

ANNUAL REPORT 2024

January 26, 2025

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

Confident in God's generosity and gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us praise God and give thanks ...

God, we praise you and give you thanks.
You are good, and your mercy endures forever.

You gave us a garden with good food to eat.
We praise you for food that nourishes us.

You rescued your people from slavery.
We praise you for freedom.

You gave us prophets to correct, rebuke and encourage us.
We bless you for your justice and mercy.

You gave us your Son, Jesus, to love, redeem and save us.
We praise you for his death and resurrection.

You gave us your Holy Spirit to be our Advocate and Comforter.
We bless you for the gifts of every tribe and nation.

Strengthen your church with every spiritual gift
and commission us again to be your servant people.

Multiply in us the fruit of the spirit:
love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control.

Send us in your love and mercy,
that the world may know you and praise you.

Now Thank We All Our God



1 Now thank we all our God with hearts and hands and voice - es,
 2 Oh, may this boun - teous God through all our life be near us,
 3 All praise and thanks to God the Fa - ther now be giv - en.



who won - drous things has done, in whom this world re - joic - es;
 with ev - er joy - ful hearts and bless - ed peace to cheer us,
 the Son, and Spir - it blest, who reign in high - est heav - en.



who, from our moth - ers' arms, has blest us on our way
 and keep us all in grace, and guide us when per - plexed,
 the one e - ter - nal God, whom earth and heav'n a - dore;



with count-less gifts of love, and still is ours to - day,
 and free us from all harm in this world and the next,
 for thus it was, is now, and shall be ev - er - more.

Evangelical Lutheran Worship, 840

Text: Martin Rinkhart, 1586-1649; tr. Cathering Winkworth, 1827-1878

Music: NUN DANKET ALLE GOTT, Johann Crüger, 1598-1662

Let us pray.

Gracious God, you are the giver of every good gift. Bless us with all that we need for ministry in your name, that we might be a blessing to others. In the name of the one who broke bread and fed the multitudes, Jesus Christ, our Lord.

Amen.

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THE ORDER OF BUSINESS

Sunday, January 26, 2025 – 11:30 a.m.

President Jeff Haldeman, presiding

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

DEVOTIONS

VIDEO GREETING FROM BISHOP MALPICA

MINUTES of last Annual Meeting, January 28, 2024

REPORTS

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

ELECTIONS

- Congregation Council – four for three-year terms
- Endowment Fund Committee – two for three-year terms
- La Crosse Synod Assembly voting member – four for one-year terms
 - *An additional youth/young adult can also be elected*
- Sugar Creek Bible Camp – two for one-year terms
- Eagle Crest Communities – two for one-year terms

NOMINATING PROCESS

NEW BUSINESS

OTHER BUSINESS

CLOSING PRAYER

Our Savior's Lutheran Church
Annual Congregation Meeting Minutes
January 28, 2024

President Jeff Haldeman called the meeting to order at 11:33 AM. There were 42 in attendance.

Agenda: President Haldeman noted two additions to the agenda: (1) Building Projects and the Scholarship Fund, and (2) Resolution #4 – Approval of Constitution Revisions. This resolution comes from the Congregation Council. A motion was made and seconded to approve the agenda as amended. Motion carried.

Devotions: Pastor Jean led devotions.

Greeting: A video greeting from Bishop Felix Malpica was shared.

Minutes: President Haldeman drew attention to the minutes from the January 29, 2023 annual meeting and also the June 4, 2023 Special Congregation Meeting, which were approved by the Congregation Council at its February 13 and June 19, 2023 meetings respectively.

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

Regarding the financial report, Pastor Jon noted we ended the year with a deficit, but he also explained about “pre-paid” income. The 2022 “pre-paid” income has to be factored in when calculating income vs. expenses, which makes the 2023 deficit less. He also lifted up the difference in Hungry Jar income from 2019 vs. 2023, which realized an increase of close to \$4,000. He celebrated this increase and the generosity of our people.

- A motion was made and seconded to receive the ministry reports as presented, and to accept the 2023 budget report and other financial reports for 2023. Motion carried.

Elections: President Haldeman noted the nominations in the annual report:

- Congregation Council (three to elect to three-year term) – Jerry Greeno, Tiffany Janisch, Brenda Skittone
 - A motion was made and seconded to close nominations for all council positions. Motion carried.
- Mission Endowment Fund (one to elect to a three-year term) – Lee Friell
 - A motion was made and seconded to close nominations for Mission Endowment Fund. Motion carried.
- 2024 La Crosse Area Synod Assembly Voting members (four to elect to a one-year term) – Jeff Haldeman, Melissa Haldeman, Carla Burkhardt, Jaime Fortier
 - A motion was made and seconded to close nominations for Synod Assembly Voting members. 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, Eric Ender
 - 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 Haldeman 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 people 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 Haldeman determined that we will continue the same process.

- A motion was made and seconded to continue with the same process for nominations. Motion carried.

New Business:

- **Building Projects and the Scholarship Fund**
 Pastor Jon stated we have received two proposals to shift resources from the Michelson Scholarship Fund to the Building Fund. These proposals come from Jim Michelson, and therefore have his approval. However, the final decision takes congregational approval.

Proposal 1: Shift \$10,000 from the Michelson Scholarship Fund to the Building Fund.

Proposal 2: Shift \$15,000 from the Michelson Scholarship Fund to a newly created Organ Fund.

These proposals would retain \$25,000 for scholarship purposes. Pastor Jon also noted that Jim clarified that the intention of the Michelson family when the scholarship fund was established, was to not only use interest for the scholarships, but also principle.

- A motion was made and seconded to proceed with the two proposals. Motion carried.

- **Repair of storm damage (Resolution #1)**
 Jeff noted the recommendation is to proceed on the church building repairs, and wait on the house and garage until we can examine them again in spring. It is possible we will not proceed with those repairs at this time. He also stated we have received \$70,000 from the insurance towards the repairs, and we anticipate an unknown amount later when the work is completed. The uncertainty is because part of the work is full replacement coverage, while the rest is only actual cash value.
- A motion was made and seconded to adopt resolution #1 as presented. Motion carried.

- **2024 Budget (Resolution #2)** – President Haldeman presented the proposed 2024 budget in the amount of \$383,374.18.
 - A motion was made and seconded to adopt the 2024 budget as presented. Motion carried.

- **Mission Endowment Fund Approval (Resolution #3)** – President Haldeman shared the proposed 2023 endowment disbursement in the amount of \$18,800.
 - A motion was made and seconded to adopt the 2023 Mission Endowment Fund disbursement as presented. Motion carried.

- **Constitution Revisions (Resolution #4)** – Resolution #4 was shared on the screen:

Resolved, that the amendments to the constitution of Our Savior’s Lutheran Church, as recommended by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and the Congregation Council be adopted as presented.

Pastor Jon explained the changes. He also noted copies of the changes were available to anyone who wanted one. It was requested that the constitution be put on the church website for people to read there.

 - A motion was made and seconded to adopt resolution #4 as presented. Motion carried.

Adjourn:

- A motion was made and seconded to adjourn the meeting at 12:08 PM. Motion carried.

Pastor Jon closed the meeting with prayer.

Respectfully submitted,
 Alison Hemker
 Congregation Council Secretary

2024 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
Jerry Greeno	2027	First
Jeff Haldeman	2025	First
Alison Hemker	2025	Second
Tiffany Janisch	2027	Second
Carolyn Karl	2026	Second
Jen Linse	2025	Second
Brenda Skittone	2027	Second
Chad Vick	2026	Second

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
Youth Director: Wendy Amundson
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

Just for the fun of it, I took a few moments to look back at what I wrote five years ago. It was January, 2020. Covid was an unknown word. There were reports of some strange illness in China, but not yet here. Soon, but not yet.

Of course, we all know where that went. But while Covid has faded a bit (though we had several people back out of commitments this past weekend because of Covid) the lessons remain. Wash your hands...if you are possibly ill, wear a mask for the sake of others...stay home if you are not well. Lessons learned, sometimes the hard way. But the biggest lesson is that no matter what, God is with us, we are the church, and we are called into the world.

In that sense Covid really didn't change anything. That has always been true. Long before Covid and long after, God is with us, we are the church, and we are called into the world.

Along those lines, in the PowerPoint I use for Congregation Council orientation, I close with a slide that reads,

"We will never change the world by going to church. We will only change the world by being the church."

True five years ago, and true today as well. So, while I am excited to see our worship attendance increase over last year, coming back to where we might have been without Covid, I am even more excited to see God's people at work.

2024 might be considered a year of "re-building." (Re)building a building, (new) building in and of community, and (maintaining and) building ministries. Let's dive in and look back at building, building, and building – and then a few more things!

(Re)building a building

We've all heard it – the church is not a building. It is people. Still, a building has value. It is a statement of commitment to the community, the place from which our mission goes out into the world, and a resource to enable us to carry out our mission. Our building is where we gather for worship, teach young and old, provide pastoral care (funerals, weddings, etc.), prepare meals for kids in the summer, house food resources for the community year-round, and more. It's an important place, and a gift from God through the hands of generations past.

So as the recipients of this gift, it's on us to be good stewards. To use the building wisely, and to care for it as the years pass. That was a big part of our experience in 2024, but it began way back in 2023.

In June of 2023 the congregation authorized working with DBS Group on several projects to repair and enhance our building. The projects included replacement of the flat roof, tuckpointing and caulking brick and windows, installation of new lighting by the front entrance, and replacing the ceiling tiles in the Gathering Area. We wanted, as

we said, to “renew this place for the sake of all God’s people.” We wanted to live out our stewardship of this resource for ministry.

In addition, we recognized that the pitched roof, the organ, sanctuary air conditioning, and the parking lot resurfacing were on the long term “to do” list. But not yet. Plenty to do first.

And then the storm hit on July 30. More to do as windows broke, the steeple siding dented, and the pitched roof damaged. We worked again with DBS Group as the immediate “to do” list grew.

Meanwhile, though it still worked, the organ showed increasing signs of failure. Moving up the priority list!

Late in 2023 we began working with insurance, sometimes much slower than we’d like. We also got the lighting done that fall. But the rest would have to wait ...

