

Projects and activities of the Worship and Arts Committee for 2023: We are pleased to share our efforts over the past year. They include:

--The committee worked with Megan Engel and Pastor Inger to institute a "Worship and Arts Feedback" meeting. These meetings link the interests, gifts and ideas of the congregation with those of the worship staff, believing that doing so will find creative ways to enliven the connection between worship and arts. The first meeting was held in August and focused on Advent, with a meeting about Post-Pentecost worship held in November. By way of topics, such things as options for the arrangement of the chairs in the sanctuary, ideas about the cohesion of the various parts of the liturgy (ex. offering, confession, etc.) and ideas for linking music with visual art were discussed. The plan is to have 2-3 meetings a year.

--The committee created an All Saints Day banner and a new "white season" reredos banner. They regularly changed the banners and paraments for the various church seasons such as Ash Wednesday, Lent, Easter, Pentecost, All Saints and Advent. The area around the altar was decorated as well, including Easter lilies for Easter and poinsettias for Advent along with the Christmas tree.

--Narthex exhibits included Allison Albright's set of Northfield Churches paintings, Wendell Arneson's paintings, paintings of the Last Supper donated in memory of Pr. Jennifer Koenig, Gerry Hoekstra's bird photos (x2), Karna Hauck's mixed media, the Senior Quilt display, and Joyce Harter's banners. The WAC is always looking to display the creative endeavors of Bethelites, so don't be shy!

--The committee has been working with the Mission and Justice Committee's focus on the creation of a land acknowledgement commissioned art piece. They have decided to hire artist John Sterner, from Willmar. WAC is hoping to display art by John Sterner in 2024. WAC is working closely with Mission & Justice to decide a location and the media for the commissioned work of art.

--In thinking about the physical space, WAC has been coordinating with other council members to choose new blinds for the sanctuary, find thoughtful ways to protect the organ from sun damage via the skylights, and determine the best location of a photo board of church staff and council members. The committee also worked with church staff to clarify how best to use the narthex in ways that sustains the sacredness of the space while also affirming its use as the ministerial and educational crossroads of the church. A banner article in April highlighted this work.

A conclusion by way of an invitation: the committee is ever a welcoming and delightful working group. Some meetings include making art! So if you like to be creative, we encourage you to join the committee!



Mission and Justice Committee — Kirsten Scott

Members — Curt Johnson, Jim Holden, Darlene Broughton, Gary Meissler, Dottie Hammer, Gordy Olson, Jane Runzheimer, Clark Cary, Judy Tonolli and Rose Turnaclyff. Kirsten Scott assumed the chair in September.

Our focus continues to be on education advocacy and support for a variety of organizations as well as encouragement of financial giving beyond the budget.

We annually determine where to distribute Mission & Justice benevolence funds for local, regional and international needs. We also decide with the Stewardship Committee on the recipients for the Thanksgiving, Christmas and Easter special offering appeals.

We support and often work collaboratively with Bethel's Homes for God's Children, Alternative Giving Fair, and ARLA (Anti-Racism Learning & Advocacy). In the community we help supply volunteers at the NCEC (Northfield Community Education Center) the satellite food shelf of CAC (Community Action Center). We encourage involvement with Habitat for Humanity and advocate for Viking Terrace. Food and housing security are fundamental rights for all.

In December of 2022, we welcomed an asylum-seeking family from Peru. A Welcome Team of volunteers continues to coordinate the care for their needs at this time of waiting and keeps Bethel members informed. We have come to know this family and appreciate their lives with us at Bethel.

Eleven members from Bethel went to the southern border early this year under the auspices of the SE Lutheran Synod and Border Servant Corps in Las Cruces, NM, to be immersed in learning more about immigration issues. The impact of the experience was shared during a Bethel Presents session in March. It is our hope that more individuals will take the opportunity to go on such a trip when it is offered again.

A primary focus has been the continuation of education about the history and issues related to Native Americans. We have hosted films, two Indigenous speakers, and provided resources. In the summer of 2022, a committee subgroup, including Connie Degrote of ARLA, began working toward a Bethel Land Acknowledgement Statement. A final draft was accepted by the Church Council in March 2023. This fall the congregation was given opportunity to comment on it and a survey was available in October. Over 90 percent was approval given and the council gave final approval to this at their November 2023 meeting. In December the whole committee, along with Karna Hauck of the Worship & Arts committee, met with a Christian Native American artist with whom we have interest for commissioning a work of art to visually represent our Land Acknowledgement Statement. Seed money for this commission has already been started.

