



CONGREGATIONAL ANNUAL REPORT



LIVING OUR FAITH

LET'S NOT BE AFRAID

These are the words National Bishop Susan Johnson spoke to delegates at Assembly 2023—a joint gathering of Lutheran and Anglicans this past summer. She encouraged those in attendance, “Let’s continue to grow, whether that’s in depth or in numbers. Let’s just strive to be as faithful as we can for our loving God.”

How are you and your congregation living into this? As you meet in your Annual General Meeting, you are encouraged to dwell on this question.

Assembly 2023

The ELCIC and ACC met in convention for the second time under the theme *Let There be Greening*, at the University of Calgary from June 27–July 2, 2023.

The ACC General Synod met at the same time as the ELCIC’s Special Convention, with several joint sessions involving both bodies for worship, fellowship, Bible study, presentations and other discussions—with other matters, such as voting and convention business, being conducted separately.

Assembly highlights include:

- ELCIC National Bishop Susan Johnson and Archbishop Linda Nicholls, Primate of the ACC, opened the Assembly 2023 plenary sessions with a state of the union address.
- The ELCIC Special Convention and ACC General Synod approved motions to bring the ACC, ELCIC and the Canadian churches of the Moravian Church in North America into full communion.
- Delegates approved an amended resolution calling on both churches to respond to opportunities for solidarity, advocacy and to pray for peace and justice in Palestine and Israel.
- On Canada Day, the assembly session began with an invitation to reflection from Anglican and Lutheran leaders, including National Indigenous Anglican Archbishop Chris Harper.
- Throughout the 2023 ELCIC Special Convention, delegates heard from four task forces, all of which were formed out of convention action at the 2019 ELCIC National Convention.
- The Task Force Addressing Ableism, Task Force Addressing Homophobia, Biphobia and Transphobia, Task Force Addressing Racism, White Supremacy and Racial Justice, and the Task Force on Carbon Neutrality each spoke, with delegates voting to approve their reports.
- Pat Lovell was presented with the 2023 ELCIC Leadership Award for her dedication, work and love given through acts of service within the ELCIC. She is the third recipient of the award. •



"LET'S NOT BE AFRAID." BISHOP JOHNSON SAID IN HER SPECIAL REPORT. "LET'S CONTINUE TO GROW. WHETHER THAT'S IN DEPTH OR IN NUMBERS. LET'S JUST STRIVE TO BE AS FAITHFUL AS WE CAN FOR OUR LOVING GOD."

Archbishop Linda Nicholls, Primate of the ACC, and ELCIC National Bishop Susan Johnson opened the Assembly 2023 plenary sessions with a state of the union address.



Sharing a campfire at Camp Lutherlyn.

Giving back to the great outdoors

The 2022 and 2023 summer seasons marked the return to camp for many families, church groups and individuals across the ELCIC. Following two years of COVID-related restrictions for the 2020 and 2021 camping seasons, faith-based Lutheran camps bounced back strongly in 2022 and 2023 with gratitude to their many financial supporters.

"Donations have certainly been up since COVID, which has really sustained us considering all we went through during the pandemic," said Paul Kopjar, assistant director of Sylvan Lake, Alberta's Camp Kuriakos. "That congregational support really has made a difference. Specifically, we receive donations from individual congregations, of both Lutheran and Anglican denomination."

Camp Lutherlyn, located just west of Ottawa, Ont, took the time off to take on some serious renovations around camp. In order to do so, Lutherlyn relied on a number of grants while running fundraisers, including a "100 X \$100" to which 100 separate donors provided \$100 to the camp. Synod-owned, Camp Lutherlyn leases its property from the Eastern Synod.

Over in the Manitoba/Northwestern Ontario Synod, Luther Village made some significant changes during COVID.

"When we took over, the summer shop was literally falling into the lake, our beloved dining hall building was falling apart and many cabins needed to be levelled, while others needed new roofs. And during COVID, you're losing so much of your income from not running kids' camps and school groups, so you're just trying to maintain," said co-executive director Lisa van Dijk.

"We just want to ensure we are best using the money we can raise. We thoroughly appreciate our remittance funding from the MNO Synod on a monthly basis." •

CLAY 2023: Ashes & Embers

For the first time since 2018, Lutheran and Anglican youth came together in-person for the Canadian Lutheran Anglican Youth (CLAY) Gathering 2023: *Ashes & Embers*. A joint gathering between the ELCIC and ACC, youth of the two churches gathered from August 10–13. Typically held biennially, the 2020 event *En Route* was hosted online in 2021 due to the COVID pandemic.

For most in attendance, it was either their first CLAY event or their first in-person CLAY event. Between the large group gatherings, praise and worship sessions, reflective group experiences and personal prayer time, the trip out to Waterloo, Ont. was filled with experiences that will surely last a lifetime.

British Columbia Home Team Leader Darya Saëd submitted team reflections to *Canada Lutheran*—the official magazine of the ELCIC—from some of her youth following CLAY. Those responses are provided below:



"Something I really enjoyed about CLAY was the large group gatherings and the really inspiring workshops that we got to do on the second day."

"I enjoyed CLAY because I get to meet a lot of new people."

"...The concert, meeting new people, playing football, the workshops, all these things were a lot of fun for me."

"I really appreciated all the music... watching everyone dance along or clap along was my favorite part."

"I really enjoyed the concerts and staying up late!"

"I enjoyed hanging out with new friends."

"What I enjoyed about CLAY was just the chance to gather with hundreds of youths from across the country, excited to worship together, excited to learn together... and see the friendships that grow."

"I really enjoyed all the time we got to spend together, worshipping and playing games and just hanging out." •

BETWEEN THE LARGE GROUP GATHERINGS · PRAISE AND WORSHIP SESSIONS · REFLECTIVE GROUP EXPERIENCES AND PERSONAL PRAYER TIME · THE TRIP OUT TO WATERLOO, ONT. WAS FILLED WITH EXPERIENCES THAT WILL SURELY LAST A LIFETIME.



The entire CLAY gathering poses for a group shot.



ELCIC members contributed in a variety of ways at the 13th Assembly of The Lutheran World Federation, in Krakow, Poland, September 2023.

The importance of strong partnerships

The Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada values the life-giving relationships of its many partners within Canada and around the world.

The ecumenical work and interfaith witness of the ELOC is felt in every corner of the globe.

With roughly 95,000 members, the ELOC is sometimes seen as a small church among the world's Christian churches. However, ELOC National Bishop Susan Johnson sees it differently.

"Despite limited resources and being a medium-size church, we know our church is far more effective when we work with partners," Bishop Johnson shared in a column for *Canada Lutheran*. "Together we can accomplish much more, strengthen relationships and work towards becoming a healthier church."