Then, in February of 2024 a generous donor stepped forward to provide the resources for a new organ (*thank you!*) With congregational approval, the new organ, a Rodgers digital organ, was installed in early May and dedicated in memory of Clifford and Doris Michelson. With much greater capabilities than our old organ, and with the primary sound source coming from the front of the sanctuary, this new organ has made an immediate impact. You can hear ... and feel the music, reverberating throughout the sanctuary with a deeper and richer sound. But the organ also has the capability for the musician to “record” the notes, and then have them played without the organist present, much like a “player-piano.” So, if the organist is ill and can’t be with us, we have options! Most of all, this instrument will serve us for decades. Think of all the pastoral care that will come through music, in regular weekend worship, Christmas and Holy Week, funerals and weddings, and more.

Finally, in May the rest of the project work commenced. Tuckpointing and caulking, flat and pitched roof, steeple and ceiling tiles. Lots of days of work, and despite a few small snags, it was finally all done!

We do have the roof for the rental unit next door to consider in 2025, but resources have been set aside from the insurance payout to cover that.

Of course, all of this needs to be paid for. Our Capital Appeal team has worked hard to highlight our needs and progress. Briefly, here’s what the Capital Appeal numbers look like, as of December 31:

June, 2023 approved projects	\$ 149,971
July, 2023 storm damage costs	\$ 111,168
Organ installation	\$ 57,100
Ceiling tiles	\$ 2,608
Parking lot gravel and regrade	\$ 4,950
Total project costs	\$ 325,797

June 1, 2023 existing resources	\$ 39,325
January, 2024 transfer of funds	\$ 25,000
Insurance received for church building	\$ 94,620
Gifts received	\$ 142,600
Total funds available for project	\$ 301,545
Balance needed yet	\$ 24,252

Thank you to everyone who contributed to the costs and the work we needed to do! Lots needed to be done ... and we got it done! And special thanks to the Capital Appeal Team for guiding us through the funding process.

Notice, however, that we remain \$24,252 short. If you have yet to complete your estimate of giving toward the appeal (remember, this was a three-year appeal), we look forward to your gifts enabling us to “put this to bed.” Regardless, we are blessed, and you are a big part of our blessings!

And then just a bit more on the building ... 2024 saw us begin to fully use our new tech system. We are still working out the bugs and learning the delicacies of the system, but we have been livestreaming since spring, and using a new YouTube channel for recordings. We have also begun to make regular use of the projector and screen.

Remember too, however, that in the end this isn't about a building. It's about ministry and people. And so, we have worked to “renew this place for the sake of all God's people.”

But wait, there's more!

(New) building in and of community

It's no secret that worship attendance and even congregational engagement has declined in our world, and across all denominations. It's a busy and distracting world, and lives are busier than ever. We have seen that decline at Our Savior's. From a peak of 340/week in the mid 2000's, to 221/week in 2019. And then came Covid. Experts expected a drop of 20% coming out of Covid. Our numbers bore that out. In 2023, we had 158/week.

Not all is gloom and doom, however. In 2024 our attendance increased to 180/week. And unlike 2019 we have a more substantial virtual presence. Prior to Covid we averaged 7 views or an estimated 13 persons a week. In 2024 we averaged 28 views, or an estimated 54 persons. Not in the building, but connecting with us in a different way – and using the new tech system that we have installed!

And then ... new folk. I don't have documentation, but it seems to me that we have more visitors and new people than we had prior to Covid. Almost every week we have someone new with us. And in conversations with other clergy, they are having a similar experience. It is almost as if Covid and the disruptions it caused resulted in some

people deciding they didn't need to be with the faith community, while others felt a new sense of emptiness, and are seeking to fill that emptiness in the midst of the faith community.

That means we need to be looking, watching, and welcoming as people who are seeking out a church home check us out. Not because we want more members, but because we are called to be a welcoming people, inviting all to be a part of a place where we experience God's gifts of grace and where the Holy Spirit pulls us together to do "God's work with our hands."

(Maintaining and) building ministries

In the end, we are called to be grounded in Jesus while living faithfully as a community and as disciples in our own little corners of the world. And that means we don't just gather for ourselves, for our own spiritual needs. We gather to be renewed and restored, AND to reach out into the world.

During 2024 we continued many ministries that have been significant in congregational life over the years. Sunday School and confirmation, choir and handbells, food pantry and WS Community Assistance, corn roast and Norwegian dinner, weddings and funerals, funeral lunches and after school dinners, cards and visits to the homebound, youth ministry and supporting kids at Sugar Creek, prayer shawls and quilting, nursing home services and connecting with college students, guitar group and Beer and Hymns, and ... I'm sure I missed a bunch of stuff (sorry about that!).

We also engaged in some new and renewed ministries. Wendy Amundson is gearing up our youth ministry, and we hope to connect kids with discipleship opportunities in their lives. As part of my sabbatical (more on that later) I worked with five persons to develop some preaching skills. We then "let them loose" to be sharers of the word while I was gone, not just to give Pastor Jean a break, but to let them grow in their discernment of God's word, and how to proclaim that word to a hurting world. They did a great job!

Looking ahead we are exploring a grief support ministry and better use of our new technology. A new pictorial directory is on the horizon, and whatever else the Spirit sends our way!

And then, our support of ministries outside of Our Saviors – Sugar Creek, the World Hunger Appeal, Campus Ministry, and host of other ministries. Like Sleep in Heavenly Peace (providing beds for kids without one). We have provided them financial support, but this past year we organized a "bed build." Biggest one the folks at Sleep in Heavenly Peace said they had ever had! Good ministry as it met needs, but also brought people together to do "God's work with our hands."

Two final observations about ministries outside the congregation. First, of the top seven congregations (in size) in the La Crosse Area Synod, we are by far the highest givers in "non-synod" financial support. From the Endowment to the Norwegian Dinner to special appeals to the Hungry Jar – we have supported the work of organizations and

ministries, partnering with them to make a difference in the world. Organizations like World Hunger, Lutheran Disaster Response, La Crosse Warming Center, Sleep in Heavenly Peace, St Claire Health Mission, Sugar Creek, and many more.

And second, about that Hungry Jar ... some things post Covid have been challenging – the Hungry Jar has been exhilarating! Since we stopped “collecting the offering” pew by pew, the kids have more room and space – and YOU have been generous! Hungry Jar offerings in 2024 were just shy of \$10,000 – more than four times what they were in 2019. Thank you for your support of ministries that really do change lives!

(Re)building, (new)building, and (maintaining) building ... all ways we are striving to BE the church!

And then some more

A few other nuggets from 2024. First, thank you for the gift of a sabbatical leave. I used that time to refresh and renew, but also to grow in photography skills while keeping an eye out for where I was seeing God at work. I managed to post a picture a day on a new Facebook page (search for “Our Savior’s ELCA – West Salem”). While the R&R was valuable, the photography skills and exploration of “God at work” really made it special, so thank you again.

And thanks to Pastor Jean for all her work during the sabbatical. But then again, I knew all was in good hands ...

Financial stewardship was also a big thing in 2024. You’ve already read about the Capital Appeal, but our regular budget is also important – those are the resources that drive much of our ministry. We did not reach our goal, but we did exceed 2023 support, and with a bit of lower expenses, we ended the year with a slightly higher fund balance. Still, our continued growth in stewardship is needed, and not just to meet the budget, but to continue growing our trust in a God who promises to meet all our needs. And as we seek to grow in trust, the Congregation Council continues to be vigilant, not just to balance the budget, but to ensure that we can and do the ministry to which God calls us!

Finally, some other highlights of the past year:

- I already mentioned this, but the bed build on April 27
- The Bishop’s visit on October 19/20
- Our National Night Out display on August 6
- Mardi Gras gathering February 11
- Organ dedication on May 26 and the organ concert on October 13
- Nature walk on October 27

After all that ...

What more needs to be said? I'll tell you ... THANK YOU!!!

Thank you to a congregation that has stayed faithful, with a commitment to faithful living. A congregation that has embraced a changing world and seeks to do God's work with its hands. *So, thank you!*

But even more **thanks to the God who makes that happen**. We have been faithful not because of ourselves, but because God's Holy Spirit works within us. A good and gracious God gifting, empowering, and sending us forth. So, yes, thank you, but even more I thank God for you!

And **I give thanks for our Congregation Council**, and for their work over the past year, with all that has gone on. And a special thanks to Jeff Haldeman for his leadership and his gift to not just talk, but to do.

And **I give thanks for our staff**, who have continued to carry out faithful ministry. From music (Linda Berg, Eric Sorenson, and Laurie Noelke), to finances (Jill Iliff and Karen DeSchepper), to the little tasks like lawns and dishes (Graham Sjoquist and Chloe Drury), we have faithful people doing good work. And then there's Kris Seeger and Josh Corning, who as office administrator and custodian do a great job and are valued partners with us, and while they are not members of this congregation, nonetheless embrace not only our tasks and our ministry, but the people of our community. Thank you all for your faithful work!

And **I give thanks for "the other pastor," (my wife)** who has worked so tirelessly in our ministry, not only doing "her stuff," but supporting me in "my stuff." What a gift she has been to me, and to you!

And finally, **I give thanks for my wife ("the other pastor")** for her presence in my life, and to Rebecca, **my daughter, too**. Together, they are incredible gifts of a gracious God. I give thanks for their support and love, patience and understanding.

Most of all, ***I again give thanks to God for Jesus and for the love that embraces and sustains us these days, and every day.*** We are called to be disciples. We are called to do "God's work with our hands." But we are gifted with nothing more and nothing less than life itself, through Jesus! Amen!

Pastor Jon

Associate Pastor's Report

Didn't I just write this report? Wasn't I just anticipating having to hold down the fort while Pastor Jon was going on sabbatical? Time seems to fly by faster the busier we are – always looking forward to something, anticipating something, and in the blink of an eye that something has come and gone! So, taking a peek at the blur that was 2024 ...

We have been blessed with a constant flow of visitors this year – families, couples and singles. A few come and go, while most have been attending regularly, getting involved in the life of the congregation, participating in events, working on committees, attending Sunday school and confirmation – you don't have to be a member to be an active part of this community of faith! All are welcome ... and we love having you!

What started out as a way to highlight my sabbatical cookbook two years ago, turned into an "annual" event. Our 2nd Annual Mardi Gras celebration in February, just before Ash Wednesday and the beginning of Lent, was a fun way of sampling goodies by our talented cooks and bakers. The kids had fun decorating masks and other activities. Are you thinking of what recipe you would like to share this year?

