



Evangelical
Lutheran Church
in America



ANNUAL REPORT 2024

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 signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

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

ANNUAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING

OPENING LITURGY

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

God, we praise you and give you thanks.

You are good, and your mercy endures forever.

You gave us a garden with good food to eat.

We praise you for food that nourishes us.

You rescued your people from slavery.

We praise you for freedom.

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

We bless you for your justice and mercy.

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

We praise you for his death and resurrection.

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

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

Strengthen your church with every spiritual gift

and commission us again to be your servant people.

Multiply in us the fruit of the spirit:

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

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

Now Thank We All Our God



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



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



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



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

Evangelical Lutheran Worship, 840

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

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

Let us pray.

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

Amen.

ANNUAL REPORT 2024



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**Bethel Lutheran Church
Annual Meeting Agenda
Sunday, January 26, 2025
9:45 am**

- I. Call to Order
- II. House Count (quorum of 60)
- III. Opening Devotion
- IV. Approval of the 2024 Minutes
- V. Reports of the Senior Pastor, Council, Treasurer, Staff and Committees
- VI. Constitution Update
- VII. Elections
 - A. Council Positions
 - i. President
 - ii. Steward
 - iii. At large
 - iv. At large—Mission & Justice
 - v. At large—Youth
 - B. Endowment Committee
 - C. Nominating Committee Chair
 - D. Cannon River Conference Assembly Representatives (2-12—bishop nominations!)
 - E. Southeastern Synod Assembly Representatives (2—bishop election)
 - F. Northfield Retirement Community (NRC—Lutheran Home of the Cannon Valley) (2)
- VIII. Approval of the Budget
- IX. Unfinished Business
- X. New Business
- XI. Closing Prayer

Bethel Lutheran Church

Minutes of the Annual Meeting

Sunday, January 28, 2024 at 9:45 am

Call to Order

President Bill Hoekstra called the meeting to order at 9:45 am.

There were 138 members in attendance, easily meeting the quorum requirement of 60 members.

Opening Prayer

Pr. Inger led the congregation in the prayer included at the front of the *Annual Report*.

Approval of 2023 Minutes

The minutes from the 2023 annual meeting were approved. (Moved by Pat Stahly, seconded by Don Pavek)

President's Report

Bill Hoekstra summarized the significant achievements of the past year:

- We completed our staff by calling Pr. Ben Schori as well as retaining Kristi Larson as our youth director
- Initiating the Nourishing Vocation Project to strengthen our sense of purpose
- Completed phase 2 of the organ renewal
- Increased attendance/engagement in the nursery with fun and creative themes
- Steady youth participation in our youth programming; continued joint VBS participating with St. John's, St. Peter's, and Emmaus Church; inclusive youth engagement during hangtime
- Via Congregational life: Bethel Garage Sale, Alleluia 5k, Congregational Meals, new member welcoming, bike/walk to church
- Adoption of a Land Acknowledgement, focus on strengthening Bethel as a inclusive space for all
- Mission and Justice work to provide education about LUA, Immigration issues
- Highly impactful Creation Care ministries about use of earth
- Despite 15-20% increases to utilities, we worked hard to be efficient and cost diligent in running the building.
- Continuing increases in worship attendance and membership
- Endowment Fund Supercharge!
- Successful Beyond the Budget giving made an impact
- Bethel's benevolence was approximately 20% in 2023 + hundreds of volunteer hours
- We are not without challenges
 - Climbing deficit, large operational costs

Treasurer's Report

Barb Fowler reported that:

- 1) Bethel needs to perform an audit of its financial books. Barb asked that we for two volunteers from the church to help with this, and to please contact her or Caroline Smith if interested.
- 2) The 2023 Giving Statements will go out this week.
- 3) The results of the 2023 budget can be seen on page 24 of the *Annual Report*. To summarize, we finished the year \$17,000 in the red; we will use our reserve fund to cover this shortfall.

Approval of 2024 Budget

Barb Fowler presented the 2024 proposed budget: a total of \$969,250, which requires an average monthly contribution from members of \$80,770 in order to meet that total.

Bo Aylin moved to approve the 2024 budget, and Peder Jothen seconded.

Concerns expressed before the vote:

- A) Making sure all benevolence monies show up in the “benevolence” column.
- B) Eliminating the communications manager position.
- C) Getting more volunteers for the front desk, so that we show hospitality to those who come through Bethel’s doors.
- D) Reducing the budget for youth programming.
- E) Increasing contributions to the Good Samaritan Fund.
- F) Paying attention to those who do not use email, as we think about providing good communication with our members.

The proposed budget for 2024 was approved by voice vote.

Approval of Committee and Staff Reports

Mary Ann Kaul moved, and Carol Lysne seconded, that we approve the Council, committee, and staff reports. The motion passed.

Outgoing Council Members

Bill Hoekstra thanked the outgoing Council members: Phyllis Larson (Personnel), Chris Bussmann (At Large), and Peder Jothen (Worship and Arts).

Elections

Bill Hoekstra presented the slate of nominations for 2024:

- a. Council Positions
 - Connie Nelson-Personnel
 - Eric Lundin-Worship and Arts
 - Evie Bauer (1 year)-At Large
- b. Endowment positions
 - Mari Aylin
 - Rose Turnacliff
- b. Nominating Committee Chair
 - Nomination from the floor—there were none
- c. Cannon River Conference Representatives (2):
 - Mary and Loren Baumbach
- d. Annual Meeting of the Southeastern ELCA Synod (2)
 - Scott and Elga Broughton
- e. Lutheran Home of the Cannon Valley (NRC) Representatives (2)
 - Bob Thacker
 - Blair Fowler (nominated from the floor)

Gene Broughton moved, Evie Bauer seconded, a motion to approve the slate of nominees. The motion passed.

Bill Hoekstra concluded the meeting by highlighting the fact that so much is happening at Bethel. He urged us all to deepen our engagement, be kind and curious and accepting of each other, continue volunteering, and give generously and boldly. He closed with a prayer.

The meeting adjourned at 10:32 (moved by Pat Stahly, seconded by Don Pavsek, approved by all).

2024 Statistical Report

Sunday Services During 2024, services were offered at 8:30 a.m. and 10:45 a.m.
In the summer, the second service moved to 10:30 a.m.
The first service was livestreamed and recordings were available later on our
YouTube channel.

Special Services

Wednesdays in Lent (10)	Maundy Thursday (2)	Good Friday (2)	Easter Sunday (3)
Confirmation (1)	Wednesdays in Advent (3)	Christmas Eve (3)	Christmas Day (1)
Private Baptism (3)			

Membership	<u>Baptized</u>	<u>Confirmed</u>
2024	1,011	806

Average Weekly Worship Attendance

<u>2016</u>	<u>2017</u>	<u>2018</u>	<u>2019</u>	<u>2020</u>	<u>2021</u>	<u>2022</u>	<u>2023</u>	<u>2024</u>	<u>Livestream 2024*</u>
480	472	431	415	591	221	265	293	271	246

* calculated by the ELCA equation as $\text{livestream views} + \text{recorded views after 1 week} \times 2$

Pastoral Acts 2024

Funerals (18)

Carrol Johnson	Francis Wergin	Chuck Sandstrom	Phyllis Maring*
Lorraine Hanson*	Douglas Johnson*	James Jr. Green*	Doug Norvold
Mara Mae Halls*	Carl William Ames	Michael Pautzke*	Carl Johnson
Linnea Mae Erickson*	Judith Dirks	John Omdahl*	
Kevin Christopherson	Earl Forkner	Merle Burmeister	

* indicates non-member

Baptisms (3)

Weston Christopher Scheffler
Amelia Schnaith
Hadley Saige Hill

Confirmations (11)

Asher Engle	Silas Leer	David Ness	Gwen Tapper
Benjamin Heinritz	Samuel Mathews	Peyton Quaas	Oliver Waters
Tyler Holz	Elizabeth McCormick	Nora Schmidt	

Church Staff

Inger Hanson (<i>Senior Pastor</i>)	Ben Schori (<i>Associate Pastor</i>)
Megan Engel (<i>Director of Music and Worship</i>)	Kristi Larson (<i>Director of Youth Ministry</i>)
Mimi De Rosas (<i>Office Manager</i>)	Brenda Rabbe (<i>Director of Children's Ministry</i>)
Caroline Smith (<i>Finance Associate</i>)	Marv Farmer (<i>Custodian</i>)
Phil Ruud (<i>Visitation Pastor</i>)	Lois Cary (<i>Assistant Office Manager</i>)
Juley Jenkinson (<i>Nursery Coordinator</i>)	Sam Dwyer (<i>AV Manager</i>)
Brent Kivell (<i>livestream</i>)	Peter Schleif (<i>Church Choir Director</i>)
Cindy Carlson (<i>Resonance Bell Choir</i>)	Jill Mahr (<i>Director of Children's and Youth Bell Choirs</i>)
Blair Fowler (<i>Volunteer Building Manager</i>)	Marci Groenewold (<i>Volunteer Coordinator</i>)

New Members Received (42)

May 2024 — Pentecost (26)

Jessica Ekeren and children Makenzie & Kohlton Bastyr	Paul & Annette Godtland
Toby & Kelli Hoskins and children Josie and Teddy Hoskins	Don & Mary Kolb
Alyssa Ozman and children Collin, Isaac, Lexie Estrem	Ron & Becky Nystuen
Mike Reddy and children Jaxson and Zoey Reddy	Sayaka Yamazaki
Ryan Schnaith & Carla Hoppe and child Amelia Schnaith	Mike & Linda Zolnosky

October 2024 — Reformation (10)

Erik & Angela Eliason and children Oliver and Haakon Eliason	Sharon Prescher
Megan Shoup and children Deilianna, Ciercina, and Anoren Schoup	Marne Prescher