During the summer, monthly Wednesday evening films were offered. One related to the immigration of people between Maltrata, Mexico and Northfield while the second was on Habitat for Humanity. The discussion following both of these films was valuable. The final movie was an animated family film with movie snacks.

A topic which has drawn a lot of interest is that of concern for eldercare. An informative panel discussion in October especially brought to light the needs of our elders, their families, employees, and employers here in Northfield, and also explained the legislation that's needed. We commit to continued advocacy on this topic.

We invite you to join in the mission of God's work in the world through your time, talents and resources.



Homes for God's Children — Gordy Olson

Members -- Dayna Norvold, Rolf Kragseth, Bryce Narveson, Dottie Hammer, Cary Clark, Gene Broughton, Linda Bliese and David Detert

Homes for God's Children began with an effort in 2022, through the Hillcrest project, to first focus on those who were homeless or who needed emergency housing. Bethel responded with \$77,000 and we can be proud of that achievement.

In 2023, the project moved up one level to Habitat for Humanity with the aim to concentrate on those who would qualify as working poor and who struggle to get on the upward economic conveyor belt through owning their own home.

In contrast to the Hillcrest project, which was a one-time event, Habitat for Humanity is an ongoing community effort and the goals for the year were different:

1. Provide information on housing in Rice County through articles in the *Blaze*, Bethel U and cottage meetings.
2. Focus more on increasing volunteer support for the construction of Habitat homes as opposed to raising money in the hope that the volunteer commitment will carry over into future years.
3. More limited fund raising with the emphasis on increasing the number of Bethel members supporting Habitat for Humanity with donations on a yearly basis.

The results again show the willingness of the members of Bethel to act:

<u>Goal</u>	<u>Result</u>
400 Volunteer Hours.	314 Hours
30 Different Volunteers.	28
\$40,000	\$15,550
15 New Monthly Donors.	2

The Homes for God's Children committee wishes to thank all of those who have helped us show God's love in our community by their donation of time, hard work, money and prayers in 2023.



Creation Care Committee — Cynthia Carau

Members — Connie DeGrote, Gary DeGrote, Kari Kust, Mary Loven, Rachel Coltvet and Gordon Kelley

Adult Education

In February, Creation Care organized a 4-week Bethel U course called “Seeing the Sacred in Nature.” In her book *Sacred Nature*, author Karen Armstrong says, “We need to recover the veneration of nature that human beings cultivated for millennia.” The sessions were as follows:

February 5 – Is Our Soil Healthy?

From storing carbon to preventing soil erosion, healthy soils are the key to help improving our environment and local water quality. Presented by Teresa Demars, Public Relations and Information Specialist, Soil and Water Conservation District, Rice County.

February 12 – The Prairie as Garden

Prairie landscapes covered much of Minnesota up until the late 19th century. This rich, inspiring history has much to teach us. Presented by Dr. Charles Umbanhowar, Professor of Biology and Environmental Studies at St. Olaf, Director of the Natural Lands.

February 19 – Is It Okay to Love a Tree?

While much stands in the way of American Christians embracing the idea of sacred nature, trees lure us in that direction. Presented by Rev. Bruce Benson, retired St. Olaf College Pastor.

February 26 – Birds and the Web of Life

Explore the amazing and varied world of birds through the eyes of Dr. Gerry Hoekstra, St. Olaf Professor of Music emeritus, accomplished birder and wildlife photographer, and frequent exhibitor in the Bethel art gallery.

Youth Events

In the spring, members of the committee led sessions with Bethel youth as follows:

9th Grade Confirmation

March 15 – A committee member led a session called “Contemplating Climate Change.” Students were asked about their own level of concern and to estimate the concern of others. We explored what the Bible tells us about caring for creation and talked about what that could mean for us now.

Limitless – 4th and 5th Graders

April 20 – Committee members took students on a tour of Bethel’s environmental projects. Afterwards, students drew pictures of some of those projects and some creation-care-related things they do at home or at school.

May 3 – Members and Kevin Strauss of the Clean River Partnership walked around the neighborhood cleaning and marking storm drains and handing out fliers about what not to dump in the drains.

May 10 – Members walked with the children to the St. Olaf Natural Lands for a tour with naturalists.

Season of Creation

Continuing a new practice from 2022, August was designated the “Season of Creation.” At the beginning of each service, a committee member spoke about the theme of the day and invited the congregation to visit the Among the Ministries table, which tied into the theme as follows.