Summer was anything but quiet ... there may have been less people around, less meetings, and no Sunday School, but things were happening ... the place was buzzing with summer lunch volunteers and quilting ladies ... not to mention dodging heavy equipment, contractors banging on the roof, and the walls shaking as the roller crushed the gravel in the parking lot ... there were funerals, baptisms, and wedding planning ... planning and preparing for fall ... and worship – we had fun doing worship – five talented lay leaders who studied with Pastor Jon prior to his sabbatical shared their sermons with us – what a gift to be able to sit back and be fed by others! Never a dull moment! It took all of us to get things done, and we did fine – thanks to Kris and Josh, and council president, Jeff Haldeman – but, we were glad to have Pastor Jon back!

Being someone who has been accused (and rightly so) of being organized and overly detail oriented, I spent many hours getting our financial reporting/recording streamlined, creating new forms and procedures in hopes of making it easier for our counters and also recruiting more members of the team – are you good with numbers??

Every couple of years, per our constitution, we are tasked with doing a membership review, and now was the time. While we were at it, it was also a good time to make data entry more consistent. New codes and categories were created to better reflect the various levels of involvement, along with membership. That being said, then every person's status had to be confirmed or updated. It turned out to be a bigger project the further I got into it, and of course got stalled out as fall came along and other activities ramped up. But it will get done ...

As we welcomed the kids back to confirmation in the fall, it was great to have Wendy Amundson back among us, hanging out with the kids and being a partner with us in our work together. She's got some ideas, so watch for them!

Every May as we wind down Sunday school, I begin to wonder who will join us to teach the kids in the fall. Two of our faithful, long-time teachers stepped down this year, but God was watching over us and three of our high school students stepped up and volunteered to teach. A gift to be sure! And, it doesn't hurt they get NHS hours, too!

Working with the Sunday school children is one of the highlights of my week. They are full of so much energy and it's fun to get swept up in that! I can get them revved up with our video time, and then send them on their way back to their teachers to deal with! Being present during confirmation after-school allows me to continue to watch the kids grow and mature. And, then staying connected with a note or email once they get to college completes the journey. It's hard to believe those little ones in PreK when we first got here are now getting close to graduating from high school!

Staying connected with our kids outside of church is important to us, as well. For the past several years, Pastor Jon and I have been a part of the Elementary School Book Fair – we love it when our kids come through the door, look up and see us, and wave and yell "Hi, Pastor Jon! Hi, Pastor Jean!" We also enjoy rooting on the Panthers at football games, seeing so many of our families and neighbors, and watching "our" kids play ball. I have been privileged to be a judge for the high school Panther Portfolios (previously Senior Exit Projects) the last six years. West Salem has so many very talented and creative kids, and it's fun to be able to see what some of our kids come up with, too.

We have a number of active "seniors" and it would be great to be able to resurrect our OWLS (older, wiser Lutherans over 55) group and provide events/outings for them. They regularly attend worship and Bible studies, and are involved with many of the other activities going on at church, but it would be nice to periodically have activities specifically for them. If anyone is interested in helping to lead this group, share ideas, and/or work with me, please let me know.

This fall we had the opportunity to host LaCrosse Area Synod Bishop Felix Malpica. This was the first time he was here to worship with us, and we pulled out all the stops! The senior choir and Sunday school choir sang, the SOS Band played, we had a baptism, there were kids at all of the services to join the Bishop for the children's message, the Bishop preached, and the council hosted him for a good German lunch (thank you Melissa Haldeman).

Being involved with Synod work is something that I enjoy. I continue as the Dean of the West Conference, which also makes me a member of the Synod Council. This past summer I was also elected to serve on the Synod Executive Committee. Makes for a long Thursday, but at least all of the meetings are back to back! I also chaired the Reference & Counsel Committee for Synod Assembly. This coming year I am part of a task force charged with reviewing the Synod Constitution specifically looking at the committee structure and making recommendations to update that. I also serve on the Evangelism & Outreach Committee which has been trying to redefine itself the last several years.

Outside of the "church" realm, I serve on the Institutional Review Board (IRB) at Gundersen Health System. That committee, too, has evolved in the last year. It is

interesting being a part of the healthcare scene and learning about new trials and experimental procedures/medications.

As I write this I am listening to the choir practicing the anthem "Here I Am Lord" – (it sounds beautiful!) – the anthem they prepared as a surprise to celebrate my 15th ordination anniversary in November. Pastor Jon had a special sermon along with pictures (another surprise) to celebrate ... all of which I watched on livestream in my recliner, tears streaming down my face, feeling sorry for myself not being able to be in worship to celebrate my day, as I was home with norovirus.

I look forward to the new year – finishing projects that have been started, trying new things, continuing to cultivate relationships with new people, being fed by the kids, spending time visiting with people, celebrating new life in baptisms, celebrating lives well lived at funerals, and celebrating lives coming together in weddings. We will also welcome guest preachers to share about their ministries – Deacon Stephanie Engle from Sugar Creek and Pastor Kathryn Thompson from LuMin. There will be opportunities for learning and teaching.

I am also excited for the new pictorial directory coming this spring. It's been six years since the last one and much has changed in those years. Do you even remember the last one? It came out just as we were shutting down for Covid! Let's make this directory one of celebration and new life. A directory is an important tool to help us all be able to put a name with a face. And, we want to see all of your pretty faces! You notice I didn't say this is a "membership" directory because you don't have to be a member to be included. This will be a directory of people who are involved in the life of this community of faith – member or not.

This has been a busy, productive year, thanks to so many people. Our Congregation Council, under the leadership of Jeff Haldeman, has been supportive, visionary, faithful, and hard working. The newly rejuvenated Property Committee, under the leadership of Rich Westpfahl, has taken the bull by the horn, tackled a laundry list of projects, and continues to look for things that need to be done to keep this place looking good and functioning well. Our Music Ministry continues to enhance our worship experience thanks to our musicians (Linda Berg and Laurie Noelke), the SOS Band (Dean Olson, Jon Hetland, Ken Isler, Dan Backhaus, Linda Berg), the choirs (senior, Sunday school, handbells, director Eric Sorenson), and our beautiful new organ (thanks to a very generous donor). Being open to trying new settings and songs brings life and energy into the "same old" routine. There is music for everyone, whether you are participating in making it happen, or just being fed by it sitting in the pew.

I am thankful for all who helped with worship during Pastor Jon's sabbatical – those extra bodies willing to help with communion at the last minute – and especially those who spent a lot of time preparing and then delivering their sermons (Trudy Drugg, Berit Gilbertson, Jeff Haldeman, Dori Jensen, and Brenda Skittone). We have gifted people in our midst, guided by God's Spirit and Word. Do I hear another sermon coming?

As I mentioned before, we thank Wendy Amundson for keeping that spark and yearning in her heart and coming back to work with our young people.

Nothing would get done without the hard work and dedication of our office staff. Thank you to Kris Seeger for all that she does – she is the face of the congregation as she greets people, answers their questions, accomplishes the tasks they ask of her. But there is so much more that she does behind the scenes, things that people don't even think about because she just does them. She cares about this place and all of us as if it was her own. She is the glue that holds us together, providing support, encouragement, and care. She anticipates what we need and is there ready to provide it. Thank you to Josh Corning for keeping our building clean and ready to go. When asked to do something, he is there offering his help with a smile on his face.

Thank you to all of you who walk this journey with us, who worship with us, who share your gifts and talents, who care for each other and for us as your pastors. You are a blessing to us.

Life and ministry is complete thanks to Pastor Jon, my "other half", who is always there with his support and encouragement, his love and care, who lifts me up when I'm down, celebrates the joys and successes, and wipes away the tears. We are a team and I am so thankful for that. Ministry is possible and fun because of him. Whatever is placed before us, we get through it together. I also give thanks for Rebecca, whose unconditional love is always there to help me through, who all at the same time can put a smile on my face and a question in my mind, who makes our family complete.

I give thanks to a good and gracious God, without whom nothing is possible.

Blessings on our ministry together,

Pastor Jean

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MINISTRIES

Worship Helpers – Worship doesn't happen without the dedication of so many faithful volunteers, some behind the scenes and some who you see each week. We invite you to follow your passion and join one (or more) of the groups – speak with Pastor Jean or use SignUpGenius to schedule a time that works for you.

The **Welcoming Team** (aka Ushers) is the face of the congregation, making the first impression as they greet folks who come through our doors – folks who are here every week, while others are visitors checking us out. Families and singles are encouraged to share their smiles and warmth with all who worship with us.

The **Worship Assistants** (aka acolytes) are our 7th and 8th grade confirmation students who not only light and extinguish the candles, but they also help serve communion. What a great opportunity to have our young people sharing the Lord's Supper!

The **Communion Assistants** prepare the elements before and after worship and then serve the Lord's Supper to those in worship. The Communion Assistants, along with the help of a member of the Welcome Team place the offering in the safe at the end of worship.

Home Communion Ministry – Visiting our shut-ins and bringing them “leftovers from the Table” (aka Holy Communion) has always been an important ministry at Our Savior's. And the great thing is that it isn't just the pastors who are able to create relationships with our homebound folks through these visits, members of the congregation also get to know those who are unable to be with us in person. The relationships created by these visits are a gift not only to those being visited, but also to those who are doing the visiting.

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. You can never have enough prayers – why not join us!

Senior Ministry – Ministry to our seniors happens behind the scenes. Cards are sent to our seniors 80+ for birthdays and holidays. Worship services are conducted on the third Thursday of each month at the three nursing and assisted living facilities in West Salem (Lakeview, Salem Terrace, Mill Street). Ruth Circle Bible Study gathers at Salem Terrace on the third Monday of each month. As we move into the new year, if you have ideas for activities or events for our seniors, please let Pastor Jean know.

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 Christmas 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 –

Our Sunday School children continue to be filled with energy and enthusiasm as they join us each week. The class sizes may be a bit smaller these days, but as a presenter at Synod Assembly said last summer, 'if you aren't producing them, they can't be here!' The days of big classes is but a memory. We are encouraged though, as the kids we do have seem to be here more regularly.

We are continuing to use the *Whirl* lectionary-based curriculum from Sparkhouse. This encourages conversation at home as the kids are hearing the same lessons in Sunday School that everyone is hearing in worship. The kids like the characters in our video who set the stage for their lessons, and Pastor Jean likes the idea of reusing materials from the past trying to be a wise steward of our resources.