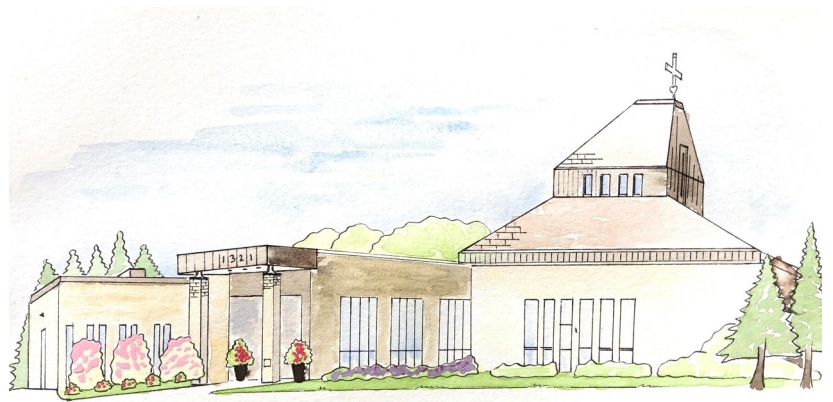
December 2024 — to be affirmed in Pentecost 2025 (6)

Jason Pollington & Megan Pratola and children Preston and Michael
Jim & Janet Dale

Formal Transfers Out 2024 (15)

Church Council

William Hoekstra (*Congregation President*)
Barb Fowler (*Financial Officer*)
Connie Nelson (*Personnel Officer*)
Joel Leer (*Steward*)
Blair Fowler (*Trustee & Building Manager*)
Cindy Kreis (*At Large—Congregational Life*)
Kirsten Scott (*At Large—Mission & Justice*)
Eric Lundin (*At Large—Worship and Arts*)
Evie Bauer (*At Large—Youth*)



BETHEL LUTHERAN CHURCH

drawing by Allison Albright



Senior Pastor — Inger Hanson

In 2024, Bethel finally got to settle into having a full staff. Ministry, however, is always an adventure! One of the gifts of participating in St. Olaf's Nourishing Vocation Project was clarity around our congregation's current values. Bethel values Worship, Community Within (fellowship), Community Beyond (outreach), and Learning—no surprises here, yet these words give important grounding for our ministries.

WORSHIP. Theologians (and constitutions) note that worship is what makes us a congregation! Through Pentecost, we linked worship with living out our values as individuals and as a congregation. In Epiphany we considered what we gave our attention to, and how it aligned with our values. In Lent, we pondered how regret can be a signal for when we have strayed from our values, and help us return to them. Eastertide was about our experiences of the divine. While there are always themes within a liturgical season, it was interesting to try to plan the seasons to connect and build on each other.

I am excited for how the Narrative Lectionary, begun this fall, similarly invites those connections and draws the worshiper deeper into God's story. There are texts I have never preached on before! Texts you may not have heard since Sunday School! Pastor Ben and Megan Engel's prior experiences have been invaluable.

Finally, a Worship & Arts Planning team of staff as well as lay leaders [currently Karna Hauck (*Worship & Arts chair*), Greg Walter, Peder Jothen, Kristi Larson, Megan Engel and the pastors] began meeting regularly this fall to think about each worship season together. I am delighted to have more lay involvement in the planning and have already seen an impact on our Sunday mornings (e.g., word choices! chair arrangements! prayers of the day!)

COMMUNITY WITHIN. Fellowship and pastoral care, Congregational Life, Kitchen & Funeral Committees, Befrienders... these are some of the areas that immediately come to mind with "community within," and we offer both formal and organic ways to develop relationships here at Bethel. It's so lovely to join a table in the CLC and jump into the conversations between services or at Bistro, to witness the healing connections that happen at funeral receptions, or to hang out with parishioners making use of the new seating in the Welcome Area outside of the administration wing. There's the intimacy of getting to know my ACTSS (Adults Coming Together for Soup and Socializing) small group, coordinated by Congregational Life, as we visit each other's homes throughout the year. I especially treasure when someone calls to schedule a walk or have coffee, just to catch up or ponder life.

For more formal pastoral care, Pastor Ben and I are joined by Visitation Pastor Phil Ruud. In addition to the one-time or unexpected needs that arise, there are usually 20 households we are trying to visit monthly, and an additional 24 we try to visit quarterly. Every few months, the pastors try to rotate who we are visiting.

The rotation is meant to allow all our folk to have a chance to experience Pastor Phil's skilled care and concern, but also to establish and strengthen relationships with the full-time pastors. This is particularly important those in hospice because in the final stages of the journey, we want to offer weekly or even daily visitation. As Pastor Phil is generally available only on Tuesdays & Thursdays, the rotation helps ensure that a first visit with Pastor Ben or me isn't at the end. Another support in hard times can be having a BeFriender, a fellow parishioner who has training in active listening. In 2025, Pastor Phil and our own Barb Holm (who is a spiritual director) are piloting a grief support group that will meet for six sessions.

Beyond fellowship and pastoral care, community within is also about good order (1 Corinthians 14:40). With two full-time pastors, our committees received more attention and reflection this year. I deeply appreciate Pastor Ben's sensitivity to systems and processes, and his ideas for new ways forward to better serve this chapter in Bethel's ministry. There is energy and excitement as Mission & Justice has reimaged itself as an "umbrella" committee,

drawing its members from the leadership of the Creation Care, Reconciling In Christ (RIC), Homes for God's Children, and Anti-Racism Learning & Advocacy (ARLA) teams, as well as from potential new ministry teams that form around Hunger, Immigration, or Elder Care.

Similarly, we had more discernment around the pastoral role in Stewardship, with Pastor Ben bringing his insights from the Stewardship Committee, and my thoughts from serving on Finance. We had good discussions with Council and hope to provide more leadership in this area in 2025.

Finally, ideas and projects that had been put on the backburner were able to be revisited this year: updating Bethel's constitution (much thanks to President Bill Hoekstra for his efforts); and an Audio Visual Update (Pastor Ben led the task force to gather information).

COMMUNITY BEYOND. Of course, "within" and "beyond" intersect and overlap. Youth come to be with their friends at Hangtime, and then bring their family to Bethel for Christmas Eve. Some visitors experience our welcome and become members. "Sharing Christ's love with a big heart" also seems to even have led to an increase in non-member funerals, with grieving families knowing they can find support and care here.

Perennial events oriented to our neighbors included March Food Drive, Alleluia 5k (Viking Terrace), Garage Sale, Alternative Giving Fair, and a Christmas card ministry (this year going to residents of assisted living communities like the Northfield Retirement Community, Three Links, and Millstream Commons.) Our Easter, Thanksgiving Eve and Christmas special offerings were dedicated to Ruth's and Sarah's House and ELCA World Hunger. The Good Samaritan Fund allows us to respond to individual neighbors with gas and food cards and other needs. In 2024, we gave out 125 gas cards, 47 Aldi cards, and 81 Bistro meals. Our various ministry teams do an exemplary job educating and updating Bethel about the wider world.

Landmarks for 2024:

As we completed our two-year sponsorship of a family seeking asylum, we realized how their friendship had expanded our sense of community and how this work had forged stronger bonds amongst us all.

With Pastor Ben's leadership, the three ELCA congregations of Northfield (Bethel, St. John's and St. Peter's) came together to celebrate our first *God's Work, Our Hands* Service Sunday.

Worship & Arts collaborated with Mission & Justice to commission indigenous artist John Sterner to create a wood relief sculpture AIKHOYAKA to help keep our Land Acknowledgement work part of our lives.

LEARNING. Once again, the Bethel U planning team (led by Barb Farmer) leaned into helping our educational forums ("Bethel presents...") connect to and compliment our worship themes and seasons, finding spots for our ministry teams' offerings, as well as bringing us timely voices for here and now (such as the panel of St. Olaf students who shared their experiences of politics).

One of the strengths of the Narrative Lectionary is how it builds biblical literacy. Many parishioners are enjoying the scriptural focus and the sense of God's overarching story. I am now offering a weekly text study on Mondays over the lunch hour at The HideAway Vault, and am delighting in having this regular crowd of parishioners sharing their questions and impressions. Another gift the Narrative Lectionary provides is a potential for a strong tie between worship and Sunday School. Brenda and Pastor Ben shifted our curriculum so that the same story explored in worship is also featured in Limitless Chapel and Sunday School. Repetition is good pedagogy!

"We know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose." (Romans 8:28) What an honor it is to see God working in and through Bethel, and to see this congregation be so intentional about purpose.



Associate Pastor — Ben Schori

A few additional notes to Pastor Inger’s report...

Stewardship shifted in function during the 2024 year, and the responsibilities and structure of Stewardship will officially change in some ways in 2025. The key takeaways of this shift:

- The pastors will be responsible for the quarterly Stewardship communication.
- Rather than meeting regularly, the Stewardship Committee will become a Task Force to be called upon when needed (perhaps to help the pastors plan a fall stewardship drive or educational offerings).
- The Steward will focus on their role on Finance Committee and Council, discerning approval of requests from the Good Samaritan Fund, and advising the pastors concerning stewardship.

AV Update. Over the past year, we’ve talked a lot about the sounds and sights of our worship, education, and fellowship experiences at Bethel. Much thanks to the AV Update Task Force (Sam Dwyer, Catherine Engle, Kelly Groenewold, and Tim Valley) for their work in identifying the places where updates can benefit our ministries, and to all of you for attending the information sessions and providing feedback! At their September meeting, the Church Council voted to move forward with the full proposed AV Update. The work will be undertaken in three phases, with each phase being fully funded before it’s begun.

Phase 1: Sanctuary Audio—\$65,550

Phase 2: Back of the House (i.e. Youth Room, Center Pod, and CLC)— \$49,200

Phase 3: Sanctuary Video—\$67,500

As we enter 2025, we have already made great progress in fundraising for Phase 1 (Sanctuary Audio) and hope to reach that goal early in the new year. Catherine Engle, Bethel’s Chair of AV Update Fundraising, will be forming a Task Force to help with the fundraising efforts for Phases 2 and 3.



Visitation Pastor — Phil Ruud

In this season, I am reminded of Mary visiting her relative Elizabeth when she learned from the angel Gabriel that she would bear a child to be named Jesus. The visits they shared helped them support each other in their pregnancies and their faith.

In my role here at Bethel as your Visitation Pastor, I strive to share the love of Christ with the people I meet in various circumstances on their journey through life.