Through partnerships with the World Council of Churches (WCC), the Lutheran World Federation (LWF) and the Canadian Council of Churches (CCC), the ELOC remains actively involved in the mission and ministry of all three organizations, continuing its growth and outreach with churches of other denominations and faith backgrounds.

The ELOC also maintains its strong relationship with Canadian advocacy and humanitarian organization KAIROS and Canadian Lutheran World Relief (CLWR), while working closely with Global Mission and Companion Synod partners.

"We are a valued partner because we participate fully," Bishop Johnson said. "We are valued because we take our turn in providing leadership. We are valued as we work to maintain our financial support. We are valued as we are seen being mediators. These partners are here for us as well, praying for us, supporting us, walking with us." •



Good Shepherd Lutheran Church

2023 Annual General Report Saskatoon,
Saskatchewan

Annual General Meeting: March 17th, 2024

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3. Adoption of Agenda
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 - a. Worship
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 - c. Witnessing
 - d. Service
 - e. Support
9. Treasurer’s Report
 - a. Review of 2023 Audited Financial Statements
 - b. Presentation of 2024 Budget
 - c. Appointment of Heagy LLP as Auditor for 2024
10. Approval of CMT Members for 2024
11. Question and Answer Session
12. Other Business
13. Adjournment
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Minutes from 2023 Annual General Meeting

Good Shepherd Lutheran Church Annual General Meeting Sunday, March 26, 2023

1. **Opening** - Pastor Munye opened the meeting with land acknowledgment and a prayer, then Nathaniel Gibson gave a reading, and the congregation participated in a hymn. The past contributions of recently deceased and long time board member, Joan Meyer, were recognized.
2. **Call to order** - Chairperson Nathaniel Gibson called the meeting to order at 12:48pm.
3. **Adoption of Agenda** - Moved by Cam Broten; Seconded by Katie Elke; Carried.
4. **Approval of Minutes from 2023 AGM** - Moved by Chris Tucker; Seconded by Maurine; Carried.
5. **Business arising** - None
6. **Reports** - Motion to accept reports as written: Moved by Lynn Szuba, Seconded by Ruth Eliason; Carried.
 - a) **Treasurer's Report** - Treasurer Marty Willick presented the following:
 1. Balance sheet with a small income for 2022.
 2. Statement of Operations highlighting that rental income is down from most years. Insurance is up significantly, and that the major expenses are wages and benefits for the Pastor and office staff.

Motion to accept Financial Reports - Moved by Marty Willick, Seconded by Don Rosten; Carried.
7. **Presentation of 2023 Budget** - Treasurer Marty Willick presented the following items:
 - a) The cost of accounting services will be about double from previous years due to CRA rule changes requiring a licensed practicing accountant to perform the review.
 - b) Clergy salary and benefits will increase by about \$8,000 based on Synod guidelines.
 - c) Insurance on the building is due shortly and will likely to go up from the previous year.
 - d) An additional cost has already been incurred for yard maintenance to hire a contractor to clear snow early in 2023.
 - e) Church maintenance and upgrades:
 1. Flooring replacement plan presented. The new flooring will be done in two stages. Part A will replace the carpet in the sanctuary and put permanent carpet in the entrances. Part B will install new vinyl flooring in the Foyer, Kitchen and Hallways
 2. Shingle replacement plan also discussed: Support committee will continue to monitor and determine a timeline for replacing the current shingles.

Motion to accept the 2023 Budget - Moved by Marty Willick, Seconded by Katie Elke; Carried.

Motion to have Scott Ehrmantraut at Heagy LLP perform 2023 Financial Review- Moved by Marty Willick, Seconded by Karen Harilstad; Carried.

8. Bylaw Amendments: Marty Willick presented Synod response to our proposed updates to the church bylaws. The following three minor changes are required by the Synod.

- a) Notification given prior to meetings must be 15 days (we proposed 10 days notice)
- b) Quorum at AGM must be twice the size of the church council plus 1 (we had proposed quorum to be 20. Current CMT is 8, so quorum is $8 \times 2 + 1 = 17$)
- c) Number of council members must be between 6 and 15 (we had proposed between 5 and 15)

Motion to accept the Bylaw Amendments - Moved by Marty Willick, Seconded by Doris Slind; Carried.

9. Election of CMT members - Doris Slind, Cam Broten, Nathaniel Gibson continue into the second year of their current terms. Deb Tilk is leaving CMT. Current CMT members seeking another term: Marty Willick, Katie Elke, Lynn Szuba, and Joel Burns. No new members to elect at this time.

Motion to re-elect the four CMT members listed above and allow adding of further members at a future date - Moved by Nathaniel Gibson; Seconded by Ruth Eliason, Carried.

10. Question/Discussion - None

11. Closing - Pastor Munye made closing statements followed by a hymn sung by the congregation. **12.**

Adjournment - Nathaniel Gibson declared adjournment at 1:27pm

Minutes taken by Joel Burns

Pastor Munye Mtata's Report

Greetings to you, members of Good Shepherd Lutheran family,

Introduction

As I reflect on the past year, I am filled with gratitude to be a part of this local manifestation of the body of Christ known as Good Shepherd Lutheran Church. One of the gifts of 2023 was the opportunity to gather consistently, week in and week out, together in-person, around word and song, meal, and community. My prayer is that we will never tire of the simple wonder of coming together each Sunday morning to receive the empowering gift of Jesus Christ in word proclaimed, bread and wine received, and in His presence in each of us for the sake of our neighbors in need.

Community and Ministry Outlook

I want to express my appreciation for the work of the entire Congregation Management Team (CMT). Among other pressing issues, the CMT has been actively engaging other Lutheran congregations in reflections about the future of our Lutheran ministries in Saskatoon, and we pray for the Holy Spirit's continued guidance in this process.

Many thanks to all the ministry and committee teams and to Corla, our office administrator, all from whom I have found encouragement and who make ministry such a gift in this place.

The delightful practices of preaching Christ crucified and risen, presiding at the table and the font, and providing pastor care alongside all of you have been highlights of my call among you. This means I've kept being reminded of God's endless kindness, the same kindness I try to remind you of every week.

We cannot appreciate enough our music director, Anna Scott, and all the musicians in this congregation, for sharing their gifts with us. Their musical gifts have not only enriched our worship experiences but have also lifted our spirits, brought us together in harmony, and helped us feel the presence of the Divine more deeply. Their commitment to sharing their art with us week after week is a beautiful expression of faith and community. We are truly blessed to have such talented individuals as part of our church family, and their contributions are a vital part of our worship and spiritual life.

