

# FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH ANNUAL MEETING

FEBRUARY 11, 2024



Clear Lake, WI





# **FIRST EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH**

## **Clear Lake, Wisconsin**

### **Annual Meeting**

February 11, 2024

(Reports given for 2023)

### **Table of Contents**

	<u>Page</u>
Agenda .....	2
Church Staff .....	3
Augustana District Service Coordinator Report .....	4
Minutes of the 2023 Annual Meeting.....	5
2023 Pastoral Acts .....	6
Pastor's Report.....	7-8
Council President's Report.....	9
2023 Church Council Highlights.....	10
2024 Council Elections .....	11
Prayer Shawl Ministry .....	12
Women of the Word (WOW) .....	12-13
Lutheran Men in Mission for Christ (LMMC).....	14-15
Education/Youth.....	16-17
WAPO Bible Camp .....	18
Worship .....	19
Outreach .....	20
Lifeline Food Pantry.....	21
Property .....	22
Finance .....	23
Memorial Fund.....	24
Treasurer .....	25-26
2024 Proposed Budget .....	27-28

# 2024 ANNUAL MEETING AGENDA

February 11, 2024 - 10:30 a.m.

1. Call to Order
2. 2023 Minutes
3. Review of Reports
  - a. Pastor
  - b. President
  - c. Finance
  - d. Property
  - e. Other Reports
4. Council Elections
5. Proposed Budget
6. Other Business
7. Adjourn

# **First Evangelical Lutheran Church Staff – 2023**

Pastor..... Bryan Anderson  
Sunday School Superintendent..... Patti Wyss  
Custodian..... Julie Barfknecht  
Office Administrator..... Terri Moe  
Financial Secretary..... Jennifer Munson  
Music Director..... Brian Wick  
Pianist..... Sherry Wirth

## **Church Council Officers – 2023**

President ..... Dale Wirth  
Vice President ..... Tim Wyss  
Secretary..... Jackie Goodmanson

## **Church Council Members**

### **Until 2024**

Rosemary Johnson  
Dennis Luehman  
Bill McIntire  
Dale Wirth

### **Until 2025**

Jackie Goodmanson  
Kevin Kamm  
Neil Larson  
Tim Wyss

### **Until 2026**

Aaron Buhr  
Hannah Eckwall  
Kristin LaBeree  
Open

# 2023 Augustana District Annual Report for Congregations

## A TIME OF CHALLENGE AND OPPORTUNITY

Much has been said and written about “LCMC 3.0.” The purpose of this report is to frame this within the context and future of the Augustana District. At the last Annual Gathering, participants were asked to provide input around five particular areas of LCMC 3.0. Focus groups met around the following areas: Global Missions, Conflict Management, Intentional Interim Ministry, Clergy Shortage/Next-Gen Leaders/Creative Staffing, Districts and Fellowships.

## THE NEW ROLE OF DISTRICTS

In order to resist the temptation of addressing the challenges listed above through the hiring of more LCMC staff, districts have been challenged in new ways. According to the LCMC website, there are currently eight U.S. districts. All of them are considering ways to address at least three of the challenges listed above: Conflict Management, Intentional Interim Ministry, Clergy Shortage/Next-Gen Leaders/Creative Staffing. All district and fellowship leaders will meet in conjunction with the Board of Trustees and Ministry Board (June 26-28) to address these challenges.

## AUGUSTANA DISTRICT

As the Augustana District, we remain committed to the ministry we have always had as a priority. At the same time, we are committed to addressing new needs that arise and other areas of ministry (beyond those listed above). For instance, we added a Sr. High Youth Retreat and a First Call Retreat last year. We plan on continuing both. We are also planning to offer call coach training within the district. As one of the larger and more organized districts in LCMC, we continue to provide an important leadership role for other existing districts, as well as new ones.

## THANK YOU

Augustana is the sum of the congregations that make up our district. THANK YOU for your prayers, financial gifts and support that comes in many ways. We are served well by a dedicated staff, boards and district council. As we look to 2024, Psalm 143:8 comes to mind: Let me hear of your steadfast love in the morning, for in you I put my trust. **Teach me the way I should go,** for to you I lift up my soul.

In Christ,

Pastor Randy Freund,

Augustana District Service Coordinator

**FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH  
ANNUAL MEETING MINUTES  
February 12, 2023**

Dale Wirth called the meeting to order with 68 members present.

Brian Wick made motion to approve 2022 Annual Meeting Minutes, Aaron Buhr seconded motion. Motion carried unanimously.

**Pastor Report:**

HIGHLIGHTS- 17 years together with our congregation. Worship attendance numbers are still down since we have been back from the pandemic. Church has been using social media outlets to reach out to our community. Thanks goes out to Brian Wick for his continued leadership as music director and blessing the church with his many talents. Thanks to Patti Wyss for her leadership with the Sunday School and worship team. Thanks to Theresa, Isaac, and Lily for their support. Wednesdays with the youth are going well. Patti helps with the Wednesday mornings and Dale helps with Wednesday evening supper. Our church has many ongoing missions. Our finances are stable, which is a wonderful state to be in given the economic recession. We have introduced a QR code for giving on Sunday bulletins. Please be sure to reach out to members who have not returned to “in person participation” and extend invitations to those around you to come join us. Remember our mission, “Growing Gods Family by Serving”.

**President’s Report:**

HIGHLIGHTS- Council has been working on Outreach programs, ways to improve Worship services, and to keep our youth growing in faith. Thanks to all the current and departing Council members for their service and commitment. The men’s group is selling shopping cards for local businesses with proceeds going to missions the men’s group supports.

**Councils Elections:** Four nominees were presented to serve on Council: Heidi Colbeth, Hannah Eckwall, Kristin LaBeree, and Aaron Buhr. Dick Made motion to accept all four members to the Council. Brad Ayer Seconded motion. Motion approved unanimously.

**Proposed Budget:** Youth Director on hold, still looking. Outreach added for expenses accrued for events. Total proposed \$256,685.00 for 2023. Bill McIntire made a motion to approve the budget, Richard seconded the motion and motion approved unanimously.