Beyond individual visitation, I am also currently involved in bringing support to OWLS and Befrienders, and occasional involvement with Sunday worship, funeral services, and grief support.

Bethel employs me for twelve hours per week, so my time and energy are limited. However, I consider it a great privilege to share faith and life with you here at Bethel.

If you wish to contact me, please call the church office (507-786-8876) or my cell phone (507-298-0048).

Together in Ministry,
Phil Ruud, Pastor

Director of Music and Worship — Megan Engel

Did you notice? Subtle and not-so-subtle highlights from 2024...

- Another successful January featuring Pop-Up Choir (or "Extreme Choir" as our choir director Pete Schleif likes to refer to it). A great option for people who wish to sing with the choir but are unable to attend regular Wednesday rehearsals.
- A trumpet in Lent! and throughout the year, at both services... Gerry Hoekstra graciously shared his talents with us on a regular basis, enhancing and inspiring our worship.
- An Eastertide featuring preludes, postludes, and anthems by women composers, in honor of Mary Magdalene and the first announcers of the good news. Thanks to Pete for helping find new anthems to add to our choral library.
- A professional joy—I served the wider church as the musician in residence for St. Olaf's Conference on Worship, Theology and the Arts and working closely with Bethel parishioner Rev. Matt Marohl. We adapted one of the liturgies featured at the conference, *Peace of the Prairie*, for Bethel's Sunday use during our August Season of Creation.
- Welcoming Noa Marohl and Becky Nystuen to our deep "bench" of assisting ministers. We are so fortunate to have so many gifted individuals of all ages helping lead us in worship!
- Narrative Lectionary—in the fall, when the lectionary focuses on the Hebrew Scriptures (Old Testament), per Pastor Inger's request I began pioneering "scriptural acclamations," musical versions of the optional gospel verses that can be paired with the primary text.
- "O Come, All Ye Unfaithful..." Our Christmas Eve Call to Worship was a test of our current audio system's limits with multiple voices singing from various places in the sanctuary. Thanks to Sam Dwyer for maximizing our current system and making this impactful song possible.
- And as in years past, grateful to work with the fun and passionate Pete Schleif (*Church Choir Director*), Cindy Carlson (*Resonance Bell Choir*), and Jill Mahr (*Director of Children's and Youth Bell Choirs*).



Director of Children's Ministries — Brenda Rabbe

We love because God first loved us. (1 John 4:19)

Inclusion, laughter, love, leadership, grace, service, learning and fun! Those are the staples of our children's ministry at Bethel, and we are intentional about all of them. There is a beautiful atmosphere of welcome and wanted. Growth thrives in that environment, and we see the fruit of it. One of my greatest joys is raising up leaders, older elementary kids who serve as role models and voices of inclusion for the younger kids, and our middle and high school volunteers who generously share their presence, kindness, leadership, and fun with us. I am always honored when our youth choose us, out of all the ways they could spend their time.

Our Bethel children intentionally share joy with others as well, with Easter, Thanksgiving, and Christmas decorations gifted to the Northfield Retirement Center, and caroling in December. We created Mother's Day bouquets out of Campanella pasta, toothpicks and florist wire, and we added to the beauty of Bethel's Center Pod with a stunning origami mobile. We also play hard together in kickball, 4 square, marshmallow/hairnet games, Mad Lib skits, Family Sunday School Field Trips, and much more.

In June, Bethel and St. John's collaborated for a morning drop-off Vacation Bible School rather than our outdoor family-style VBS we've done for the past three years. We had an excellent team of volunteers, and the kids had a good time at our camp themed VBS. Speaking of camp, Bethel's connection to Good Earth Village has been re-established with several children attending summer camp in 2024!

This fall we transitioned to a Narrative Lectionary Sunday School Curriculum called *Spirit and Truth*. Its format closely mirrors the Hands-On curriculum we have used the past several years but gives us the advantage of continuity in teachings for all ages. This has been a seamless transition for our Sunday School Teaching Team as well.

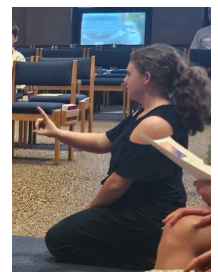
More brand-new items! Pastor Ben and I have revisited and refreshed retreats for our elementary aged kids, including adding a brand-new Relationships Retreat for 4th/5th grade families. Also, Abby Atzinger joined our staff in September as director of Singing Shenanigans during Limitless, a fresh choral experience filled with fun and creativity.

We closed out the year proclaiming the Good News of Jesus while simultaneously building confidence and affirmation in our Sunday School and Limitless participants through the annual Children's Christmas Program. Our program is double-cast and includes approximately 60 children. We aspire to let our lights shine brightly and encourage others to do the same. Faith is not something you can do or form for someone else. It is experiential, explored and developed, tested and proved over time. Our job is to be seed planters, providing kernels of truth and watering them with the grace and love found in the baptismal waters. We love because God first loved us. How blessed we are to be able to reflect God's love to each other in this place.

Thank you for sharing your children with us. Thank you for financially supporting children's ministry. Thank you for volunteering and praying. As always, we're in this together.

Blessings,

Brenda



Director of Youth Ministries — Kristi Larson

This year, two of our summer trips (the ELCA Youth Gathering and our 8th Grade Mission Trip) had the theme “Created to Be.” As Christians we are created (and free!) to be our authentic selves, each with different talents and gifts. As the church, we are created to love God and love others.

The youth at Bethel Lutheran were created to be many things, in fact, too many to count! Each of them are unique people created in God’s image. Our students are kind, intelligent, hardworking, funny (and so much more) people. Here are a few ways our youth demonstrated how they are created to live out Bethel’s 4 core values.



Created to LEARN – Each week in the program year, our 6th – 9th Grade students gather for Confirmation on Wednesday nights where they learn about God’s story, the church’s story, and how we as Christians fit into those stories.

Created to CONNECT (community within) – In youth ministry, relationships are where we thrive. Students have countless opportunities to connect with their peers and with caring adults. Two excellent examples are Hangtime

and the Christikon backpacking trip. Every Wednesday night during the school year, the youth room is filled with around 20 students who come to play games, eat pizza and connect through highs and lows. This past summer, a group of 10th graders had a literal mountain top experience in Montana and came down as even better friends.



Created to SERVE (community beyond) – One big way that our youth served their neighbor was during the 9th grade service trip to Duluth where they focused on hunger and food insecurity. As a group, they served at food banks, food centers, and even community gardens.

Created to WORSHIP - This year, our high school youth had the worship opportunity of a lifetime: The ELCA Youth Gathering. Together with 13,000 other youth from around the country we listened, sang, and danced to amazing music and listened to powerful speakers.



THANK YOU! Youth Ministry is about young people understanding who God is and who they are in the world. But it’s also about the hard working and loving adults that work right alongside them. THANK YOU to all of the teachers, small group leaders, trip leaders, mentors, Hangtime leaders, Faith Flow presenters and so much more. You not only make this program happen, but you make it a meaningful experience for the young people at Bethel.



Trustee/Building Manager Report — Blair Fowler

As we finish 2024, we are pleased to report that expenses in the Facilities account have underrun the 2024 budget due to savings in our snowplowing and no major equipment expenses. The utility costs have increased over 15% this past year and the property insurance had an increase of over \$9,000.00 for year 2024-2025. We were also advised that property insurance will have no more deductible. Roof repairs will be at a 2% of property value. Our current property value is over 13 million dollars. The Capital Reserve is funded by the operating budget at \$21,000 per year.

The following projects were completed this year:

- * Sealcoating and striping of our parking lots were completed; this work should last us another 5 to 7 years.
- * New Solar Blinds were installed in the Sanctuary.
- * Open Path Security was upgraded (controls our door locking).
- * Installed new or upgraded the WiFi system throughout the building.
- * New furniture was purchased for the narthex sitting areas.



Special thanks to volunteers who are always available when we need help. Each one of them have special talents: carpenters, plumbers, electricians, and painters, so we are able to handle a lot of the projects in house which saves Bethel a considerable amount of money. Thanks, too, to Marv Farmer for all the work he does behind the scenes.

As Bethel continues to grow, it is important to remember that any projects or improvements to our church building need to have approval from staff, Church Council, or Finance Committee.



Congregational President — Bill Hoekstra

Dear Bethel,

Blessings and peace to you! I am writing my third and final address as congregational council president. Reflecting on the past 3 years, Bethel has evolved in exciting ways; it has been an honor to serve on the council as part of that process.

This past year, God has blessed our congregation with faith-based experiences! Amazing music, following the Narrative Lectionary, tremendous fellowship events like Bistro, ACT's dinners, OWLs gatherings, and the Alleluia Fun Run to name a few. These events help strengthen Bethel's community in powerful ways. I believe that they have touched the lives of others in unseen ways too. Our youth programs focused energy on creating a camp experience for our youth, the 8th grade Duluth mission trip, trips to New Orleans for the ELCA Youth Gathering, and Christikon, Montana.

Bethel members continued to work to create positive change. We are in our second year of endowment grants providing our church with the opportunity for meaningful, creative, and faith-growing projects. Bethel U continues to educate and challenge us to intentionally practice our lives in the service of God with topics that inspire and create self-examination. Further, ministry, congregational council, ministry teams, and small group leaders convened for a third year of Bethel's Leadership Summit to share and create ideas. This past fall, we witnessed the installation of Aikhoyaka (Connection), Lakota artwork created by John Sterner to honor our land acknowledgement statement. Bethel continues to contribute substantially to our church, local community, and the larger world. The CAC, *God's Work, Our Hands* volunteering, our sponsored family seeking asylum, support for Habitat for Humanity, attending Pride in the Park, and so many other examples exemplify this.

Within our walls, we have moved to complete consolidation of our giving platform onto Breeze, revamped our website, and are planning to improve the audio/visual capabilities of our church. Many more needed upgrades and repairs occur regularly, often in ways that benefit us but are unseen by most. Finally, the congregation council has worked hard to update the constitution to align it with our Synod.