August 6 – Forest

Featured information on reducing palm oil use, using recycled paper products and planting trees in the Chippewa National Forest through the Arbor Day Foundation

August 13 – Land

Todd Lippert shared information about the Land Stewardship Project

August 20 – Wilderness

Displayed a map of local and state-wide wilderness areas with pins for members to mark where they’ve been

August 27 – Rivers

Shared information on an upcoming CRP clean-up, the city’s Adopt A Catch Basin program and pictures of the 4th graders cleaning storm drains

Renewable Energy

At the Committee’s recommendation, Bethel asked Xcel to switch the remainder of our non-solar panel electricity to Windsource. This means that 100% of our electricity comes from renewable sources.

Adopt-A-Highway

In May and October, Creation Care gathered a group of volunteers to clean up Bethel’s stretch of Highway 3.

Composting

The Committee continued working with the Kitchen Committee members and staff to maintain our composting efforts and improve them as needed.

Bethel Endowment Fund Grant Proposal

The Committee submitted a proposal to have 2 electric vehicle chargers installed at Bethel.



Congregational Life — Cindy Kreis

Members — Colleen Vitek, Heather Kuehl, Ellen Iverson, Chelsey Headrick, Kristin Stets, Don Pavek, Cindy Kreis and Pastor Inger

The Congregational Life Committee had fun in 2023 offering activities that provided welcome and connection opportunities at Bethel.

Congregational Life activities in 2023 included:

Welcoming New Members – Membership to Bethel increased significantly as we welcomed over 50 new members in 2023. Our committee connected each family unit with a sponsor family to help welcome them into our Bethel family. On Pentecost Sunday in May and Reformation Sunday in October, we hosted reception breakfasts during the coffee hour in honor of our new members so all Bethelites could participate in this fellowship together!

Bethel Garage Sale – A strong experienced group of Bethel members worked hard to continue the Annual Garage Sale tradition which is a special part of the life of our congregation! This opportunity brings our members together in meaningful fellowship as they prepare for this outreach opportunity. It was once again another huge success as Bethel ministered and raised funds for people in the Northfield community.



Alleluia 5K Fun Day – This year, our second annual Alleluia 5K moving worship experience, held on the first Sunday of Easter, wound through the Viking Terrace loop with funds raised going towards the ongoing needs of residents living there. This Easter Alleluia fun run/walk community worship experience helps us celebrate and remember the amazing resurrection of Christ not just in our heads, but with our bodies, too! Our Congregational Life committee gathered volunteers and orchestrated the outdoor course and festivities while the Kitchen committee prepared a wonderful fish taco lunch in the CLC to welcome all the participants who joined in from our Bethel community.

Palm Sunday Pancake Breakfast – Rebirth of a previous tradition was carried out in a spring setting in the CLC with a special pancake and yogurt breakfast that allowed the congregation to relax and share in community a week before the most holy week of the year. Many volunteers gathered to plan this special event, which also included palm branches, dyed eggs and spring tulips in order to help celebrate the coming of our Lord. Perhaps we'll see donkeys in 2024!

Habitat for Humanity Day – Bethel was in the second year of "Homes for God's Children" with the focus on Habitat for Humanity. Therefore, our committee members participated and provided opportunities for others to join them on a Saturday in July as 12 Bethelites sheetrocked, sanded and painted homes in Faribault. Our committee is planning to hold additional Bethel volunteer build days in the coming year as Northfield sites begin to need our help. We're planning to again, offer free daycare at Bethel for young families while parents volunteer. Kids could be making forts for fun, and adults could be building homes for the community! Look for this special opportunity coming in 2024!

Creation Care Bike, Walk or Carpool to Worship – For the second year, our committee worked in coordination with the Creation Care and Worship planning to promote a “Season of Creation” liturgical pattern which focused on the care and celebration of God’s creation. To help provide action among our congregation, our committee encouraged everyone to bike, walk or carpool to church each Sunday during this awareness month of August. Participants were entered into a raffle for gifts which reflected sustainability gifts from Thrivent seed money and donations by Downtown Bicycles. All children who participated were rewarded with ice cream tokens donated by Culver’s or The Blast as a way to motivate them to encourage their parents to continue each week!

Welcome Pastor Ben Schori and family – In August, the Christian Life Center was filled with Bethel members coming together to welcoming Pastor Ben, his wife Melissa and two young daughters, Johanna and Isla, in the traditional Lutheran way. A Congregation BBQ Potluck was planned with help from the Kitchen committee. Sloppy Joes and potato salad were prepared by volunteers in the Bethel kitchen while veggie/fruit/cheese trays, chips and desserts were brought potluck style by the congregation.

