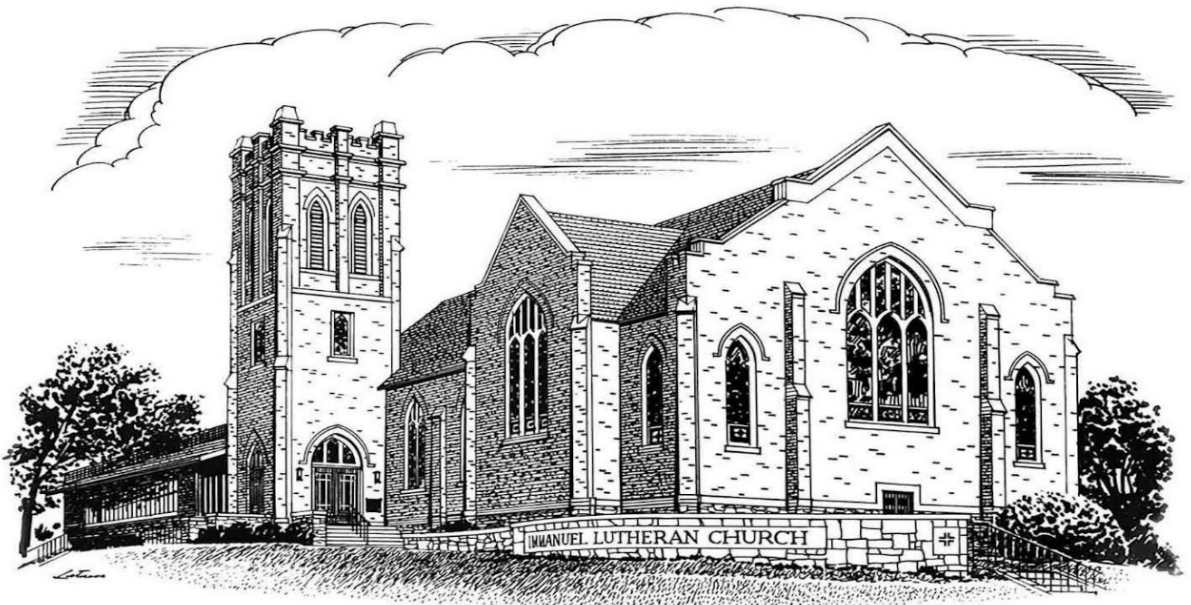


**Immanuel Lutheran Church**  
**Annual Report for 2023**  
**February 25, 2024**



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**Agenda**  
**Immanuel Lutheran Church**  
**Annual Meeting**  
**February 25, 2024, 12:00 p.m.**

1. Call to Order and Determination of Quorum (10 percent of the voting members)
2. Adoption of the Agenda
3. Opening Prayer
4. Minutes of the 2023 Annual Meeting
5. Reports
  - a) Congregation President
  - b) Pastor
  - c) Treasurer
  - d) Financial Secretary
  - e) Endowment Trust Fund
  - f) Committee Reports
  - g) Nominating Committee
6. New Business
  - a) Elections
  - b) Ad Hoc Committee
  - c) Proposed 2024 Budget
  - d) Other
7. Other Business
  - a) Recognition of New Life – Baptisms and Deaths
  - b) Recognitions of Council members completing their terms
8. Resolutions
9. Closing Prayer and Adjournment

*\*According to Immanuel's Constitution, a voting member is a confirmed member who has communed and made a contribution of record during the current or preceding calendar year.*

## **Minutes**

### **Immanuel Lutheran Church Annual Congregational Meeting**

**Sunday, February 19, 2023**

#### **Via Zoom**

The Immanuel Lutheran Church annual meeting was held Sunday, February 19, 2023, via Zoom.

Members in attendance (57): Henrik Andersen, John Anderson, Don Arney, Cece Atherton, Tracy Atherton, Sally Baehni, Karen Bame, Nancy Beckmann, Ken Beckmann, Connie Benolkin, Larry Benolkin, Melodee Blobaum, Rebecca Blocksome, Beth Callstrom, Randy Callstrom, Mason Carey, Kayla Carey, Leonard Carr, Norma Carr, Pam Edvalds, Kevin Fewell, Linda Fewell, Linda Fox, Jeff Fox, Roger Gieschen, Sally Gieschen, Elizabeth Hastings, Matt Hastings, Kate Hauber, Del Karmeier, Naomi Karmeier, Terry Kueker, Lori Kueker, B.J. Laven, Kathy Linder, Mary Jo Moore, Bill Moore, Jean Nuernberger, Lynden Peters, Ingrid Peterson, Dave Peterson, Carol Powers, Sara Prem, Connie Ross, Chris Roth, Megan Sawyer, Pastor Micah Sievenpiper, Rick Sundell, Vicki Swanson, Linda Taylor, Bonnie Thomas, Brian Thomas, Rick Wilcox, Ellen Wilcox, Carolyn Wilson, Heather Winker and Jeff Winker.

Guests in attendance (2): Jonah Thomas, Suzanne Anderson.

A quorum having been established, President Connie Benolkin called the meeting to order at 12:07 p.m.