Each week the children spend time with Linda Berg and Naoko Giblin learning new songs that they share in worship periodically. They always do a great job with their songs and we love having them up there. It is especially exciting when we have the SOS Band, Senior Choir, and Sunday School kids all singing together – they really rock the place!

This year the Sunday School Christmas program was "Live From Bethlehem". The kids worked really hard for many weeks preparing for the program, and their hard work paid off. It was great! Those with speaking parts met before church with Eric Iliff practicing their lines, and the hymns they sang were familiar and they really belted them out!

We start and end our year with a time to connect with any of our adopted classroom grandparents who are able to be there. Some of our grandparents are mobile, while others are shut-ins. We welcome new grandparents each year as we welcome the Pre-K class. Our grandparents follow "their" kids throughout their time in Sunday School, through 6th grade confirmation. The kids have fun using their creativity to make cards for special occasions for their grandparents.

For the first time in a while, we had several teachers that we needed to replace. Stacey Sjoquist "retired" after many years, and Amanda Vick headed off to college after several years. We thank both Stacey and Amanda for all of their time and witness to so many of our young ones. To complete our staff of faithful witnesses, we were excited to welcome three of our high school students as teachers and two confirmation students as helpers.

Thank you to all of our teachers and helpers ...

Sunday School Staff 2024-2025

Pre-K & Kindergarten: Oilvia Maki

1st Grade: Jen Evenson and Audrey Schlifer

2nd Grade: Jessalyn Hickey

3rd Grade: Lydia Jothen and Emelia Tlustosch

4th Grade: Lindsey Gilberts

5th Grade: Eric Iliff

Substitutes: Erin Hebrink, Brenda Skittone, Brian Vike

Helpers: Kaelyn Hebrink and Niko Schnittgen

Music leaders: Linda Berg and Naoko Giblin

Music substitute: Ilene Pavelko

Youth

Once again, we have a Youth Director on staff ... thank you to Wendy Amundson for her energy and enthusiasm, and her genuine care for our kids, as she takes on that role again!

Since the beginning of confirmation in September, I have enjoyed being able to spend time getting to know each and every one of our students. Good conversations were had as we stuffed backpacks of school supplies, and the 8th grade class had an evening of making delicious cookies. There are times when individuals come into my office to sit and have some short conversations, while enjoying some snacks they know are always there.

In the new year, I have some events planned. 7th graders will be having some time with a few of our older church members, listening to their journey in faith. We are excited to hear what they have to say and the questions the kids will have for them. The 8th graders will be enjoying supper with their "adopted classroom grandparents" (Paul & Marilyn Ranum). The meal has been planned and it will be a joy to hear their stories of life.

Other things are in the works but have not been finalized yet – stay tuned for more to come!

Back by popular demand, watch for opportunities for at least two outdoor bonfires coming this spring!

Thank you and have a great rest of the year.

Respectfully submitted by, Wendy Amundson, Youth Director

Confirmation

Confirmation instruction and faith formation continued in 2024, as it has for so many years, 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 7-8th grade, teaching catechetics and working on discipleship.

As seems to happen every year, a number of new kids joined us as the year went on. That is always good news! But ... did we hit the jackpot – during December, over just a few weeks three kids joined the 6th grade class. What a great gift – more kids!

Because of our changes in timing last year, we had two confirmation services during the year. On April 14, 22 9th graders affirmed their baptism. Then, on April 28 another 18 8th graders followed them. These classes had some great kids, and we miss them in the program, but we are also excited to see them go out into the world as God's agents of change.

Meanwhile, After School continued, with a usual crowd of 20-25 kids hanging out, spending time together, and enjoying a meal together. We've made it a pattern now that one of the kids opens the meal with prayer, and then we eat!

Currently, our classes are a bit smaller – 11 8th graders, 20 7th graders, and 14 6th graders. Still, lots of energy and discipleship going on in the room.

The curriculum for the ministry includes:

- 6th grade – the Bible from Genesis through Acts, taught by Corey Sjoquist
- 7th grade – catechetical material including Sacraments, Prayer, and the Ten Commandments, along with several electives covering areas of service, faithful living, church "stuff," and the world around us, taught by Pastor Jon and several elective leaders.
- 8th graders – more catechism with the Apostle's Creed, then gifts and stewardship, and checking out God's Word, taught by Pastor Jon.

Both 7th and 8th graders also spend some time learning about, and doing servant leadership. Thanks to Becki Murphy for handling that part of their learning.

Affirmation of Baptism is set this year for April 27 for the 8th graders. We will miss this batch of kids, but God sends them out into world – and then next year we will welcome new disciples of Jesus!

One final note – ALWAYS room for more!

Respectfully submitted by, Pastor Jon

Worship and Education Participation for 2024

Worship continues to be the heart of our time together as a community of faith. In worship we connect with our God, hearing God's word of grace, receiving the gifts of the sacraments, and being the Body of Christ gathered together in this place and at this time. Worship feeds our soul and renews our spirit as we head back out into a challenging and difficult world.

We worship regularly, each weekend, with the celebration of Holy Communion, to which we invite all to share, regardless of who they are or where they come from. Livestream is available at the 10:30 service - find the link on the homepage of our web site; or anytime on our YouTube channel, which is available through the same link.

While worship attendance is important, we know that we are called to more than worship - we are called to be faithful disciples at all times and in all places. The worship numbers below are one measure, but not the only measure, of our faithful living.

Worship

Weekly in-building worship average	180
Estimated virtual worship over a 7-day period	<u>55</u>
TOTAL worship participants each week	235

Special services

Ash Wednesday	123
Lent (5-week average)	92
Maundy Thursday	151
Good Friday (2 services)	114
Easter – in building (3 services)	458
– online estimate	120
Thanksgiving Eve (Ecumenical @ St Teresa)	
Advent – Hanging of the Greens	36
Advent (Ecumenical @ WS Presbyterian)	
Christmas Eve – in building (4 services)	510
– online estimate	141
Christmas Day	41

Total Christian Education participants for 2024

Sunday School	53
Confirmation	45 (6 th – 8 th Grade)
Bible Study	18 (<i>includes Wednesday study and WELCA Ruth Circle</i>)

Pastoral Acts

Baptisms

Madelyn Jo Craig	Ariel Grace Wuensch
Madison Nicole Herman	Addison Jade Wuensch
Lincoln Dane Brockmeyer	Ellie Jean Kvamme
Parker Mae Peterson	Rory Sue Shepherd
Ingrid Eulalia Balboa	Marley Blake McClintock

Funerals/Deaths

Elna J. Witt	Kimberly Jo Riley	Gloria J. Thompson
Charlotte M. Swenson	Blanche H. Tryggestad	Delvan H. Horstman
Linda J. Spah	Mary L. Storandt	Sylvia J. Hetland
William A. Martell	Kay F. Osiecki	Andrew H. Beckstrom
Dale P. Anderson Jr.	Darlene C. Johnson	Mary Geske
	John F. Reynolds	

Marriages

Emily Trautman & Tristan Aguiar
Taylor Tamke & Benton Schmidt
Dawn Affeldt & Christopher Clay

Confirmations

8th Grade

Isaac Arentz	Landon Labus
William Byom	Leah Langrehr
Deanna Christianson	Casey Mathison
Arianna Clements	Lily Muellenberg
Zander Clements	Mya Peterson
Candace Drury	Madison Phillips
Anna Gross	Ethan Quackenbush
Jesse Jothen	Anya Tenner
Campbell Laack	Anna Witte

9th Grade

William Clements	Drew McConkey
Gunnar Eckland	Mara McNaughton
Charlie Fullwood	Tula Mitchell
Julia Hansen	Jaxen Quackenbush
Sophia Hanson	Brooke Rasmussen
Charlie Ihle	Graham Sjoquist
Grace Johnsrude	Nathan Stefferud
Noah Johnsrude	Arianna Stugen
Isaiah Laack	Lily Twite
Lexi Marinelli	Landon Weiland
Briauna Mathison	Alicia Zarecki

New Members

Conrad Miller	Lloyd Clark
Kelcee Burrell	David Hemker
Annie Labus	Joan Wachter
Shirley Schoenfeld	Brian & Corinne Hanson
Chrissy Nelson & daughter Kylie	

Transfer Out

Dawn & Bruce Eckelberg	Nancy Halaska (Koepp)
Jacob Iliff	Adam & Jessica Kennedy
Sidney & Karen Jerome	Clark & Dani Draxler, Owen and Ethan

Residents of Nursing Homes & Independent/Assisted Living Facilities

*(as of December 31, 2024)

Mill Street Manor

Arlan Gilbertson
Lana Helgeson
Vernetta Moe
Shirley Schoenfeld

Salem Terrace

Norma Piper
Velma Schmidt

Mulders Healthcare

Virgil Mikkelson

Havenwood of Onalaska

Carolyn Karl

Springbrook – Onalaska

Diane McClintock

Morrow Home - Sparta

Eva Farris
Cristi Johnson
Luella Pierce
Judi Rogness

Onalaska Care Center

Helen Friell
Kathy Brisson

Eagle Crest South - LaCrosse

Bobbie Broughton
Joe & Carol Stekel

Eagle Crest North - Onalaska

Beth Hoth

Waunakee Manor - Waunakee

Betty Whitlock

Nominations

Congregation Council

Four to elect to a three-year term

- Trudy Drugg

I am a widow with two daughters, three grandchildren, and one on the way. I moved to West Salem from southern Minnesota three years ago. I work at City Brewery scheduling their Irwindale (CA) facility. I am Dori Jensen's sister, and I've become active at Our Savior's, even preaching last summer during Pastor Jon's sabbatical. I'm looking forward to meeting new friends.

- Jeff Haldeman

Jeff has been married for 39 years and has three children and six grandchildren. He has been an active member of Our Savior's since 1988. Jeff has spent 38 years in supply chain - specifically purchasing various pressure retaining equipment for the energy sector. He also has a small business constructing custom cabinets and furniture. He has served on the church council in the 1990's and has currently finished serving for one term. He has also ushered, helped with communion, preached last summer, tackled a variety of property issues, and served as a confirmation guide.

- Amy Rasmussen

I've been a member at OSLC since 2009, and a life-long member of the ELCA, beginning at a tiny country church in NE South Dakota. I am married to Clint (also life-long ELCA) and have two daughters. I am currently a pharmacist at Gundersen. I enjoy being a home communion minister and spending time with family.

