



Evangelical
Lutheran Church
in America



ANNUAL REPORT 2024

ANNUAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING

OPENING LITURGY

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

God, we praise you and give you thanks.

You are good, and your mercy endures forever.

You gave us a garden with good food to eat.

We praise you for food that nourishes us.

You rescued your people from slavery.

We praise you for freedom.

You gave us prophets to correct, rebuke and encourage us.

We bless you for your justice and mercy.

You gave us your Son, Jesus, to love, redeem and save us.

We praise you for his death and resurrection.

You gave us your Holy Spirit to be our Advocate and Comforter.

We bless you for the gifts of every tribe and nation.

Strengthen your church with every spiritual gift

and commission us again to be your servant people.

Multiply in us the fruit of the spirit:

love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control.

Send us in your love and mercy,

that the world may know you and praise you.

Now Thank We All Our God



1 Now thank we all our God with hearts and hands and voices,
2 Oh, may this bounteous God through all our life be near us,
3 All praise and thanks to God the Father now be given,



who wondrous things has done, in whom this world rejoices;
with ever joyful hearts and blessed peace to cheer us,
the Son, and Spirit blest, who reign in highest heaven,



who, from our mothers' arms, has blessed us on our way
and keep us all in grace, and guide us when perplexed,
the one eternal God, whom earth and heaven adore;



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

Evangelical Lutheran Worship, 840

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

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

Let us pray.

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

Amen.

AGENDA
KNIFE RIVER LUTHERAN CHURCH
ANNUAL MEETING OF THE CONGREGATION
10:00 am Sunday, February 9, 2025

Call to Order: President Helene Hedlund	<u>Page</u>
Determination of Quorum: Acting Secretary, Jan Swanson	
Opening Prayer: Pastor Susan Berge	
 Approval of Agenda	 1-2
 Approval of Minutes of Annual Meeting held February 11, 2024.	 3-4
 Congregational Ministries & Leaders (Informational Only)	 5
 Reports (Motion to accept will be entertained after all reports are presented):	
Council President	6-7
Pastor's Report /Statistical Report	8-11
Worship Committee	12
Women of the ELCA	12
Food Shelf	12
Prayer Chain	12
Endowment	13-14
Creation Care	14-15
Christian Education	16
Quilters	17
Website/YouTube	17
Technical Team	18
Property Committee	18
Columbarium	19
 Approval of Reports	
Treasurer's Report – Outline	20
2024 Treasurer's Report	21-22
2024 General Operations Cash Flow	23
2024 Money Market Account	24
2024 Community & World Outreach	25
2025 Expense Budget	26-27
2024 Balance Sheet	28
Approval of 2025 Budget	
Audit Report	29-30
 Approval of Treasurer and Audit Reports	

NEW BUSINESS:

Introduction of 'Youth Representative to the Council'

Election of Officers

Randi Alreck is leaving the council after serving: 2/03/2019 – 2/9/2025 council – 3 terms
Nancy Dent is leaving the council after serving: 2/28/2021 – 2/9/2025 council – 2 terms
Craig Whiting is leaving the council after serving: 2/28/2021 – 2/9/2025 council – 2 terms

The Knife River Lutheran Church Nominating Committee

Slate of Nominees

Office	Name	Term Expires
<u>Church Council</u>		
President	Helene Hedlund	2027 (can serve 1 more 2-year terms)
Vice President	David Grong	2026 (can serve 2 more 2-year terms)
Secretary	Kay Bloom	2026 (can serve 2 more 2-year terms)
Treasurer	Ed Lee	2026 (can serve 1 more 2-year term)
Members	Steve Berger	2027 (can serve 2 more 2-year terms)
	Anne Jasperson	2027 (can serve 2 more 2-year terms)
	Jillian McCorison	2027 (can serve 2 more 2-year terms)
	Vicky Gorman	2026 (can serve 1 more 2-year terms)
	Jan Swanson	2026 (can serve 2 more 2-year terms)
	LeAllan Estrem	2026 (can serve 2 more 2 year terms)
<u>Endowment Committee</u>	Debbie Allert	2027 (2 year term)
	Phil Berge	2026 (2 year term)
	Lee Bujold	2027 (3 year term)
	Scott Jasperson	2027 (3 year term)
	Melanie McMillion	2026 (2 year term)
<u>2024 Auditors</u>	Scott Jasperson	1 year term
	Beth Anderson	1 year term
<u>2024 Synod Assembly Delegates</u>	Linda Grong	1 year term
	David Grong	1 year term

Constitutional Amendment – Vote

Save The Date: Pastor Susan concludes her ministry and Celebration. May 25, 2025

Other

Closing Remarks – President Helene Hedlund

Closing Prayer – Pastor Susan

Adjourn

DRAFT ONLY
KNIFE RIVER LUTHERAN CHURCH
2023 ANNUAL MEETING MINUTES OF THE CONGREGATION
10:00 am Sunday, February 11, 2024

Meeting called to order by President Helene Hedlund
Quorum determined by Secretary Jan Swanson – 47present
Opening Prayer by Pastor Susan Berge

Approval of Agenda – Motion and 2nd to approve **CARRIED**

Approval of 2022 Annual Meeting Minutes held February 12, 2023 – pages 3 & 4 Motion and 2nd
Discussion to change wording regarding Landscape Report orally given. Change new committee to task force. **CARRIED**

Acknowledgment of Congregation Ministries and Leaders – page 5 Information Only

Approval of Annual Reports pages 6-20

- Council President
- Pastor's Report/Statistical Report – Pastor shared highlights from her report. Encouraged by the growth in attendance particularly regarding our youth participation.
- Worship Committee – Pat M. wanted to add the Bells to groups that have musically expanded our Sunday options
- Women of the ELCA
- Food Shelf
- Prayer Chain
- Endowment
- Creation Care
- Christian Education
- Handbells, dulcimers, Sticks & Strings
- Quilters
- Website/YouTube
- Technical Team
- Columbarium
- Property Committee

Motion and 2nd to approve annual reports **CARRIED**

Treasurer's Report outline on pages 21-27

Ed Lee reported it was a very good year. We are debt free. Highlight new record in community and world outreach.