#### **Adoption of Agenda**

President Benolkin called for a motion to adopt the meeting agenda as printed on page 3 of the 2022 Annual Report. Linda Taylor moved to adopt the meeting agenda as printed on page 3 of the 2022 Annual Report; Henrik Andersen seconded. The motion carried.

#### **Opening Prayer**

Pastor Micah Sievenpiper offered a prayer of thanksgiving.

#### **Minutes of the 2022 Annual Meeting**

President Benolkin reported that the Congregational Council had approved the minutes of the annual meeting, found on pages four to nine of the 2022 Annual Report, at the first regular meeting of the council on February 22, 2022.

## Reports

- **Congregation President.** In addition to her written report presented on pages 11-12 of the 2022 Annual Report, President Benolkin thanked members of the congregation for attending the meeting. She said the meeting allowed the congregation to reflect on the previous 12 months of ministry together as well as look ahead to the next 12 months. Noting that the congregation took bold steps to put the building in order in 2022, she announced an initiative to rejuvenate Immanuel's ministry through evangelism in 2023. She said her goal is to reintroduce Immanuel as a place of God's grace for the neighborhood and the entire metro area in 2023.
- **Pastor's Report.** Pastor Sievenpiper apologized for the delay in presenting the 2022 Annual Report, and for some inadvertent omissions in the first printing, including leaving off two members who had entered the Church Triumphant, Ann Erickson and Lila Aamodt. Expanding on his report on pages 10 and 11 of the 2022 Annual Report, Pastor Sievenpiper said 2023 will be an exciting but challenging time in the life of Immanuel. The decision to take care of maintenance projects that had been delayed for several years has prepared Immanuel for the future. But the cost of those projects, combined with the loss of financial windfalls that had benefited Immanuel in recent years – member generosity in sharing pandemic stimulus checks and the federal Paycheck Protection Program, to name two – has created financial challenges. He said he hopes the congregation will explore new revenue streams, such as renting office space to musical and other groups that currently meet in the building. The congregation may also have to consider other steps in these tight financial times, which are not unique to Immanuel, such as selling property, partnering with other congregations through parish agreements or shared staff. He also said he is looking forward to building on ministries that were interrupted by the pandemic, including resuming the Immanuel Symposium with a possible first session on homiletics, and role-playing games.
- **Treasurer's Report.** Kathy Linder said 2022 had been a year of exploration, both for her personally and for the congregation. She thanked the congregation and Jean Nuernberger and Brian Thomas, heads of the Finance Committee, for their support. She said people continue to support Immanuel ministries financially, and particularly praised the support for the Financing a Faithful Future campaign.
- **Financial Secretary.** Linda Fox told meeting attendees annual giving statements can be found on a table in the narthex and said she would try to mail them soon for those who have not picked them up in person. She also said some giving envelopes have not been picked up, and asked members to either pick up their envelopes, ask the office to mail them, or notify the office that they did not wish to use envelopes. She said in this, her first year as financial secretary, she has found that it has taken a lot of time to get up to speed on the duties of the position, and she thanked her predecessor, Rick Sundell, for his help and guidance. Fox also referred those attending to the Miller Accounting report on pages 13 to 23 of the 2022 Annual Report for income and expenditure information.

- **Endowment Trust Fund.** Lynden Peters reminded the congregation of the value of the Endowment Trust Fund in serving as a backstop for operating expenses. He said 2022 was not a good year for the market, resulting in the fund falling from a little over \$600,000 in value to just over \$400,000. He reported a withdrawal of \$60,000 in January 2023, leaving a balance of \$432,000 at the end of January. The takeaway, he said, is that Immanuel is withdrawing funds at a greater rate than the fund is able to replenish itself through market gains. However, the ETF continues to allow Immanuel some time before making difficult financial decisions.
- **Nominating Committee:** Nominating Committee Chairwoman Sara Prem thanked her committee for their work in finding people to serve on the Congregation Council and the three other constitutionally required committees. Committee members were Connie Ross, Chris Roth and Dave Peterson, with President Benolkin and Pastor Sievenpiper as ex officio members.
  - **Church Council:** Chris Roth and Vicki Swanson have agreed to serve initial three-year terms that end in 2026; Sara Prem will serve a second three-year term that ends in 2026.
  - **Nominating committee:** Members who have agreed to serve a one-year term on the nominating committee are Tracy Atherton, Larry Benolkin, Mike Ortmann, Carolyn Wilson, and Mason Carey, who will chair the committee.
  - **Audit Committee:** Pam Edvalds, B.J. Laven, Lynden Peters, Ingrid Peterson and Rick Sundell have agreed to serve on the Audit Committee. The Nominating Committee was unable to secure the sixth required member of the committee.
  - **Mutual Ministry:** The chairwoman and all five current members have agreed to remain on the committee. They are Ellen Wilcox, chairwoman; Jeri Blaske-Yungeberg, Beth Callstrom, Milan Hanson, Suzanne Steffen, and Rick Sundell.