Theresa Anderson gave a wonderful thank you for Pastor Bryan. He is a blessing to all of us.

Dale brought up that our next outreach is the Easter Egg Hunt and encouraged people to donate or volunteer for this. It is a community outreach event.

Motion made to adjourn by Dick Becker. Lily Anderson seconded motion. Motion approved unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted by,  
Jackie Goodmanson, Council Secretary

# **2023 Pastoral Acts**

## **15 Baptisms**

Linn Case	Maverick Hoffman
Kenneth Cuper	Lincoln Lundgren
Lacey Curtis	Grady Paulson
Braxton Goodmanson	Dylan Peterson
Emmett Goodmanson	Hayden Peterson
Gavin Goodmanson	Jaxson Peterson
Kolton Goodmanson	Greta Wickum

## **4 Confirmation Class**

Alyssa Anderson  
Abigail Hoefflerle  
Anthony Holloman  
Jack Petersen

## **6 First Communion Class**

Tristin Barney	Jay Case
Maci Buhr	Nevaya Larson
Olivia Buhr	Kya Schneider

## **3 Funerals**

Nancy Durand  
Myrna Paulson  
Shirley Warner-Buhr

## **1 Marriage**

Calvin Rosen & Jenna Zeman

## **7 New Members Received**

Linn Case  
Annette Gilbertson  
Cassie Paulson  
Dylan Peterson (Hayden & Jaxson)  
Ashley Pittman

## **1 Member Transferred Out**

Marlene Rundquist



# **PASTOR'S REPORT**

Given February 11, 2024, summarizing January 1-December 31, 2023

Beloved in Christ, grace to you and peace. Thank you for our shared ministry as we enter our 18<sup>th</sup> year together.

## **WORSHIP**

This past year we averaged 35 people at the first service and 98 at the second for an average total worship attendance of 133. We continue to livestream on Facebook. Brian Wick deserves our special recognition for his musical leadership. Thanks to Jackie Goodmanson for preparing the projection for the contemporary service. We hope to encourage in person attendance as the norm this year. The Council is discussing going to one service during the summer months this year.

## **CHILDREN AND YOUTH**

Thanks goes to our Sunday school superintendent, Patti Wyss for her fine leadership of the program and her army of volunteer teachers, especially Theresa Anderson who led the Sunday school Christmas program to the delight of us all. What a joy to have over 100 kids participate in Community Vacation Bible School this year, hosted by our church. We are always looking for volunteer Sunday school teachers so please consider serving.

This year our high school youth will journey to Indianapolis, Indiana for a week of service and outreach. High School youth continue to meet Wednesdays for Bible study and breakfast. We continue to offer meals on Wednesday nights and the youth room is open and supervised by parents from 5:30-8:30 PM. Youth group has been meeting once a month for activities with a few family events sprinkled into the mix of programming. Special thanks to Dale Wirth who cooks for the youth on Wednesdays.

## **MISSIONS**

All of our mission commitments were met again this year. We celebrate the many quilts made and donated by our quilting group along with dozens of school kits sent around the world through Lutheran World Relief. Many local children were blessed by our annual Christmas toy drive in cooperation with the Methodist Church. Our Easter Egg Hunt Outreach was another great success along with our Red Cross Blood Drives. The Women's Event in February has become a very well attended annual event. All new movers to our area received a welcome postcard from the congregation. We are starting a ministry to visit those people in person as well, called Project FISH (Friends Inviting Sharing Hope). Don't forget to take a prayer shawl to those in need of extra support and thanks so much to those who make the shawls.

## **MEMBERSHIP**

Currently our total membership is 591. We will be seeking to update our membership list this year along with completing our online photo directory. There is hope to move into more electronic communication as well so help us get your latest contact information updated with the church office. We grieve the loss of two members this past year: Myrna Paulson and Shirley Warner-Buhr. Remember their families in your prayers and acts of love. Our greeter corps is now welcoming all who come for Sunday services. Consider how you might do your part to graciously welcome and receive newcomers at worship.

## **FINANCES**

Thanks to our membership we have a financially stable congregation during trying times. That is no small accomplishment! Meeting all general fund expenses as well as a significant mortgage is a challenge. Remember the office has established an online giving portal on our church website as well as a QR giving code on Sunday bulletins. The proposed 2024 budget was reduced to reflect the downturn in the economy and reduced offering. We had to rely on fundraisers to meet the shortfall to the General Fund but all bills and benevolences were paid.

Join me in prayer and hope as we strive to build up the body of Christ here at First Lutheran. Let's shine brightly for Christ as we seek to know Christ and make him known. As our mission statement says, "Growing God's Family by Serving".

Thanks Be to God!  
Pastor Bryan Anderson

### **Snapshot of Average Worship Attendance Among Lutheran Congregations in our Area**

First Lutheran, Clear Lake 133  
Our Saviors, Amery 110  
First, Amery 94  
Elim, Amery 26  
Deronda, Amery 53  
Little Falls, Amery 45  
East Immanuel, Amery 47  
Trinity, Amery 45  
Balsam, Amery 48  
Faith, Clayton 35  
Immanuel, Clayton 35  
Moe, Clear Lake 40  
Immanuel, Emerald 32  
First Arland, Clayton 52  
United, Prairie Farm 67  
West Akers, Prairie Farm 33  
Holy Cross, Glenwood 75

## COUNCIL PRESIDENT'S REPORT

It has been a blessing and an honor to serve as your Council President in 2023. A special thank you to all Council members and especially those retiring after this year. I ask each congregational member to consider volunteering as a Council member at some point. I believe you will find the experience very rewarding.