- Motion and 2nd to approve Treasurer's Report **CARRIED**
- A Big Thank You to Michael Dent, Melanie McMillion and all the individuals who count and record the offerings for all their work in making the weekly financial details work for KRLC

Approval of 2024 Budget

- o The projected budget for 2024 is 11.5% higher than in 2023 with a total operating budget of \$146,235.04. 11.5 % sounds like a big increase Clarification/correction on page 21 should read: 2023 Budget vs 2024 Budget +\$1,256.45 per mo; instead of 2023 Donations vs 2024 Budget +\$316.31 per mo
Motion and 2nd to approve 2024 Budget **CARRIED**

Audit Report page 28

- A detailed review was conducted by the Audit team. Special thank you to Craig Whiting and Scott Jaspersen.

Old Business – None **New Business** – None

Election of Officers/Members at Large

Nominating Committee – Vice President David Grong; Steve Carlson and Leeann Olson

Bill Meyer is leaving the council after serving: 2/28/2021 – 2/11/2024 – 1.5 terms

Jan Swanson is leaving the Secretarial position to serve as council member after serving:
2/12/2023 – 2/11/2024 – 1 year

The Knife River Lutheran Church Nominating Committee

Slate of Nominees

Church Council

President	Helene Hedlund	2025 (can serve 2 more 2-year terms)
Vice President	David Grong	2026 (can serve 2 more 2-year terms)
Secretary	Kay Bloom	2026 (can serve 2 more 2-year terms)
Treasurer	Ed Lee	2026 (can serve 1 more 2-year term)
Members	Randi Alreck	2025 (Final Term)
	Craig Whiting	2025 (can serve 1 more 2-year terms)
	Nancy Dent	2025 (can serve 1 more 2-year terms)
	Vicky Gorman	2026 (can serve 1 more 2-year terms)
	Jan Swanson	2026 (can serve 2 more 2-year terms)
	LeAllan Estrem	2026 (can serve 2 more 2-year terms)

Endowment

Debbie Allert	2025 (1-year term)
Phil Berge	2026 (2-year terms)
Lee Bujold	2027 (3-year terms)
Scott Jaspersen	2027 (3-year terms)
Melanie McMillion	2026 (2-year terms)

2024 Auditors

Scott Jaspersen	1 year term
Craig Whiting	1 year term

2024 Synod Assembly

Delegates

Kay Bloom	1 year term
Randi Alreck	1 year term

Motion Moved and 2nd to approve KRLC Nominating Committee's Slate of Nominees **CARRIED**

Closing Remarks – President Helene Hedlund

Shared her heartfelt thanks to 'Pastor Susan and the 2023 Council for their work and commitment to our church community along with their support of me in my role as Council President. I celebrate with you all the individuals who volunteer their time to ensure that KRLC continues to grow and be recognized as the Heart of the Community. It's been a great year and I am certain that 2024 will be the same.' *Helene Hedlund*

Closing Prayer – Pastor Susan

Adjourn – Motion and 2nd **CARRIED**

Respectfully submitted,
Jan Swanson – Secretary

Congregational Ministries and Leaders

Church Council Members as presented for congregational vote – 2/9/2025

Berger, Steve
Bloom, Kay - Secretary
Estrem, LeAllan
Gorman, Vicky
Grong, David – Vice President
Hedlund, Helene – President
Jaspersen, Anne
Lee, Ed – Treasurer
McCorison, Jillian
Swanson, Jan

Christian Education Committee

Alreck, Randi
Berge, Susan – Pastor
Burkhard, Lawrence – Chair
Jaspersen, Anne
McCorison, Jillian
Smith, Carmen
Swanson, Jan

Columbarium Committee

Berge, Susan - Pastor
Bujold, Lee
Carlson, Steve – Chair
Hubbartt, Susan – Secretary
Lee, Ed – as KRLC Treasurer
Ojard, Nancy
von Goertz, Paul

Creation Care

Berg, Bill
Berge, Susan - Pastor
Burkhard, Lawrence – Chair
Gorman, Vicky
Jaspersen, Anne
Jaspersen, Scott

Endowment Committee

Allert, Debbie
Berge, Phil
Berge, Susan – Pastor – (Advisory Member)
Bujold, Lee
Hedlund, Helene – (Adv. Member as Cong. Pres.)
Jaspersen, Scott
McMillion, Melanie

Lectio Divina

Alreck, Randi & Berge, Susan (Pastor) – Co-Leaders

Men's Group – Ed Lee & Scott Jaspersen, coordinators

Newsletter

Grong, Linda – Editor
Jaspersen, Scott & Anne – assembly & mailing

Planning Team

Berge, Susan – Pastor
Bujold, Lee, Randi Alreck & Anne Jaspersen – as Church Mouse
Grong, Linda – as Newsletter Editor
Hedlund, Helene – as council president
Lee, Ed – as council treasurer
McMillion, Melanie – as calendar coordinator

Prayer Chain

Beardsley, Carmen – Coordinator

Property Committee

Scott Jaspersen, Bjorn Ojard – Co-Chairs
Bill Berg, Steve Carlson, Nancy Dent, David Grong, Anna-Lu Hovis, Ed Lee, Bjorn Ojard, Dick Sigel, Pete Stoddard, Craig Whiting.

Quilters

Hubbartt, Susan - Leader

Stewardship Committee

Berge, Susan – Pastor
Grong, David – Chair (as Council VP)
Lee, Ed
McMillion, Melanie

Technology Team

Allert, Jim
Berge, Phil
Shelerud, Scott

Women of the ELCA (W/ELCA)

Anderson, Beth – Treasurer
Grong, Linda – President
Jaspersen, Anne – Sunshine Co-Chair
Safstrom, Gail – Sunshine Co-Chair

Worship Committee

Allert, Jim
Berge, Susan – Pastor
Carlson, Carol
Dent, Nancy
Jackson, Delores
Meyer, Pat - Chair
Olson, LeeAnn
Shelerud, Scott
Stoddard, Patti

2024 Council President's Report to the Knife River Lutheran Church Congregation

Greetings to all from the KRLC Council

The past year has brought us so much joy as well as heartache, as we said goodbye to too many members of our congregation. But in the end, it was an unforgettable year full of wonderful memories that remind us of how truly blessed we are.