I'm thankful to Kara and Chris Tucker's invaluable commitment to keeping this sacred space warm and welcoming, which cannot be understated. Alongside the Support ministry, they continue engaging in this ministry as if it's "to the glory of God" (1 Cor. 10:31).

Moreso, I'm thankful for the hard work and creativity of the Fundraising Team. They organized a garage sale to help raise money for improving our worship space, and it was a big success.

It must, however, be noted that we recognize some of the challenges we have faced together, including navigating a tight financial landscape. It's in these moments of hardship that the strength of our faith and community shines brightest. I am deeply moved by the generosity and commitment each of you has shown, contributing what you could under difficult economic circumstances. Your steadfast faith and support have been the bedrock of our resilience.

As we look ahead, I invite us all to consider the profound impact our collective contributions can make. In the spirit of stewardship and faith, may we continue to support our beloved community with whatever means available to us. Every act of giving, no matter the size, is a testament to our shared commitment to each other and our faith. Together, let's embrace the opportunity to strengthen our church and support one another, guided by the love and teachings of our faith.

Our youth at Good Shepherd are such witnesses to vibrant and dynamic faith in this time. It is an honour to walk alongside them, together with Kara, whose organising initiative is much appreciated. We continue to engage them regularly for connection and faith conversations through Confirmation Class.

Indeed, faith formation of all ages continued to be our focus, with renewed efforts to involve to our Sunday School groups, creating platforms for adult faith conversations in book studies and bible studies, and providing different perspectives through guest presentations in our worship services.

I count myself blessed to have been involved in different noble initiatives in and by our congregation. The encouraging ministry of the Wellness Support Group; the adorable ministry of the coffee group that encourages connection and fellowship in our congregation, and the outreaching initiatives through NEST and The Bridge; all have encouraged our mission beyond our walls, touching lives across Saskatoon with the love and service that define who we are. I encourage you to check out all the reports of these initiatives and consider joining all that God is up to among us.

It was another fulfilling year as I continued serving on the Luther Care Community and Prairie Centre for Ecumenism Boards. This has allowed me to be more present in and around our community in a meaningful way.

Conclusion

As I conclude this report, I am moved to call on our congregation to keep holding conversations about the amazing potential of our faith community. As people of hope, let's explore more new and effective ways to serve not only ourselves but also the wider Saskatoon community.

I look with hope towards this coming year. Filled with gratitude for each of you I cannot wait to see where our crucified and risen Saviour will lead His body in 2024. Wherever that is, we have this assurance that He will meet us from that future with arms outstretched and life beyond anything we could create on our own. We will continue to become who we receive, the body of Christ. Thanks be to God!

Pastor Munye Mtata

Statistical Report

2023 WORSHIP SERVICES

| | |
|---------------|----------------|
| January – 62 | July – 41 |
| February - 60 | August – 48 |
| March – 79 | September – 67 |
| April – 95 | October – 88 |
| May – 68 | November – 57 |
| June – 70 | December – 83 |

2022 SUMMARY

| Baptized (B) | | Confirmed (C) | |
|-----------------------------------|------------|-----------------------------------|------------|
| Baptized membership Dec 31, 2022 | 243 | Confirmed membership Dec 31, 2022 | 177 |
| Baptisms | 3 | Confirmations | 5 |
| B. Members Received | 0 | C. Members Received | 0 |
| B. Members Transferred Out | 0 | C. Members Transferred Out | 0 |
| B. Members Removed by Death | 4 | C. Members Removed by Death | 4 |
| B. Members to Responsibility List | 0 | C. Members to Responsibility List | 0 |
| B. Statistical Adjustment | 0 | C. Statistical Adjustment | 0 |
| Total Baptized Membership | 242 | Total Confirmed Membership | 178 |

BAPTISMS (3)

| <i>Name</i> | <i>Date</i> | <i>Parents</i> |
|--------------------------------|----------------|----------------------------|
| Damion Douglas Brentley Bowman | Oct 1, 1989 | Bonnie Hunt Eggers |
| Lucy Harleen Bowman | May 14, 2017 | Katie Elke & Damion Bowman |
| Damion Douglas Brentley Bowman | April 29, 2023 | Katie Elke & Damion Bowman |

CONFIRMATIONS (5)

| | |
|--------------|---------------|
| Daniel Tilk | Emily Knutson |
| Isaak Burns | Emma Sereda |
| Gavin Tucker | |

WEDDINGS (0)

| <i>Name</i> | <i>Date</i> | <i>Location</i> |
|-------------|-------------|-----------------|
|-------------|-------------|-----------------|

FUNERALS (4)

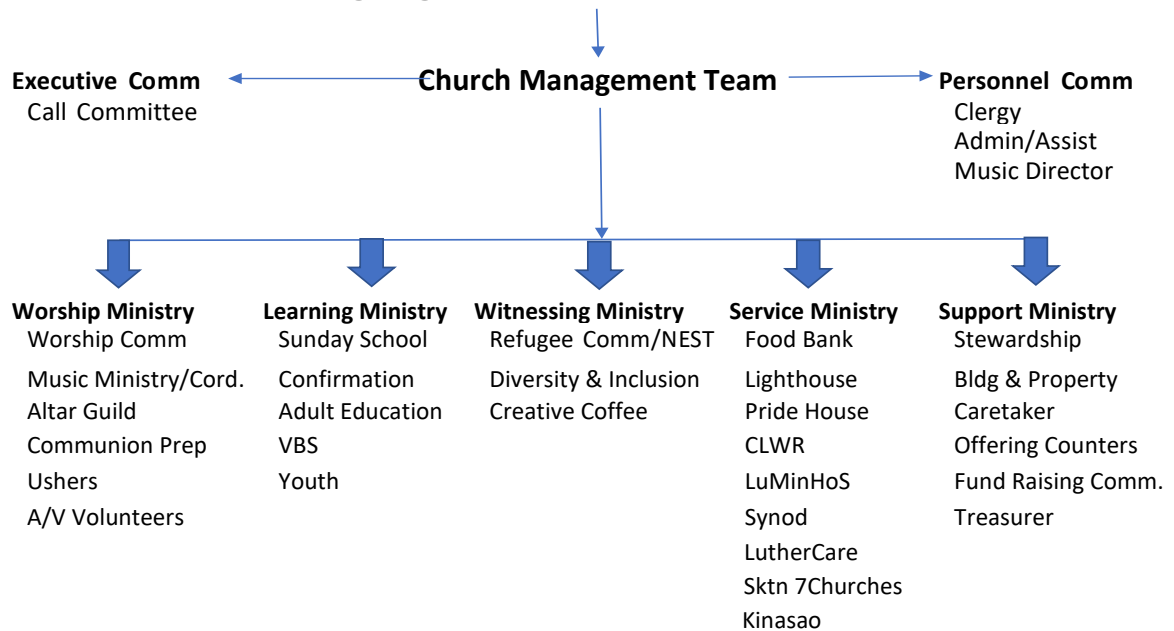
| <i>Name</i> | <i>Date</i> | <i>Location</i> |
|----------------|-------------------|-----------------|
| Hans Grande | May 1, 2023 | Hillcrest |
| Judy Humphreys | May 28, 2023 | Hillcrest |
| Lloyd Larson | August 13, 2023 | Acadia Drive |
| Joan Meyer | February 25, 2023 | Hillcrest |