As a congregation, we should be proud of the work we have done in 2023 to fulfill our mission statement of "Growing God's Family by Serving". We have worked hard throughout the year on many outreach programs: from the women's event held in February, to the Easter Egg hunt, Vacation Bible School, Hope Alive and the many musical events held throughout the year. For our youth we continue to provide excellent Sunday School instruction, confirmation, and youth events, including mission trips and the Underground Church. Our fund raising events: the Rummage Sale, Shake Shack, and Fall Dinner, are always popular. All these things have one thing in common. They all need people and leaders. I am writing this after attending Gail Clark's funeral. During the day my wife Sherry and I reflected on the fact that in the summer of 2018, we had a groundbreaking ceremony for the new sanctuary. As Council president at that time, I was honored to attend and have my picture taken with several of our oldest and dearest members. Today, Gail joined my mother-in-law Shirley Buhr, Myrna Paulson, Carol Anderson, and Jerry Thompson, all of whom were in that photo and who now are in Heaven. How much things can change in five years! I cannot help but reflect on the lifelong contributions these people provided the church. However, for as much as they did at some point, everyone slows down and you have to say they have done their fair share and someone needs to step up and contribute. In Sunday school we sang a song that went, "I am in the Lord's army". In the army and life its always next man up. We have been blessed to have great people take over leadership roles. The question is; who is next? Who will step up and fill big shoes when the call goes out. I know many people have already taken on new roles and your contributions are greatly appreciated. New people bring new ideas and sometimes it's different than it used to be. A few mistakes may be made along the way. Either way they need our support, backing, and gratitude for taking on a new role. Their success is ultimately our success. Let's cheer on everyone.

Thank you to all that volunteer their time and talents to the Church. There is no job that is too big if we all work together.

"I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith." (2 Timothy 4:7-8)

God Bless,  
Dale Wirth  
Council President

## CHURCH COUNCIL HIGHLIGHTS – 2023

- January** Approved a new church logo for church outreach:
- 
- February** Installed new Council: Dale Wirth, President; Tim Wyss, Vice President; Jackie Goodmanson, Secretary.
- March** Decided to investigate alternative insurance companies for cost savings.
- April** Hired mowing of property at \$100/cut with trimming included.
- May** Approved rummage sale to happen during Clear Lake Days weekend.
- Summer** Met only during August. Due to the shortfall in offerings, approved using Shake Shack proceeds to help meet General Fund expenses.
- September** Decided to relocate can collection bin, Nativity and storage shed to their new location behind the building.
- October** Implementing Project FISH (Friends Inviting Sharing Hope) to visit with new movers to our area.
- November** Approved purchase of carpet cleaner for janitor use.
- December** Considering uniting services into one for summer.

We thank the following Council members for their service this past year:

Aaron Buhr  
Heidi Colbeth  
Hannah Eckwall  
Jackie Goodmanson (Secretary)  
Rosemary Johnson  
Kevin Kamm  
Kristin LaBeree  
Neil Larson  
Dennis Luehman  
Bill McIntire  
Dale Wirth (President)  
Tim Wyss (Vice-President)

# 2024 COUNCIL ELECTIONS

The Council is an elected body of 12 members serving 3-year terms on a rotating basis. The Council meets monthly to oversee the ministry of the congregation and its pastor. Each member also leads one committee and serves as an offering counter and communion assistant on a rotating schedule. A group of four comes up for election at each Annual Meeting. Nominations can be taken from the floor as needed:

Term expires Jan. 2024	Term expires Jan. 2025	Term expires Jan. 2026
Rosemary Johnson	Jackie Goodmanson	Aaron Buhr
Dennis Luehman	Kevin Kamm	Hannah Eckwall
Bill McIntire	Neil Larson	Kristin LaBeree
Dale Wirth	Tim Wyss	Open

**Nominees/Incumbent\***

1. Linn Case
2. Laura Lieffring
3. Bill McIntire\*
4. \_\_\_\_\_(3 year term)
5. \_\_\_\_\_(2 year term)

## SAMPLE COUNCIL BALLOT

### First Evangelical Lutheran Church – 2024

**Vote for 4 for a 3-year term, and 1 for a 2-year term.**

Linn Case (3 yr.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____ (3 yr.)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Laura Lieffring (3 yr.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	_____ (2 yr.)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Bill McIntire (3 yr.)	<input type="checkbox"/>		

## **PRAYER SHAWL MINISTRY**

Do you enjoy crocheting or knitting but don't have an outlet for your craft? The Prayer Shawl group is always open to new members. We meet once a month on the last Wednesday from 9:00 AM-11:00 AM and share a cup of coffee and a snack and a little conversation while we work on our current project. Finally, we pray for all who have received a prayer shawl.

Maybe you don't have time for meetings. You are more than welcome to donate whatever you make. Just leave them with the office with your name attached.

Thirty-three prayer shawls were given out in 2023. If you know someone who could use the comfort of having a shawl with extra prayers woven into the pattern to help them heal, racks of available shawls are in the church entry. Take what you need but leave a name on the clipboard, so we can pray for the recipient.

## **WOMEN OF THE WORD (WOW)**

Our first event of 2023 was a WOW potluck held on January 29 in conjunction with the Sunday school's "Bible Camp promotion" Sunday.

The 3<sup>rd</sup> annual "women's event" outreach entitled, "Victory's Crown" was held on Saturday, February 11. We hosted approximately 130 guests. Special thanks to Heidi Colbeth, Laura Case, Theresa Anderson and Patti Wyss who organized the event!

The "May Day" community dinner was held on May 3, and we served approximately 80 guests. Special thanks to Roxi Anderson and Jo Nilssen for heading this dinner honoring our seniors.

Our WOW group provided scholarships for 17 youth to attend Bible Camp this past summer.

At an August meeting, possible choices for the 2023-24 Bible study groups were discussed. Linda McIntire, Barb Anderson, Hannah Eckwall and Jackie Gilbertson reviewed a couple of choices and chose "Revelation: Trusting the Architect of the Future". The book study group, which meets on the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Saturdays of the month is currently reading, "Whisper: How to Hear the Voice of God" by Mark Batterson.

On Saturday, November 4, our WOW ladies assisted the women of Elim Lutheran Church with hosting the funeral service for former member, Mary Peterson. Jerry Peterson made a very generous contribution of \$300 to our group.