2024 has been a busy year for our Council. I hope you will all be able to extend a thank you to those who served.

David Grong, VP	Jan Swanson
Kay Bloom Secretary	Nancy Dent
Ed Lee, Treasurer	Vicki Gorman
Pastor Susan	LeAllan Estrem
Randi Alreck	Craig Whiting

A special thank you to Randi, Nancy and Craig who have completed their respective terms.

Meeting Schedule. We have maintained the changes to the meeting schedule established in 2023. We expanded the in-person meetings from quarterly to bi-monthly. To reduce the need for email discussions and/or votes, we had added a bi-monthly “stand-up” meeting to address interim issues. This revised format has been working well to meet the needs of the congregation. As always, members of the congregation are invited to attend our meetings

Priority Outcomes. The council continued three identified areas of priority: Communication, Recognition as “Heart of the Community” and to routinely assess/adjust decision making. These priority outcomes help guide the council in its work on behalf of KRLC. As such,

- Jim Allert and Nancy Dent completed modification of the KRLC website. krlc.org Thank you.
- The council completed its annual review of policies. We have also continued our review of the policies to ensure they are working and consistent with the church Bylaws.
- We are currently exploring a method to archive documents and policies and to provide easy access. In the meantime, you can find most policies on the website.
- The congregational/community picnics continued throughout the summer. They have been well attended. The plan is to schedule random winter indoor picnics throughout the winter and resume the summer format this spring/summer.
- KRLC is fortunate to have many volunteers to do the work of the church and community.
 - As such, you will notice that many of our confirmed youth are also volunteering as it relates to Christian Ed and during the service. Their presence is greatly appreciated.

- o Many members volunteered for the Julebyen celebration, specifically by coordinating the Live Nativity
- o The Church opened its lower level for food assembly and warming areas for volunteers.
- o Thank you to the many individuals who play important roles in the Church whether it is serving on a committee/task force, offering a ride, offering a prayer, greeter, ushering, acolytes, choir and band members. It takes many to make a church operate successfully. Easy is the task where many share the work.
- We hosted the summer Fun Fest with all proceeds going to ELCA World Hunger initiatives.

As we look forward to the coming year, there will be exciting changes. As you are aware, Pastor Susan has announced her retirement date of June 1. Her last service will be May 25, 2025. During this time of transition, we want to celebrate her ministry as she prepares for a new and exciting chapter in her life. Of course, there will be moments of great joy and likewise, moments of sadness as we prepare for her departure. As we maneuver through the processes of an Interim pastor, establishing a Call Committee and ultimately choosing a new pastor, it is good to remember that KRLC is a welcoming and forward-looking congregation.

In closing, I would like to thank Pastor Susan and the 2024 Council for their work and commitment to our church community along with their support of me in my role as Council President. It's been a great year ... I look forward to serving our congregation in 2025.

Submitted by,
Helene Hedlund, Council President

ANNUAL REPORT FROM THE PASTOR FOR 2024

INTRODUCTION

2024 was a year of vibrant ministry for our congregation. *Some of the story is told through numbers:* we received 12 new members, baptized 4 children and 1 adult, and confirmed 3 teens. We again placed 1st in our Synod for giving to the ELCA World Hunger Appeal per confirmed members, and so again won the Holy Cow! Look What We Did For World Hunger! Award. *Some of the story is told through what is new:* a new mixed voice choir, JOYFUL, has begun, directed by new member, Patti Stoddard. We have upgraded audio-visual equipment and made changes in our Memorial Garden. Our website has been beautifully updated and changed. *Some of the story is told through what is ongoing:* our wide assortment of musical ensembles, fellowship and study opportunities, and community picnics and events have continued to gather people, old and new, together. Our Council has met monthly and has worked hard on our constitution and by-laws to do necessary updating. Our worship has remained a vibrant component of ministry, as we worship outside all summer long, feature so many styles of music within our worship all year, and provide the opportunity for people to worship from home through our live-streaming. Our average worship attendance was 65, the highest ever, indicative of the appeal of our efforts. This past year we have grieved some significant deaths and celebrated glad happenings together, demonstrating the value of being a part of this “heart of the community”. God has been good to us!

HIGHLIGHTS OF EACH SEASONS

WINTER-

- * Our Annual Meeting was held, celebrating the previous year’s ministry.
- * Reports were filed as required by our congregation for the Synod and Churchwide.
- * We celebrated the 100th birthday of our matriarch, Audrey Carlson, on February 18!
- * I took a month-long Sabbatical, focused on Biblical studies and dulcimer music. Members of the congregation filled in beautifully in every way imaginable.
- * Our new choir, JOYFUL, started up, led by Patti Stoddard.
- * The Lenten season began with Ash Wednesday worship and continued with Wednesday evening study led by Randi Alreck.

SPRING-

- * We performed 3 Holy Baptisms
- * We received 6 new members
- * We moved through the season of Lent into the observance of Holy Week and the celebration of Easter.
- * We recognized our graduating senior.
- * Church picnics started up at the end of May and were a great community gathering opportunity.
- * Our Synod Assembly was held. We again won the Holy Cow Award!
- * VBS happened June 10-12

SUMMER-

- *Worship moved outdoors, lots of good energy.
- *Our tech team (Scott Shelerud, Jim Allert, Phil Berge—thank them often and sincerely!) had new challenges to face to live stream outside.
- *3 of our young people were confirmed on June 30.
- *Church picnics continued through early fall and were very popular, bringing in community members as well as church members.
- *Special services included Bluegrass service, Gospel service, Blessing of the Animals

FALL-INTO DECEMBER

- *We worked on our patio to improve safety and accessibility.
- *We started up Children's Church and Kid's Connect, along with Confirmation.
- *Worship moved indoors, but attendance remained strong.
- *All of our musical ensembles started up.
- *6 new members were received.
- *We held a successful Fall Fun Fest
- *Special services like All Saint's Day, Advent, Christmas were held.
- *Our Live Nativity at Julebyen was a wonderful and joyful retelling of the Nativity story.