- Scott Thompson

I was born and raised in La Crosse/La Crescent. I have a business degree from UW-L. I am married to Carol, and we raised our family in Green Bay. In retirement we returned to this area. I am currently on the Mission Endowment Fund Committee. We enjoy camping and spending with family.

Mission Endowment Fund Committee

Two to elect to a three-year term

- Jen Linse
- Jeff Rich

2025 LaCrosse Area Synod Assembly Voting Members

(June 6-8, 2025 in Westby/LaCrosse)

Four to elect to a one-year term - *An additional youth/young adult can also be elected*

- Carolyn Karl
- Graham Sjoquist – youth
- Brenda Skittone
- *To be nominated from the floor*
- *To be nominated from the floor -*

Delegates to Sugar Creek Bible Camp

Two to elect to one-year term

- Brenda Skittone
- Jeff Haldeman

Delegates to Eagle Crest Communities

Two to elect to one-year term

- Carolyn Karl
- Eric Ender

President's Report

Another Happening Year!

Looking back on 2024, I am once again amazed at all accomplishments that the members of Our Saviors Lutheran Church have achieved both within our church and in our community. We are so fortunate that so many of our members are willing to share your talents and efforts.

I am also pleased to report that 2024 weekly attendance has increased by approximately 15% compared to 2023. We continue to have new people worshipping with us on a regular basis. As we look forward to 2025, we need to continue to find ways to reach out to our community and the world. Our mission is to be a beacon of hope for a troubled world.

Financially we are in better shape than last year. Unfortunately, we are still running slightly in the RED. If you review the financial report, we did miss our budgeted income by approximately negative 3%, and our overall balance by negative 1%. Now that isn't bad, but I'd prefer that we missed our budget on the positive side. I challenge the congregation to really 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.

We continue with our capital improvement campaign. With God's guidance, the congregation's increased giving, insurance claim, and the hard work of many talented members, we have accomplished all of our current projects. This year's finished projects include, Flat and pitched roof replacement, steeple repair, gravel parking lot resurfacing, window repair, brick tuck pointing, organ replacement, ceiling tile replacement, re-sealed exterior window and doors, and new gutters/downspouts. A huge shout out to our Capital Campaign Committee for all the organizing and fundraising efforts. I want to thank all our members who have generously contributed to this financial need. Our goal is not yet met, so please remember that we still need everyone to honor your pledged commitments.

Pastor Jon took a 3-month sabbatical this past summer. In preparation five members of the congregation attended sermon classes with Pastor Jon. All five had the opportunity to share a sermon with the congregation which gave Pastor Jean a break, helping her focus on the daily church business.

Even though we have accomplished many things, we need to continue to challenge ourselves to do more! If you have ideas you'd like to initiate or share, please talk to our Church Council. Our Saviors wants to continue our current momentum to provide an environment where "All are welcome" and we all can make a positive difference in our community and to the world!! Thank YOU!!!

Respectfully submitted by,
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

The bell choir had a great year in 2024. We continued to grow in members which has also allowed us to do more challenging music. We performed multiple times in 2024 and look forward to doing more in 2025. In 2025 the bell choir will be performing as always, but will get the opportunity to perform with other bell choirs at the La Crosse Area Synod Music Fest on February 16, 2025 at Trinity Lutheran Church in La Crosse. We always welcome new members. If interested contact Laurie Noelke.

Respectfully submitted by,
Laurie Noelke

Audit Committee

The Audit Committee had completed an audit of the church's accounts and financial practices [for calendar year 2023]. In conducting the audit, the Committee reviewed the WELCA account, the Youth account, the Community Assistance account, the Disaster Relief Fund account, the Mission Endowment Fund, and selected months of the General Fund account. The Committee also reviewed financial procedures for handling, counting and depositing offerings; procedures for payroll, payments to vendors and accounts payable; procedures for IT access and backup; procedures for the Youth account, including Scrip cards.

The Committee did not find any account irregularities and found that procedures and internal controls in place are generally adequate to protect the finances of the church.

Audit Committee recommendations from the prior audit have been adopted and written into procedure. The Committee has no additional recommendations for Council's consideration.

Respectfully submitted,
Audit Committee – Sharon Olson, Dorene Jensen, Jim Anderson

*** The 2024 financial books will be audited in early 2025.*

Lutheran World Relief School Kits & Personal Care Kits

This year, Our Savior's again participated in gathering donations and making school kits for Lutheran World Relief. Each kit contained 4 notebooks, 1 box of crayons, 1 pencil sharpener, 1 ruler, 1 pair of scissors, 5 unsharpened pencils, 5 pens, and 1 eraser, and were assembled into a drawstring backpack. The Wednesday after school kids assisted with assembling the kits and packaging them into boxes for shipment. 100 kits were assembled. On October 12th, volunteers from Our Savior's drove the kits to Good Shepherd Lutheran Church to be sent with the other local kits and quilts to the distribution center where they would be processed. While we don't know the location of our kits specifically, in the past year school kits have been sent to Iraq, Tanzania, and the Philippines, among other places. Thank you for your support of this project.

Respectfully submitted,
Tiffany Janisch

Summer Lunch Program – Feed Our Children – West Salem

We are once again 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 Hansen's IGA, West Salem Schools, Linda's Bakery, Compeer Financial, Marine Credit Union, and many memorials and individuals. We also applied for and received a significant grant from Kwik Trip this year which was milk for lunches and breakfasts for several weeks. The Community Care and Share Food Pantry, and a Thrivent grant written by Lynette Ender provided bags of meal items for all of our pickups and deliveries.

This year we had eight weekly leaders: from Our Savior's – Lynette Ender (also representing the West Salem Lions), Carla Burkhardt, Judy & Phil Gilbert, and Tracy Hesse and myself (also representing the School District of West Salem) ... from St. Teresa's of Kolkata – Cheryl Lang ... from Prince of Peace – Sherie Brunk ... and from West Salem 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.

I was invited to attend a spring LaCrosse County food insecurity meeting again this year. Various organizations were represented at that meeting including the Food Pantry – West Salem was well represented. One of the goals of this year was making sure that fresh fruits and vegetables are offered for every meal. We did our part and were able to do this through various donations and our amazing volunteers. It was also highlighted at this meeting that one of the ways that we specifically 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. Nothing that we send there is wasted ... if there are ever any leftovers, they are used the next day.

Thank you for your support in providing this service.

This year in numbers:

- 11 weeks
- 20 serving days
- 8 weekly leaders
- 57+ hours HS student hours logged (NHS and others)
- 2,506 lunches served. And many breakfasts

Respectfully submitted, Angie Hemker

THANK YOU to Angie Hemker for (once again) pulling this all together! For all of your work organizing, cleaning, connecting, serving, and everything else that needed to be done!

Community Care & Share Food Pantry

In 2024 we saw increased usage of the pantry which has been common among most food pantries in the area. We serve on average 15-20 families each week, with 1-2 new families a month. We continue to try for people to be more aware of us so we can assist with their food insecurity.

We are very thankful for the continued support of our wonderful community and churches with donations of food, personal care items and monetary donations which allow us to give vouchers for meat, eggs, milk & bread. We just make our need known and the response is fantastic. With a focus on nutrition we make weekly trips to the Hunger Task Force to help provide fresh fruits, vegetables & occasionally meat items. We also appreciate the gardeners who share their bounty with us and enable us to increase the variety of fresh items we can offer.

This year we implemented a new way of helping people make their food choices. We invite them in to the pantry itself where they can see our items better and when available we utilize the kitchen to display the available fresh produce. This seems to be working well and much more satisfying to our guests.

All this would not be possible without our wonderful and dedicated volunteers who help with Saturday distribution and shelving and marking food donations and organizing the pantry. Thank you all for the hours you put in.

Please share the information that we are open every Saturday 10-12 and serve the residents of West Salem, Bangor, Rockland, Barre Mills and Mindoro. There are no income restrictions. We are here to assist anyone with food insecurity. If you are interested in volunteering please just contact me.

Respectfully submitted, Melody Schmitz, Board Member

ELCA World Hunger

The ELCA World Hunger turned 50 this year! If you have enough to eat each day, please consider making a monthly donation to the ELCA World Hunger fund to go to those who go hungry. This could be done by making a monthly donation, automatically through your bank. Another option would be to buy Scrip Cards (Woodmans, Culvers, Kwik Trip) and the amount that is given back from that purchase can be designated for World Hunger. Instead of selling animal ornaments like years past, we sold greeting cards with blank insides to write your own message. We are fortunate to have artists in our community and we sold cards painted by Pastor Mitzi Miyamoto and Lynnette Wick. Each card sold for \$5 with 3 of those dollars going to World Hunger. We sold 74 cards to equal \$222. We then sent it in before the end of the year so the amount would be matched so our donation became \$444! Please consider one of these options to help feed the world! Until all are fed ...

Respectfully submitted by,
Judy Gilbert

Outreach Committee

Reaching out beyond our church walls is the goal of our committee. We organize the June Dairy Day Fun Run! Our numbers have continued to recover from Covid. We were blessed with good weather, great volunteers, and runners/walkers.

Next, our major community event was the Community Corn Roast! We served up 450 cobs of corn. These are both weather dependent events and it didn't disappoint! The sun was out for set up, we had a good down-pour during the event to keep people in the shelter visiting with West Salem friends, new and old, and then the weather cleared for clean-up. We had volunteers pick up roasters at Fort McCoy, prep the corn, blow out the shelter and clean it up, put out signs throughout the community, roast corn, serve food, bake bars, and hang around for clean-up, and those who ate. About 45 people helped out in some way to make this event happen.

Our other outreach is on West Salem's National Night Out and helping the summer lunch program. If you enjoy teamwork and making Our Savior's known for what we do outside of worship - join us!

Reaching out to others,
Judy Gilbert

Food and Fellowship

2024 was full of many ways to commune with our fellow brothers and sisters at Our Savior's. A great way to bring people together is with food. Gathering around a meal or snacks offers "food for the soul."

Coffee hour between services continues to provide downtime for parents of Sunday School students plus a great way to connect with old friends and make new ones. Confirmation students continue to connect while enjoying a warm meal on Wednesday evenings before their classes.

Prior to Lent (early Fat Tuesday), many brought in one of their favorite dishes to share for the second annual Mardi Gras Party.

We also brought back the old tradition of Lenten suppers. Homemade soup and fresh baked bread provided a healthy, hardy meal for our youth, working families, and retirees.