Rally Sunday Breakfast – The fall season was welcomed with a warming breakfast in the Christian Life Center for all Bethelites to share in fellowship together. Everyone built their own oatmeal and/or yogurt bowls between services, while connecting with one another and anticipating the return of Sunday School and other educational faith opportunities to come.

ACTSS - Adults Coming Together for Soup and Socializing – This socializing event brought together new and seasoned Bethelites to gather for a simple soup supper in one of their homes three times a year in order to share stories and build community with one another. Five dinner groups were formed with groups of 4-10 people, including couples and individuals. This opportunity for getting to know one another better while sharing a simple dinner will come around again each September. Please consider joining in the new year!

Lizbeth Bakes a Cake Walk! – Our committee partnered with the Refugee Welcoming team to hold an intergenerational Cake Walk during a Bistro evening in November. Lizbeth Ramirez has been serving at Bistro each week and loves to make cakes. This activity spotlighted her talents as she provided four beautifully decorated cakes, 2 pies and 80 cupcakes to be used for this “fun”draiser! It was an exciting evening with over 100 participants. Proceeds supported Bethel’s Refugee Fund and the Ramirez family.

Our hope is to bring us together to share God’s love and fellowship around Bethel and within the community. We invite you to join in our activities or share your ideas for meaningful connections at Bethel. We would also love to have you join our committee!

“For where two or three are gathered together in my name, I am there among them.” - Matthew 18:20



2023 in Review





**Northfield
Retirement Community**
Innovation. Choice. Tradition.

Annual Report to Congregations

2024 Annual Meeting

We look forward to welcoming the delegates from
your congregation on

Sunday, April 7

1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.

900 Cannon Valley Drive ~ Northfield

Dear Friends,

We are grateful to all of you for your support and involvement with NRC. As of this writing, we're filling Christmas stockings with the gifts from so many of you to our residents. How fortunate we are!

We knew at this time last year that 2023 would be a transitional year for NRC, as indeed it has been. In this report, we share the major highlights of the year for our organization. But allow us first to mention the most important transition of all:

Our residents have moved from the isolation of the COVID years to once again freely and joyfully sharing in fellowship and in fun and interesting activities that brighten and lift spirits. To see people enjoying meals and activities together, worshiping and attending concerts in our chapel, participating in Bible study and hymn sings, spending time with family, sharing laughter and stories with children from local schools who come to visit, warms our hearts and brings smiles to our faces each day.

The return of shared experiences and life in this community means that we are living our mission:

Rooted in Christian values, supporting independence, dignity, and quality of life for the aging by providing innovative living options and services.

Innovative Living Options and Services

As we reported in the *NRC Outlook* in June and September, dealing with issues of staffing, funding, and finances occupied a great deal of 2023. As the Board of Directors analyzed our situation, it became increasingly apparent that the best decision for current and future residents and for the future of NRC was to delicense our Care Center (skilled nursing facility) and to transition the entire campus to assisted living. This significant change in operations went very smoothly thanks to excellent teamwork among staff and to the gracious reception of the changes by residents and family members alike. Fortunately, we were able to move all but two individuals to a new unit on campus and to find appropriate new homes for the individuals leaving NRC. All affected staff chose to remain at NRC.



Innovative Living Options and Services (continued)

NRC now offers a continuum of assisted living and services to residents: Parkview East and West are traditional assisted living apartments; Cannon Valley Suites-MC provides secure memory care and Cannon Valley Suites-EC provides enhanced care for residents in need of a higher level of care than that offered in traditional assisted living with onsite nurses approximately 16 hours/day. Evergreen Lodge remains a dedicated memory care residence. The Manor and Northwood Pines offer an independent option.

We were very pleased to welcome 48 new residents to NRC this year, and we are continuing to expand our outreach efforts to reach full occupancy in what we hope will be the near future. We are also planning to create a new unit in place of the Care Center and are currently determining how best to configure and staff it to meet the growing needs of the community.

Expanded Outreach: Church and Community Relations Committee

As was the case for the majority of organizations during COVID, NRC spent three years focusing inward—maintaining and adjusting our operations to serve our residents to the best of our ability. The time has now come when we can renew our long-standing partnerships with you, our member congregations, and other organizations in the broader community. The Church and Community Relations Committee of the Board is now back in full swing with monthly meetings. The primary goal of the committee is to ensure that, just as you assist us with financial contributions and volunteer projects, we provide you with ongoing communication and with a range of programs of interest to you, such as educational presentations concerning eldercare issues. In addition, in 2024 we would be glad to attend your annual meetings, just as you attend ours! To that end, we will contact you in the near future to determine whether you would like an NRC representative to join you. And of course, NRC welcomes your suggestions and ideas about how we can best serve you and the elders in your congregation.