OTHER ITEMS OF NOTE...

STEWARDSHIP

Once again, we had a strong year financially, essentially breaking even, remaining debt free, and gaining in our total means. Additionally, we supported numerous special offerings, especially around the Holidays (Elder Care Giving Tree, God's Barnyard, Red Bucket Salvation Army). To be able, in addition, to give so much away for outreach is truly commendable! Please see the stewardship report. Many, many thanks are due to Michael Dent and Ed Lee, our bookkeeper and treasurer! They do a tremendous job!

PASTORAL MINISTRY

Pastoral care is an aspect of ministry that I particularly find meaningful and satisfying; that's probably a good thing, as we have continued to have many needs for such care in our church and community. I made about 97 home/residence visits, 3 hospital visits, 25 extended phone calls, 56 brief indoor church visits. I had 15 pastoral care sessions. I performed 2 weddings, 5 baptisms, confirmed 3 students, celebrated First Communion with 4 students, and performed 3 funeral/memorial/graveside services, and we received 12 members.

MINISTRIES WITHIN THE COMMUNITY

The main vehicle for my pastoral involvement in the surrounding community is through the Two Harbors Ministerium. Typically, we provide ministry for the nursing homes, we sponsor community services each year, and we oversee the Neighbor to Neighbor Thrift Store.

MINISTRIES WITHIN THE CONFERENCE

Our conference is the Lake Superior Conference, stretching from Proctor/Duluth up to Grand Marais/Hovland. There are five such conferences within our Synod. Monthly meetings are held for pastors like myself to attend, which combine education with fellowship and support, most of them virtual this year. I attended just a few, because of schedule conflicts.

MINISTRIES WITHIN THE SYNOD

Each pastor in our Synod has obligations within our Synod. These include attending the Synod Assembly, attending conference and cluster meetings, and perhaps serving on special task forces. This last year, as in years past, I served on the Guidelines for Pastors and Lay Leaders task force. Our Synod also sponsors a spiritual growth group for clergy, Grounded in Grace, which meets monthly, of which I am a part. I attended the Synod Assembly as well.

CONTINUING EDUCATION/SABBATICAL

Each Pastor is encouraged to pursue Continuing Education each year. I attended weekly text study meetings, monthly Grounded in Grace meetings. And I was blest with a one-month sabbatical of Biblical study time!

MOVING INTO 2025.....

*My upcoming retirement on June 1 of this year means that the congregation will be entering a time of transition and visioning. Happily, we have excellent leadership, wonderful Synodical guidance, and we are in a strong position in most every way imaginable to work through this transition.

*I will be making sure records are in order and all is in place for whatever/whoever is up next.

*We will continue to explore the best avenues for ministries with children and teens, including our program year education programs and perhaps some kind of summer VBX experience.

*We will want to build upon our great foundation of community involvement with meals, picnics, and other events, so that we are utilizing our beautiful grounds, kitchen, and building for the good of our community.

IN CONCLUSION...

Once again, we may be grateful for all the ways God has blessed us to be a blessing; to live out our mission as the Heart of the Community!

Respectfully submitted,

Pastor Susan Berge

PASTOR'S STATISTICAL REPORT

KNIFE RIVER LUTHERAN CHURCH

JANUARY 1-DECEMBER 31, 2024

Holy Baptisms: 5: April 14-2 Baptisms: Cora and Henrik Swendsen; April 28 Earl Nelson; June 29- Anthony Hubbartt; July 14-Emmett James Ross

Weddings: 2 Aug. 17-wedding: Katarina Hanson and Joseph Bredow

Sept. 21-wedding: Maggie Swardstrom and Tim Chapman

New Members: 12

May 26-6 new members received: Pat and Steve Berger, Nancy Hong, Janet Emery,
Taylor and Alexis Ross

Oct. 27 6 -new members received: Katarina and Joe Bredow; Eric and Vi Hanson; Audrey
Hanson; Barb Eaton

Funerals/Memorial Services: 4

Sept. 28-memorial service: DeWayne Rubedor

Oct. 3-funeral: Audrey Carlson

Oct. 14-memorial service: Paul Struve

Nov. 2-memorial service: George Krog

Confirmations: 3- Anthony Hubbartt, Gunny Skadberg, Olivia Smith on June 30

Year-end Totals for 2024:

Baptized (last year was 248) — 262

Confirmed/Voting (last year was 184) - 196

Average worship attendance (last year was 60) - 65

WORSHIP COMMITTEE REPORT FOR 2024

Submitted by Patricia Meyer, Chair

As a congregation, we are very lucky to have the talent within our congregation and their willingness to share with us. Included in that talent are two ordained ministers, and other church members willing to step in and help. This was evident last winter when Pastor Susan was on Sabbatical for a month.

Another blessing is our music program. We have Carol Carlson and Lawrence Burkhard leading our weekly service, with Sticks and Strings led by Phil Berge, and our dulcimer group, Sweet Chaos led by Jim Allert and Pastor Susan, and the bells Knife River Ringers with LeeAnn Olson, adding to our services. The addition of Patti and Pete Stoddard to our congregation brought a new choir, JOYFUL led by Patti. It has been awesome to make music with her. It was also wonderful to regroup Seraphim, the women's choir, over Christmas.

Some of our special services included the ability to worship in our outdoor garden last summer, Confirmations, Bluegrass and Gospel service, animal blessing, weddings, baptisms, and several funerals. We also received several new members, and our average attendees has grown from 62 to 65. It's great to see so many young people attending Sunday school.

Our tech team of Scott Shelerud, Phil Berge, and Jim Allert have really advanced our capability to reach our congregation and others wherever they are in the world. Melanie keeps everything in order and running smoothly, finding us ushers and lectors and everything else that happens behind the scenes. Jan Swanson finds us communion assistants. Also, thanks to our Altar Guild people who have us ready for our service every Sunday and more.