Early Easter morning many gathered again to Celebrate the Risen Christ not only with worship and song, but also with an Easter Breakfast of milk, coffee, juice, sausages, fruit, and cinnamon rolls.

Several times a year we also gather for Beer and Hymns with food, song, and a favorite beverage.

In August, Our Savior's hosted the annual Corn Roast for the community. Many members of the community gathered to share and celebrate God's blessings of a bountiful harvest.

In late August, we came together with food and fellowship at Gospel on the Green to kick off Sunday School.

In October, the Pastors and church council enjoyed a meal with Bishop Felix Malpica.

In early November, the smell of Norwegian Cooking enticed many to enjoy our annual Lutefisk and Meatball Supper.

December brought together confirmation students and other volunteers to decorate our sanctuary for Advent and Christmas. Hot Chocolate, apple cider, and cookies provided a necessary glucose boost and break from the work.

If Food is Medicine, then Food and Fellowship is Medicine for the Soul! Our Savior's offers a HUGE Thank You for all the volunteer bakers, cooks, servers, dishwashers, and decorators! Your hard work definitely feeds the souls of those around you!

Respectfully submitted by,
Melissa Haldeman

Property Committee

The property committee at Our Savior's Lutheran Church meets the 3rd Wednesday of every other month at 4:30 p.m. We encourage and invite congregation members to become involved with the on-going work of the property committee either as a member of the committee or volunteering to complete various tasks.

The property committee has formed a **"To Do List"** which is a fluid document of items which have been identified as needs by the members of the congregation. The following projects are related directly to the property and/or facilities, and we thank the many church members who took leadership roles and/or assisted with the completion of the projects.

Major repairs/projects completed:

- Roof replacement - (storm damage)
- Replacement of all ceiling tile in gathering area - (storm damage)
- Replacement of ceiling tile in other rooms upstairs - library, Sunday school rooms, sacristy, pastor's offices, church office area and annex room - (storm damage)
- Installation of new indoor signage

Minor repairs/projects completed:

- Hand sanitizer stations
- Replace mirror in Pastor Jean's office
- Repair of dishwasher in kitchen (basement)
- Repair of garbage disposal in kitchen (basement)
- Re-paint wall in Gathering area (storm damage)
- Replace faucet nozzle in upstairs kitchenette
- Several smaller projects too numerous to list

Many projects are still listed on the **"To Do List"** and will be completed as time, weather, and funding permit. New items will be placed on this list as future projects and needs are identified.

The committee is currently working on a process which would enhance communications with congregation members regarding potential repair and/or new project requests.

Respectfully submitted by,
Rich Westpfahl

WELCA
(Women of the ELCA)

Ruth Circle Bible Study - meets monthly on the third Monday at 9 AM at Salem Terrace in the kitchenette. All Our Savior's women are invited. In 2024 our offerings of \$1,200 were distributed to 10 ministry organizations. The winter/spring 2024/2025 Bible study is: "Faithfulness" by Denise Rector.

Respectfully submitted by, Connie Blunck, Chairwoman

Dorcas Sewing Circle - The Dorcas Quilting group had another very successful year in 2024. We again sent over 300 quilts to Lutheran World Relief. The cost of shipping was paid by the Hungry Jar collections.

This past year we were blessed with many donations of sheets, fabric, thin blankets, and sewing supplies. We would like to thank our congregation members for their help in finding supplies and hope that we will continue to receive these helpful donations that can be dropped off at the church at any time. 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.

Respectfully submitted by, Maryrose Hetland, Quilter

Norwegian Dinner - The Norwegian supper was held November 2, 2024 from 3:30 to 6:30 pm. Chairpersons Lynette Ender, Bonny Goodenough, Inger Michael, Jon & Maryrose Hetland organized the event.

331 meals were sold. Patrons dined in the fellowship hall with a plated meal delivered to the guest. Take-out containers were made available and utilized by many. Approximately 75 were take-out meals. Profits were \$5,000 between the dinner and the bake sale. (See page ?? for the list of recipients.)

The shipping of the quilts and school kits funding to LWR was short \$240. Maryrose Hetland stated that the Dorcas Circle has money and will pay the extra. The Hungry Jar donations were \$800 for the shipping.

Lynette Ender, Bonny Goodenough, and Inger Michael submitted their resignations after chairing the event for 20 years. Jon and Maryrose Hetland are willing to continue. A meeting planned for January 2025 will determine how the supper will move forward.

Respectfully submitted by, Lynette Ender

Funeral Lunch Committee

After a break of four years the funeral lunch committee was reinstated in June 2024. Our mission is to provide food service and hospitality for families during the difficult time of the death of a loved one. We offer either a traditional funeral lunch that we prepare, or if the family wishes to provide food, we will serve the meal and clean up afterwards. In the past year we participated in five funerals. We are blessed to have volunteers that can step up on very short notice and provide comfort and service to families in our congregation. If you would like to be a part of this ministry, please contact us and we will gladly add you to our volunteer list.

Respectfully submitted by,
Jon & Maryrose Hetland

Mary & Martha Prayer Shawl Ministry

After looking up Prayer Shawl ministry on Google, I discovered the current Prayer Shawl ministry began in Hartford, Connecticut, by two women who had attended the Women's Leadership institute at Hartford Seminary in Hartford, Connecticut. Since its beginning, Prayer Shawl ministry has grown internationally.

Our Savior's Prayer Shawl ministry began in 2006 with three to four members who met weekly to knit and/or crochet together. The members have varied through the years, but the core has remained constant. Due to increased demands, we now try to meet the first and third Tuesday of almost every month at 1pm, and members attend as they are able. We are a small group of three and welcome anyone who knits, crochets, or would like to learn a new skill. Yarn for shawls is always available at church. We meet in a cozy room off the narthex and would love to see some new faces. Could it be yours?

Respectfully submitted by,
Jan Goetzinger

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 calendars, tab, and label the newsletters. We thank Connie & Larry Blunck, Bev Bockenbauer, Renee Herman, Carolyn Karl, Nancy Steigerwald, 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 by,
Kris Seeger, Administrative Assistant

Mission Endowment Committee

In 2024 the Mission Endowment Committee recommends for Annual Meeting approval for distribution of \$19,843.20 to the organizations listed below. We thoughtfully evaluate our proposed gifts to each organization utilizing the guidelines set by "Resolution Establishing OSLC Endowment Fund." We continue to focus on giving locally and supporting causes close to home. The Endowment Fund has allowed Our Savior's to distribute in excess of \$275,000 since being established in 2002.

Last year we sponsored a very successful "build" for Sleep in Heavenly Peace, building 125 beds in just over 2 ½ hours. We felt it was well organized and well attended. Other faith communities and some members who are not active attended the event. We would like to sponsor another this year so watch for upcoming details. Donations to the Endowment Fund are always welcomed. We receive gifts as memorials, bequests, wills, and honoring of family events like birthdays and anniversaries. We always appreciate suggestions of new groups or activities that could use our support.

Members of the Endowment Committee are: Lee Friell, Jeff Rich (up for election to a second term), Scott Thompson, Katie Drury & Melody Schmitz (retiring after 2 terms).

This year the proposed distribution of funds is as follows:

Clothes Closet - Our Savior's La Crosse	\$500.00
Care & Share Food Pantry	\$750.00
New Horizons	\$1,000.00
La Crosse Warming Center	\$2,000.00
Sleep in Heavenly Peace	\$1,000.00
Sleep in Heavenly Peace – build support (held)	\$143.20
St. Claire Health Mission	\$1,000.00
St. Claire Health Mobile Clinic	\$1,000.00
ELCA World Hunger	\$2,000.00
Sugar Creek Bible Camp	\$2,000.00
Sugar Creek Camperships (for OSLC kids)	\$1,000.00
LAS ILP Church in Peru	\$750.00
WS BGC Snack Fund	\$700.00
(*held from 2023 for LaCrosse Area Synod Children's Ministry Video Project)	
OSLC Capital Improvements	<u>\$6,000.00</u>
Total	\$19,843.20

Respectfully Submitted by,
Melody Schmitz, Chairperson

Mission Endowment Fund 2024 Financial Report

Assets

ELCA Endowment Fund Pooled Trust (338.993240 shares)	\$520,125.42*
* Share value as of December 30, 2024 @ (\$1,534.32)	
Union State Bank Checking Balance	\$11,464.75
Union State Bank CD	\$16,000.00

Income

Checking Account Interest (Union State Bank)	\$ 19.90
Contributions/Memorials	\$527.00
ELCA Endowment Fund Pooled Trust Dividends	\$19,318.00

Expenses

2023 Distribution approved at the Annual Congregation Meeting (1/28/24)	\$17,968.29
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2024 Proposed Distribution to be approved at Annual Congregation Meeting (1/26/25) to be distributed in 2025	\$19,843.20
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Update to 2024 Annual Report Asset Report -

ELCA Pooled Trust – Mission Endowment Fund –	
Balance reported in 2023 Annual Report as of 9/30/23	\$454,816.13
Change in market value as of 12/31/23	
added in February 2024 (\$1,430.36 per share)	\$ 30,066.27
End of Year Balance (12/31/23)	\$484,882.40

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

Asset Report – 2024

Youth Account

Account #	Account Name	End of year Balance
Assets		
1.77.000	Youth – Union State Bank Checking	\$30,106.59

		2024 FUND REPORT			
		Youth Account			
		Beginning Balance 1/1	Income	Expense	Ending Balance 12/31
3.77.100	Youth General Fund Balance	\$23,168.28	\$55.50	\$0.00	\$23,223.78
3.77.200	Scrip Card Purchase Fund Balance	(\$6,072.44)	\$25,739.40	\$24,256.00	(\$4,589.04)
3.77.201*	Scrip Campership Fund Balance	\$0.00	\$4,779.32	\$0.00	\$4,779.32
3.77.202**	Scrip Student Fund Balance	\$10,979.25	\$20.00	\$8,404.01	\$2,595.24
3.77.203**	Scrip World Hunger Fund Balance	\$382.75	\$431.00	\$751.25	\$62.50
3.77.500*	Youth Mission Trip Fund Balance	\$0.00	\$4,034.79	\$0.00	\$4,034.79
* Added accounts and ** renumbered others to better reflect purpose of account					
Redistributed monies to appropriate new accounts					

2024 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 slightly over 2023 and were 3rd highest sales since starting in 2016

- Woodman's cards ~ 75% of sales

2024	Sales	Profit	Profit Margin
Culver's	\$ 875.00	\$ 87.50	10%
Kwik Trip	\$ 5,860.00	\$ 293.00	5%
Kwik Trip Car Wash	\$ 216.00	\$ 96.00	\$16 per card
Ship Shape GC	\$ -	\$ -	0%
Woodman's	\$ 20,150.00	\$ 1,007.50	5%
Total	\$ 27,101.00	\$ 1,484.00	5%



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

Thank you for supporting World Hunger and Youth programs (Sugar Creek camperships).