Bethel is growing! We are busy! We are capable! We have met many challenges with a willing and generous spirit. I believe we come together as a community of Christians for one focus, to serve God's will, and because we know that our sum is so much greater than our singular abilities. I believe we must be mindful in balancing attention to our operational needs of the church, the structure allowing us to be effective disciples of God, and our generosity to others. Bethel's leadership continues to be thoughtful in the ways we use our resources effectively. We also ask that you prayerfully consider your engagement and giving to Bethel to keep us strong and vibrant well into the future! Thank you for your support of Bethel in all that you do; you *are* the hands and feet of Jesus!

Praise be to God!

Bill Hoekstra,
Congregational President
Bethel Lutheran Church

Finance Committee — Barb Fowler

Committee members: Barb Fowler, Brian Haefner, Andrew Jorgenson, Heidi McCormick, Lee Runzheimer, Lois Stratmoen, Blair Fowler, Bill Hoekstra, Joel Leer, Pastor Inger Hanson (ex officio)

It is with deep thankfulness that we present the 2024 financial report. There was concern during the year about the financials being in a deficit position. However, the commitment of our members to the ministry of Bethel came through and we ended the year with a small deficit of \$145!

Revenue and Expenses ...

Offerings and other revenues totaled \$947,977 which was 1.8% increase over 2023. Total revenue was less than the budget goal of \$969,250 by \$21,273 but was short of actual expenses by only \$145.

** On-line giving represented 48% of total offerings.

** Interest and dividend income totaled \$21,825 due to investing our available cash in US Treasury bills thereby earning 4.5 to 5% interest. This level of income will likely not be sustained in the long term so this is not an income source we should count on.

Expenses totaled \$948,122 which was \$161 less than last year and \$21,128 below the 2024 budget of \$969,250.

** Personnel and Administration expenses totaled \$721,581 which represented 76% of total expenses. Administration expenses were below budget due to under use of professional development funds and cost of supplies.

** Facilities expenses of \$93,974 represented 10% of total expenses. The mild 2024 winter saved \$15,000 of budgeted expenses for utilities and snow removal.

** Benevolences paid from the operating budget totaled \$69,050 and those paid from dedicated non-budgeted donations totaled \$112,754 for a grand total of \$181,804. This is 19% of total revenue.

Capital projects

** \$22,235 was spent on capital projects from the Capital Reserve Fund. Those expenses are detailed in the Trustee report. \$21,000 was added to the Capital Reserve Fund from the operating budget as a savings toward future major expenses. The balance in that fund is \$60,764.

Endowment Fund ...

The Bethel Endowment Fund balance as of November 30 was \$636,530. These funds are invested in the ELCA Endowment Fund Pooled Trust. This fund will produce annual payouts of about 4% of market value enabling the Endowment Committee to make annual awards for projects not part of the operating budget.

In 2023, we submitted our application for the Employee Retention Credit from the IRS. This Federal program was on hold for much of the year. We have confirmed that our application is pending.

Two Bethel members completed the 2023 audit of procedures and no material weaknesses or discrepancies were found.

You will find more detail in the financial reports included in this report. If you have any questions, please contact a member of the committee or bring them to the Budget Meeting on January 19.

At the Budget Meeting, the 2025 Budget will be presented. Each year, the Finance Committee and the Church Council set the budget, based on discussions with the Personnel committee and other budget managers, at a level they view as needed to run the church. Please come to hear the detail of this important commitment.

It is a privilege to oversee the funds that you so generously give to support the work of Bethel and to donate to many other causes. Visitors are welcome at our meetings on the second Thursday of the month.

If you have a question, feel free to contact a committee member or email Caroline Smith, Finance Associate, at csmith@bethelnorthfield.org.

Bethel Endowment Committee — Ryan Blumhoefer

Committee Members: Mari Aylin, Ryan Blumhoefer, Rose Turnacliff, Steve Engle, John Larson, Heidi Muller Peterson, Kevin Fink, Pastor Inger (ex officio)

2024 was an exciting and transitional year for the Bethel Endowment:

With the substantial gift from the Estate of Donald Nelson in 2023, the Fund balance has grown to a level where we've been able to establish a regular annual process for accepting, reviewing and making numerous meaningful gifts from the Endowment each year. This was the dream when we first started establishing the structure for the Fund about eight years ago!

We awarded \$10,000 in grants in 2024. The grant recipients were: (a) Jill Mahr for the purchase of additional bells; (b) the refugee welcome team for the Ramirez family; (c) the Indigenous Art Fund; and (d) Bethel youth for a 9-Square court.

The balance of the Endowment Fund being held in our account at the ELCA on November 30, 2023 was \$501,381.83. The balance of the Fund on November 30, 2024 was \$636,529.75

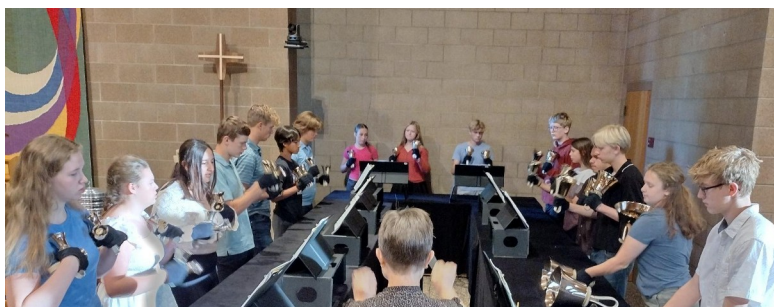
The Endowment Committee is currently in the process of reviewing applications for grants to be issued in January 2025. We received 15 grant applications, with total requests of approximately \$70,000. We are planning to distribute \$15,000, with final decisions to be made before year end.

In 2025, we will continue to look for opportunities to provide education about the Fund and its long-term benefits. We welcome gifts of any size to the Fund, and members of our committee would be happy to talk with anyone who has questions about the Fund or would like to discuss the possibility of making a gift.

With the incredible generosity of Bethel, we have been able to create an Endowment Fund that will impact lives for generations to come!

God Bless,

Ryan Blumhoefer
Endowment Committee Chair



Stewardship — Joel Leer

Committee Members: Joel Leer, Pam Vig, Becky Benedict, Ben Chadwick, Scott Broughton, Pastor Ben Schori

Last year I wrote that it was a year of transition for the Stewardship Committee. This year is no different. The Stewardship Committee will no longer actually be a committee, and instead, the Steward will oversee a stewardship task force that will be called into action for special projects but won't meet regularly outside of those projects.

In 2024, we had many rich conversations about the financial direction of Bethel and what role the Stewardship Committee can and should play. Stewardship is really about helping to ensure that the church is a vibrant community full of life and energy in praise of our God. In the end, the committee this year was less about vision and more about getting tasks completed, thus, the reason for the re-envisioning of this component of church life.

To that end, the committee focused on the following key initiatives this year:

- Breeze – Different year, same effort! With the tremendous work of Kelly & Marci Groenewold, the new church information management system continues to grow and grow. Our committee worked to establish in-church opportunities for congregation members to get their profiles created in Breeze so that our church staff can better communicate with and organize congregants to better and more completely serve the needs of the church. Please, if you haven't activated your account, get the information you need to get activated in Breeze. That's part of being a stewardly member of this amazing congregation!
- Online Giving - Not only were we making efforts to increase the number of members who give online, but we were trying, and continue to try to get the last hold-outs moved over from Vanco to Breeze for online giving. The rallying cry: Vanquish Vanco! The sooner this happens, the sooner we can stop paying the annual fee for using Vanco. Let's do this!
- Time & Talent – No more paper! Thank you to Pam Vig for her work on this transition! We look forward to continuing to better connect your talents with the church's areas of need.
- Budget Gap Closure – I'm not going to lie, these last two years have been a challenge in terms of wondering just where we will land in terms of our budget. While we are thrilled that the end-of-year numbers showed a deficit of less than \$200 (collective happy sigh), we continue to aim for a giving structure that allows the church to focus on other things and not spend so much time worrying about the budget shortfall. We are all in this together. This is our church home.

Be on the lookout for ways that you can help with the ongoing stewardship of this incredible church. Stewardship is not a "not it." We are all it.

Finally, I've enjoyed serving the last two years as Bethel's Steward and will be seeing you in the choir and in the Bistro kitchen.

Respectfully & Humbly Submitted,
Joel Leer

Personnel Committee — Connie Nelson

Members: Bo Aylin, Tricia Lancaster, Wanda Larsen, Connie Nelson, Dan Rustad, Katy Schuerman, Pat Stahly, Bill Hoekstra (ex officio), Pastor Inger (ex officio)

Connie stepped into the Personnel Chair position, following three years of dedicated leadership from Phyllis Larson.

Staff Updates:

In 2024, the Pastors took on communication responsibilities,
with Pastor Ben handling the weekly email and Pastor Inger creating the monthly newsletter.
Mimi de Rosas and Pastor Inger created the annual report.

A Nursery Coordinator was hired at the end of April, but due to unforeseen health concerns never fully stepped into the role. Thankfully, Juley Jenkinson agreed to stay on, appreciating the scaled down duties and reduced time commitment (relative to her previous position of Director of Early Childhood Faith Formation).

Although we advertised for a part-time Office Manager (Fridays and Sundays) to relieve Mimi de Rosas, we withdrew the posting when Lois Cary indicated she was willing to continue in this role.

We are delighted that Juley and Lois are continuing to share their gifts with Bethel! Their dedication and commitment to Bethel's mission is much appreciated.

Nathan Hoekstra and Asher Engle were hired as AV Technicians to assist Sam Dwyer.

Arturo Rosas Avila was hired as a fill-in custodian for when Marv Farmer is unavailable. Many thanks to Dale Turnacliff for his excellent service in this position prior to retiring this past year.

Abby Atzinger was hired as part-time Limitless Children's Music Leader.

Kristi Larson was granted a medical health leave November 18 –December 16.

As Pastor Ben began to settle into his call, members of the Personnel Committee met with him to provide a six-month review.

In the spring, Pr. Inger Hanson and members of the Personnel Committee conducted annual staff reviews for staff working half-time or more. Connie and President Bill Hoekstra also completed Pr. Inger's annual review process in May.