Non-audited Historical Comparison of Average Attendance and Worship Service Offerings

| Year | AvgAttend/Sun | AvgOffer/Sun |
|------|---------------|--------------|
| 2017 | 118 | 3828 |
| 2018 | 113 | 4197 |
| 2019 | 110 | 3605 |
| 2020 | 37 | 2579 |
| 2021 | 40 | 2629 |
| 2022 | 48 | 2826 |
| 2023 | 68 | 2775 |

*2020 and 2021 were affected by COVID closures

Good Shepherd Organizational Plan Congregational Members



Congregational President's Message: Church Management Team

As we approach our annual general meeting at Good Shepherd Lutheran Church it provides us with a good opportunity to look back at the year we have had as a community. It has been wonderful to see attendance increase at our in-person worship services with a mix of familiar and new faces. It is our hope that attendance numbers will continue to rise and that more and more people will find ways to connect and to reconnect with our community of faith. After fundraising and generous contributions from the congregation we were able to install new carpeting throughout the church and it is so nice to see a refreshed look throughout. We have also had the return of the Good Shepherd choir and we were blessed with wonderful music through the advent season.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the people in our community who give so much of themselves and of their time to help Good Shepherd function the way that it does. A community of faith cannot thrive without the help and dedication of countless people. I would like to extend a special thank you to Pastor Munye whose leadership and guidance over the past year has been invaluable. Thank you to Corla for all of her hard work on the administrative side of Good Shepherd. Thank you to Nathan Elke for all that you do to make sure that our worship services run smoothly. Thank you to Anna Johnson Scott for your work on music and thank you to all of the volunteers who help run the Sunday school and youth programs at the church. I would like to end by thanking my fellow CMT members for their commitment and dedication over the last year. The future is always unknown but we move forward confident that God has been at work and will continue to be at work in and through the Good Shepherd Lutheran community.

In Christ,

Nathaniel Gibson – CMT Chairperson

Worship Ministry

Purpose of the Worship Ministry Team:

Constitution: This congregation, remembering God's mighty acts in the past, celebrating God's abiding presence, and moving toward God's promised fulfillment, will listen to the Word of God in Scripture and preaching, receive the Sacraments, and respond with confession, prayer, praise, thanksgiving, and with these and offerings. In order to assist members to acknowledge God's rule over their lives, their own unity as Christ's body on earth, and to express their relationship with God in public and in private, the congregation shall gather for worship regularly and, in accordance with the traditions of the Lutheran Church, recruit, equip, and support members for leadership in worship, use appropriate worship materials, and make certain that worship has a place in other functions of the congregation.

2024 AGM Report - Worship Committee

Greetings! 2023 came and went, and worship continued to (try to) return to normal. Gone are the days of only online worship, and we're back in person again! We continue to stream live on Facebook and record for later upload to YouTube.

Things are taking some time to get back to pre-COVID levels, in terms of attendance, and volunteerism, which would go hand-in-hand, I guess; when you have less people coming, you have less people who are able to volunteer. We've been continuing with a clipboard in the Welcome Area, hoping people will sign up for worship duties (Lector, Prayer reader, usher, communion assistant), though there still have been a lot of blanks to fill on Sunday mornings. We've been considering trying to return to groups of volunteers for different duties who can be set ahead of time - I've been trying to reestablish the Communion Prep group, for example - but it's slow going. The confirmation students have been learning about running the Projector and/or Sound Booth, so we'll hopefully get a stable of people who can take on those duties.

Anna has returned as Music Director, taking a bunch of duties off of Corla's shoulders...thank you, Corla, for the work you put in, and thank you Anna, for the work you are **about to** put in. 😊

As for 2023 in the Sound Booth, we've had a few technical challenges recently:

- One of the projector bulbs blew on Dec 23rd, and has proven problematic to fix: the bulb's blowup turned out to actually **damage** the projector, which we didn't discover until we got a new bulb, and it's old enough that fixing is not viable. We have a projector that might work, donated by a congregation member, and we're hoping to get that up and running soon.
- The computer in the Sound Booth was replaced because it was just **too old and slow** to operate well.
- We've been looking at the connection between the sound board, the videos and the computer; we'd like to have a streaming (and recorded) service where the sound goes directly into the recording, as opposed to recording the sound that's bouncing around the Sanctuary. 😊 A (different) congregation member has pledged to purchase a new camera/equipment that could accomplish this, but we've recently found that a new camera **might not** be necessary; a computer program and some connectors might be able to bring everything - sound, camera, PowerPoint - into the computer and combine it all into one well-sounding and more visually interesting package. More on that as we experiment with it. 😊
- We had a Sanctuary "bee" where all the light bulbs were replaced and the globes washed, the ceiling fans (and the control on the wall!) were replaced, and the screen areas were painted with a colour that allows the projected images to **pop** out more...thanks to all who volunteered their time for that!

Something that really needs to be addressed in the coming year is to somehow contact members who haven't been worshipping as much as they did pre-COVID to try to get them returning; while some **may** have health reasons for not attending, we suspect the majority of non-attendees are suffering from what can be described as "an object at rest stays at rest"; a pattern of not coming to church on Sundays has become habit-forming over the pandemic time period, and once established, a pattern like that is hard to break. Hopefully things like the just-announced Photo Directory will bring that back to the forefront of people's minds, and we can get them attending again. Personally, I also think an updated Photo Directory is good to establish just **what** our community size is; if we're making decisions, financial and otherwise, based on what we think we are, as a congregation, but it is actually different from that, we need to know.

Finally, a call also goes out to anyone who'd like to serve on the Worship Committee; we're at a small crowd right now, and one or two more would be great! It'd be nice to have some younger person/people in the group, so we get fresh looks at the things we do and the way we do them. If you're interested, approach one of our committee members (Nathan Elke, Doris Slind, Karen Harilstad) or Pastor Munye and say you'd like to join.