Prepared by Linda Arentz

January 2, 2025

Submitted by Scrip Team Members

Linda Arentz

Tracy Skrentny

Jan Wee

Asset Report – 2024

WELCA Account

Account #
Assets

Account Name
WELCA – Union State Bank Checking

End of year Balance
\$6,297.24

		Beginning Balance 1/1	Income	Expense	Ending Balance 12/31
3.88.100	WELCA General Fund Balance	\$3,578.39	(\$2,946.00)	\$35.95	\$596.44
3.88.200	Norwegian Dinner Fund Bal	\$24.81	\$7,817.46	\$7,590.46	\$251.81
3.88.300	Ruth Circle Fund Balance	\$93.00	\$1,161.00	\$1,200.00	\$54.00
3.88.400	Quilting Fund Balance	\$2,707.53	\$3,220.00	\$532.54	\$5,394.99

2024 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
WELCA Katie's Fund/Thank	\$300.00
Children's Vision	\$100.00
Total Donation	\$1,200.00

2024 Recipients - Norwegian Dinner	
ELCA World Hunger	\$500.00
Lutheran Disaster Response	\$500.00
Lutheran Social Services	\$500.00
Sugar Creek Bible Camp - general	\$300.00
SCBC - OSLC Camperships	\$300.00
Lutheran Campus Ministry	\$300.00
Salvation Army	\$500.00
St. Clare Mission - Sparta	\$500.00
LaCrosse Warming Center	\$250.00
Sleep in Heavenly Peace	\$250.00
OSLC Summer Lunch Ministry	\$300.00
Karung House	\$500.00
WINN Inc.	\$300.00
Total Donation	\$5,000.00

2024 Budget Report

2025 Budget Proposal

INCOME

	2024 Budget	2024 Actual	2025 Budget	\$ Change	% Change
General Envelope	\$215,000.00	\$195,491.85	\$205,000.00	(\$10,000.00)	-4.65%
Loose	\$2,000.00	\$3,921.33	\$4,000.00	\$2,000.00	100.00%
Electronic	\$110,000.00	\$111,650.84	\$115,000.00	\$5,000.00	4.55%
Initial	\$250.00	\$281.00	\$250.00	\$0.00	0.00%
Advent	\$500.00	\$365.00	\$500.00	\$0.00	0.00%
Christmas	\$4,000.00	\$4,525.00	\$4,000.00	\$0.00	0.00%
Lent	\$2,000.00	\$1,570.00	\$1,750.00	(\$250.00)	-12.50%
Ash Wednesday	\$400.00	\$660.00	\$700.00	\$300.00	75.00%
Holy Thursday	\$500.00	\$470.00	\$500.00	\$0.00	0.00%
Good Friday	\$500.00	\$975.00	\$750.00	\$250.00	50.00%
Thanksgiving	\$600.00	\$210.00	\$300.00	(\$300.00)	-50.00%
Prepaid	\$9,000.00	\$9,000.00	\$17,500.00	\$8,500.00	94.44%
Thrivent Choice	\$1,350.00	\$1,295.00	\$1,300.00	(\$50.00)	-3.70%
Interest-General	\$10,000.00	\$11,539.42	\$11,750.00	\$1,750.00	17.50%
Sunday School	\$400.00	\$266.00	\$0.00	(\$400.00)	-100.00%
Special Event	\$0.00	\$375.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	0.00%
Rental	\$7,750.00	\$7,800.00	\$8,050.00	\$300.00	3.87%
Interest-Parsonage	\$9,000.00	\$8,540.40	\$9,000.00	\$0.00	0.00%
Easter	\$6,000.00	\$6,568.00	\$6,750.00	\$750.00	12.50%
Offset	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	0.00%
EFT Processing	\$100.00	\$35.35	\$50.00	(\$50.00)	-50.00%
TOTAL INCOME	\$379,350.00	\$365,539.19	\$387,150.00	\$7,800.00	2.06%

EXPENSE

	2024 Budget	2024 Actual	2025 Budget	\$ Change	% Change
La Crosse Synod	\$32,000.00	\$32,000.04	\$32,500.00	\$500.00	1.56%
Campus Ministry	\$3,000.00	\$3,000.00	\$3,000.00	\$0.00	0.00%
Sugar Creek	\$2,500.00	\$2,499.66	\$2,500.00	\$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	\$38,499.70	\$39,000.00	\$500.00	1.30%

Salary, Senior	\$66,700.00	\$66,700.08	\$68,700.00	\$2,000.00	3.00%
Benefits, Sr Pr	\$28,456.68	\$28,456.68	\$23,982.24	(\$4,474.44)	-15.72%
Housing, Sr Pr	\$13,890.00	\$13,890.00	\$13,890.00	\$0.00	0.00%
Cont Ed, Sr Pr	\$800.00	\$785.00	\$800.00	\$0.00	0.00%
Books, Sr Pr	\$300.00	\$43.88	\$300.00	\$0.00	0.00%
Synod Mtg, Sr Pr	\$400.00	\$427.96	\$400.00	\$0.00	0.00%
FICA Sr Pr	\$4,184.00	\$4,184.16	\$4,310.00	\$126.00	3.01%

Senior Pastor Total \$114,730.68 \$114,487.76 \$112,382.24 (\$2,348.44) -2.05%

Salary, Assoc Pr	\$41,000.00	\$41,000.04	\$42,230.00	\$1,230.00	3.00%
Benefits, Assoc Pr	\$21,331.08	\$21,331.08	\$17,712.30	(\$3,618.78)	-16.96%
Housing, Assoc Pr	\$10,725.00	\$10,725.00	\$10,725.00	\$0.00	0.00%
Cont Ed, Assoc Pr	\$800.00	\$800.00	\$800.00	\$0.00	0.00%
Books, Assoc Pr	\$300.00	\$0.00	\$300.00	\$0.00	0.00%
Synod Mtg, Assoc Pr	\$400.00	\$564.37	\$400.00	\$0.00	0.00%
FICA, Assoc Pr	\$3,231.00	\$3,231.12	\$3,328.00	\$97.00	3.00%

Assoc Pastor Total \$77,787.08 \$77,651.61 \$75,495.30 (\$2,291.78) -2.95%

Secretary	\$28,800.00	\$29,959.34	\$31,000.00	\$2,200.00	7.64%
Youth and Family	\$5,500.00	\$709.80	\$5,500.00	\$0.00	0.00%
Music Coordinator	\$4,820.00	\$4,820.00	\$4,965.00	\$145.00	3.01%
Organist	\$15,836.00	\$15,606.00	\$16,310.00	\$474.00	2.99%
Choir Director	\$6,427.00	\$6,427.00	\$6,620.00	\$193.00	3.00%
Maintenance	\$12,700.00	\$12,530.04	\$13,080.00	\$380.00	2.99%
Treasurer	\$5,047.00	\$5,046.96	\$5,198.00	\$151.00	2.99%
Counter	\$2,065.00	2,064.96	\$2,127.00	\$62.00	3.00%
Dishwasher	\$400.00	\$340.00	\$400.00	\$0.00	0.00%
FICA	\$6,211.42	\$5,964.46	\$6,517.80	\$306.38	4.93%

Lay Salaries \$87,806.42 \$83,468.56 \$91,717.80 \$3,911.38 4.45%

Conference/Conventi	\$800.00	\$1,050.00	\$1,050.00	\$250.00	31.25%
Property Insurance	\$7,000.00	\$4,007.50	\$13,000.00	\$6,000.00	85.71%
Workers Comp	\$2,000.00	\$252.75	\$1,750.00	(\$250.00)	-12.50%
Pulpit Supply	\$500.00	\$351.80	\$500.00	\$0.00	0.00%

Administration \$10,300.00 \$5,662.05 \$16,300.00 \$6,000.00 58.25%

Postage/Petty Cash	\$3,250.00	\$2,868.08	\$3,250.00	\$0.00	0.00%
Office Supplies	\$3,000.00	\$2,728.51	\$3,000.00	\$0.00	0.00%
Copier Supplies	\$1,000.00	\$1,116.69	\$1,100.00	\$100.00	10.00%
Office Equipment	\$250.00	\$171.22	\$250.00	\$0.00	0.00%
Software	\$600.00	\$670.95	\$700.00	\$100.00	16.67%
Auto Expense	\$2,250.00	\$2,391.23	\$2,500.00	\$250.00	11.11%
Internet/Telephone	\$2,750.00	\$2,814.47	\$2,900.00	\$150.00	5.45%
Other Expenses	\$13,100.00	\$12,761.15	\$13,700.00	\$600.00	4.58%
Gas	\$5,000.00	\$3,520.79	\$5,000.00	\$0.00	0.00%
Electric	\$6,600.00	\$6,015.00	\$6,300.00	(\$300.00)	-4.55%
Water/Sewer	\$1,100.00	\$1,114.87	\$1,100.00	\$0.00	0.00%
General Maintenance	\$12,000.00	\$11,037.83	\$11,500.00	(\$500.00)	-4.17%
Green Thumb	\$200.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	(\$200.00)	-100.00%
Building	\$24,900.00	\$21,688.49	\$23,900.00	(\$1,000.00)	-4.02%
Outreach Committee	\$1,000.00	\$867.61	\$1,000.00	\$0.00	0.00%
Senior Ministries	\$250.00	\$236.21	\$250.00	\$0.00	0.00%
OWLS	\$100.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	(\$100.00)	-100.00%
Outreach	\$1,350.00	\$1,103.82	\$1,250.00	(\$100.00)	-7.41%
Parish Activities	\$750.00	\$622.74	\$750.00	\$0.00	0.00%
Social	\$750.00	\$622.74	\$750.00	\$0.00	0.00%
Stewardship Comm	\$250.00	\$197.80	\$250.00	\$0.00	0.00%
Envelopes	\$1,300.00	\$1,181.69	\$1,200.00	(\$100.00)	-7.69%
Electronic Giving Fee	\$1,200.00	\$1,164.75	\$1,200.00	\$0.00	0.00%
Stewardship	\$2,750.00	\$2,544.24	\$2,650.00	(\$100.00)	-3.64%
Music Supplies	\$500.00	\$252.43	\$500.00	\$0.00	0.00%
Worship Supplies	\$2,500.00	\$3,101.42	\$2,750.00	\$250.00	10.00%
Devotional Materials	\$650.00	\$716.00	\$750.00	\$100.00	15.38%
Copyright Fees	\$1,500.00	\$1,463.00	\$1,500.00	\$0.00	0.00%