We approved a policy change in PTO that now requires more specific reporting of absences. We also made a minor PTO change to put us in compliance with the new Safe and Sick Time Law. These addenda are noted in the Employee Handbook.

The Personnel Committee meets monthly and is in close contact with Pr. Inger. We especially provide support for her in her supervisory role.

Many thanks to the ongoing commitment of our PC Team members - Katy, Wanda, Pat, Bo, Dan, Tricia, as well as the support of our Pastors and Council President, Bill Hoekstra.

Worship and Arts Committee — Karna Hauck

Karna Hauck (chair), Carol Lysne, Wendell Arneson, Peder Jothan, Tania Will, Marcia Groenewold, Lois Stratmoen, Eric Lundin (council liaison), Pastor Inger (ex officio)

2024 Projects and Activities:

In the sanctuary...

— The NEW All Saints Day/Christmas “white season” reredos banner became part of the liturgical rotation, helping visually set those seasons and feast days apart. We also handled the seasonal decorations of the area around the altar, arranging the Easter lilies and poinsettias (along with the Christmas tree and wreaths).

— A new, lightweight processional cross crafted by Bob Kaul (with a matching design to crosses worn by worship leaders, given to confirmands, and in pastoral care visits) was put into service on Palm Sunday!

— We were an integral part of the massive endeavor to commission an art piece engaging our Land Acknowledgement statement. Our committee created the contract and worked closely with Native American artist John Sterner to support his initial drawing stages, wood material research, designing of prototypes, and provide feedback on a wood relief piece. We worked in tandem with Kirsten Scott and the Mission & Justice committee to fundraise and share the artistic process through photos and articles with the congregation. Karna served as his main contact throughout the project. When the the installation date for “Aikhoyaka” was set, we arranged for a six week display of Sterner’s ledger art. The committee supported the entire process and built a genuine friendship with John, sponsoring his overnight visits and a couple of potluck meals. We will continue to oversee the care for the piece as we repair unforeseen warping and plan a more sustainable re-installation.

— Safety concerns surround reredos banner changes (currently extremely risky as done with a tall ladder), and with council’s support, we have begun working with building manager Blair Fowler to find an appropriate lift or other solution.

In the narthex...

— The committee continues to emphasize that the narthex is an extension of sanctuary’s sacred space while also affirming its use as the ministerial and educational crossroads of the church. Narthex exhibits for 2024 included Wendell Arneson’s mixed media drawings and oil paintings; paintings of the Last Supper donated in memory of Pastor Jennifer Koenig, Judy Code’s flower series; the Senior Quilt display; Gerry Hoekstra's bird photos; and John Sterner’s ledger art. The WAC is always looking to display the creative endeavors of Bethelites, so don't be shy!

— When the welcome area was updated, we were consulted for recommendations on color scheme, etc.

Outside...

— Now that the East entrance has the RIC Mosaic Cross, we moved the rainbow pole to the West entrance. Now art at both major entrances make our Reconciling In Christ commitment clear and visible.

Other

— We developed a Policy for Bethel Art Donations to clarify parameters.

— Karna Hauck served on the Worship & Arts Planning group with Megan Engel, Pastor Inger, Pastor Ben, Kristi Larsen, Greg Walter and Peder Jothan. These meetings link the interests, gifts, and ideas of the congregation with those of the worship staff in order to enrich and enliven our worship experiences. We consider the full sensory experience of each liturgical season, sometimes digging into the words used in various parts of the liturgy, ways to link music with visual art, chair arrangement options, and even communion hygiene. The plan is to have at least one meeting for each liturgical season going forward.

A conclusion by way of an invitation: the committee is ever a welcoming and delightful working group. Some meetings include making art! So if you like to be creative, we encourage you to join the committee!

Congregational Life — Cindy Kreis

Your Congregational Life team –Charlie Dahl, Colleen Vitek, Heather Kuehl, Ellen Iverson, Kristin Stets, Don Pavek, Rebecca Terry, Cindy Kreis and Pastor Inger (ex officio)

The Congregational Life Committee focuses on promoting activities that provide welcome and connection opportunities within and beyond Bethel.

Congregational Life activities in 2024 included:

Welcoming New Members –Bethel welcomed 36 new members in 2024. Our committee connected each family unit with a sponsor family to help welcome them to Bethel. New Member Sundays were held on Pentecost and Reformation Sundays along with breakfast receptions in their honor so all Bethelites could greet them and join in fellowship together!

Bethel Spirit Wear: Clothing order – This past spring our CL team put together an online ordering store through Larson’s Printing to offer various clothing items featuring the Bethel logo for our members. Colorful ‘Spirit Wear’ can be spotted around our church and community with opportunities for another order to be available in 2025!

Palm Sunday Pancake Breakfast – A repeat of last year’s delicious event was carried out in spring fashion with a hearty pancake and yogurt breakfast for the congregation to relax and share in community together a week before the most holy week of the year.

Alleluia 5K Fun Day – The 3rdrd annual Alleluia 5K moving worship experience was held on the Sunday after Easter. Although the weather was chilly, the choir sung beautifully, our Limitless “Bodybuilders” energized folks in the sanctuary while other brave participants wound their way outside around the Bethel neighborhood. All joined together for a short inspirational service in the sanctuary with a special offering donated to the ongoing needs of residents in Viking Terrace. Afterwards, a fish taco lunch was served by volunteers for all who joined in the fun!

Bethel Garage sale – This year was once again incredible! Along with the bonding and fellowship amongst volunteers, and the great deals Bethel’s annual garage sale provides for the community, the proceeds from the week-long event helps fund an array of ministry efforts. \$22,866 was raised to allocate within and beyond Bethel!

‘Going to the Chapel’-Eco-friendly Outing – This event was a collaboration with the Creation Care team to invite members to use eco-friendly modes of transportation; walking, biking, carpooling or boating, to enjoy the outdoors and meet at the Chapel Brewery to socialize!

God's Work, Our Hands – On this annual day of service for the ELCA, our committee assembled box lunches in the CLC to distribute to the volunteers of Northfield area churches who came together to put their faith into action. Participants helped with various service projects around the community including bandage rolling, CSA weeding, Starfish House landscaping, and Clean River Partners drain labeling. Look for this to become an annual event!

Rally Sunday Breakfast – The fall season was welcomed with a nourishing breakfast in the Christian Life Center for all Bethelites to share in fellowship together. The congregation was able to build their own oatmeal and/or yogurt bowls between services while connecting with one another and anticipating the return of Sunday School and other educational faith opportunities to come.

ACTSS - Adults Coming Together for Soup and Socializing – Six dinner groups were formed with the goal of getting to know one another better along with inviting newer members for dinner three times a year. Groups gathered for a simple soup suppers within their homes to share stories and build community with one another. Please consider joining an ACTSS group next fall!

Our hope is to bring us together to share God’s love and fellowship around Bethel and within the community. We invite you to join in our activities and share your ideas for building meaningful connections at Bethel. We eagerly welcome you to join our committee!

“For where two or three are gathered together in my name, I am there among them.” -Matthew 18:20



Mission and Justice Committee — Kirsten Scott

Dedicated members of this team include Curt Johnson, Jim Holden, Dottie Hammer, Gordy Olson, Clark Cary, Judy Tonolli, Darlene Broughton, Jane Runzheimer, along with Pastor Ben.

We believe that service is both an obligation and a privilege as Christians living out our baptismal covenant. We seek to provide opportunities for Bethel members to learn about the needs of others and to put our knowledge into action for bringing God's message and justice to the world.

We annually distribute Mission and Justice benevolence funds for local, regional and international needs as well as coordinate with the Stewardship Committee on the recipients of the Thanksgiving, Christmas and Easter special offering appeals.

This past year we offered more learning opportunities about Native American history and current issues. Donations toward the commissioned artwork by John Sterner were sought. We are so grateful for the generosity of Bethel members, an endowment fund grant, garage sale funds, and a community grant. The wood relief, dedicated November 3, reflects the spirit of our Land Acknowledgement Statement, reminds us of our connection to each other and serves to enrich our worship.

The 50th Anniversary of ELCA World Hunger's work has been a focus. Great strides have been made against hunger and poverty in this time but exacerbating climate change and global conflicts call us to continue to strongly support this global ministry. We will continue to feature their work and the financial needs in 2025.

In spring another learning opportunity related to senior issues was offered, this time about end-of life decisions. Eldercare continues as an area of prevalent concern within Bethel and beyond.

Our Welcome Team has continued to coordinate with our asylum-seeking Peruvian family whom we welcomed in December 2022. The children are thriving in school and mom enjoys her full time employment. Bethel's financial support for the family will be ending at the close of the year.

At the end of August we were glad to see the success of *God's Work, Our Hands*, a Northfield ELCA joint venture of worship followed by various hands-on service activities around town. It will hopefully become an annual means of serving others.

Other Bethel teams we continue to enlist support for and partner with include the Annual Giving Fair, ARLA, Homes for God's Children, Habitat for Humanity, our local CAC, and Minnesota's ISIAH organization. Many hands are involved in these and many other local nonprofits! Housing and food insecurity in addition to immigration/refugee concerns continue to be prominent.

Finally, we are presenting an idea for restructuring the committee such that better communication, support and collaboration can occur amongst the many teams doing mission and justice work at Bethel and are excited to introduce it to the congregation at the annual meeting.



Homes for God's Children — Gordy Olson

Members of the Homes for God's Children Committee: Bryce Narveson, Dayna Norvold, Bob Thacker, Gordy Olson, David Detert, Jodi Doeden, Dottie Hammer, Clark Cary, Gene Broughton, and Pastor Ben Schori.

2024 was another wonderful year for Bethel members as you continue to support the work of our Homes for God's Children committee. This was the third year of our five-year initiative in thankful response to paying off Bethel's mortgage. We are thankful for the generosity of each of you.

Our 2024 project was providing support for Ruth's House in Faribault and Sarah's House in Northfield. These facilities provide housing and support for women and children who are emerging from difficult circumstances of abuse or dependency. Our goal was to provide \$20,000 to help Ruth's House pay for utilities and rent at Sarah's House. Our total giving for 2024 to the Ruth's House project was \$20,669! What a tremendous response! We are grateful for the generosity of Bethel members! Well done!