### **New Business-Elections**

- President Benolkin asked for a vote of acclamation for Sara Prem, Chris Roth and Vicki Swanson to be elected to the Congregation Council. They were elected by acclamation.
- President Benolkin asked for a vote of acclamation for Tracy Atherton, Larry Benolkin, Mike Ortmann and Carolyn Wilson to serve on the Nominating Committee, with Mason Carey as chairman. They were elected by acclamation.
- President Benolkin asked for nominations from the floor to fill the remaining opening on the Audit Committee. Hearing no nominations, she asked for a vote of acclamation for Pam Edvalds, B.J. Laven, Lynden Peters, Ingrid Peterson and Rick Sundell to serve on the Audit Committee. They were elected by acclamation.
- President Benolkin asked for a vote of acclamation for Jeri Blaske-Yungeberg, Beth Callstrom, Milan Hanson, Suzanne Steffen, and Rick Sundell to serve on the Mutual Ministry Committee with Ellen Wilcox as chairwoman. They were elected by acclamation.

## New Business – Budget

Brian Thomas presented the budget, which can be found on pages 46 through 50 of the 2022 Annual Report. He thanked Nuernberger, Linder, Fox, members of the Financing a Faithful Future Committee and Terry Kueker for their help in preparing the budget, which he described as “challenging and difficult to look at.”

- **Financing a Faithful Future:** Immanuel members and friends have pledged or contributed \$225,000 for the deferred maintenance projects that were started, finished and/or planned for 2022 to 2025. The budget was prepared assuming that Immanuel would receive one-third of the total \$125,000 pledges in each year, 2023, 2024 and 2025, although Thomas said it would be helpful if those who pledged would pay their pledges early.
- **Deficit Budget:** The budget as proposed will have a \$234,981 deficit, of which \$114,411 is from deferred maintenance project expenditures that are part of the Financing a Faithful Future funding effort, and \$120,570 is from the operating budget.
- **Context:** The future is challenging, especially when considering how long the ETF will be able to supplant deficit budgets. However, proposed budgets for the last few years have had significant deficits which have either entirely been overcome, or which have ended up being smaller than anticipated. Thus, Immanuel has shown that it can both control costs and increase giving.
- **Key assumptions:** In addition to the estimated \$40,000 Financing a Faithful Future income that is being assumed from a revenue perspective, and the \$115,000 in expenses for Financing a Faithful Future, the budget assumes:
  - that giving is equivalent to 2022, and Global and Local Outreach expenses will equal 10 percent of total revenue excluding the Financing a Faithful income,
  - The currently vacant ministry assistant position will remain vacant for the entire year.
- **Looking ahead:** While the current mortgage interest rate of 4.625 percent will remain unchanged in 2023, it is an adjustable-rate mortgage with rate changes scheduled in October 2024 and 2029. The mortgage matures March 1, 2032. At the current rate, Immanuel is paying \$87,000 per year for principal and interest.

Linder noted the projects that were accomplished in 2022, including roof repair, a new boiler and hot water heater, and initial repairs to the stained-glass windows. President Benolkin said work will resume on the windows when the weather permits. Henrik Andersen suggested that the \$120,000 deficit could be overcome if 120 giving units each increased their pledge by \$20 per week, and encouraged viewing the budget deficit from a more hopeful point of view.

Mary Jo Moore asked how many giving units the congregation has, and the trend in numbers. Fox said she did not know the answer for that, though she said she thought the more

important number is the regular envelopes and giving line of the budget. Thomas said that as of February 2, 2023, 42 units had pledged \$229,560, for an average of about \$5,500 annual giving per pledging unit. Moore said it would be nice to know the number of pledges received each year, and if it was going up or down. She said the budget was sobering and that she imagined that the Congregation Council will have many difficult conversations and pledged her thoughts and prayers for their efforts. President Benolkin said congregational input will be sought in any such decisions.

Nuernberger reminded those attending that the congregation had sustained a number of deaths of members who regularly supported Immanuel, and also said that running the Financing a Faithful Future fundraising campaign concurrently with the General Operating Budget Stewardship Campaign probably had some impact on the pledged giving.

Randy Callstrom moved that the budget be approved as presented. Carolyn Wilson seconded the motion. The budget was approved with one abstention.

### **Other**

- **Recognition of New Life – Baptisms and Deaths.** Pastor Sievenpiper reminded the gathered assembly that the life we live in community is defined by baptism, and that significant moments along the way are marked in baptism. He noted the significant deaths in 2022 as well as the people who were baptized, as listed on page 45 of the 2022 Annual Report. He asked for a moment of silence for those who have died.
- **Recognition of Council members completing their terms.** President Benolkin thanked departing Congregation Council members Lynden Peters and Janette Rodecap for their service.

### **Closing Prayer and Adjournment**

President Benolkin led a prayer of gratitude and declared the meeting adjourned at 1:13 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Melodee Blobaum, Council Secretary



## **Council President's Report**

*God is our refuge and strength, an ever-present help in trouble. Psalm 46:1 NIV*

*May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit. Romans 15:13 NIV*

The two Bible verses above chosen to frame this report from the Congregation Council speak to two facets of our congregation. The two facets are the challenges or “trouble” of the past year and the promise of “joy and peace” from the God of hope in 2023 and beyond as we celebrate the ministry and tenacity of Immanuel.

The Congregation Council and other leadership within the congregation gracefully, deliberately, and decisively managed staff changes and fluctuations. Our leadership was steadfastly committed to the care and support of our staff, the pastor, and the ongoing ministry of the church.