We also send "thanks" to all those who have stepped up to perform Worship Duties: reading of lessons and prayers, helping with communion, ushering, folding bulletins, all the many behind the scenes (and in front of the scenes) things that happen each week to help the service look effortlessly smooth...believe me, there is an effort involved! . 😊

~ Nathan Elke

Altar Guild:

Our Altar Guild had another successful year at Good Shepherd Lutheran Church and appreciate our opportunity to serve the church community.

We deeply regret the loss of two vital members in our Altar Guild who contributed many years to our guild; Lorraine and Lloyd Larson.

Our Altar Members consist of Melody Fornwald, Sandra Haug, Dick Schneider and a new member on the board, Darren Ulmer. New Members are welcomed!

Appreciation goes out to Corla McGillivray who took care of the two poinsettias during the Advent Season.

We would also like to Thank our Altar Guild member Dick Schneider who donated a Holy Spirit "Inside Banner" to Good Shepherd Lutheran Church in memory of his oldest grandson, Dwayne Demkiw.

Lastly, thank you to all the Altar Guild Members for their continued dedication to our Altar Guild Group.

Respectfully submitted,

Angeline Demkiw

Music Ministry:

Good Shepherd is blessed to have so many people who are willing to share their gifts with the church. A big heartfelt thank you to everyone who gives their time and energy to contribute to the music ministry at Good Shepherd. Thanks to the CMT members, Pastor Munye and the Worship committee for their consistent support

of music here at the church. Also, thanks to Nathan for his dedication to creating the power points for services and often managing everything in the sound booth!

Thank you to the pianists who led the hymns for services this summer. In the fall the band leaders began leading worship music by choosing songs and organizing the bands which include a variety of singers and instrumentalists. Thank you - band leaders!

We are very fortunate to rely on so many talented people that create the music for Sunday morning services. I encourage anyone who is interested to be part of the bands, choir or musical contributions to the services to please let me know and get involved! We would love to have you as part of the team!

Here are some of the musical moments since this fall:

The Good Shepherd Choir is back again!

Choir went on hiatus in the winter of 2019 when the covid lockdowns began. I had purchased new music for the choir which was filed away- waiting to be sung!

Once things settled down in the fall I wondered if it might be time to start up the choir again before Christmas. I sent an e-mail the last week of October and we had our first practice Nov. 1st with 14 people and it grew from there! My accompanist Cheryl Mercier was also heading to Florida so I wasn't sure who would play piano so I was so thankful when Stephanie was available to play for the choir!

Christ the King Sunday On Sunday, Nov. 26th the choir sang a choral arrangement of the festive hymn- *Crown Him Lord of All* with an amazing saxophone solo played by Joel Burns (which he transposed for a flute part). It was the first time the choir had sung at church together since 2019! We had many virtual songs over the years but it was wonderful to be together again at Good Shepherd.

Service of Carols and Readings: The first Sunday of Advent we had a traditional service of Carols and Readings and it was wonderful to have a instrument ensemble who played the hymns. We learned a new song written for Good Shepherd called *Light a Candle* for the Advent wreath candle lighting for the Advent and Christmas services. Thanks to the musicians Ruth Sestak, Leah Zepick, Andrew Linsley, Nathaniel Gibson, Elke Mau, Ruth Eliason, Joel Burns, and Stefan and Anna Scott and all the readers for participating in this service.

Let There Be Christmas- On Dec. 10th for the second Sunday of Advent the choir and instrument ensemble presented the cantata *Let There Be Christmas* by Joseph Martin. It was truly a joy to hear all the parts come together in just over a month and to have so many people involved. We appreciate our neighboring church, McClure United, for loaning us the music to use.

Thank you to the instrument ensemble who really filled the church up with sounds of joy. Thank you for sharing your talents with the choir and the congregation to help celebrate the season of advent.



Stephanie Tillmann- piano

Andrew Linsley- flute

Joel Burns- saxophone

Elke Mau- French horn

Nathaniel Gibson- trombone

Quinn Friggstad- trumpet

Leah Zepick- trumpet

Ruth Sestak- trumpet

Matthan Gibson- trumpet

A special thanks to Alex Hartshorn for bringing her gifts of interpretative movement to bring alive the story of the cantata song *Carols in a Quiet Manger (In the Bleak Midwinter)*

Thank you to all the faithful singers in the choir who continue to make a joyful noise unto the Lord! We had some new faces this year along with many who have been singing together for years.

Thanks to our soloists Jeremiah Scott and Ruth Eliason and duet by Nathan and Katie Elke. Thanks to the Sunday School for joining the choir for the song *Christmas Through the Eyes of a Child* with handbells and for waving the scarfs joyfully in *Hodie*. Always nice to have the children included for these special Christmas moments! Thanks to everyone who helped with the Sunday School kids during the service (Ingrid, Eden, Gavin and Kipton) and to Cam for cueing the kids at just the right times!

Thank you to Aaron Friggstad for helping with the sound, Keiran on the PowerPoint and all the ushers and everyone else involved in the service.

Third Sunday of Advent- Thanks to the Sunday School for putting on such a wonderful Christmas program. Thanks to all the kids who played solos or duets for the prelude and offertory. We have so many talented kids and it was great to hear the music they have been learning this year- especially the lovely Christmas music!

Service of Hope and Light- On the longest night of the year Good Shepherd hosted a service of hope and light which included hymns and music focused on the light and love of Christ in the Christmas season. Thank you to all the musicians, soloists and choir for participating in this special service.

Christmas Eve Services- Thanks to the Zepick family for helping with the morning Christmas Eve service including Debbie Zepick a guest pianist.

Thanks to Stephanie Tillmann for playing for the 5pm Candlelight service and for the music contributions by Kaja and Debbie Zepick- *Out of the East*, the Zepick family singing *Jubilate*, Leah & Aaron Zepick and Kara Erickson for singing *All Is Well*.

Anna Scott played for the 7pm Candlelight service. Thanks to Benson Akinbuwa for singing *For Unto Us a Child is Born*, Andrew Lowe visiting from Toronto who sang *See Amid the Winter's Snow*, Nathan Elke who sang *Joseph's Song- I Was Not His Father- He Was Mine* and the Scott family for singing *A Peace Carol*.

2024- Choir in the new year started up again at the end of January. We are preparing to sing for the joint Lent service hosted at Good Shepherd on Feb. 28th and also for services leading up to Easter which is quite early this year. Stay tuned for more choir dates!

I am working on composing a liturgy for Holy Communion for Good Shepherd. We have already used *Lamb of God* and *Take This Bread and Eat* as part of communion and *Know, Grow, Show* for a sung response to the prayers. The Kyrie, Hymn of Praise- *Glory to God*, and Post Communion Canticle are in the works!