In addition to providing this financial support, members of Bethel also provided landscaping maintenance at Sarah's House helping to beautify the homes of women and children who lived there during the year. With the ending of the year, our formal support of Ruth's House through the Homes for God's Children initiative will come to an end, but we hope members will individually continue to support Ruth's House. Brochures are available near the office for those who want more information.

As we turn the calendar to 2025, we are enthusiastic about our new project. During this year we will be assisting the CAC in resupplying and making units available for occupants through the CAC Crisis Housing Project. There are times when people find themselves suddenly homeless with nowhere to turn. The CAC provides those experiencing homelessness with a place to stay for up to 90 days. We will be helping in two ways. First, we will gather supplies to replenish units since the CAC encourages those who are leaving a unit to take with them things they will need in their new home. Second, we will go into the unit after the CAC has done the cleaning and help make the unit ready for the new occupants. We need your help in either of these ways. Please stay tuned for an opportunity to share in this important mission.

Thank you once again for your great support of Homes for God's Children projects. We are humbled and truly grateful for what you have done and continue to do.



Community Action Center

Creation Care Committee — Cynthia Carau

Members: Cynthia Carau, Rachel Coltvet, Connie DeGrote, Gary DeGrote, Gordon Kelley, Kari Kust, Mary Loven, Jan Stahly, Dwayne Vosejka

In 2024, the Creation Care Committee continued its important work with passion and joy. We worked to educate Bethel members of all ages on the how and why of protecting our natural world and found ways to improve our stewardship of the earth within Bethel's practices. We remain grateful to the congregation for their commitment to caring for God's beautiful creation, the only home we have.

Bethel Present & Faith Flow

March 10 – John Larson, Bethel member and Chief Operating Officer at Niron Magnetics, presented the journey behind the creation of the "Clean Earth Magnet," named one of TIME's Best Inventions of 2023, and its potential to positively impact God's creation.

April 14 – A representative from Curbside Compost spoke during Faith Flow and also manned a Ministry Table with information about how composting benefits the earth.

April 21 – In honor of Earth Day, the Creation Care Committee hosted a presentation by Ashley Gallagher, Senior Resource Conservationist with the Dakota County Soil and Water Conservation District. Ashley spoke about her work helping landowners reduce their environmental impact.

9th Grade Confirmation

In March, a committee member led a session called Contemplating Climate Change. Students were asked about their own level of concern and to estimate others. They explored what the Bible says about caring for creation and what that could mean for us now.

Limitless 4th Graders

April 17 – A committee member and a staff person from Clean River Partners led students around Bethel's neighborhood to pick up garbage and prevent it from entering the watershed.

April 24 – Committee members led children to St. Olaf Natural Lands for a tour with naturalists.

May 1 – Committee members gave students a tour of the environmentally friendly parts of the Bethel property and then had them do a related art project.

Season of Creation

For the third year in a row, August was designated the "Season of Creation." At the beginning of each service, a committee member spoke about the theme of the day and invited the congregation to visit the Among the Ministries table, which tied into the Minnesota-related themes of **Lakes, Prairies & Fields, Birds and Humans**. This was Year 1 of the new 3-year cycle, determined in cooperation with Pastor Inger and Megan Engel. Each year's themes represent a widening circle of concern. Year 2 themes will focus on the United States: Deserts, Mountains, Rivers, Flora. Year 3 themes will focus on the World: Ocean, Climate, Forests, Animals.

Adopt-A-Highway

In May and October, Creation Care gathered a group of volunteers to clean up Bethel's stretch of Highway 3.

Bathroom Signage

The Committee updated signs in all the bathrooms to clarify what goes in compost, trash, and metal containers.

Communion Cup Washing Racks

At the suggestion of a member of the congregation, the Committee found a way for Bethel to stop using plastic (non-recyclable) cups for communion. We purchased 6 Saint Saver communion cup racks that allow glass cups to be washed in the dishwasher. We collaborated with the Altar Guild Committee to incorporate these racks into the usual process and made an explanatory poster. Partnering with Marci Groenewold, we expanded the volunteer signup list to include “cup washing” as a regular task.

Leadership Change

In September, Cynthia Carau announced that she would be stepping down at the end of 2024 after 3 years as chairperson.







Annual Report to Congregations

Merry Christmas Dear Friends! We are truly grateful to all of you for your ongoing support and commitment to our community. As we reflect on the numerous acts of kindness and generosity you've shown, we can't help but feel fortunate to have such a strong network of supporters who help us uplift our residents through your thoughtful gifts and unwavering encouragement.

Your Contributions to NRC Again, thank you for your involvement with NRC— for your many volunteer contributions and for your financial support which helps to strengthen our Spiritual Care department and employee and resident assistance funds. We look forward to our collaboration in 2025.



SPIRITUAL CARE At Northfield Retirement Community (NRC), we're dedicated to fostering a nurturing environment for our residents' spiritual well-being. Milosha Malecha, our Director of Activities & Volunteer Opportunities, has been working tirelessly to create engaging spiritual care activities throughout the year. We extend our heartfelt thanks to the local churches for their invaluable support and involvement in these programs. This season, we're excited to finalize a more consistent spiritual care program, which we hope to announce soon! Stay tuned for more details.

Holiday Events on Campus

Thanksgiving Eve service in the chapel for everyone to attend brought in about 40 people

Tuesday Dec 10th St. Dominic's Catholic Service/Communion 10:30- Chapel; 11:20 Evergreen Lodge

Monday Dec. 16th 10am Christmas Mass/Communion Lead by Pastor Jon and Pastor Joy from Christiania Lutheran

Monday Dec. 23rd Scripture and Song service led by Deborah Ward at 3:30

Tuesday Dec 24th St. Dominic's Catholic Service 10:30- Chapel; 11:20 Evergreen Lodge

For any questions or additional information, please contact Milosha Malecha at MMalecha@northfieldretirement.org or by phone at 507-664-3472.

NRC Census Continues to Climb Our Northfield Retirement Community (NRC) census is at its highest since 2019, reflecting the trust and satisfaction of our residents and their families. We have witnessed remarkable growth in the past year. Compared to this time last year, our census has increased by 14 residents, demonstrating a strong demand for the high-quality care and services we provide. Our Enhanced and Memory Care units continue to be in high demand. This growth positively impacts our budget, allowing us to further invest in the well-being of our residents and maintain our commitment to providing exceptional care and support. We want to express our gratitude to everyone who has chosen NRC as their home. We remain dedicated to fostering a warm, inclusive environment where residents can thrive and enjoy a fulfilling lifestyle.

ST. OLAF STUDENTS AT NRC In an innovative solution to address housing challenges, the Northfield Retirement Community (NRC) partnered with St. Olaf College to provide a unique living arrangement for students. From its success, this affiliate housing program has extended to carry on through 2026.

This collaboration strengthens the longstanding relationship between NRC and the college while offering significant financial benefits for the retirement community. This partnership serves as a creative approach to addressing housing needs, fostering intergenerational connections, and providing enriching experiences for residents. The collaboration creates a synergistic environment where students and residents learn from each other. Additionally, nursing students from St. Olaf engage with NRC through nurse-aide training programs and hands-on experiences, further demonstrating NRC's commitment to creating a thriving, financially sustainable community that benefits all residents while nurturing a supportive and engaging environment.



FOUNDATION AND VOLUNTEERS NRC celebrated its 55 year anniversary with a special time capsule event in our Chapel last month. Thank you to all our congregations that helped NRC achieve this milestone! Volunteers and supporters are always welcome and appreciated by the NRC Foundation. Please reach out to DawnMarie at 507-664-3471 or dvihrachoff@northfieldretirement.org



STAFFING Northfield Retirement Community (NRC) is proud to announce that we have been recognized as the Best Senior Living/Retirement Setting in the Northfield News 2024 Readers' Choice Awards. Additionally, and for the second year in a row, our Assisted Living housing options received high satisfaction ratings on the Minnesota Department of Human Services Assisted Living Report Card. According to the report, NRC ranks higher in satisfaction than other assisted living facilities across the state on measures such as resident quality of life and family satisfaction. The exceptional work of our staff across all departments has been integral to achieving this recognition. Their commitment and passion for their roles create a warm, supportive environment that allows our residents to flourish. Since January, we have welcomed 48 new employees to the NRC family, with 10 of them receiving comprehensive training and becoming certified nursing assistants. We are continuously seeking talented individuals to join our team, offering market-based competitive compensation and benefits packages to attract the best candidates. For more information about our quality awards and other recognitions this year, please contact Mallory Dingman.

12/18/24



Southeastern Minnesota Synod ELCA Looking Toward Ministry in 2025



For no matter how many promises God has made, they are “Yes” in Christ. And so, through him the “Amen” is spoken by us to the glory of God. (2 Corinthians 1:20, NIV)

The Use of the Means of Grace, a teaching document of our denomination, emphasizes the importance of baptism happening in the midst of the gathered assembly. In baptism, we claim the promises of God for the baptized, and the gathered assembly has the distinct privilege of hearing those promises for themselves, too.

Baptism happens in community because the promises of baptism are for the community.

Indeed, in the rite of baptism, members of the congregation participate as the newly baptized is welcomed among them. Promises to accompany the newly baptized in the journey of faith are spoken aloud.

In baptism, we remember the promises of God as we hear them spoken, again and again, by those in our midst.

I spent a number of years in a faith tradition that emphasized the power of personal testimony. Individuals would testify to the work and power of God in their lives and the lives of those they knew. In these spaces of testimony, we collectively remembered the promises of God. The faith of those gathered was buoyed as they were reminded of God’s work in the world.

Testimony. Reclaiming of the promises. These essential practices in the Christian faith keep us grounded and assured in who God is and what God does, especially in times when it is hard to see. We hear the promises of God over and over again because we often need to be reminded of them. We need to be reminded that in Christ, all God’s promises are “Yes!” Practicing faith in community strengthens us to reply, “Amen!”