Not only has the council been vigilant in the financial well-being of the church, but it has monitored programs like YouthWorks during the summer months, which impacts our church, our congregation, and the Kansas City area at large.

Maybe the most challenging and ever-present component of “trouble” is the restoration, preservation, and repair of our aging facility. Again, the council and especially the Property Committee have worked together to ensure that as problems arise, they are examined and dealt with as much as possible.

Peace and joy emanating from the work of the Holy Spirit in our congregation is revealed in four ways. 1) You, the congregation, have gifted Immanuel’s ministry with generosity. Generosity for giving of your financial resources, but also answering the call to volunteer your time and your skills to all kinds of needs as we collectively do ministry.

2) A special gift of ministry given by you, the congregation, is relationship and care for each other. This congregation exemplifies openness to all types of people, circumstances, and a willingness to work to actively listen and care for others.

3) The Congregation Council is beginning a deliberate willingness to critically examine our future ministry. We are developing ways to discuss, analyze and act on a re-imagined embodiment of the Immanuel congregation. It is work that has begun in 2023 and will move forward in 2024.

4) Immanuel’s strength of purpose and tenacity to do ministry in the face of challenges comes from the work of the Holy Spirit. We have hope because the Triune God gives us that hope. Immanuel’s Congregation Council will continue to discern God’s will through the lens of hope.

Respectfully submitted,  
Connie Benolkin  
Congregation Council President

## **Pastor's Report**

Partners in Ministry,

This past year was a time of transition, both for myself and for Immanuel. The year began while we were still adhering to much more cautious protocols to limit the risk posed by COVID-19. As the year went on, and conditions improved, we scaled back these restrictions. While we have mostly moved away from that level of caution, I appreciate the ways in which this community continues to show care for one another, continuing to adapt our practices to serve the needs of all as best we can. It's why we continue to do things like stream our services online and offer online options to in-person meetings whenever possible.

As many are already aware, I also had some personal transitions during the year that affected my ability to be fully present as a leader and pastor in this community. I am grateful for the ways this congregation made room for me to heal, focusing on my mental health and the wellbeing of my family. A lot of people stepped forward to make sure the work of God continued unabated, and it is a blessing to see how what we confess to believe on Sunday mornings is lived out daily in the work of this congregation.

YouthWorks once again spent the summer in the building, and while it could have gone more smoothly, opening our doors to host groups from around the country makes it possible for many in our communities to be served. The future of YouthWorks is uncertain at the moment, as they consider potential organizational changes, but I hope we will continue to look for opportunities for ministry partnerships and hospitality to the wider church. Other important partnerships include the Gathering Table, where we spent the ELCA Day of Service in September, and Metropolitan Lutheran Ministry, who we work most closely with during the Christmas Store each December.

As pastor, one of my responsibilities is supervising the ongoing work of the congregation. We are blessed with a dedicated staff that works to keep the wheels moving, in addition to a big team of members who offer their skills, time, and themselves to lead the work of God in this place.

As we look to the future, we have some challenges ahead of us. Finances have been a concern for some time, and together with the Council, I am committed to meeting these challenges head-on. Through the generosity of this congregation, we have been working on a number of Financing a Faithful Future projects (some of them complete, some of them still ongoing). In the months ahead, we have organized a task force to take a serious look at what we can do to overcome the obstacles we face, working towards sustainable ministry that doesn't depend on a trust fund that will eventually be empty, we continue to operate without changes.

I am hopeful for the coming year, that we will find opportunities to put the gospel into action, and I am grateful to be a part of this life-giving work here at Immanuel.

In Peace,  
Pastor Micah Sievenpiper

## **Music Director's Report 2023**

2023 began with the choir rehearsing in Luther Hall on Sunday mornings and singing from the balcony as part of our continued efforts to observe social distancing protocols. Over the year we relaxed these measures with the choir returning to the choir loft for services on Easter and the resumption of the use of the choir room in September. All of us involved in music making have enjoyed returning to the front of the church and the improved musical communication that it enables. The choir rehearses on Sunday mornings at 8:30 and is always open to new singers.

Chasey Briggs and Jonathon Moldovan have continued in their roles as Choral Scholars within the choir. In addition to occasional solo singing, their presence continues to aid us in note learning, consistency and being able to plan ahead for a slightly larger and more varied range of repertoire. Robert Barthel's organ playing, accompanying, flexibility and good humor are also a large part of what enables the choir to do what they do.

The Handbell Choir continues to play about once a month. The choir is made up of a pool of possible ringers, from school age through retirement, with the common denominator being that everyone has some prior experience in reading music. Each time they ring in church, those who are available commit to a rehearsal on the Saturday morning before from 9 – 10 a.m. plus a rehearsal before the service. We are always happy to welcome new ringers, and we will teach you what you need to know about handling and ringing bells.

We have welcomed a number of guest instrumentalists in 2023, including a brass quartet on Easter Sunday, an oboe soloist in May, a trumpeter for Reformation Sunday, a cellist for All Saints Sunday and a harpist for the later service on Christmas Eve.

We also continue to be blessed by the ongoing offerings music by many individuals in the congregation. Of special note are Lisa Erickson, who plays in worship frequently throughout the year and Living Prayer who offered music for a number of services in 2023. I look forward to their continued contributions in 2024.