I would like to continue singing with the Sunday School kids and possibly do a simple musical either in the spring or fall. I am also hoping to do more ensemble music and include elementary students who are just starting out on their band instruments and maybe those who haven't played in a while but would like to try! We also have the handbells so we will see where we can make use of our resources in the upcoming months.

Thanks again to the congregation and CMT for all the support and encouragement for the Music Ministry at Good Shepherd. Blessings abound and keep on singing! ~Anna Scott

Learning & Youth Ministry

This was a program designed from a large confirmation class last year. The Fridays that began were filled with simply coming and decompressing after long weeks of school and sports. Offered without an agenda, this program welcomed the youth who were available.

This year started with a more consistent schedule. The Christmas season ended with laser tag, and it was quickly noticed that some outside activities were needed. The youth meet twice a month, with one Friday a relaxed time at the church to play games, balloon volleyball and more. The following Friday is now a planned activity somewhere in the city. To date, the youth have enjoyed laser tag, a gym night at Zion, and a Synod Youth Retreat. Our group is from Grade 6 to Grade 12, and we are enjoying a regular attendance of approximately 8 up to as many as 12.

Good Shepherd is blessed to have an amazing group of youth and young people who still find fulfillment in faith-based fellowship with their peers. It has been a wonderful experience to see this concept continue to find momentum as we move forward. A chance to provide another step towards creating new dynamics and solid leadership within our congregation. Kara

2022 was another year of change and adaptation for the Learning Ministry with various forms of programs offered throughout the year. At the start of 2022 Sunday School was offered online with virtual recordings and 2 Sunday School Zooms which allowed the students to see each other again and interact in a small way.

Plans were made for VBS in summer 2022, but interest was low and it was put on hold. In fall 2022 under the leadership of Kara Erickson Tucker, Ruth Eliason, Katie Elke and Debbie Tilk, Sunday School resumed in person! We were excited and invigorated by the blessing of having children in the Sunday School wing again. Attendance was quite consistent around 12-15 and the VBS curriculum was used during October.

In November/December 2022 Katie Elke directed the Christmas Program 'The Holy Family is Here' with the help of Ruth Eliason, Kara Erickson Tucker and Debbie Tilk. It was wonderful to work with the children singing Christmas carols, learning lines and discussing the message of Christmas. Special thank-you to confirmation students Gavin Tucker, Ingrid Broten and Daniel Tilk for taking on roles in the play. The play was performed during the church service on December 18.

The Learning Ministry renewed Spark House as a resource to include children's bulletins in the weekly emails and as a resource for the Christmas play.

In closing, we would like to thank all families for taking part in any or all these activities and the Sunday School leaders for their continued inspiration to bring God's word and fellowship to the Good Shepherd children.

Respectfully Submitted,
Katie Elke

Witnessing Ministry

Purpose of the Witnessing Ministry Team

Constitution: This congregation, relying on the Holy Spirit, shall proclaim the Gospel by word and deed and thereby invite all people to repent and believe. This congregation shall recruit, motivate, equip and support its members to witness to their faith at every opportunity in daily life so that the Lord is glorified, the fellowship is strengthened, the lapsed are restored and new members are added to the congregation. It shall provide for the communication of the Gospel through partnership with the wider Christian community. It shall assure that all congregation functions witness to the faith of the church.

NEST Report:

This past year has been busy for Nest, as 13 refugees arrived in Saskatoon. We welcomed a Sudanese family of five, that we have been working with for over 5yrs. For many years they have not lived as a family unit, three members lived in Egypt, while two adult children lived in Uganda. A single young man arrived from Palestine. Seven people from Afghanistan, with three that are of the Hazard ethnic minority.

Our hope for 2024, is to welcome 12 more refugees. Arriving from Palestine, Iraq, Sudan, Eritrea and Afghanistan. We work closely with CLWR, MCC & the Roman Catholic Diocese to obtain the required spots needed for each application.

This years fund raising projects (Secret Garden Tour, Equinox Dinner & Middle Eastern Fall Supper) allow us to raise some of the funds needed, along with the hope that these projects will raise awareness of the work Nest does here in Saskatoon.

We wish to say Thank you to CMT for the monetary donation received this past year.

A number of our past refugees have become Canadian Citizens in 2023. This is not an easy test to pass, so we are very proud of each success & also the commitment to Canada it shows. Visit our website nestsaskatoon.net to view some of these new citizens.

Respectfully submitted,
Elaine Carter

Creative Coffee Group:

Our Church's Coffee Club had a great year in 2023 enjoying each others company during the Spring to Autumn's Seasons in addition to contributing to a very successful Fundraiser. In late May we kicked off the Spring with a luncheon at Boston Pizza whereby 12 ladies attended for a delicious reunion. During the summer months we enjoyed get-togethers complete with a Candy Bag stuffing coffee party at the church for the Garage Sale. It was non-stop assembly line filling for 2 hours but we were extremely happy to help (and indulge in a few mis-formed gummy worms, blue whales and gummy bears). Also, we contributed and requested Baking from the congregation and raised a phenomenal \$500.00 from Baking alone towards the new roof. Thank you to all who donated J. We celebrated with a year-end luncheon at



Wilson as pictured below. Please feel free to join us in 2024. It's fun.... it's free and it's a monthly occasion to enjoy fellowship and gatherings amongst our church parishioners.

Please email me at Cheryl.mercier57@gmail.com if you are interested so I can include you in our event planning. Thank you. Cheryl Mercier

Wellness and Support Group:

In the fall of 2022 Kara Erickson-Tucker identified, with her compassionate eye, a number of congregational members struggling with various health issues: physical, mental, spiritual or grief-related. She asked me to facilitate a support group which first met in January of 2023.

This group met approximately biweekly until a summer break in 2023. In the fall, a more formal monthly schedule was established: the 3rd Saturday of the month at 1:00 p.m. at the church. Whenever possible, Pastor Munye attends offering words of encouragement, prayer and the strengthening of communion.

The group is here to support anyone going through difficult times: the support comes through sharing burdens with fellow caring members.

Not a group of experts but people of faith supporting one another; a group to be a conduit of Christ's assurance in

Matthew 11: "Come to me all who are weary and burdened and I will give you rest."

Doris Slind

Service Ministry

Purpose of the Service Ministry Team

Constitution: This congregation shall live by faith active in love. It shall motivate, equip and support its members to: minister in daily life; participate as members of a caring community; serve as Christians in all the institutions and structures of the society of which they are a part; and promote justice and reconciliation, meet human needs and alleviate suffering, both individually and corporately. In these efforts, this congregation shall cooperate with the synod and the ELCIC, other Christian churches, faith communities and groups in society. It shall make certain that all its functions strengthen the motivation and ability for service.