Staffing and Financial Stability

NRC received the *Northfield News* 2023 Readers' Choice for Best Senior Living/Retirement setting. We credit this honor to our committed staff in all departments. As one resident commented, "We are so fortunate to have such a talented and friendly staff. They are so willing to help in many ways, as well as bending an ear to listen to our concerns. They make living here a pleasure!"

Since January, 62 new employees have joined NRC. Twenty of them have received training at NRC and have become certified nursing assistants. We are always recruiting new talent and offer a market-based competitive compensation and benefits package.

Our financial situation continues to improve as we make strides in occupancy and continue to manage our expenses effectively.

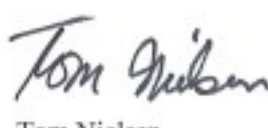
Your Contributions to NRC

Again, thank you for your involvement with NRC—for your many volunteer contributions and for your financial support which helps to strengthen our Spiritual Care department and employee and resident assistance funds. We look forward to our collaboration in 2024 and to welcoming you to our annual meeting in April.

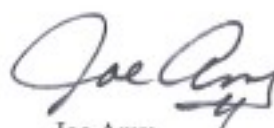
Wishing you a blessed Advent and Christmastide,



A. William Nelson
Chair of the Board of Directors



Tom Nielsen
President & CEO



Joe Amy
Chair of the Church
and Community Relations Committee

Southeastern Minnesota Synod ELCA 2023 Ministry Report



As another year has drawn to a close, we give thanks for what has been and look forward with anticipation and hope.

In 2023, the ministry of the Southeastern Minnesota Synod continued in earnest. Sixty-two congregations engaged in the call process even as some continue their call process into the new year. We were delighted to welcome 21 new rostered ministers into various settings within the synod.

For the first time in several years, we hosted a visit from a global companion synod. Bishop Atahualpa Hernandez of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Colombia (IELCO) spent a week visiting our synod's leaders, members, and ministries. It was a joy to spend time with him and learn from IELCO's excellent diaconal ministry among the most vulnerable in Colombia.

Our 2023 Synod Assembly, held in May, welcomed Dr. Susan Brower as the keynote speaker. Dr. Brower helped us understand demographic trends across the state and our communities. In May of 2024, we will use this information as a springboard for the focus of our next Synod Assembly. We will welcome Dr. Matt Bloom to share as we consider how each of us can impact our congregations and communities.

As I consider the ministry of the synod in 2024, I am drawn to the phrase *every congregation connected*. In 2023, congregations took advantage of the connections we have with each other; this was especially evident in the continued increase of collaborations between individual congregations. Throughout the synod, congregations have strengthened ministry through partnering with neighboring congregations.

As we draw on the strength of our internal connections, we have an opportunity to engage afresh with the communities our congregations are already a part of. What opportunities are there to be the church for the community beyond our buildings? What is already happening that we can come alongside? What needs of our neighbors currently need to be met?

One of the gifts of being a congregation of the Southeastern Minnesota Synod is that no congregation must go it alone. We are part of a network with congregations and connections that strengthen us and multiply the impact we have in the communities to which we are called.

May the Spirit open our hearts and minds to all the ways God continues to invite us to participate in God's good work in the world!

In Christ,

Bishop Regina Hassanally

2023 Income Statement

	2023 Actual	2023 Budget	Variance
Revenues			
Offerings	\$ 896,993	\$ 941,870	\$ (44,877)
Other Income	\$ 34,282	\$ 7,750	\$ 26,532
Total Revenues	\$ 931,275	\$ 949,620	\$ (18,345)
Expenses			
Personnel	\$ 624,044	\$ 635,260	\$ (11,216)
Benevolences	\$ 68,422	\$ 68,170	\$ 252
Worship & Music	\$ 12,841	\$ 9,005	\$ 3,836
Children's Ministry	\$ 9,385	\$ 9,550	\$ (165)
Youth Ministry	\$ 11,697	\$ 12,345	\$ (648)
Adult & Family Ministry	\$ 6,597	\$ 6,995	\$ (398)
Congregational Life	\$ 7,760	\$ 4,920	\$ 2,840
Administration	\$ 71,376	\$ 89,535	\$ (18,159)
Facilities	\$ 115,161	\$ 92,840	\$ 22,321
Total Expenses	\$ 927,283	\$ 928,620	\$ (1,337)
Building/Capital Reserve	\$ 21,000	\$ 21,000	\$ -
Total Transfers	\$ 21,000	\$ 21,000	\$ -
Total Expenses	\$ 948,283	\$ 949,620	\$ (1,337)
NET SURPLUS/(DEFICIT)	\$ (17,008)	\$ -	\$ (17,008)