The First Lutheran Fall Dinner and raffle was held on November 14. The bake sale brought in approximately \$1,631. These funds go a long way in providing Bible Camp scholarships for our young people.

Sunday, November 19 was Women of the Word Sunday (during Pastor's absence). Heads of various events/groups each highlighted their ministry contributions. Lily Anderson was guest preacher.

All women who are members of First Lutheran church are considered WOW members, and are placed onto one of our serving groups for funerals. Eva Wilson, Dixie Croes and Janet Monson spent some time this fall "cleaning up" the lists. Any member not sure of what group you are assigned to can contact the church office for that information. Our current officer team consists of: Patti Wyss- president, Barb Anderson- treasurer and Tiffany Wagner-secretary. Meetings are currently held as needed to prepare for upcoming events.

# FIRST LUTHERAN WOMEN OF THE WORD TREASURER'S REPORT – 2023

## RECEIPTS

Cards, Napkins, Dishcloths, Beet Pickles	125.00
Smorgasbord Bake Sale and Other Sale Items	3,993.00
Circles and WOW Offerings, Book Reimbursements	283.00
Miscellaneous	309.02
Potluck for Campers	730.00
Contribution toward Campership	175.00

<b>Total Receipts</b>	<b>\$5,615.02</b>
-----------------------	-------------------

## DISBURSEMENTS

Camperships	2,620.00
Lifeline Food Pantry	150.00
Pastor Gift	200.00
Christmas for Children	250.00
Postage for Bakeless Mailing	45.36
Bike for Easter Egg Hunt	100.00
Parish Administrator Gift	150.00

<b>Total Disbursements</b>	<b>\$3,515.36</b>
----------------------------	-------------------

## CHECKING ACCOUNT

January 1, 2023	\$3,309.50	
2023 Receipts Deposited	<u>+5,615.02</u>	
	<b>8,924.52</b>	<b>Total</b>
2023 Disbursements	<u>-3,515.36</u>	
<b>Checkbook Balance-December 31, 2023</b>	<b>\$5,409.16</b>	

<b>Savings Account</b>	<b>\$5.00</b>
------------------------	---------------

Respectfully submitted,  
Barb Anderson, WOW Treasurer

## **MEN'S BREAKFAST AND BIBLE STUDY**

The **Lutheran Men in Mission for Christ (LMMC)** has been the men's ministry at First Lutheran Church for 33 years. The group provides fellowship and spiritual growth through Bible study. The group meets on the first and third Saturday mornings of each month and any man is welcome. The group is typically ten to twelve men. The morning activities include coffee and breakfast served at 6:30 by a volunteer followed by Bible study lead by Pastor Bryan from 7:00 to 8:00. In 2023, we read through Philippians, Philemon, Hebrews and started Matthew. We generally read and discuss only one chapter of the book during a session, so studies are thoughtful and deliberate with time for discussion.

No prior Bible study experience is needed to fit in with this group. Any man who wants Christian fellowship with other men and wants to explore his faith through Bible study should join us. No reservations are needed and the church office will even put you on a mailing list to receive a reminder if you desire.

**To support church mission projects**, in 2016 we began selling shopping cards to some of our favorite local merchants. The shopping cards are available at church each Sunday and can be used like a debit or gift card. The men's group purchases the cards at a discounted price from the merchants and makes them available to you at face value. You receive the full value of your purchase! When you shop with these cards from the men's group, you are supporting local businesses while supporting church missions. We currently offer cards for Nilssen's Market, Clear Lake True Value and Kwik Trip.

Among the ongoing missions of the LMMC is the monthly financial support of Child Evangelism Fellowship (CEF) which is located in the Clear Lake Community Center (Pastor Bryan serves on their board). LMMC also financially supports the Wednesday evening meals for the confirmation classes and youth group, makes a gift to the youth Mission Trip, supplies the apples for the Sunday School Christmas program and pays for some church lawn care work. A past project was the purchase and installation of the defibrillator in the gathering space. The number of missions supported will increase as more funds become available through breakfast offerings and your purchase of the shopping cards.

Tim Wyss  
LMMC President



# LUTHERAN MEN IN MISSION FOR CHRIST

## TREASURER'S REPORT – 2023

### RECEIPTS

OFFERING	\$567.00
CARD SALES	\$34,242.78
GIFT OFFERING	\$5,000.00
CLOSED SAVINGS WESTCONSIN	\$5.02
DIVIDEND	\$0.36
<b>TOTAL RECEIPTS</b>	<b>\$39,815.16</b>

### DISBURSEMENTS

CARD PURCHASE	\$32,719.35
CHILD EVANGELISM	\$480.00
BECKER LAWN CARE	\$308.82
FFA ALUMNI	\$84.00
GIFTS DONATIONS: BIKE	\$78.00
GIFTS DONATIONS: MISSION TRIP	\$300.00
<b>TOTAL DISBURSEMENTS</b>	<b>\$33,970.17</b>
2023 RECEIPTS DEPOSITED	<b>\$39,815.16</b>

TOTAL RECEIPTS **\$39,815.16**

2023 DISBURSEMENTS **\$33,970.17**

PROFIT \$5,844.99

CHECKBOOK BALANCE 12/31/2022 \$6,687.73

TOTAL \$12,532.72

**CHECKBOOK BALANCE 12/31/2023 **\$12,532.72****

**TOTAL DEPOSITS ON HAND **\$12,532.72****

#### CARDS ON HAND

12/31/2023	
KWIK TRIP	\$800.00
TRUE VALUE	\$675.00
NILSSEN'S	\$275.00
	<b>\$1,750.00</b>

#### CARDS GIVEN AS GIFTS

Lent Soup Supper	\$50.00
Kayak Trip	\$50.00
Breakfast	\$100.00
Pastor	\$100.00
Confirmation	\$150.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$450.00</b>

Respectfully submitted by,  
Michael Johnson, Treasurer

# EDUCATION AND YOUTH

## SUNDAY SCHOOL

There are currently 43 children enrolled in our Sunday school program- ages 4 through grade 6. We continue to use “on-line” registration utilizing a “Google form”.