Suzanne Anderson  
Music Director

## **Endowment Trust Fund Committee**

Members: Milan Hanson | BJ Laven | Rick Sundell | Lynden Peters

The Endowment Trust Fund (ETF) was created in 1979 for the purpose of supporting the ministries of Immanuel Lutheran Church (ILC). In May of 2005, ILC entered into an agreement with UMB Trust Services to act as the professional investment manager of the ETF. Per ETF policies UMB is required to maintain a diversified portfolio. The ETF portfolio return on investment for 2023 was

11.90%, excluding cash and/or gift additions to the fund. Beginning fund value in January 2023 was \$472,866.03 and the fund value as of December 31, 2023 was \$438,816.51.

In September of 2020 the account management fee charged by UMB was reduced to 1.20%, for a guaranteed three-year period. In 2023 UMB agreed to keep the management fee at the 1.20% fee moving forward for an undefined amount of time.

In 2023 a total of \$100,000 was transferred to Immanuel's operating budget at three different periods to address both building repairs and ongoing operational needs. Additional withdrawal and transfers noted on the following summary reflect pass through transactions of stock sales and gifts by Immanuel members for various purposes.

Should you wish to discuss a gift to the ETF (including gifts by will and planned giving), please contact any of the members of the committee.

Submitted by Lynden Peters

## **Altar Guild**

Members: Melodee Blobaum, Chairwoman | Karen Bame | Nancy Beckmann | Beth Callstrom | Milan Hanson | Ingrid Peterson | Linda Peterson | Linda Taylor | Bonnie Thomas | Ellen Wilcox | Heather Winker | Pall Pressing, Altar Guild Auxiliary Member | Carolyn Wilson

Immanuel's Altar Guild continued its primary responsibilities of preparing the sanctuary for worship each Sunday in 2024.

Of note during the year is the adoption of stainless steel cups to hold juice in the Communion trays, thus reducing confusion about which cups hold juice and which hold wine. We are indebted to Bonnie Thomas for her suggestion.

Also of note is the beautiful new banner for the Christmas season designed and crafted by Ingrid Peterson. Expect several new banners in 2024. We are indebted to her for her extraordinary work.

And a final note of gratitude to Ken Beckmann for repairing the wobbly altar candlesticks.

## **Annual Report of Kenyan Children's Fund Program**

The only activity this year was issuing wire transfers of remaining funds to the program in Kenya, preparing/sending thank you notes to individuals making contributions, and sending a final close-out letter to 2023 donors, sharing the close-out letter with Immanuel's congregation via monthly newsletter, and posting the close-out letter on the KCF website. The close-out letter below provides a glimpse into the many accomplishments over the past twelve years.

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Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ:

To everything there is a season, and a time for every purpose under heaven.

Ecclesiastes 3:1

Following 12 years of amazing accomplishment made possible by your generosity, the Kenyan Children's Fund will cease U.S. operations Dec. 31, 2023. The KCF committee in Kenya will continue to seek grants and other forms of funding so it can continue to provide food, medical care, and education fees for 45 children and their guardians.

Thanks to you, U.S. donations funded KCF projects that will continue to benefit the Mamiloki village and its people for generations to come. For example, your contributions provided funding for:

- A water well, which now provides potable water for about 7,000 people. KCF worked with Water Missions, which drilled the well, installed the tap system, and trained the village people to maintain and repair it. Water for Life, the project that designated funds for the well, was the KCF's largest single project.

- A girls' bathroom at the school, ensuring for the first time that girls can stay in school throughout the day.

- Goats that provide milk, income, and offspring. We began with a few goats, and there now are many more.

- Emergency home repairs, which created structures that now protect children and their guardians from the heat and rain.

- Sleeping palettes that keep families from sleeping on dirt floors.

Crop seeds, especially for beans and maize. The resulting gardens help feed families, provide seeds for future plantings, and may provide some income.

We give thanks for Dr. John Helgesen, KCF chair emeritus, and for Jimmi Kimuyu, who has returned to his home village of Mamiloki to continue the fund's work there. Together, they founded the KCF in 2012 at Immanuel Lutheran Church in Kansas City and led efforts to make it viable. Along with volunteers who have served on the U.S. committee for more than a decade, they sought grants, hosted displays during synod events, sold purses and other items handmade by Kenyan artisans, hosted Water for Life Sundays and reached out to many people of faith to invite broad participation in the KCF

### **Memorials Commission Report**

This commission consists of three members of the congregation at large and one member appointed from within the council. Members may serve 3-year terms. The commission is responsible for receiving and disbursing certain memorial funds consistent with the donor's requests.

This year the Memorial Fund grew to \$20,402.77 at year's end. The Ann Erickson Memorial money, \$3,010, was designated to pay for the boiler. Karen Bame (3-year term ends 2023) Kathy Linder (3-year term ends 2023) (renewing)

Kathy Linder

### **Mutual Ministry Committee**

The Mutual Ministry Committee met 8 times in 2023 to consider issues, offer perspectives and share suggestions to ensure that Immanuel's ministry was the mutual concern of the congregation and our Pastor. In a confidential setting, the committee focused on discussing how Pastor and the congregation may share leadership, extend support, resolve misunderstandings, identify pragmatic solutions, suggest improvements, promote Immanuel's ministries and care for each other. I am grateful to all committee members who engaged in open and productive discussions throughout the year. My thanks go to Suzanne Steffen, Beth Callstrom, Jeri Blaske-Yungeberg, Milan Hanson, and Rick Sundell.