Bethel Lutheran Church
Restricted-Project Class Activity Report
December 2023

	Ending Balance 12/31/2022	Month Revenue	Month Expense	YTD Revenue	YTD Expense	Ending Balance 12/31/2023
Capital Reserve						
Building/Capital Equip	\$ 86,367.88	\$ 1,750.00	\$ -	\$ 21,150.00	\$ 45,518.18	\$ 61,999.70
Mortgage	\$ 150.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 150.00	\$ -
Subtotal: Capital Reserve	\$ 86,517.88	\$ 1,750.00	\$ -	\$ 21,150.00	\$ 45,668.18	\$ 61,999.70
Endowment						
Endowment Fund Principal	\$ 55,736.67	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 55,736.67
Endowment Gifts Rec'd	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 447,757.80	\$ -	\$ 447,757.80
Endowment Fund-Gain/(Loss)	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ (2,112.64)	\$ -	\$ (2,112.64)
Subtotal: Endowment Stmt	\$ 55,736.67	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 445,645.16	\$ -	\$ 501,381.83
Endowment Fund-To Be Trnsf	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 5,044.29	\$ 800.00	\$ 4,244.29
Subtotal: Endowment	\$ 55,736.67	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 450,689.45	\$ 800.00	\$ 505,626.12
Operating Reserve						
Operating Reserve	\$ 223,120.44	\$ -	\$ 144.91	\$ -	\$ 1,701.17	\$ 221,419.27
Parish Restricted						
Adult Ministry Fund	\$ 40.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 40.00	\$ -
Adult & Family	\$ 1,106.98	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 1,106.98
Adult Scrip	\$ 2,030.62	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 1,387.00	\$ -	\$ 3,417.62
Archives - Archive Case Fund	\$ 2,775.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 2,775.00
Audio/Video	\$ (1,252.02)	\$ 25.00	\$ (804.53)	\$ 3,625.00	\$ 2,372.98	\$ -
Befrienders	\$ 50.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 40.00	\$ 90.00	\$ -
Children's Ministry	\$ 1,060.71	\$ 300.00	\$ -	\$ 1,386.14	\$ 263.07	\$ 2,183.78
Congregational Life	\$ (3,199.38)	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ (3,199.38)	\$ -
Early Childhood	\$ 1,612.18	\$ -	\$ 508.63	\$ -	\$ 1,612.18	\$ -
Environment	\$ 21,895.30	\$ 1,167.86	\$ -	\$ 11,148.53	\$ 1,374.04	\$ 31,669.79
Evangelism	\$ 4,078.84	\$ 10.00	\$ -	\$ 120.00	\$ -	\$ 4,198.84
Funeral	\$ 3,678.64	\$ 200.00	\$ -	\$ 1,689.43	\$ 2,351.90	\$ 3,016.17
Garage Sale	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 20,210.60	\$ 19,964.66	\$ 245.94
Good Samaritan	\$ 9,190.67	\$ -	\$ 2,205.68	\$ 3,295.00	\$ 11,454.84	\$ 1,030.83
Indigenous Artwork	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 500.00	\$ -	\$ 500.00
ISLA Scholarship Fund	\$ 1,611.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 1,611.00
Kitchen Bistro	\$ 2,119.39	\$ 1,491.60	\$ 2,101.21	\$ 10,608.79	\$ 13,056.86	\$ (328.68)
Kitchen Capital	\$ 6,930.85	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 137.45	\$ 157.50	\$ 6,910.80
Kitchen General	\$ (1,598.02)	\$ 150.00	\$ 659.92	\$ 150.00	\$ 1,265.78	\$ (2,713.80)
Kitchen Soup Supper	\$ (898.39)	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 194.00	\$ (704.39)	\$ -
Library	\$ 397.11	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 397.11
Limitless!	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 880.00	\$ 880.00	\$ -
Memorial Fund	\$ 5,444.94	\$ 50.00	\$ -	\$ 1,637.14	\$ 5,425.00	\$ 1,657.08