First Communion for fifth-grade students was held on Maundy Thursday, April 6. The following students received their First Communion: Tristan Barney, Maci Buhr, Olivia Buhr, Jay Case, Nevaya Larson and Kya Schnider.

First Lutheran Church continues to utilize a rotational model for Sunday school. “The Good News Bible” was distributed to the 6 Sunday school students entering third grade and is used through confirmation. “The Beginners Bible” is given to and used by children when they exit the cradle roll and is used through second grade.

The 2022-23 scope and sequence of curriculum lessons used (published by Augsburg Fortress) included: “The Burning Bush”, “The Red Sea”, “The Lord is my Shepherd”, “The Banquet with Simon”, “Ten Men Healed”, and “The Wedding at Cana”. Sunday, January 29 was utilized as Bible Camp Promotion Sunday. Fifteen First Lutheran Students attended WAPO Bible Camp last summer and two attended Arrowhead Camp. The Women of the Word support their attendance with a \$150 campership for each student.

Rally Sunday was held on September 10 as we kicked off the Sunday school year. Theresa Anderson directed the Sunday School Christmas Program with the help of Lily Anderson, Natalie Petersen, Tiffany Wagner, Kiley Munson, Lisa Anderson, Kristen Wallace, and Cindy Nilssen. This gift of song and story, “God’s Christmas Promise” was presented at the 10:00 service on Sunday, December 17.

The rotational model requires the commitment and involvement of numerous members of our church family. As teachers, they bring their talents, experiences and gifts to share with our children. We thank them and ask the Holy Spirit to continue to stir their hearts to stay involved with this very important work of the church. Theresa Anderson and Stacia Hoefflerle continue to write and perform puppet shows to introduce each rotation. We thank Brian Wick for helping with music during opening when possible. We also extend a special thank you to all who volunteer as teachers for their ongoing dedication to the Christian education of the children of First Lutheran.

Submitted by Patti Wyss, Sunday School Superintendent

## **CONFIRMATION**

Four 10<sup>th</sup> graders were confirmed on Sunday, October 29<sup>th</sup>: Alyssa Anderson, Abigail Hoefflerle, Anthony Holloman, and Jack Petersen. Confirmation instruction is held on Wednesday evenings for 7<sup>th</sup>-9<sup>th</sup> graders. Tim Wyss and Theresa Anderson team teach the 7<sup>th</sup> grade class. They study the Gospel of John. Pastor Bryan is the instructor for the 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> graders. 8<sup>th</sup> graders are led through a Bible overview and the 9<sup>th</sup> grade works their way through the Small Catechism. Youth group and regular worship attendance are also encouraged. Each youth must turn in a minimum of 20 sermon notes a year and serve the congregation in some capacity. All Confirmands are also encouraged to attend a week of Bible Camp or a servant trip during the summers.

## **YOUTH**

The First Lutheran Church Youth group coordinates events with Pastor Bryan and other volunteers. The youth room is open and supervised by parents on Wednesday evenings. The youth continue with supper on Wednesday nights before confirmation classes. Special thanks to our main cook Dale Wirth. Activities in 2023 included a winter fun day, apologetics conference, servant trip, bowling night, movie nights, Bible camp, a canoeing and picnic adventure on the Namekagen River hosted by the Nelsons, and the Underground Adventure hosted by the Cains.



## Congregational Report 2023

**Thank you for being a Partner Congregation!** We are grateful and inspired by the work and support of so many congregations who've continued to partner with camp so that thousands of people each year can experience fellowship in community and come to know Jesus at Camp Wapo, Ox Lake, and Wilderness Canoe Base. We are grateful for a year filled with campers and retreat guests, for our donors, prayer warriors, and YOU - our partner congregations.

**Summer 2023** This summer we welcomed nearly 4000 campers and families to Camp Wapo, Ox Lake and Wilderness Canoe Base, including 90 guided canoe trips into the BWCAW. This year's summer staff was excellent. They were required to be flexible, resilient, and filled some important leadership roles. They rose to that challenge full of energy, grace and servant hearts. We are always looking for young adults to work at camp so if you know someone who would be perfect, please send them our way! It's the perfect resume builder for any future career path.

**Strategic Plan Initiative** We continue to work on Strategic Initiative focusing on three main Strategic areas: Identity, Inclusivity, and Generosity/Engagement. In 2023, a task force of talented theologians and pastors created a theology framework document that will serve as guardrails for the good of our campers/guests and overall ministry. The Diversity, Equity, Accessibility, Inclusion (DEAI) committee has been created and secured funding for a DEAI assessment to happen in 2024. A development audit has been completed highlighting strengths and areas of growth. We continue the work on comprehensive site plans that will help us provide meaningful and transformative outdoor ministry experiences for all.

**Welcome!** At Wilderness Canoe Base we welcomed **Stephanie Carpenter**, Wilderness Canoe Base Director, **Megan Meyer**, Food & Hospitality, Spencer Garness, Property, and Sarah Garness, Office. Their previous WCB experience and a deep love and understanding for the ministry has resulted in a seamless leadership transition.

At Wapo we welcomed **Eric Golberg**, Director of Administration, **Mari Shumaker**, Wapo Program Director, **Joe Mara**, Maintenance, and **Nick Meziere**, Hospitality and Guest Services. Starting January 1, 2024, **Joel Abenth** will begin serving as the Director of Donor Engagement. With his vast experience working with donors and outdoor ministry, he is ready to work with congregations, individuals and families who wish to support camp in all sorts of ways. Please reach out to him if you want to learn more about opportunities to support camp ([joela@campwapo.org](mailto:joela@campwapo.org)).