Thank you to all members who supported Service Ministry initiatives over the past year. Our projects consisted of ongoing and new initiatives. Examples include the following:

- We maintained our ongoing collection bin for the Saskatoon Food Bank.
- The yard sale fundraiser provided quality and affordable items for community members living close to the church.
- We made a donation to NEST, which works to sponsor refugees to come to Saskatoon through Canadian Lutheran World Relief (CLWR). The funds for this donation were provided in part by the offering from the Christmas season service organized by Pastor Harley.
- After a financial appeal to the congregation, we made a donation to a refugee project being led by Mennonite Central Committee Saskatchewan (MCC-SK) to support an Afghan family that hopes to come to Saskatoon.
- We promoted fundraising initiatives of Luther Care, including LuMinHos and the Stair Climb Challenge.

- We collected funds for TeleMiracle.

If members have ideas of projects to support or wish to organize a project, please contact Cam Broten or Lynn Szuba.

Support Ministry

Purpose of the Support Ministry Team:

Constitution: Support – This congregation, in faithfulness to God, shall provide leadership, organizational structures, facilities and funds to enable fulfillment of its functions. It shall strive to maintain effective stewardship practices, recruit, equip and support members to provide for these activities while regularly evaluating its total life and ministry.

Members of the team – Marty Willick, Don Slind, Chris Tucker, Joel Burns.

Stewardship Items:

- As we progressed through 2023, our church has definitely moved towards more ‘normal’ operations. We have continued to receive offerings using Interac email authorizations, offerings during our in-person services, offerings dropped off at church, as well as the regular monthly donations through PAR. With the help of a couple of significant donations, this has allowed us to meet our obligations again this year.
- We were able to do a church garage sale and received specified donations to go towards our capital projects.

Building and Property Items:

- Use of the facility for 2023 has returned to normal use, but we have lost a couple of regular renters.
- It was decided to focus on a capital project plan to address a couple of delayed projects. This included looking at replacing the flooring in the church and replacing the roof shingles.
- The capital projects were divided into 3 parts. Part A was replacing the rug in the sanctuary and offices. This included adding permanent flooring for the 2 entrances. Part A was completed before the summer. Part B entails the shingling of the whole roof of the church which will hopefully occur in the spring of 2024. Funding for this project is almost in place. Part C covers the replacement of the tile flooring in the church. This capital project will need to be funded and will likely be looked at in 2025 at the earliest.
- I would also like to thank Chris Tucker for keeping the smaller things fixed and repaired and Don Slind and his and his work volunteers for tackling the paving stones in the entrances and the flooring in the men’s bathroom.

Caretakers and Staff:

- Kara and Chris have continued to do maintenance, painting and general repairs in the church which is appreciated by all the congregation.
- Corla McGillivray continues to bring a professional level of effort in her role as office administrator.

Treasurer:

- I have continued in the role of treasurer for the church to ensure that all requirements for CRA and ISC are submitted as required. Due to changes in tax filing for all non-profit organizations, Marilyn Johnson with MG Accounting & Office Services is unable to perform our accounting review for our yearend. We have engaged Scott Ehrmantraut at Heagle LLP to review our books for 2023. This will be a more costly process, but we had no choice.

- Again, a special thank you to Corla, Kara and Chris for all the work they do to assist the Support Team do its job.

Sincerely, Marty Willick, Support Team Chair

Caretaking:

The year for caretaking has been routine with waxing floors, window cleaning and general weekly cleaning. All this is made easier with support for those who keep house maintenance in mind such as cleaning up the playroom after use and consideration to avoid accidental spills from open liquids in the sanctuary during meetings and services on the new carpet.

With the installation of the new carpet, as caretakers, we took advantage of the reorganization of rooms that had to be temporarily emptied. The music office was cleaned and reconfigured with assistance. We were able to paint and install new lighting in the small storage room. All Christmas decorations and Christmas tree were moved from the mezzanine storage area to floor level to best support those who take the time to decorate for our Christmas season.

Thank you to all those who supported property maintenance and our caretaking projects in taking time to clean globes and change all the bulbs for consistent lighting. Assistance to clean up the candles (wax) from this year's Christmas Eve service all while enjoying a day of conversation and fellowship.

Our caretaking duties usually support the Property Management Team, it is important to highlight work that was completed this year as follows:

- Outside pavers removed, leveled, and installed again at both front entrance and side entrance.
- Carpet installation for the sanctuary, offices, and playroom.
- Installation of new fans
- Painting the walls for better viewing as projector screens.
- A new signboard was created and painted at the exterior in front of the church.

It was a great year overall!

Chris and Kara Tucker

Fundraising 2023:

Although this is necessary for our needs within the church, the only fundraiser this year was our garage sale. It was an amazing endeavor that did not quite make the millions we were hoping for, however, it truly created moments for our volunteers who spent time tirelessly organizing items with stickers, markers, and a strong sense of humor.

The fundraising committee is small but mighty and welcomes anyone who might be interested in supporting the work needed to make money for the Celebration Fund. There are plans in the works to provide more fundraisers that can be enjoyed by our congregation and others with entertainment and more.

Stay tuned...



Saskatchewan Synod Insert for 2023 Congregational Annual Reports

Year-end letter from Bishop Sid Haugen

Dear partners in the Gospel,

Again, this year, before reporting on 2023, I would like to take a moment review the role of the synod and the role of congregations.

Congregations or faith communities are the core of our church. At the congregational level, the Word is preached, the sacraments are shared, and service to the world is carried out. At the congregational level 'the rubber hits the road' for our church. The word synod comes from the from the Greek words *sun* (with) and *hodos* (road). A synod is those who are literally 'with each other on the road.' By 'Saskatchewan Synod' we mean **all** the congregations and related ministries that walk together in Saskatchewan and NW Manitoba. Congregations though remarkably independent bodies, gather themselves into synods for two reasons: 1. to accomplish things an individual congregation could not and 2. to take care of other congregations who may need the support offered by the synod.

Saskatchewan Synod Convention, by constitution, elects a Synod council to be the governing body of the synod of congregations and elects a Bishop to serve as the synod's lead pastor and chief executive officer.

How does the synod of congregations resource that synod leadership? Remarkably, financial giving to ensure leadership for our synod is determined freely and independently by each congregation. Each congregation contributes to the synod balancing their own resources with their strong sense of call to provide support for the synod: for congregations in need, for our national church, for our seminary.