Thanks to all who keep KRLC the wonderful place we have to worship.

WELCA REPORT FOR 2024

Submitted by Linda Grong, President

WELCA continues to meet September to May, skipping December due to the Holiday rush. Our meetings are hosted by volunteer members and are the second Tuesday of the month at 6PM.

Our study of choice is the Gather Magazine, which had some printing and publishing oops this past year. Hopefully they will be on track for 2025. If you have thoughts regarding projects or church related activities that would benefit from our contribution, please contact Linda Grong, President or Beth Anderson, Treasurer. All are welcome here.

TWO HARBORS AREA FOOD SHELF REPORT FOR 2024

Submitted by Kay Struve

The year of 2024 the Knife River Lutheran Church contributed \$6242.50 to the THAF. The total visits to the food shelf were nearly 3,000. (488 households and 1126 individuals were served.) The volunteers' hours for the year were nearly 3,000. Thank you to the congregation for the continued support and volunteer hours given the food shelf.

PRAYER CHAIN REPORT FOR 2024

Submitted by Carmen Beardsley, Coordinator

The prayer chain committee is a small, devout group of individuals who are prepared to offer immediate prayer for those in need and/or those who prefer to keep their prayer needs private. In 2024, we averaged 3-4 requests per month. Prayer requests can be emailed to me at carmen.i.beardsley@gmail.com. If you choose to call, my mobile number is 218-830-0956. If I don't answer, please leave a message. I check voicemail frequently. As the coordinator, I forward requests via email to the group. To join the committee, send me your email address and I'll add you to the chain.

ENDOWMENT COMMITTEE REPORT FOR 2024

Submitted by Phil Berge, Chair

Endowment Fund Committee Members: Philip Berge – Chair, Melanie McMillion – Secretary, Deb Allert, Lee Bujold, Scott Jaspersen, Pastor Susan Berge (advisory member), Helene Hedlund (advisory member)

Others assisting in an advisory capacity: Edward Lee (Congregation Treasurer), Lawrence Burkhard (former Endowment Committee chair)

Endowment Fund Financial Advisor: Ted Bujold Senior Portfolio Manager at RBC Wealth Management

Endowment Fund Balances:	12/31/2023	\$67,440.69
	12/31/2024	\$73,048.29
	[Designated as Account Principal:	\$50,000.00]

Endowment Asset Allocation:	Cash Accounts:	5%
(December 31, 2024)	Fixed Income:	1%
	Mixed Assets:	94%

Deposits in 2024: None

Expenditures in 2024:	\$140.00	Yearly account maintenance fee
	\$1,000.00	Scholarship

Total Expenditures 2024: \$1,140.00

The Mission Endowment Fund is intended to provide mission support beyond the congregation's operational budget with emphases on youth, education, and property/capital improvements. According to KRLC bylaws, only the interest earned from the principal can be spent.

In November of 2023, the Endowment Committee received one scholarship request. The Congregation Council approved the awarding of the scholarship on January 7, 2024, and it was disbursed accordingly. In 2024, the Endowment Committee received one scholarship request in late November. The Committee will consider and act on that request early in 2025.

The Committee reviewed fund investment options, meeting with Ted Bujold, Senior Portfolio Manager at RBC and current custodian of the fund; via telephone with Matt Wagner (Thrivent Charitable Giving) and Greg Hanson (Thrivent); and Zoom meeting with Tharan Lepold, Gift Planner with the ELCA Foundation Ministry. The decision was made to remain with RBC the current custodian of the fund, and to begin exploring Social Screened investments possibilities for those who might desire that option.

In response to the Congregation Council's initiative to revise and streamline the congregation's Bylaws, the Committee began working on revising the Bylaws governing the Endowment Fund. There is considerable work still to do on revisions. One important step in moving forward with the work of bylaw revision would be an amendment to the KRLC Constitution.

Proposed Amendment:

C5.05. This congregation shall have a mission endowment fund that will operate as specified in this congregation's bylaws and continuing resolutions. The purpose of the mission endowment fund is to provide for mission work beyond the operational budget of this congregation.

This amendment was approved by the Congregation Council and will be voted on at the KRLC Annual Meeting on February 9, 2025.

ENDOWMENT COMMITTEE REPORT FOR 2024 (*continued*)

In 2025:

- the Committee will continue work on revising the bylaws governing the operation of the Endowment Fund pending adoption of the amendment.
- will seek ways to raise awareness of the Endowment Fund, highlight the work the fund has done and can continue to do, and encourage giving to the fund.
- work toward developing a memorandum of understanding for donors.
- work on developing an Investment Policy Statement in consultation with RBC.

CREATION CARE TEAM REPORT FOR 2024

Submitted by Lawrence Burkhard, Chair

The Creation Care Team was formally established in October 2014. Its goal is to empower our congregation to be of part *Lutherans Restoring Creation*, an ELCA program that recognizes creation as a gift of God entrusted to our care. Lutherans Restoring Creation action plan has six areas of focus:

- 1) Worship
- 2) Education
- 3) Building and grounds as model
- 4) Discipleship at home and work
- 5) Public witness and policy
- 6) Promoting our care for creation identity in the congregation.

Creation Care Mission Statement

We recognize creation as a gift from God entrusted to our care. As a congregation, we will incorporate creation care into our worship life, educational program, the maintenance of building and grounds, our personal discipleship at home and work, and in our public witness. We seek to make caring for God's creation an integral part of the identity and mission of our life together.