**Retreats and Events in 2023** Retreats at Wapo and Wilderness are definitely building back to capacity. Reach out to Ryan ([ryanb@campwapo.org](mailto:ryanb@campwapo.org)) to schedule your retreat at Wapo or Wilderness. We celebrated 75 years of ministry at Camp Wapo on Aug 6<sup>th</sup> with a bluegrass worship and celebration lunch. We welcomed over 400 people for our Memorial Day Pancake Extravaganza. We had our 21<sup>st</sup> year of the Wapo Golf Tournament, and hosted over 1200 guests and volunteers in Advent with 8 performances of the 34<sup>th</sup> annual Christmas Dinner Theater "For the Love of Christmas Lefse".

**Mission Support Fund** This year we had 2 matching gift challenges to inspire new donors. One generous friend of camp offered a \$50,000 summer giving challenge and Wilderness Canoe Base received a \$20,000 gift match for GiveMN's Give to the Max day. Our donors rose to the challenge, responding with \$70,000 in gifts. Overall, we also had a tremendous response to our Mission Support Fund appeal to support operating and camper scholarships, raising well over \$500,000. Every gift has a life changing impact on thousands of lives each year.

**Our theme for 2024 is "Always"** Hebrews 13:8 "Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today and forever" and 1Thessalonians 5:16-18 "Rejoice always, pray continually, give thanks in all circumstances." In a world marked by constant change, this theme serves as a powerful reminder of the unchanging nature of God's love. With our campers, we will discover how to live out this promise in a camp experience and at home.

We look ahead with eager anticipation and a sure sense of hope. See you at camp in 2024!

## WORSHIP AND MUSIC

Our worship experience at First Lutheran has always been rooted in the rich Lutheran liturgical heritage that was developed by Martin Luther at the time of the Reformation. We are believers who gather around the Holy Word and Sacraments, seeking forgiveness and renewal. We hear God's word proclaimed through scripture, sermon, and music. The one thing that we bring to the service is our sinful self and a repentant heart. We come to the service to hear and receive what God does for us. Our "School of Faith" is a time for us to refresh our souls and to prepare us to go out and be a witness of our faith.

We are thankful for the people who add their talents and abilities to make our worship a meaningful experience as we, "Grow God's Family Through Serving". This includes: Pastor Bryan, ushers, Altar Guild, readers of the lessons, communion assistants, choir, worship team, and projection operators. We can't forget the Sunday School and puppets who are always a big hit when they perform. Thank you also to Brother Gary for his tag teamwork with me when we substitute for Pastor. Special thanks to Jay for the great work he has done in our technology area.

We share our worship experience as an outreach by broadcasting our services as a live stream on Facebook. A link to these services can also be found on the church's web page. We continue to offer the broadcasts to reach our members who are not able to be at service on Sundays. At the same time, our broadcasts have been a witness to those people outside of our church family. People have expressed their gratitude and we have received comments and thanks from people outside of our immediate area who have been able to watch our broadcasts. We are making a difference in peoples' lives with what we are doing here in our worship experience.

Here are some worship and music highlights from the past year:

- The midweek Lenten services using the Holden Evening Prayer and the program "Overheard Conversations by the Cross".
- The spring and Christmas concerts presented by the choir and Methodist bell choir.
- The annual Sunday School Christmas program.

To God be the power and the glory for what He has done for us. If you would like to be a part of any of the groups that is involved in worship and music, contact me or the office and we will get you hooked up with the people involved with that particular group.

Thanks be to God!  
Brian Wick

## **OUTREACH REPORT – 2023**

January 4<sup>th</sup> – Bowl making at the High School for Empty Bowls.

February 7<sup>th</sup> – Empty Bowls fundraiser to support the school backpack food subsidy.

February 11<sup>th</sup> – Women’s Event, Victory’s Crown with speakers promoting a faith filled life.

February 22<sup>nd</sup> – Youth Spaghetti Dinner raising funds for summer servant trip.

March 28<sup>th</sup> – Blood Drive

April 1<sup>st</sup> – Community Easter Egg Hunt outreach

April 7<sup>th</sup> – Community Good Friday Service

April 23<sup>rd</sup> – Hosted Polk County Mental Task Force speaker, Steven Hill, speaking on the subject of addictions.

June 7<sup>th</sup> – Hope Alive Event in Amery, where we served ice cream cones and handed out evangelistic literature to the community.

Shake Shack at Clear Lake Heritage Days

July 10<sup>th</sup>-15<sup>th</sup> – Youth Mission Trip to an Indian Reservation.

July 28<sup>th</sup> – Blood Drive

August 13<sup>th</sup>-16<sup>th</sup> – Hosted Community Vacation Bible School with over 100 children participating.

November 8<sup>th</sup> – Fall Dinner and Bake sale/Raffle fundraisers.

Ongoing all year: Prayer Shawl ministry, Quilting group, First Brew and You High School Youth Bible Study, Compassionate Friends, Morning Grace Bible Study, Evening Grace Bible Study, Men’s Bible Study, Women’s Book Study, Little Dresses/Britches for Africa, Back to School Backpacks, Community Toy Drive with Methodist Church, Benevolence Donations totaling \$12,486.

“In the same way, your light must shine before people, so that they will see the good things you do and praise your Father in Heaven.” Matthew 5:16

Respectfully Submitted by,  
Jackie Goodmanson & Heidi Colbeth

# LIFELINE FOOD PANTRY – 2023

*Kindness is doing what you can, where you are, with what you have... No act of kindness, no matter how small, is ever wasted. Aesop*

Hard to believe another year has come and gone and a new year has begun. During this past year, through the generosity of our supporters, Lifeline Food Pantry was able to offer food assistance to many families in the Clear Lake and surrounding areas. With the help of other organizations, LFP was able to supply additional food to families in need.

Our donations come from church groups, community drives, civic clubs, individuals and local businesses. We have also received money from grants that have helped in the purchase of food. The bulk of our purchases come from the St Croix Food Bank, which is in Hudson WI, however, this year we have had to use local grocers to purchase basics like milk and eggs. As an agency partner, we can receive items from the food bank for pennies per pound, thus monetary donations go a lot farther.

Lifeline Food Pantry is recognized by the Internal Revenue Service as a non-profit organization and contributions are tax deductible.