Organ	\$ 8,596.93	\$ 10.00	\$ 129.60	\$ 31,626.33	\$ 27,235.45	\$ 12,987.81
Quilting	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 1,500.00	\$ -	\$ 1,500.00
Stewardship	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Sustainability	\$ 10.27	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 10.27	\$ -
Torch	\$ 240.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 100.00	\$ -	\$ 340.00
Woodworking-Treasure Builders	\$ 1,277.05	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 75.00	\$ -	\$ 1,352.05
Worship & Music	\$ 5,847.37	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 291.20	\$ 1,930.07	\$ 4,208.50
Youth Programs	\$ 72,807.59	\$ 497.00	\$ 1,700.00	\$ 38,851.97	\$ 54,653.93	\$ 57,005.63
Youth Camp- 4-7th Grade Fun	\$ 692.79	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 692.79
Youth Camp-Wapo	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 25.00	\$ (25.00)
Youth Christikon	\$ 21,252.70	\$ -	\$ 500.00	\$ 12,267.14	\$ 8,212.45	\$ 25,307.39
Youth Flathead (Sr High)	\$ (18,918.03)	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 1,168.65	\$ 40,433.00	\$ (58,182.38)
Youth Service Trip - 8th Grade	\$ (2,703.76)	\$ -	\$ 1,200.00	\$ -	\$ 1,200.00	\$ (3,903.76)
Youth	\$ 450.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ (450.00)	\$ -	\$ -
Youth Events	\$ 44,921.66	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 3,613.36	\$ 194.35	\$ 48,340.67
Youth High School Trip	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 17,325.29	\$ 2,545.59	\$ 14,779.70
Youth Ministry	\$ (9,500.78)	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 97.60	\$ -	\$ (9,403.18)
Youth Scholarship	\$ 10,526.87	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 1,656.54	\$ -	\$ 12,183.41
Youth Scrip Earnings	\$ 26,086.14	\$ 497.00	\$ -	\$ 3,173.39	\$ 2,043.54	\$ 27,215.99
Subtotal: Parish Restricted	\$ 145,853.63	\$ 3,901.46	\$ 6,500.51	\$ 129,453.58	\$ 140,234.76	\$ 135,072.45
Parish Pass Through						
Alleluia Fun Run	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 376.24	\$ 1,514.78	\$ 1,891.02	\$ (376.24)
Alt Giving Fair	\$ (10,599.12)	\$ 15,301.92	\$ 521.52	\$ 28,187.92	\$ 1,378.52	\$ 16,210.28
Christmas	\$ 7,213.96	\$ 6,860.61	\$ 5,960.61	\$ 5,960.61	\$ 13,174.57	\$ -
Easter	\$ 369.50	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 7,115.00	\$ 7,484.50	\$ -
ELCA Disaster Relief	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 200.00	\$ 200.00	\$ 200.00	\$ -
Food Shelf	\$ 12,165.31	\$ 131.33	\$ 933.99	\$ 21,111.94	\$ 33,277.25	\$ -
Greenvale Snack Program	\$ (144.91)	\$ -	\$ (144.91)	\$ -	\$ (144.91)	\$ -
Misc Benevolence	\$ 5,799.95	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 956.66	\$ 6,756.61	\$ -
Special Offering-Refugee Fund	\$ 7,050.00	\$ 5,946.00	\$ 2,697.00	\$ 31,297.47	\$ 27,525.16	\$ 10,822.31
Special Offerings-Habitat	\$ (4,794.70)	\$ (2,546.00)	\$ 7,126.00	\$ 13,275.19	\$ 8,480.49	\$ -
Sunday School	\$ 263.07	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 591.35	\$ 285.10	\$ 569.32
Thanksgiving	\$ 370.00	\$ 395.50	\$ 5,814.48	\$ 5,444.48	\$ 5,814.48	\$ -
World Hunger	\$ 6,492.48	\$ 150.00	\$ 1,130.13	\$ 5,132.50	\$ 11,624.98	\$ -
Subtotal: Parish Pass Through	\$ 23,768.88	\$ 26,239.36	\$ 24,615.06	\$ 120,787.90	\$ 117,747.77	\$ 27,225.67
\$ 534,997.50	\$ 31,890.82	\$ 31,260.48	\$ 717,036.64	\$ 305,351.88	\$ 947,098.92	