As we look ahead to the coming year, I want to pay particular attention to our claiming, naming, and proclaiming of God’s promises for us and all of creation. There may be days in which our faith wobbles, when the promises of God seem a far cry from fulfillment. On those days, harkening back to our baptisms, we benefit from hearing the promises of God proclaimed by our communities loud enough for others to hear. *(continued)*

2024 HIGHLIGHTS

- 42 congregations were engaged in call process
- 13 Rostered Ministers were welcomed to the synod
- 1 new worshipping community was created: the Nuer Community Lutheran Church
- 3 Power+Boundaries workshops were hosted to equip lay people, church staffs, and Rostered Ministers
- A Chrism Mass Advent Worship was offered to leaders for the first time



In the first part of 2025, members of the Office of the Bishop will intentionally collect stories of God's work in the world from members throughout the synod. Our hope is to create a library of stories told by all kinds of voices that give testimony to what God has done and hopes of what God will yet do.

How have the promises of God been fulfilled in your life? In the lives of those you love? In the aspects of creation you explore? In the life of your congregation or larger community? What testimony can you share for the sake of building up the community of faith?

The life of discipleship is, in the words of the late Rev. Eugene Peterson, "a long obedience in the same direction." It is an obedience best undertaken in community with a chorus of believers surrounding us crying, "Yes!" and "Amen!" as we lift our voices to do the same.

May this year in ministry be one in which we claim and proclaim the fulfillment of all the promises of God so that our faith might grow and the world might live more fully into abundant life.

How is the Spirit inviting your congregation to join the chorus of "Yes!" and "Amen!"?

In Christ,

Rev. Regina Hassanally

Bishop Regina Hassanally



2024 HIGHLIGHTS

- Synod Assembly took place with roughly 360 people in attendance, celebrating the theme: **"Every Congregation Connected"**
- Fall Theological Retreat took place with 145 attendees (including Rostered Ministers and congregation staff) in La Crosse, WI, with the theme **"Will You Be My Neighbor? Called to Community"**
- Gatherings were hosted to support leaders who are new to the synod, in their first years of ministry, and retired

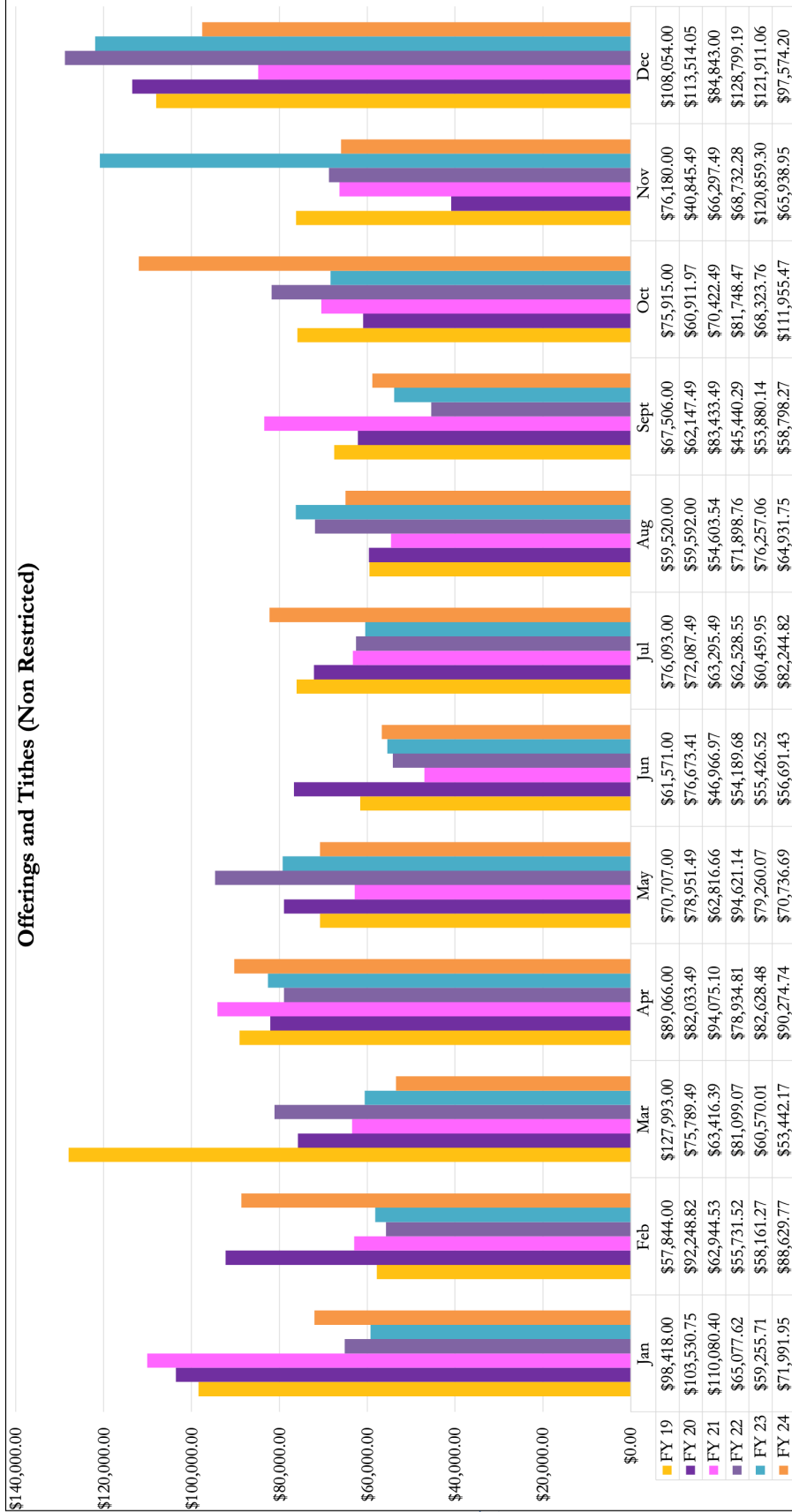


2024 Income Statement

Bethel Lutheran 2024 Income Statement

Revenues		BUDGET		
		ACTUAL 2024	2024	Variance
	Offerings	\$ 915,107	\$ 945,750	\$ (30,643)
	Other Income	\$ 32,870	\$ 23,500	\$ 9,370
Total Revenues		\$ 947,977	\$ 969,250	\$ (21,273)
Expenses				
	Personnel	\$ 650,094	\$ 643,230	\$ 6,864
	Administration	\$ 71,487	\$ 82,740	\$ (11,253)
	Adult & Family Ministry	\$ 6,529	\$ 8,400	\$ (1,871)
	Benevolences	\$ 69,050	\$ 69,050	\$ -
	Congregational Life	\$ 6,931	\$ 6,105	\$ 826
	Facilities	\$ 93,974	\$ 109,310	\$ (15,336)
	Worship & Music	\$ 9,827	\$ 10,650	\$ (823)
	Youth Formation	\$ 19,230	\$ 18,765	\$ 465
Total Expenses		\$ 927,123	\$ 948,250	\$ (21,127)
	Building Capital Reserve	\$ 21,000	\$ 21,000	\$ -
Total Transfers		\$ 21,000	\$ 21,000	\$ -
Total Expenses		\$ 948,122	\$ 969,250	\$ (21,128)
NET OPERATING REVENUE		\$ (145)	\$ -	\$ (145)