We are open for food distribution twice a week and are available for emergency food boxes or short-term service for anyone in need. Our contact information is posted on the Clear Lake Community website. We also have started a Facebook page where we try to post any news that we may have. This past year, we supported an average of 79 families that followed our once per month scheduled policy. However, we understand that some may need additional help and are more than welcome to return. On the second and fourth Wednesday of the month our clients are encouraged to stop in for the additional foods and fresh fruits and vegetables that come in on those days.

We respect our client's privacy and confidentiality is a priority. The statistics below represent annual service activity. You will note our numbers have started to go up due to the increase in the price of basic needs. If you know of anyone in your area who could use a box of food, even if it is for a month or two, please encourage them to come check out the food pantry. If you know of anyone 60 years of age or older who could use food, please encourage them to check out our commodity program.

	<b>2019</b>	<b>2020</b>	<b>2021</b>	<b>2022</b>	<b>2023</b>
Number of families	1479	1007	773	814	949
Individuals in these families	3499	2392	1672	1657	2016
Adults 18 & older	2436	1720	1274	1389	1496
Children under 18	1063	672	398	414	520

LFP continues to operate as a host site in Westcap's seven county service area for the seniors only Commodity Supplemental Food Program. This program is for low-income seniors who will receive a box monthly of assorted commodity foods. The USDA commodities arrive at the pantry and LFP distributes them on behalf of Westcap. This program is in addition to the regular food pantry service. This year we served an average of 45 individuals on our monthly Commodity service.

The Lifeline Food Pantry would not be here if not for the volunteers and we have been truly blessed with many wonderful volunteers who unselfishly share their time, talents, and energy in picking up and helping to organize and distribute food. Thank you to all who generously offer help in any way. God bless you as you continue to support LFP's mission to fight hunger in our community.

Thank you!

# PROPERTY COMMITTEE REPORT

Well another year has come and gone, the property committee, Dennis Luehman and Bill McIntire, with the help of others, had our share of issues and fun projects this year.

We started with a large remodel project at the parsonage. This included: new cabinets, new built-in dishwasher, new hood/microwave combo, new kitchen sink and faucet, new counter tops and pantry addition. Special thanks should go to Dennis for heading up this project and completing the majority of it on his own!

This past spring with all the snow fall, we had an ice dam form on the roof above the quilters closet which caused some minor water damage and a minor problem with the sprinkler system. We cured the problem and fixed the fire sprinkler matter with the help of Summit Fire Protection. We also found some issues with the exhaust fan vent on the roof for the family bathroom and repaired the vent damper. We replaced the belts for the exhaust fans for the public restrooms too.

Regular maintenance was done on all heating and air conditioning units: filters changed and flame sensors cleaned.

We relocated the storage shed and Nativity scene on the south side of the building and so far it seems to fit there perfectly.

We had some major issues with the fire system as it wanted to call Bill at all hours of the night and day to tell him there was an issue. With Dennis's help and Bill's help and a few other people outside the church family, the issue was resolved and we are on a watch system which seems to be going correctly.

We also had a professional carpet cleaner come in and shampoo the carpets and then purchased our own carpet cleaner.

Respectfully submitted,  
Bill McIntire and Dennis Luehman



## STEWARDSHIP AND FINANCE COMMITTEE REPORT – 2023

The committee would like to thank our Financial Secretary, Jenny Munson, and Terri Moe, our Church Administrator, for their continued work regarding all financial matters of the Church. We appreciate their hard work and efforts to make sure the Church financial obligations are met.

Our financial obligations continue to be covered with the incredible generosity of our congregation. It should be noted however, giving for the General Fund in 2023 fell short of the budget. The Church maintained good spending control and came in under budget with help from fundraisers we normally apply to our outstanding mortgage. As a Council we looked at the economic situation and cut our 2024 budget accordingly. We also combined the General Fund and Building Fund. This will allow us to be more proactive in how we cover expenses. All budget changes will be discussed at the Annual Meeting.

Thank you for your continued support.

Respectfully submitted,  
Dale Wirth and Aaron Buhr, Finance and Stewardship Committee

*“And my God will supply every need of yours according to his riches in glory in Christ Jesus.”  
Philippians 4:19*

# FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH MEMORIAL FUND REPORT

January 1, 2023– December 31, 2023

Type	Date	Number	Name	Memo	Amount	Balance
First Lutheran Memorial Account	01/01/2023					21,113.88
<b>OUTDOOR SIGNAGE</b>	01/01/2023					<u>1,527.00</u>
Total Outdoor Signage						<b>1,527.00</b>
<b>MEMORIAL GARDEN</b>	01/01/2023					8,782.00
Y-T-D Deposits					355.00	9,137.00
Check	05/25/2023	2507	New Haven	Skid Steer Work to Cut & Level Prayer Garden	-1,400.00	7,737.00
Check	06/20/2023	2511	Ryan Buhr	Pour Concrete for Prayer Garden	<u>-4,000.00</u>	<u>3,737.00</u>
Total Memorial Garden						<b>3,737.00</b>
<b>SUNDAY SCHOOL</b>	01/01/2023					3,389.94
Y-T-D Deposits					<u>545.00</u>	<u>3,934.94</u>
Total Sunday School						<b>3,934.94</b>
<b>UNSPECIFIED</b>	01/01/2023					7,351.90
Y-T-D Deposits					47,617.00	54,968.90
Check	04/19/2023	2503	First Lutheran Church	Tablecloth for Hope Alive Outreach Event	-130.56	54,838.34
Check	05/15/2023	2504	First Lutheran Church	Reversible Markerboard	-387.02	54,451.32
Check	05/15/2023	2505	First Lutheran Church	Council Motion -Move unspecified monies to general fund to pay bills if need be	-6,000.00	48,451.32
Check	05/25/2023	2506	PaperWorx	Palm Sunday Brunch Signs	-525.00	47,926.32
Check	06/12/2023	2508	Weavers Cabinet Shop	New Countertops & Cabinets at Parsonage	-6,772.78	41,153.54
Check	06/15/2023	2509	Clear Lake Electric	Electrical Work at Parsonage	-476.88	40,676.66
Check	06/16/2023	2510	Village of Clear Lake	Permit & Electrical Inspection at Parsonage	<u>-200.00</u>	<u>40,476.66</u>
Total Unspecified						<b>40,476.66</b>
<b>BUILDING</b>	01/01/2023					40.00
Y-T-D Deposits					<u>2,295.00</u>	<u>2,335.00</u>
Total Building						<b>2,335.00</b>
<b>FIRST LUTHEAN MEMORIAL ACCOUNT – OTHER</b>						<u>23.04</u>
<b>TOTAL FIRST LUTHERAN MEMORIAL ACCOUNT 12/31/2023</b>						<b><u>52,033.64</u></b>

# FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH TREASURER'S REPORT

for the year ended December 31, 2023

	TOTAL		
	Jan - Dec 23	Budget	\$ Over Budget
<b>GENERAL FUND</b>			
Income	234,905.95	201,233.00	33,672.95
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>234,905.95</b>	<b>201,233.00</b>	<b>33,672.95</b>
Gross Profit	234,905.95	201,233.00	33,672.95
<b>Expense</b>			
Staff	125,653.33	124,833.00	820.33
Property	40,618.87	40,900.00	-281.13
Office	7,347.98	8,000.00	-652.02
Worship	2,993.82	2,800.00	193.82
Education	3,307.96	8,700.00	-5,392.04
Missions	12,486.00	12,000.00	486.00
Outreach	1,077.98	2,000.00	-922.02
Miscellaneous Expense	5,026.55	2,000.00	3,026.55
<b>Total Expense</b>	<b>198,512.49</b>	<b>201,233.00</b>	<b>-2,720.51</b>
<b>NET GENERAL FUND</b>	<b>36,393.46</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>36,393.46</b>
<b>BUILDING FUND</b>			
<b>OTHER INCOME</b>			
Interest Income	291.36	64.98	226.38
IBM Dividend Income	198.90	0.00	198.90
Mortgage Reduction Fund	55,813.20	55,452.00	361.20
<b>Total Other Income</b>	<b>56,303.46</b>	<b>55,516.98</b>	<b>786.48</b>
<b>Other Expense</b>			
Bremer Principal Payments	26,110.18	58,129.93	-32,019.75
Interest Expense-Building Fund	29,340.14	31,373.73	-2,033.59
<b>Total Other Expense</b>	<b>55,450.32</b>	<b>89,503.66</b>	<b>-34,053.34</b>
<b>NET BUILDING EXPENSE</b>	<b>362.88</b>	<b>-34,051.66</b>	<b>34,414.54</b>

# FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH

## Bank Account Balances As of December 31, 2023

Dec. 31, 2023

### ASSETS

<b>Current Assets Checking/Savings</b>	
Pillar Bank Savings	105.35
Pillar Bank – General Fund	24,392.66
<b>First Lutheran Memorial Account</b>	
Outdoor Signage	1,527.00
Memorial Garden	3,737.00
Sunday School	3,934.94
Unspecified	40,476.66
Building Fund	2,335.00
First Lutheran Memorial Account - Other	23.04
	<hr/>
<b>Total First Lutheran Memorial Account</b>	52,033.64
Bremer Bank – Mortgage Escrow Fund	31,405.98
	<hr/>
<b>Total Checking/Savings</b>	107,937.63
<b>Total Current Assets</b>	107,937.63
	<hr/>
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>	<b>107,937.63</b>
	<hr/> <hr/>
<b>LIABILITIES &amp; EQUITY</b>	0.00

**Bremer Mortgage Note Payable Principle Balance Remaining \$652,466.63**

## 2024 PROPOSED BUDGET (Rounded)

	2023 Budget	2023 Actual	2024 Proposed
<b>Staff</b>			
Pastor			
a. Base Salary	61,700	61,700	64,785
b. Social Security Offset	4,720	4,720	4,956
c. Pension	8,635	8,614	9,066
d. Health & Disability	1,500	1,500	1,500
e. Mileage	0	0	0
f. Continuing Education	600	321	600
g. Supply Pastor	0	0	0
Administrator/Secretary	29,490	29,490	29,490
Music Director	5,000	5,000	5,000
Pianist	1,200	1,200	0
Treasurer	1,600	1,600	1,600
Custodial Services	7,000	7,000	7,000
Payroll Taxes	3,388	3,388	3,388
<b>Property</b>			
Insurance (Including Workers Comp.)	5,400	6,894	5,400
Communications (Phone/Internet)	3,500	3,143	3,200
Utilities	20,000	19,727	20,000
Maintenance (Paint Parsonage)	12,000	12,124	10,000
<b>Office</b>			
Postage	2,000	1,229	1,200
Copy Machine	1,500	1,675	1,500
Office Supplies	2,500	1,818	2,000
Software License/QuickBooks	2,000	2,626	2,000
<b>Worship</b>			
Supplies and Music	2,000	2,218	2,000
Offering Envelopes	800	776	800
<b>Education</b>			
Cradle Roll/Sunday School/VBS	1,000	555	0
Confirmation & Youth	6,200	1,370	2,000
Adult Education/Library/Devotionals	1,500	1,382	1,300
<b>Missions</b>	12,000	12,486	3,500*
<b>Outreach</b>	2,000	1,078	2,000
<b>Miscellaneous</b>	2,000	5,027	4,000
<b>Minimum Mortgage Payment (\$4,621 x 12)</b>	55,452	56,303	55,452
<b>Total General Fund Budget</b>	<b>256,685</b>	<b>254,965</b>	<b>243,737</b>

### MISSIONS

- Lutheran Congregations in Mission for Christ \$1,200
  - Augustana District \$1,200
  - WAPO Bible Camp \$500
  - Lifeline Food Pantry \$300
  - Child Evangelism Fellowship \$300
- \$3,500\*

\*More will be given should the offering income allow.