2023 Balance Sheet - LY and CY

	Actual As of 12/31/2023	Actual As of 12/31/2022
Assets		
Cash & Cash Equivalents		
Checking Account	\$70,091	\$217,019
Petty cash	\$105	
Savings Account (CRB)	\$1,472	\$209,281
Certificate of Deposit	\$1,462	\$1,447
ELCA Mission Investment Fund	\$1,490	\$96,910
Endowment Pooled Fund	\$501,382	\$42,450
Schwab - T bills investment	\$364,082	-
Pre-paid expenses	\$3,000	
Total Cash and investments	\$943,084	\$567,108
Fixed Assets (land/building/organ/equipment)	\$7,193,420	\$7,193,420
Total Assets	\$8,136,504	\$7,760,527
Liabilities and Fund Balance		
Liabilities		
Accounts Payable	\$16,306	\$30,781
Total Liabilities	\$16,306	\$30,781
Fund Balance		
Operating Reserve Fund	\$221,419	\$223,120
Capital Equipment Reserve Fund	\$62,000	\$86,518
Designated Funds	\$162,298	\$169,623
Endowment Fund	\$501,382	\$55,736
Unrestricted Net Assets	(\$20,322)	\$1,331
Net Fixed Assets	\$7,193,420	\$7,193,420
Total Fund Balance	\$8,120,197	\$7,729,747
Total Liabilities and Fund Balance	\$8,136,504	\$7,760,527

Bethel Lutheran Church 2023 Benevolences

Budgeted Benevolences 2023

SE MN Synod	\$	37,000
Lutheran Social Services	\$	11,400
Northfield Retirement Community	\$	2,500
Global Mission & Justice	\$	11,000
Northfield Union of Youth	\$	1,200
Hillcrest Village	\$	5,000
General Benevolence	\$	322
Total Budgeted Benevolences		\$ 68,422

Non-Budgeted Benevolences

Easter - Refugee Fund	\$	7,115
Thanksgiving - Racial Equity Fund of MN Council of Churches	\$	2,722
Thanksgiving - Community Action Center	\$	2,722
Christmas - Augusta Victoria Hospital, Jerusalem	\$	5,961
Special Offerings	\$	18,520
ELCA World Hunger	\$	5,132
March Food Drive - CAC Food Shelf	\$	21,112
Alternative Giving Fair	\$	14,932
Alleluia Run - Rice County Neighbors United	\$	1,515
Good Samaritan Funds Used	\$	11,455
Garage Sale - Habitat	\$	8,000
Garage Sale - other benevolences	\$	2,000
Beyond the Budget - Hillcrest Village appliances	\$	1,000
Refugee Fund	\$	24,182
ELCA Disaster Relief	\$	200
Sunday School Offering	\$	285
Beyond the Budget - Habitat for Humanity	\$	7,126
Total Other	\$	96,939

Total Non-Budgeted Benevolences	\$ 115,459
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Total Benevolences (Budgeted & Non-Budgeted)	\$ 183,881
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Total Benevolences (% of operating revenues)	20%
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Proposed 2024 Budget

	2024 Budget	2023 Actual	Budget to actual (\$)	Budget to actual (%)
Revenues				
Offerings	\$ 945,750	\$ 896,993	\$ 48,757	5%
Other Income	\$ 23,500	\$ 34,282	\$ (10,782)	-31%
Total Revenues	\$ 969,250	\$ 931,275	\$ 37,975	4%
Expenses				
Personnel	\$ 643,230	\$ 624,044	\$ 19,186	3%
Benevolences	\$ 69,050	\$ 68,422	\$ 628	1%
Worship & Music	\$ 10,650	\$ 12,841	\$ (2,191)	-17%
Children's Ministry	\$ 8,175	\$ 9,385	\$ (1,210)	-13%
Youth Ministry	\$ 10,590	\$ 11,697	\$ (1,107)	-9%
Adult & Family Ministry	\$ 8,400	\$ 6,597	\$ 1,803	27%
Congregational Life	\$ 6,105	\$ 7,760	\$ (1,655)	-21%
Administration	\$ 82,740	\$ 71,376	\$ 11,364	16%
Facilities	\$ 109,310	\$ 115,161	\$ (5,851)	-5%
Total Expenses	\$ 948,250	\$ 927,283	\$ 20,967	2%
Building/Capital Reserve	\$ 21,000	\$ 21,000	\$ -	0%
Total Expenses & Transfer	\$ 969,250	\$ 948,283	\$ 20,967	2%
NET SURPLUS/(DEFICIT)	\$ -	\$ (17,008)	-	-

Through your generosity, God is at work across the ELCA. A portion of your offering, called Mission Support, advances the ministry of our church, helping the ELCA nurture Christian community, raise up leaders, serve our neighbors and strive for justice. Read stories and learn more at [ELCA.org/SOFIA](https://elca.org/SOFIA).