Respectfully submitted,  
Ellen Wilcox, Chair

### **Prayer Team**

Members: Melodee Blobaum | Beth Callstrom | Kathy Linder | Jean Nuernberger | Carol Powers | Carolyn Wilson | Milan Hanson (ad hoc)

Immanuel's Prayer Team offers opportunities for individuals to continue to build their relationship with God. We ceased offering the monthly Zoom vespers services during the summer, Mid-week Prayers are being sent electronically to all households, healing services were offered in person and streamed via YouTube in March and October, and The Longest Night service was offered in person and streamed via YouTube in December. Weekly Lenten meditation prompts were prepared and distributed on Sundays throughout the Lenten season.

The Prayer Team and Adult Education Committee invited Rev. Noni Strand to engage with Immanuel on the topic of Caring for Creation on April 30. Rev. Strand is the CSS Lutherans Restoring Creation Mission Table Chair. The Adult Forum presentation was The Power of One, How Scripture and faith shape our care of the earth. After worship, the congregation learned how it could care for the earth in Our Collective Power. Following lunch, Led and Fed by the Power of the Spirit invited participants to engage in spiritual practices to connect with

the earth. A prayer service to end gun violence was co-hosted with the Peace and Justice Committee in January and this service was followed by a reception.

The Prayer Team explored Group Spiritual Direction during 2023. Members of the Prayer Team will be offering Group Spiritual Direction opportunities to members of the congregation in 2024.

Members of the committee also pray daily for Immanuel and its needs, and for all people listed on the prayer list in the weekly bulletin. We also offer prayers for requests made privately that do not appear on the public list. If you have a private request, please send it to the prayer team email, [ImmanuelKCPrayerTeam@gmail.com](mailto:ImmanuelKCPrayerTeam@gmail.com)

Respectfully submitted,  
Jean Nuernberger, Prayer Team chair

### **Property Committee**

Members: Henrik Anderson | John Anderson | Mike Friedrich | Milan Hanson | Terry Kueker

Again 2023 saw continued work on our deferred maintenance projects. These efforts took place with Council's consent and contractual approval. All items were included in the Financially Faithfull Future campaign fund raising effort.

- Stained Glass window repairs and protective covering for the South side of the Sanctuary was completed.

Emergency and new maintenance items which were addressed:

- We experienced three electrical transformer failures during the year. The final two caused the lighting system supporting the Sanctuary pendants to fail. Thanks to the efforts of John Anderson, we were able to replace many of the component parts and restore service.
- Sanctuary pendant lighting was completely replaced with energy efficient LED bulbs. Many thanks to Henrik's son Kasper.
- The refrigerator in the Spong Kitchen failed and was replaced. Thank you, Henrik.
- The HVAC equipment in the attic leaked causing the ceiling over the Spong Common Room to fall. The ceiling has been repaired and the HVAC issue was addressed.
- New digital and programable thermostats have been installed in the Sanctuary and Luther Hall.

Planned 2024 projects include:

- Securing the cap stones over the choir loft window, thus completing our final Faithfull Future project.
- Obtaining bids and determining priorities on some outdoor lighting needs.
- Obtaining bids and determining priorities on our Sprinkler System.
- Obtaining bids for remodeling the Prayer Room and Meeting Room (the old Oromo meeting space) which will become a meeting room/library.
- Begin replacing the florescent lighting with LED lighting, as existing equipment fails. The effort will require rewiring the fixtures.

I would like to thank all the volunteers for their time and effort over the past year(s). Special thanks to the Stewardship Committee that organized and led several outdoor property cleanups during 2023, Marc Winkler who manages many of the Genesee House problems, and Don Arney who always seems to be around when needed.

The Property Committee is a volunteer effort and we thank the congregation for their patience as we address issues. The committee is in need of additional members to support the needs of our facilities. Anyone that would like to participate please contact the office or one of the members listed below.

Henrik Andersen - John Anderson -Mike Friedrich-Milan Hanson- Terry Kueker  
Respectfully Submitted, Terry Kueker

### **Social Ministry 2023 Report**

Please see the budget categories titled **Ministry to Those at a Distance** and **Ministry to the Community** for the list of the organizations that Immanuel supports. Immanuel has long been partners with these nonprofit organizations, which do important work that Immanuel could not accomplish on its own.

Our committee created a 2023 calendar of events to keep Immanuel involved in ministry. Here are highlights.