Report on 2023

This report briefly addresses two items:

1. the benevolence received by synod leadership in 2023 from the synod of congregations
2. how synod leadership has worked with that benevolence.

Benevolence received from synod congregations in 2023

Rather than speaking directly to this, I'm inserting here a paragraph provided by our finance manager:

Congregational benevolence to Synod in 2023 was \$364,411 from 75 congregations, only 77% of budget and 12% behind the previous year of 2022. This means we are operating at more of a loss than budgeted. The number of congregations sending benevolence continues to drop (from 81 congregations in 2020 to 75 in 2023). In 2023, 19 congregations gave the same as in 2022; 21 gave more; and 41 gave less or none. We have balanced our 2024 budget only by reducing our support to the wider church and even that balance budget is only attainable if we receive at least \$412,000 congregational support as we did in 2022.

How Synod leadership has worked with the benevolence received from synod congregations in 2023

Synod council approved a budget for the work of the Bishop's office. The Bishop's office employs a total of 2.5 full time equivalents to support the administrative and pastoral work of the Bishop in supporting our synod of 100 congregations, 3 synod ministries, and 125 rostered ministers (about half of which are retired). Bishop's office is constitutionally and practically the main source of support for congregations and ministries and the roster of ministers.

Synod council during 2023 continued to "pay it forward" by contributing as 'first fruits' ('off the top') 35% of congregational benevolence to support key partners in ministry: 20% to the ministry of our National Church; 15% to Lutheran Theological Seminary, our seminary in Saskatoon.

- The Administrative Team at our Saskatoon office consists of a .75-time office manager, a .5-time executive assistant, and a .25-time finance manager. The administrative team at the office in Saskatoon continues to develop communication channels for our synod council and committees, congregations, ministries and rostered ministers as well as assisting them in administrative and financial matters. The synod website, Share point sites, synod leadership email distribution lists, SaskSynod News, and video conferencing are key tools for that work.
- The Pastoral Team supports congregations, ministries and rostered ministers ‘on the road’. Rev. Dr. Ali Tote serves on staff as full-time assistant to the bishop. The position is made possible through a designated fund rather than being supported by general benevolence. The Assistant to the Bishop role greatly extends the reach of the bishop’s pastoral team in providing care and direction for congregations, ministries and rostered ministers in our synod.

2024

So here we stand at the beginning of 2024.

In the congregations, I’m hearing two words. One is that the momentum we lost in the three years of the pandemic did not come back immediately. While we are seeing hopeful signs of slowly regaining momentum, none of us are exactly sure what the post-pandemic church will look like. What seems highly likely is that we will need to embrace significant changes in the shape of our church at every level: congregational, synodical and national. What does the future look like? None of us can say with certainty. But God is good. We are, as in any other time in the decades and centuries of being church, called to keep walking forward in faith that God will provide.

In the synod, of course, I have announced that I will not let my name stand for bishop at our convention this May. As you know, at the convention a blank ballot will be handed out to delegates to begin the process of nominating and electing a new bishop. What happens next will be in God’s hands. How inspiring is that!

Peace,

Bishop Sid

(To stay in contact with the Synod, visit the Synod website at www.sasksynod.ca and sign up for Synod News.)

WORSHIP FOR A CONGREGATIONAL ANNUAL MEETING

OPENING THE MEETING

LAND ACKNOWLEDGMENT

You are encouraged to acknowledge Indigenous lands in a way appropriate to your context at the beginning of your annual meeting. The following words are provided as an example.

We acknowledge that we are gathered on the traditional and unceded territory of the [Name of Indigenous Peoples for where your community is located]. We recognize and respect their enduring presence on this land and express our gratitude for the opportunity to live, work and learn on their territory.

Let us take a moment to reflect on the history of this land and to consider our roles in working towards reconciliation and understanding.

PRAYER

Gracious and loving God, we give you thanks for gathering us together into your church — whether it be in person, online or a combination of the two.

Our community is more than an organization; it is a family united by a shared purpose and mission, to discern the work you call us to do. In this time of reflection and planning, grant us clarity of mind and openness of heart. May our discussions be guided by wisdom, understanding, and a spirit of unity. Help us to see beyond the details and numbers, recognizing the greater purpose and impact of our collective efforts.

May we seek to be generous, compassionate, loving people of God. Keep us mindful of the many other needs in the world — conflicts, refugees, poverty, and all other concerns that we name before you now.

All this we pray in your name. *Amen.*

READING 1 Timothy 6:17–19

As for those who in the present age are rich, command them not to be haughty, or to set their hopes on the uncertainty of riches, but rather on God who richly provides us with everything for our enjoyment. They are to do good, to be rich in good works, generous, and ready to share, thus storing up for themselves the treasure of a good foundation for the future, so that they may take hold of the life that really is life.

HYMN *God, Whose Giving Knows No Ending*
EvLW, #678

LITANY

The prayers below are based on the ELCIC's four vision priorities.

Leader: We come before you today, humbled by the depth of your love that calls us to strive for a Healthier Church. Instill in us the

wisdom to foster collaboration among all expressions of the church. Grant us the grace to develop a strong sense of connection, rooted in trust, good communication, creativity and collaboration. May these qualities be the pillars that uphold the foundation of our faith community.

All: Open wide our hands in sharing.

Leader: As we seek to cultivate Effective Partnerships, open our hearts to the richness of engagement with others. As we navigate the path of collaboration, may our efforts be guided by your love and bring forth abundant fruit.

All: Open wide our hands in sharing.

Leader: In our pursuit of Relational Leadership, grant us the strength to deepen diversity and equity in our community. Inspire us to embrace inclusivity, creating spaces that reflect the boundless love you have for all your children. May our leadership reflect your grace, fostering an environment where every individual feels valued and heard.

All: Open wide our hands in sharing.

Leader: Let us lead with Compassionate Justice, guided in our reflections and actions. May we be a voice for justice on issues that matter, advocating for the well-being of all your creation. Grant us the courage to stand up for what is right, inspired by the compassion you have shown us through Christ.

All: Open wide our hands in sharing.

Leader: Gracious and loving God, bless us with creativity and perseverance as we navigate the challenges ahead. May our actions be a testament to your love, shining a light that draws others closer to you. All this we pray in your name.

All: Amen.

CLOSING THE MEETING

Leader: Bless our community with a sense of purpose and direction for the coming year. We thank you for the diverse talents and gifts represented in our congregation and community. May we use these resources to show others the blessing of your unconditional love.

Leader: In your holy name we pray,

All: Amen.

HYMN *Lord of All Hopefulness*
EvLW #765

Leader: Go in peace — in love, justice and a commitment to serve one another and our wider community.

All: Thanks be to God.