Activities

- 1) Worship expressions of Creation Care:

We worshipped in our Memorial Garden all summer long with our songs and prayers. A Blessing of the Animals was held following worship on September 8, 2024

- 2) Single pain glass windows in furnace and quilt storage rooms have been covered with Styrofoam, reducing heat loss.
- 3) Lower door on the front of the church was replaced to reduce air infiltration into the church.
- 4) Lawrence Burkhard, LeAllan Estrem, and Randi Alreck attended the NE MN Synod/ELCA EcoFaith Network Summit "Cross & Currents in the Flood. Building Arcs Together for a Livable Planet." held at Glory Dei Lutheran Church, Duluth, MN on April 6, 2024. Keynote speaker was Larry Rasmussen, Christian environmental ethicist, awarding winning author of *The Planet You Inherit: Letters to my Grandchildren When Uncertainty's a Sure Thing*, and Reinhold Niebuhr Professor Emeritus of Social Ethics at Union Theological Seminary in New York City. His presentation:

We face uncharted territory, Larry Rasmussen warns in his recent book, *The Planet You Inherit: Letters to my Grandchildren When Uncertainty 's a Sure Thing*. We -- *homo sapiens*, that is -- stand at the edge of the abyss called the Age of the Anthropocene, the age of human domination of the entirety of nature. Addressed to his two grandchildren, Eduardo and Martin, the letters in this incredibly engaging book were written with deep regret to have been part of the crowd which has unfairly placed them before such immense difficulty. As their grandfather, Larry hopes to provide the boys (and us, with our progeny, of course), a map of "the world for a different way of life" in "a new age of discovery and a dangerous pilgrimage." The phrase captures both the sense of adventure and an awareness of peril which pervade the book.

CREATION CARE TEAM REPORT FOR 2024 (*continued*)

In the afternoon, 2 sessions consisting of 4 breakout sessions were held:

1st Session

Energy Transitions and the IRA: *Building Arcs to Renewable Energy*

Graceful Conversations: *Building Arcs across Divided Perspectives*

Joining the Pollinator Plot: *Building an Arc of Pollinator Sanctuaries*

Letter to My Body of Water: *Rediscovering our Spiritual Arc with Water*

2nd Session

Building Arcs Between Generations: *Conversation with the Keynote Speaker and Next Generation Respondents*

Climate Grief and Mental Health: *Building Arcs of Awareness and Wellness in Anxious Times*

Political Advocacy and Action: *Building Arcs for Necessary Change*

Zero Waste Kids: *Building Arcs with our Youngest Generation*

Summit Output for KLRC:

Information on funding and building solar energy systems learned by Lawrence and LeAllan.

Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) provides big incentives to lower costs of such systems.

Completed projects/efforts

- No projects completed this year.
- Replacement of the lower door on the front of the church to lower heating costs.
- Insulating single pane windows with Styrofoam in furnace and quilt storage rooms to lower heating costs.
- Office paper recycling to Duluth Township recycling bins

New Projects/Efforts

- Team formed to investigate solar panels for the church. No progress to date.
- Evaluation of church's gardens to see if they meet the Synod's "Pollinator Plot" requirements and if not, move to doing so that KRLC can become one of the Synod's *Pollinator Sanctuary Congregations*.

Continuing efforts

Composting bucket in the kitchen was discontinued because no one was emptying the bucket. Need to revisit this effort.

Define projects/efforts for 2025

Newsletter tips and write-ups

Attending/involvement in Synod Creation Care Team activities

Worship expressions of Creation Care

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION REPORT FOR 2024

Submitted by Lawrence Burkhard, Chair

Youth program:

The Sunday School program continued using the Children's Church/Kid's Connect format. With the Children's Church/Kid's Connect format, the children attend the first part of the church service with the adults (parents/grandparents), and then, after opening prayers, they depart to their classes. The children return in time for Communion. Because of the limited attendance (often, 3 or 4 children), only one class is taught, and we are blessed to have 6 adults and 6 recently confirmed students in the teaching roles.

For Children's Church, the *Living The Word* curriculum by Spirit and Truth Publishing was used from January through May. This curriculum follows the Narrative Lectionary used by Pastor Susan in Church services. For September through December, the Holy Moly curriculum by Spark House/Augsburg Fortress was used.

Over the summer months, Dani Mattson led the children in crafts, coloring and playground exercises.

Vacation Bible School

VBS was led by Jillian McCorison and occurred on June 10-12, from 4:30-7 PM. The theme for VBS was *Set Sail*. The Bible stories were Jesus Fishes for Men, Jesus Calms the Storm and Jesus Walks on the Water. Patti Stoddard led the music, Vicky Gorman and Randi Alreck served the children dinners, and Olivia Smith and Sadie Pollard were teaching assistants.

Confirmation

Confirmation classes were held January through May and resumed in September. We are using "Here We Stand" lesson materials from SparkHouse.org purchased from Augsburg Fortress Publishing, and each child has a copy of "Here We Stand Lutheran Study Bible" for the class. There were five students the first half of the year, and three were confirmed last summer. Three students were enrolled as of the fall.

Children Church's Mission Project

The ELCA's Global Barnyard is the mission project for the children attending Children's Church/Kid's Connect, and the children take offering in class. The children thank the congregational members for their support of the mission project via coin boxes, offering envelopes, and VBS support.

Adult programs:

- The WELCA met monthly in the Fall, Winter and Spring for a Bible study.
- On Wednesday evenings during Lent, Randi Alreck led a group studying spiritual devotions with a book by Diana Butler Bass titled: *Grounded. Finding God in the World. A Spiritual Revolution*. The study met in-person.
- Over the year on Tuesday mornings, a group led by Randi Alreck and Pastor Susan met for *Lectio Divina/Dig Deeper*: readings and meditation on scripture. Meetings were done in-person and when weather permitted, meetings were done in the Memorial Garden.

QUILTERS REPORT FOR 2024

Submitted by Susan Hubbartt, Leader

Our quilters continue to meet every Wednesday from 10-3 pm at Knife River Lutheran. We are a group of anywhere from two to six ladies but we continue to look for more ladies to join us.

There are a variety of tasks to do such as cutting, ironing, putting colors together for the quilt tops, laying the squares out to quilt size, sewing the squares together, tying and the final step is the binding the top and bottom of the quilt together. We have a lot of fun doing these tasks together and hope to see new faces this year.

The following is a list of donated quilts this past year:

- 6 – given to North Shore Horizons (Two Harbors)
- 10 – given to Life House (Duluth)
- 3 – Confirmands
- 1 – Fall Fest Silent Auction
- 1 – given to a home bound member (health issues)
- 4 – Baptisms
- 1 – Steve & Pat Berger's son's family who is stationed at US Embassy, East Coast Africa.