- March & April – We collected specifically requested food for KU Campus Ministry, which has been feeding increasing numbers of students, faculty and staff, and needed help to restock pantry shelves. After Easter, we sent a carload of food to Lawrence.
- July – Christmas in July - A list of gifts needed by MLM for the Christmas Store was publicized, and we collected gifts throughout the month.
- August – Social Ministry led ILC in collecting school backpacks and school supplies for students at two nearby elementary schools, each of which serves a low-income population.
- September – Our committee’s goal was to offer a variety of God’s Work Our Hands projects ... at least one that took volunteers outside of our walls and at least one more that brought volunteers together inside our building. As a result, two projects benefitted people in need outside our doors and a third prepared our building for continued ministry: -- Saturday, Sept. 9, Immanuel volunteers came together at Gathering Table in northeast KC to put together more than 1,000 sack lunches for hungry people served at that location. -- Sunday, Sept. 10, a multi-generational group of Immanuel people loaded more than 120 backpacks with the school supplies that were donated during August – a fun activity for adults and Sunday School students. The backpacks were evenly divided between Gordon Parks Elementary and Frank Ruston Elementary schools, both of which serve low-income students in neighborhoods near Immanuel. Also on that Sunday, many members cleaned and organized the Luther Hall kitchen, restoring order after hosting YouthWorks during the summer months.



- October – Immanuel worshippers had the opportunity to donate to CROP Walk, which took place Oct. 14. Those donations continue to support the fight against hunger locally & worldwide.
- November – The Christmas tree went up again to collect more gifts for the MLM Christmas Store. Sunday School students made tree ornaments with gift items listed on them to remind shoppers about most-needed gifts.
- December – ILC hosted the MLM Christmas Store Dec. 7-10 with ILC members on hand each day to help with logistics and hospitality.

The social ministry committee members are happy to create opportunities through which the caring generosity of Immanuel's people can shine.

2023 Social Ministry Committee: Karen Bame, Pam Edvalds, Linda Fewell, Rick Sundell and Patti Winkler

### **Stewardship Task Force 2023**

The Stewardship Task Force was organized in September, 2023, and met in person five times through October. Members of the Task Force were Don Arney, CeCe Atherton, Mike Ortmann, Catie Tomlin, and Carolyn Wilson, Convener. Council members Connie Benolkin and Linda Fox contributed greatly to our efforts.

The task of this Task Force was to present a theme, use publicity of various means and to launch and complete the drive. Our expectation was to raise money to help fund ministry for the ensuing year.

The theme was Fulfilling the Mission. We understood the mission of the church is ongoing and to be Christ's presence in the world using individual and corporate means at our disposal. Some the means require time and others require money.

The means we used were Temple Talks, Bulletin Announcements and the Parish News. Along with the Finance Committee, we presented one Adult Forum. In October we mailed a Stewardship Letter and a Pledge to each member household.

The Finance Committee report will reflect the initial amount pledged for 2024. We fulfilled the mission with thanksgiving for pledges that had come and those still to be received. We ended the campaign with a celebration on November 12, 2023. CeCe Atherton, Melodee Blobaum, and EB Walker received special awards. They were humble in their acceptance.

The next phase will be the "talent" part of stewardship but presented in a whole new way. Look for new ways to volunteer!

Respectfully submitted,  
Carolyn Wilson, Convener

## **Sunday School Committee**

The Immanuel Sunday School class is small, but we have a lot of fun while learning about our Lord! For the first half of 2023, we typically had 5-10 students, and the second half of the year, usually 2-6 (several have aged out).

In February, the class brought back the tradition of making instruments that we shook during service while putting away the Alleluias for Lent, a tradition we had to miss for a couple of years. It was so great for the kids to be able to do this again!

Easter in April was celebrated with an egg hunt for all children in attendance.

In May, we met at a local park for a fun outing to wrap up the school year.

On 9/10, we helped stuff backpacks for God's Work, Our Hands. The following week we met in the Gathering Space for our first regular class of the new school year.

In November, we helped the Stewardship Committee with a couple of noisy offerings during service. We had decorated some collection tins during Sunday School to help with this project.

We had a fun Christmas party/lesson on 12/17, then joined the Adult Forum to sing some Christmas carols. Connie Ross once again provided our students with lovely Christmas tree ornaments.

Elizabeth Hastings (curriculum), Tori Friedrich (seasonal activities), and Jeri Blaske-Yungeberg (supervisor/administration duties) make up the Sunday School leadership team. They serve as the primary teachers, receiving back-up as needed from other parents/caregivers/members. We meet as 1 large group in the Gathering Space with 1 rotating teacher each week.

## **Nominating Committee**

### Church Council

Henrik Andersen  
Bonnie Thomas  
Randy Callstrom  
Leilani Boyd

### Synod Assembly Representatives

Ellen Parson  
Mike Ortman

### Nominating Committee

Chair-Bonnie Thomas  
Ingrid Peterson  
BJ Laven  
Jeff Fox  
Lori Kueker

### Audit Committee

Rick Sundell

### Mutual Ministry

Tracy Atherton\*

\*Milan Hanson would like to run for a 2nd term, however, he is currently experiencing health challenges and is uncertain he can commit to the position. If able, we would like to nominate Tracy Atherton and allow Milan the opportunity to return to his role, should he be able to