December 31, 2024 FINANCIAL DASHBOARD



Bethel Lutheran Church
Restricted-Project Class Activity Report
December2024

	Ending Balance 12/31/2023	Month Revenue	Month Expense Expense	YTD Revenue	YTD Expense	Interfund Transfers	Ending Balance 12/31/2024
Capital Reserve							
Building/Capital Equip	\$ 61,999.70	\$ 1,750.00	\$ 319.00	\$ 21,000.00	\$ 22,235.35		\$ 60,764.35
Subtotal: Capital Reserve	\$ 61,999.70	\$ 1,750.00	\$ 319.00	\$ 21,000.00	\$ 22,235.35		\$ 60,764.35
Endowment							
Endowment Fund Principal	\$ 55,736.67						\$ 55,736.67
Endowment Gifts/Trnsfers	\$ 447,757.80	\$ -		\$ 51,845.77			\$ 499,603.57
Endowment Fund-Gain/(Loss)	\$ (2,946.21)	\$ 1,118.69		\$ 69,493.02		\$ -	\$ 66,546.81
Endowment Income	\$ 5,878.04	\$ -		\$ 21,256.10		\$ -	\$ 27,134.14
Endowment Transfers/Exp	\$ (800.00)	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ (10,800.00)	\$ (10,800.00)
Subtotal: Endowment	\$ 505,626.30	\$ 1,118.69	\$ -	\$ 142,594.89	\$ -	\$ (10,800.00)	\$ 638,221.19
Subtotal: Endowment Stmt	\$ 501,381.83		\$ -	\$ 102,307.66	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 636,529.75
Cash at Bethel	\$ 4,244.47	\$ 127.88		\$ 1,819.32		\$ -	\$ 1,819.32
Operating Reserve							
Operating Reserve	\$ 221,419.27	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 7,945.00	\$ 20,980.92		\$ 208,383.35
Operations Transfer							
Operations	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 2,000.00	\$ -
Parish Restricted							
Adult & Family	\$ 1,106.98						\$ 1,106.98
Adult Scrip	\$ 3,417.62						\$ 3,417.62
Archives - Archive Case Fund	\$ 2,775.00						\$ 2,775.00
Audio/Video	\$ -		\$ -	\$ 1,270.10	\$ 681.59		\$ 588.51
Audio/Visual Phase I		\$ 18,798.42		\$ 28,167.48	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 28,167.48
Children's Ministry	\$ 2,183.78			\$ 451.00	\$ 915.50		\$ 1,719.28
Environment	\$ 31,669.79	\$ 358.66	\$ 2,122.00	\$ 8,572.59	\$ 7,225.00		\$ 33,017.38
Evangelism	\$ 4,198.84	\$ -		\$ 492.00	\$ 300.00	\$ (787.54)	\$ 3,603.30
Funeral	\$ 3,016.17	\$ 500.00	\$ 724.78	\$ 2,485.00	\$ 1,266.89	\$ 400.00	\$ 4,634.28
Garage Sale	\$ 245.94		\$ 750.00	\$ 23,754.13	\$ 6,059.31	\$ (17,200.00)	\$ 740.76
Good Samaritan	\$ 1,030.83	\$ 25.00	\$ 750.00	\$ 17,066.50	\$ 6,646.14		\$ 11,451.19
Handbells	\$ -			\$ 6,450.21	\$ 8,982.00	\$ 5,000.00	\$ 2,468.21
Indigenous Artwork	\$ 500.00	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 9,958.93	\$ 14,804.76	\$ 4,350.00	\$ 4.17
ISLA Scholarship Fund	\$ 1,611.00					\$ (1,350.00)	\$ 261.00
Kitchen Bistro	\$ (328.68)	\$ 1,093.69	\$ 780.21	\$ 10,546.88	\$ 8,495.40		\$ 1,722.80
Kitchen Capital	\$ 6,910.80		\$ 724.78	\$ -	\$ 811.42		\$ 6,099.38
Kitchen General	\$ (2,713.80)		\$ 578.48	\$ -	\$ 1,216.17		\$ (3,929.97)
Kitchen Soup Supper	\$ -			\$ 863.01	\$ 518.02		\$ 344.99
Library	\$ 397.11			\$ 50.00			\$ 447.11
M&J Quilting	\$ 1,500.00		\$ 523.23	\$ -	\$ 1,624.16	\$ 1,500.00	\$ 1,375.84
Memorial Fund	\$ 1,657.08	\$ 100.00		\$ 325.00	\$ 1,657.08		\$ 325.00
Organ	\$ 12,987.81			\$ 2,215.00	\$ 3,650.00		\$ 11,552.81
Torch	\$ 340.00	\$ 20.91	\$ 338.15	\$ 130.91	\$ 369.81		\$ 101.10
Woodworking-Treasure Builders	\$ 1,352.05						\$ 1,352.05
Women's Retreat	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 350.00		\$ (350.00)
Worship & Music	\$ 4,208.50			\$ 200.00	\$ -		\$ 4,408.50
Youth Programs	\$ 57,005.63	\$ 126.12	\$ 1,282.88	\$ 21,295.80	\$ 24,721.85	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 54,579.58
Youth Camp- 4-7th Grade Fun	\$ 692.79		\$ -	\$ -	\$ -		\$ 692.79
Youth Camp-Wapo	\$ (25.00)						\$ (25.00)
Youth Christikon	\$ 25,307.39		\$ 1,282.88	\$ 4,765.70	\$ 8,574.51		\$ 21,498.58
Youth Flathead (Sr High)	\$ (58,182.38)			\$ -	\$ 12,203.48		\$ (70,385.86)
Youth Service Trip - 8th Grade	\$ (3,903.76)			\$ 433.00	\$ 3,183.12		\$ (6,653.88)
Youth Events	\$ 48,340.67		\$ -	\$ 7,210.99	\$ 3,038.88		\$ 52,512.78
Youth High School Trip	\$ 14,779.70	\$ -		\$ 6,232.82	\$ (4,955.10)		\$ 25,967.62
Youth Ministry	\$ (9,403.18)			\$ 133.05			\$ (9,270.13)
Youth Scholarship	\$ 12,183.41		\$ -	\$ 205.74	\$ 1,014.46	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 11,374.69
Youth Scrip Earnings	\$ 27,215.99	\$ 126.12		\$ 2,314.50	\$ 1,662.50		\$ 27,867.99
Subtotal: Parish Restricted	\$ 135,072.45	\$ 21,022.80	\$ 8,574.51	\$ 134,294.54	\$ 90,295.10	\$ (7,087.54)	\$ 171,984.35
Parish Pass Through							
Alleluia Fun Run	\$ (376.24)		\$ -	\$ 904.52	\$ 1,265.82	\$ 787.54	\$ 50.00
Alt Giving Fair	\$ 16,210.28	\$ 12,871.73	\$ 658.57	\$ 11,549.82	\$ 13,781.57		\$ 13,978.53
Christmas	\$ -	\$ 6,897.34	\$ 7,299.99	\$ 7,299.99	\$ 7,299.99		\$ -
Easter	\$ -			\$ 4,976.33	\$ 4,976.33		\$ -
ELCA Disaster Relief	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 5,491.87	\$ 5,491.97	\$ 5,491.97		\$ -
Food Shelf	\$ -	\$ 130.00	\$ 3,268.57	\$ 18,192.36	\$ 18,192.36		\$ -
Greenvale Snack Program	\$ -						\$ -
Special Offering-Refugee Fund	\$ 10,822.31	\$ -	\$ 300.00	\$ 18,051.22	\$ 21,060.01	\$ 3,300.00	\$ 11,113.52
Special Offerings-Ruths House	\$ -	\$ 1,061.41	\$ 1,437.47	\$ 5,577.67	\$ 15,577.67	\$ 10,000.00	\$ -
Sunday School	\$ 569.32						\$ 569.32
Thanksgiving	\$ -	\$ 1,981.26	\$ 5,091.26	\$ 5,091.26	\$ 5,091.26		\$ -
World Hunger	\$ -	\$ 553.13	\$ 1,587.01	\$ 9,118.47	\$ 9,118.47	\$ -	\$ -
Subtotal: Parish Pass Through	\$ 27,225.67	\$ 23,494.87	\$ 25,134.74	\$ 86,253.61	\$ 101,855.45	\$ 14,087.54	\$ 25,711.37
	\$ 951,343.21	\$ 46,267.67	\$ 34,028.25	\$ 249,493.15	\$ 235,366.82	\$ (1,800.00)	\$ 1,105,064.61

2024 Balance Sheet—LY and CY

Bethel Lutheran 2024 Balance Sheet - LY & CY

Assets		Actual as of 12/31/2024	Actual as of 12/31/2023
Cash & Cash Equivalents			
Checking Account	\$	(9,406)	\$ 70,091
Petty Cash	\$	105	\$ 105
Savings Account (CRB)	\$	1,472	\$ 1,472
Certificate of Deposit	\$	-	\$ 1,462
ELCA Mission Investment Fund	\$	1,496	\$ 1,490
Pre-paid Expenses	\$	3,000	\$ 3,000
Endowmentment Pooled Fund	\$	636,530	\$ 501,382
Stock pending sale	\$	1,897	\$
Schwab - T Bills investments	\$	464,396	\$ 364,082
Total Cash & Investments	\$	1,099,490	\$ 943,084
Fixed Assets (land/building/organ/ equipment)	\$	7,193,420	\$ 7,193,420
Total Fixed Assets	\$	8,292,910	\$ 8,136,504
Liabilities and Fund Balance			
Liabilites			
Accounts Payable	\$	-	\$ 16,306
Total Liabilites	\$	-	\$ 16,306
Fund Balance			
Unrestricted Net Assets	\$	7,015,133	\$ 6,769,964
Net Fixed Assets	\$	1,105,065	\$ 947,099
Net Revenue	\$	172,713	\$ 403,134
Total Fund Balance	\$	8,292,910	\$ 8,120,197
Total Liabilities and Fund Balance	\$	8,292,910	\$ 8,136,503

Bethel Lutheran Church 2024 Benevolences

Bethel Lutheran Church 2024 Benevolences

Budgeted Benevolences 2024

SE MN Synod	\$	37,000	
Lutheran Social Services	\$	11,400	
Northfield Retirement Community	\$	2,500	
Global Mission & Justice	\$	11,000	
Hillcrest Village	\$	5,000	
General Benevolence	\$	322	
ELCA Disaster Response	\$	1,822	
Total Budgeted Benevolences			\$ 69,050

Non-Budgeted Benevolences

ELCA World Hunger	\$	21,395	
CAC Food Shelf	\$	18,192	
Alternative Giving Fair	\$	12,664	
Alleluia Run - Rice County Neighbors United	\$	1,266	
Good Samaritan Funds Used	\$	6,646	
Garage Sale - gas and food cards	\$	2,500	
Garage Sale - Healthfinders	\$	1,500	
Garage Sale - CAC diaper fund	\$	1,000	
Garage Sale - Ruth's House	\$	10,000	
TORCH	\$	370	
Refugee Fund	\$	21,060	
ELCA Disaster Respense	\$	5,492	
Homes for God's Children- Ruth's House	\$	10,669	
Total Non-Budgeted Benevolences			\$ 112,754
Total Benevolences (Budgeted & Non-Budgeted)			\$ 181,804

Total Benevolences (% of operating revenues)

19%

Proposed 2025 Budget

Bethel Lutheran Proposed Budget 2025

Revenues	2025 Budget	2024 Actual	Budget to actual (\$)	Budget to actual (%)
Offerings	\$ 983,260	\$ 915,107	\$ 68,153	7%
Other Income	\$ 27,500	\$ 32,870	\$ (5,370)	-20%
Total Revenues	\$ 1,010,760	\$ 947,977	\$ 62,783	6%

Expenses

Personnel	\$ 677,709	\$ 650,096	\$ 27,613	4%
Administration	\$ 82,520	\$ 71,487	\$ 11,033	13%
Adult & Family Ministry	\$ 8,350	\$ 6,529	\$ 1,821	22%
Benevolences	\$ 71,810	\$ 69,050	\$ 2,760	4%
Congregational Life	\$ 7,205	\$ 6,931	\$ 274	4%
Facilities	\$ 112,716	\$ 93,972	\$ 18,744	17%
Worship & Music	\$ 10,800	\$ 9,827	\$ 973	9%
Youth Formation	\$ 18,650	\$ 19,230	\$ (580)	-3%
Total Expenses	\$ 989,760	\$ 927,122	\$ 62,638	6%

Building/Capital Reserve	\$ 21,000.00	\$ 21,000.00	\$ -	0%
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Total Expenses & Transfer	\$ 1,010,760	\$ 948,122	\$ 62,638	6%
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NET OPERATING SURPLUS/(DEFICIT)	\$ -	(\$145)	\$145	
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Through your generosity, God is at work across the ELCA. A portion of your offering, called Mission Support, advances the ministry of our church, helping the ELCA nurture Christian community, raise up leaders, serve our neighbors and strive for justice. Read stories and learn more at LivingLutheran.org/SOFIA.