20 quilts were made this year. The church budgets money for the supplies we need every year, which we greatly appreciate. We put close to 175 hours of quilting for the year 2024.

WEBSITE AND YOUTUBE REPORT FOR 2024

Submitted by Nancy Dent

Our website got a facelift in early September, and we have a new address (krlc.org). Much thanks to Jim Allert who put in countless hours on the new design. In the process we also changed providers from WIX to GoDaddy, making the updates and website administration significantly easier. However, it also means that the data we have is slightly different for the first 9 months than after the move, so you may notice and rejoice that there is less data in this report.

We continue to have a very strong viewing of our live-streamed worship services! Total YouTube views were down 15% from 2023 views, but still very healthy at 1,511. We continue to reach many who can't make it to services in person for various reasons and are very thankful to our dedicated technical team (Phil Berge, Jim Allert and Scott Shelerud) who faithfully record the services and keep the video system operational (quite an ongoing challenge)!

There was an average of over 27 computers logged into YouTube viewing 2024 Sunday worship services, down ~15% from 2023. It ranged from a low of 10 in February to a high of 69 in September. Similar to past years, we expect these counts are low as they don't reflect multiple people watching from one household and we rejoice at how much our live-streaming extends the ministry of our community church (particularly to those who can't make it in person temporarily or permanently, as this allows them to continue to participate)!

The website data for the first 9 months of 2024 also reflects a slight reduction from prior years. Similar patterns were observed with nearly as many visits on mobile phones as from computers. Approximately one-third of the website visits occur on Sundays and two-thirds are spread throughout the week. We also continue to see visitors from multiple countries.

TECHNICAL TEAM REPORT FOR 2024

Submitted by Scott Shelerud

In 2024, I made the following upgrades to our tech infrastructure:

The Internet service from Zito was increased from 100 MB/second to 1 GB per second - i.e. 10 times faster.

The Network modem was replaced as part of the Zito upgrade.

A new 'Power over Ethernet - POE' switch was installed, allowing the network cables to provide power to remote peripherals - cameras, antennas, etc. - and accommodating the higher bandwidth from the enhanced Zito service.

An Uninterruptible Power Supply was purchased to provide battery back-up power to the Zito Modem. This ensures that our emergency phone in the elevator will work in the event of a power outage.

I installed a new WiFi antenna for our outdoor service live-streams. This system will match up with the higher speed capability of the new modem and provides better signal strength and allows for more users.

Emergency repairs were made to our existing PA system. The repairs highlighted the need for a new mixing board which was purchased. Phil and I consulted with an audio engineer to properly match the new mixer with our existing system.

For 2025:

The Speakers in the basement will be replaced as part of the PA system upgrade.

The PA system and a new amplifier will be installed. I will work hard to get this done in time for PS's farewell ceremony.

Additional wireless microphones will be purchased to better accommodate live-streaming our various musical groups.

We still have some issues with our existing primary live-stream camera. I will continue to seek a resolution to this situation.

Pete Stoddard has stepped up to help out with the live-streaming, but we could still use additional help. Anyone else interested please let me know.

PROPERTY COMMITTEE REPORT FOR 2024

Submitted by Scott Jasperson, Co-Chair

Committee Members: Bjorn Ojard & Scott Jasperson – Co-Chairs

Steve Carlson, Ed Lee, David Grong, Craig Whiting, Anne-Lu Hovis, Bill Berg, Pete Stoddard, Dick Sigel

The following major church projects were completed in 2024:

- Exterior announcement board repaired, painted and new interior letter board installed;
- Memorial Garden double doors (basement) sanded (rust inhibitor applied), painted and stainless-steel kick plates installed on both the interior and exterior of door bottoms;
- New exterior LED lights installed (replacement of rust ones) above Memorial Garden double doors;
- "No parking Between Signs" installed across from Arne Bugge's driveway;
- Water damaged ceiling area in pastor's office repaired and painted;
- Memorial Garden fishpond filled and new concrete pavers installed;
- Memorial Garden mosaic panels removed and open area replaced with concrete pavers;
- New "Energy Star" rated white steel entrance door installed on church front (small entrance door to the side of main door).

All projects, except for new front entrance door, were completed by church members at a considerable cost savings. We have an amazing group of talented members that are always so willing to "step up and get er done." Thanks so much for all your time and talent!

Columbarium for 2024

	2024	2023	Change
Columbarium fund balance	\$ 22,472.20	\$ 17,689.20	\$ 4,783.00
Reserve required by law	\$ 4,500.00	\$ 4,500.00	
Assets available	\$ 17,972.20	\$ 13,189.20	
Columbarium debt/Fully paid	\$ -	\$ -	

Date	Explanation		Expense	Income	Account Balance
1/14/24	Niche purchase	X		\$2,200.00	\$19,889.20
2/13/24	Memorial plaque purchase	X		\$350.00	\$20,239.20
2/28/24	Homecoming Inc.	X	\$165.00		\$20,074.20
6/10/24	Niche purchase	X		\$2,200.00	\$22,274.20
11/4/24	Memorial plaque purchase	x		\$350.00	\$22,624.20
11/17/24	Homecomings Inc.	x	\$152.00		\$22,472.20

Our Columbarium and Memorial Wall stand quietly next to the Church and Memorial Gardens, reminding us of the loved ones we have lost and of the families of those that created and nurtured our Church and community. How wonderful it would be if all of the families were to add their ancestry to honor their commitment to God and our community. Families who visit the Columbarium and Memorial Wall, in either the Summer or Winter, will feel welcomed to this sacred space and can enjoy the surrounding gardens, temperatures permitting.

For additional information contact Lee Bujold, Susan Hubbartt or Steve Carlson

2024 Treasurer's report

There are just a few things that I want to communicate to you today.