## Proposed 2024 Budget

Account Category	Historical Actuals						2023 Full Year			2024 Budget		
	2017 Actual	2018 Actual	2019 Actual	2020 Actual	2021 Actual	2022 Actual	2023 Projection	2023 Budget	vs. Full Yr Budget	2024 Budget	vs. 2023 Projection	vs. 2023 Budget
Total Offerings	346,916	357,568	361,036	340,334	425,503	312,222	259,705	333,633	(73,928)	265,500	5,795	(68,133)
Total Other Revenues	48,600	59,539	77,186	54,471	56,581	64,546	71,206	62,450	8,756	66,850	(4,356)	4,400
<b>TOTAL REVENUES (w/o ETF transfers)</b>	<b>395,516</b>	<b>417,107</b>	<b>438,222</b>	<b>394,805</b>	<b>482,084</b>	<b>376,769</b>	<b>330,911</b>	<b>396,083</b>	<b>(65,172)</b>	<b>332,350</b>	<b>1,439</b>	<b>(63,733)</b>
Total Global Outreach	27,600	30,800	32,700	32,700	27,380	23,470	22,544	27,380	(4,836)	25,040	2,496	(2,340)
Total Local Outreach	9,513	11,690	12,140	7,295	12,425	5,145	4,130	8,245	(4,115)	8,195	4,065	(50)
Total Christian Education	1,413	1,007	1,716	489	466	435	974	1,250	(276)	1,400	426	150
Total Outreach & Fellowship	928	2,590	1,690	1,716	1,056	1,247	2,699	1,850	849	1,750	(949)	(100)
Total Music	8,003	7,228	7,751	3,416	4,466	7,188	7,644	10,226	(2,582)	10,910	3,266	684
Total Worship	2,449	2,805	3,030	1,606	1,719	2,075	1,384	1,705	(321)	1,511	127	(194)
Total Publications & Library	1,917	1,254	1,713	1,469	1,648	1,358	593	1,866	(1,273)	769	176	(1,097)
Total Postage & Communications	5,374	4,527	5,138	3,906	4,397	4,321	3,905	4,456	(551)	4,000	95	(456)
Total Other Congregational Min.	1,914	1,959	1,896	1,376	632	710	469	700	(231)	700	231	-
Total Personnel	196,130	182,969	193,099	183,169	190,223	190,199	183,065	188,516	(5,452)	198,104	15,039	9,588
Total Other Parish Administration	29,152	20,119	23,797	20,729	24,706	28,627	26,465	23,522	2,943	25,870	(595)	2,348
Total Repairs & Maintenance	40,922	34,674	31,527	34,457	41,377	80,704	48,010	153,731	(105,721)	58,280	10,270	(95,451)
Total Utilities	41,865	52,627	47,310	36,026	32,920	57,970	52,638	56,700	(4,062)	58,000	5,362	1,300
Total Other Facilities	128,222	129,678	116,438	102,762	105,682	106,910	110,473	111,084	(611)	119,107	8,635	8,023
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>495,404</b>	<b>483,927</b>	<b>479,946</b>	<b>431,116</b>	<b>449,098</b>	<b>510,357</b>	<b>464,991</b>	<b>591,231</b>	<b>(126,240)</b>	<b>513,636</b>	<b>48,645</b>	<b>(77,595)</b>
<b>NET PROFIT FROM OPERATIONS</b>	<b>(99,888)</b>	<b>(66,820)</b>	<b>(41,724)</b>	<b>(36,312)</b>	<b>32,987</b>	<b>(133,588)</b>	<b>(134,080)</b>	<b>(195,148)</b>	<b>61,067</b>	<b>(181,286)</b>	<b>(47,206)</b>	<b>13,861</b>
Total Transfers (to)/from Endowment Trust Fund	87,000	66,835	42,000	17,000	(15,679)	70,901	112,477	(39,833)	152,311	-	(112,477)	39,833
Prior Period Adjustment	(13,309)	(1,471)	-	-	-	941	(10,901)	-	(10,901)	-	10,901	-
Total Forgiveness of PPP Loans	-	-	-	26,300	26,300	29,345	-	-	-	-	-	-
Release from Restricted Funds	-	-	-	-	-	-	161	-	161	-	(161)	-
<b>NET PROFIT / (LOSS)</b>	<b>(26,196)</b>	<b>(1,457)</b>	<b>276</b>	<b>6,988</b>	<b>43,608</b>	<b>(32,401)</b>	<b>(32,344)</b>	<b>(234,981)</b>	<b>202,638</b>	<b>(181,286)</b>	<b>(148,943)</b>	<b>53,695</b>

## **Resolutions**

1. RESOLVED , that we offer thanks to God for the gift of Jesus Christ, God's work, and God's love; that we ask forgiveness for our sins; that we pray for growth in our Christian faith; and that we seek strength and guidance from God to serve faithfully in the coming year.
2. RESOLVED , that we glorify God through worship and the ministries we offer for the sake of the gospel and to demonstrate God's love in the world.
3. RESOLVED , that we thank our capable staff — Suzanne Anderson, Robert Barthel, Abbey Brightwell-Gray, Phillip Cooper, Rev. Micah Sievenpiper — for their faithful service during the past year and their gifts in ministry as we continue our faith journey together.
4. RESOLVED, that we thank the many Immanuel volunteers whose service to every aspect of our ministry is as inspiring as it is vital.
5. RESOLVED , that the minutes of the Annual Meeting will be reviewed and approved by the Congregation Council at its first regularly scheduled meeting following the Annual Meeting.