Worship	\$5,150.00	\$5,532.85	\$5,500.00	\$350.00	6.80%
Sunday School	\$1,500.00	\$878.17	\$1,500.00	\$0.00	0.00%
Confirmation	\$350.00	\$636.41	\$350.00	\$0.00	0.00%
Education	\$1,850.00	\$1,514.58	\$1,850.00	\$0.00	0.00%
Youth Program Supp	\$750.00	\$218.89	\$500.00	(\$250.00)	-33.33%
Sugar Creek Campers	\$3,000.00	\$2,805.36	\$3,000.00	\$0.00	0.00%
College Student Supp	\$400.00	\$260.00	\$400.00	\$0.00	0.00%
Family Ministries	\$250.00	\$224.00	\$250.00	\$0.00	0.00%
Youth	\$4,400.00	\$3,508.25	\$4,150.00	(\$250.00)	-5.68%
TOTAL EXPENSE	\$383,374.18	\$369,045.80	\$388,645.34	\$5,271.16	1.37%

Asset Report – 2024

Church Accounts

Account #	Account Name	End of year Balance
<i>Assets</i>		
1.00.200	Interest Checking Account	140,079.50
1.00.608	ELCA Pooled Trust – General*	427,662.64
1.00.609	ELCA Pooled Trust – Parsonage*	<u>185,685.33</u>
<i>Total Assets</i>		\$753,427.47
 <i>Liabilities</i>		
2.00.200	Federal tax deposit	1,596.92
2.00.300	State Withholding tax	366.63
2.00.900	Pass Through Accounts+	<u>3,285.74</u>
<i>Total Liabilities</i>		\$5,249.29

*These balances are as of December 30, 2024 based on the statement from ELCA Endowment Pooled Trust.

Update to 2023 Annual Report Asset Report -

1.00.608 ELCA Pooled Trust – General –		
End of Year Balance reported in 2023 Annual Report		\$373,963.40
4 th quarter interest as of 12/31/23 added in February 2024		\$24,721.38
Actual End of Year Balance (12/31/23)		\$398,684.78
 1.00.609 ELCA Pooled Trust – Parsonage –		
End of Year Balance reported in 2023 Annual Report		\$213,976.26
4 th quarter interest as of 12/31/23 added in February 2024		\$14,145.21
Actual End of Year Balance (12/31/23)		\$228,121.47

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

2024 Fund Report

			Jan 1	2024	2024	Dec 31
			Balance	Income	Expense	Balance
3.00.000	General Fund		\$134,321.92	\$434,319.19	\$369,045.84	\$199,595.27
3.01.100	Building Fund		\$45,308.83	\$45,512.95	\$115,073.92	(\$24,252.14)
3.01.102	Facility Needs Fund		\$6,952.66	\$0.00	\$3,169.18	\$3,783.48
3.01.103	Cap Improvements		\$5,986.70	\$500.00	\$2,002.71	\$4,483.99
3.01.104	Emergency Fund		\$5,020.25	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$5,020.25
3.01.105	Equip Repl Fund		\$740.60	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$740.60
3.01.106	Insurance Claim Fund - Church		\$70,435.07	\$40,732.93	\$111,168.00	\$0.00
3.01.107	Organ Fund		\$0.00	\$57,100.00	\$57,100.00	\$0.00
3.01.108	Insurance Claim - Johnson South		\$0.00	\$21,500.00	\$0.00	\$21,500.00
3.01.200	<i>New Facilities/Programs</i>					
	3.01.201	New Fac/Programs	\$9,297.19	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$9,297.19
	3.01.202	Youth Program	\$9,166.14	\$1,025.00	\$0.00	\$10,191.14
3.01.300	Building Centennial Fund		\$39,832.08	\$15.00	\$39,847.08	\$0.00
3.02.102	Johnson House South		\$4,920.74	\$3,300.00	\$2,239.91	\$5,980.83
3.02.103	Market Gain-ELCA PT Parsonage		\$228,121.47	\$20,657.18	\$63,093.32	\$185,685.33
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	\$45,092.79	\$145.00	\$1,589.55	\$43,648.24
	3.03.103	To Be Designated	\$2,310.00	\$1,925.00	\$0.00	\$4,235.00
3.04.101	Eggen Seminary Scholarship		\$8,718.24	\$348.00	\$0.00	\$9,066.24
3.04.102	Eggen-Anderson Camper Fund		\$2,328.12	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$2,328.12
3.04.103	Meyer/Lewis Scholarship Fund		\$4,132.74	\$465.00	\$0.00	\$4,597.74
3.04.105	Marking Scholarship Fund		\$20,900.16	\$828.00	\$200.00	\$21,528.16
3.04.106	Michelson Scholarship Fund		\$60,689.28	\$0.00	\$26,173.00	\$34,516.28
3.04.107	Moe Scholarship Fund		\$1,828.13	\$73.00	\$0.00	\$1,901.13
3.04.108	Piper Scholarship Fund		\$500.00	\$500.00	\$500.00	\$500.00
3.04.109	HAFriell Campership Fund		\$50,000.00	\$2,025.00	\$0.00	\$52,025.00
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	\$58.45	\$0.00
3.05.103	Medical Reimbursement Fund		\$1,927.15	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$1,927.15
3.06.101	Choir Fund		\$3,921.64	\$157.00	\$291.17	\$3,787.47
3.06.102	Confirmation Bibles Fund		\$1,129.63	\$50.00	\$459.80	\$719.83
3.06.103	Disaster Relief Team Fund		\$2,135.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$2,135.00
3.06.104	Education Fund		\$3,257.16	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$3,257.16
3.06.105	Coffee Fellowship Fund		\$777.83	\$310.34	\$0.00	\$1,088.17
3.06.106	Family Ministries/Mom's Group		\$0.00	\$55.00	\$0.00	\$55.00
3.06.107	Green Thumb Fund		\$790.00	\$0.00	\$80.00	\$710.00
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		\$8,461.81	\$0.00	\$587.08	\$7,874.73
3.06.113	Summer Lunch Fund		\$372.64	\$3,926.26	\$3,292.52	\$1,006.38

3.06.114	Youth Mission Scholar Fund	\$2,881.10	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$2,881.10
3.06.115	Confirmation Fee Fund	(\$537.67)	\$550.00	\$126.60	(\$114.27)
3.06.116	Long Education Fund	\$3,087.62	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$3,087.62
3.06.117	SEP Resource Fund	\$200.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$200.00
3.06.118	PLC Fund	\$466.20	\$720.61	\$1,186.81	\$0.00
3.06.119	Conf-Servant Leadership Fund	\$500.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$500.00
3.06.120	Funeral Lunch Fund	\$0.00	\$500.00	\$0.00	\$500.00
3.06.121	LWR School Kits Fund	\$0.00	\$338.46	\$0.00	\$338.46
3.06.201	Administration Fund	(\$262.86)	\$466.20	\$15.00	\$188.34
3.06.202	Outreach Fund	\$5,659.24	\$4,920.00	\$4,275.00	\$6,304.24
3.06.203	Stewardship Fund	\$1,748.03	\$0.00	\$400.00	\$1,348.03
3.06.204	Worship Fund	\$1,297.53	\$0.00	\$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	\$71,565.17	\$36,102.29	\$7,124.43	\$100,543.03
	Total Funds				\$748,178.18
	Total Liabilities				\$5,249.29
	Total Liabilities and Fund Balance				\$753,427.47

Ministry Giving – 2024 (Via Pass Through account)

Ministry Supported	Amount
ELCA World Hunger	4,225.89
Lutheran Campus Ministry	170.00
OSLC Summer Lunch	940.26
LaCrosse Warming Center	1,865.90
LaCrosse Area Synod Peru Mission Trip	368.63
Lutheran World Relief – School Kits	489.03
Lutheran World Relief – Quilt Shipping	799.94
Lutheran Disaster Response	2,553.66
Sugar Creek	1,078.00
OSLC Camperships – Sugar Creek	569.64
OSLC LaCrosse Come for Supper Ministry	631.81
OSLC LaCrosse Clothes Closet	381.13
Care & Share Food Pantry	1,890.00

A MESSAGE FROM PRESIDING BISHOP ELIZABETH EATON



Dear friends in Christ,

All around us, we see signs of God's love and goodness. A person who has stepped away from church for many years steps back into a congregation, feeling the call of the Holy Spirit. Young adults feeling isolated in a digital-first world start gathering in person in a small group, enjoying the warmth of a hug and a new friend asking about their week. A mother plants a garden, and it yields fruits and vegetables, giving her nutritious food for her kids and extra produce to sell at the local market. Everywhere we look, we see signs of Christ's love. In Psalm 93, we read: "More majestic than the thunders of mighty waters, more majestic than the waves of the sea, majestic on high is the Lord! Your decrees are very sure; holiness befits your house, O Lord, forevermore" (4-5).

God's love is a majestic thing, and it moves us to share it in word and deed. The ministries of our congregations, our synods and the ELCA churchwide organization are all working together to share God's love with people in our neighborhoods, across our country and around the world.

I am so grateful for you, dear church. Your generosity to each of these three expressions of the church — your congregation, your synod and the churchwide organization — has bolstered the church's ability to share the message of God's love to people who are longing for it. Through your

“More majestic than the thunders of mighty waters, more majestic than the waves of the sea, majestic on high is the Lord! Your decrees are very sure; holiness befits your house, O Lord, forevermore.”

—Psalm 93:4-5

financial resources, your time volunteering and accompanying others, and your voices, you've helped carry this message of God's majestic love. Thank you, dear church. As we look ahead to the coming year, I encourage you to stand steadfast in God's promises, sure of God's love and goodness.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Elizabeth A. Eaton".

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