1. A BIG "Thank You" to all of you!
 - Many churches are in financial trouble, but we are not! It's because of your dedication, commitment and generosity that makes this possible. THANK YOU!
2. KRLC finances are in excellent condition, and we are financially stronger today than at any other time. Here are just a few examples:
 - In 2024 our bank account values continue to grow in value, increasing by \$19,622.
 - Our main operating account and money market fund grew by \$9,193.
 - We have no debt!!!!
 - Our 2024 donations were right on the targeted budget (only \$103 short)
 - We had a small operating loss of \$984 on a budget of \$146,235.
 - We established a Money Market account with a current value of \$86,336 and earned interest for the first time in the amount of \$1,154 net after expenses. This money is in the designated account rather than the operating account.
 - We have money set aside in this account to pay for both a roof and a new furnace.
 - KRLC has an excellent financial system with many checks and balances built in.
3. I would like us all to think about the great impact this small group of people has. KRLC believes in community and world outreach by generously giving to worthy causes.
 - In 2024, \$12,272 was donated to local charities.
 - During this same time, \$12,619 was donated to world outreach.
 - Think about what these dollars mean to those who are less fortunate. How much has our small church affected them by giving \$24,892. I believe this is similar to what Jesus did when he multiplied the fish to feed the multitudes.
 - In addition, \$12,846 was paid to the NE MN Synod to support their activities.
- Budgeting for 2025 is not an exact science with our beloved Pastor retiring June 1st.
 1. The projected 2025 operating budget is \$164,263 which is a 12.5% increase from 2024 but this assumes that Pastor Susan was here the entire year.
 2. We know it's pretty accurate for the first 6 months and wrong for the 2nd six months.
 3. The Synod recommends that we pass a budget, as if Pastor Susan were here the full year, and know that our expenses will be lower in the second six months. I wish I could redo the budget with accurate number, but we just don't know what they are until later this year.
 4. This all comes down to faith! Faith that God will provide us a path through this valley, that our Call Committee and Church Council will make good decisions and faith in each other because we are the Church, and we are a strong congregation who pulls together when things need to get done or get tough. We have a long history to prove those facts.
- A big thank you to Michael Dent and Melanie McMillion for all their work in making the weekly financial details work for KRLC.

**2024 Audit Report
Knife River Lutheran Church
Knife River, Minnesota**

Date of Audit: December 3, 2024
Place of Audit: Knife River Lutheran Church
Audit Period Reviewed: January 1, 2024 - December 3, 2024

Present:

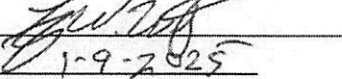
Craig Whiting – KRLC Auditor
Scott Jaspersen – KRLC Auditor
Ed Lee – KRLC Treasurer
Michael Dent – KRLC Bookkeeper

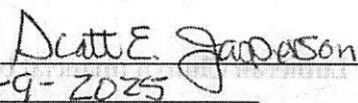
The audit objectives related to the internal audit of Knife River Lutheran Church financial books, records and operations include the determination that:

- All assets and liabilities recorded in the congregation's books and records are supported by appropriate independent documentation (bank statements & vendor invoices);
- All general ledger balances are appropriately reconciled to their underlying assets (bank statements) and liabilities (accounts payable) in a timely and accurate manner;
- All donations are being properly classified on the financial statements and are in line with the donor's intent;
- Appropriate procedures are in place governing key financial operations and are being complied with;
- Proper segregation of duties (checks & balances) for all key financial transactions are in place and are not being circumvented;
- Controls governing the congregation's investments, assets and bank accounts are in place and operating as intended;
- All necessary insurance policies are in place and in force;
- All monies generated and expenses incurred as a result of special events are being properly accounted for and can be traced back to the proper bank account(s);
- Expenses are appropriately approved and supported by the appropriate documentation;
- All fixed assets are properly documented;
- Personal identity information is being safeguarded both in system and paper form;
- An appropriate records retention procedure is in place and being followed;
- Appropriate data processing controls and procedures are in place and are operating as intended.

Based on audit work performed to achieve the objectives listed above, the financial books and records of Knife River Lutheran Church were found to be sound and accurate in all respects. However, additional procedures/improvements should be considered by the church council (if needed) in 2025;

- Purchase of a paper shredder (placed near the church office) to shred sensitive and confidential information as needed;
- Purchase of a small safe or similar safety box to store all financial offerings received by mail or in person during the week and other important documentation (i.e. insurance policies, etc);
- Implement a method/procedure which allows for access of all church financial records/data (by appropriate individuals) in the event the bookkeeper is not available for a prolonged period of time.

Signed: 
Date: 1-9-2025
Craig Whiting - KRLC Auditor

Signed: 
Date: 1-9-2025
Scott Jasperson - KRLC Auditor

Present
Craig Whiting - KRLC Auditor
Scott Jasperson - KRLC Auditor
Ed Lars - KRLC Treasurer
Michael Pratt - KRLC Bookkeeper

The audit objectives related to the internal audit of Knife River Lutheran Church and operations include the determination that

- All assets and liabilities recorded in the congregation's books and records are supported by appropriate independent documentation (bank statements & vendor invoices)
- All general ledger balances are appropriately reconciled to their underlying assets (statements) and liabilities (accounts payable) in a timely and accurate manner
- All donations are being properly classified on the financial statements and are in line with the donor's intent
- Appropriate procedures are in place governing key financial operations and are complied with
- Proper segregation of duties (checks & balances) for all key financial transactions is in place and are not being circumvented
- Controls governing the congregation's investments, assets and bank accounts are in place and operating as intended
- All necessary insurance policies are in place and in force
- All monies generated and expenses incurred as a result of special events are properly accounted for and can be traced back to the proper bank accounts
- Expenses are appropriately supported and supported by the appropriate documentation
- All fixed assets are properly documented
- Personal identity information is being safeguarded both in system and paper form
- An appropriate records retention procedure is in place and being followed
- Appropriate data processing controls and procedures are in place and are operating as intended

A MESSAGE FROM PRESIDING BISHOP ELIZABETH EATON



Dear friends in Christ,

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

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

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

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

—Psalm 93:4-5

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

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Elizabeth A. Eaton". The script is fluid and cursive.

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