

Annual Congregational Meeting  
Jan. 28, 2024

Contents:

- Congregational Meeting Slide Deck
- Minutes from Jan. 22, 2023 Meeting
- 2023 Financial Report
- 2024 Proposed Budget
- Pastor's Report
- Office Report
- Music/Worship Report
- Youth Report
- Jan. 28, 2024 Meeting Minutes



**Tree of Life  
Congregational  
Meeting**

January 28, 2024

# Agenda

1. Call to Order and  
Opening Prayer
2. Establish a Quorum
3. Approval of Jan. 22,  
2023 Minutes
4. Election of 2024  
Council
5. President's Report

## Agenda, *continued*

6. Pastor's Report
7. Financial Report
  - a. 2023 Financial Report Overview
  - b. 2024 Proposed Budget Overview
8. Closing Prayer and Adjournment

1. Call to Order  
and  
Opening Prayer

Pastor Chris Lake

## 2. Establish a Quorum

3. Approval of  
Jan. 22, 2023  
Minutes

## 4. Election of 2024 Council



# Thank You to Retiring Members:

Russ Bliese

Tom Gros

Peggy Little

Pat Rowe

# Existing Members Continuing

Kevin Solberg (President)

Sandy McCarthy (V.P.)

Jim Lemaux (Treasurer)

Heidi Beckham

Mark Templet

Deb Zimmer

Council 2024  
Election  
Recommendations

New Members

Jenny Jenkins  
Russ Larson  
Ronnie Whitman

Council 2024  
Election  
Recommendations

Appointments:

Jim Lemaux, Treasurer

Heidi Beckham,  
Financial Secretary

TBD, Secretary

# 5. President's Report

Kevin Solberg



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Join us on  
Christmas Eve  
Worship at  
3:00 and 7:00 pm





# 6. Pastor's Report

Pastor Chris Lake

# 7a. Financial Report: 2023 Financial Report Overview

Jim Lemaux

*A detailed copy of the report  
is available online*

# 2023 Financial Report: Revenue

# 2023 Financial Report: Revenue

## **Revenue: Pledged Offering**

Actual: 233,707

Budget: 228,870

Over/Under: 4,837

# 2023 Financial Report: Revenue

## **Revenue: Non- Pledged**

Actual: 186,178

Budget: 197,611

Over/Under: (11,433)



# 2023 Financial Report: Revenue

## **Revenue: All Other**

Actual: 124,420

Budget: 45,650

Over/Under: 78,770

# 2023 Financial Report: Revenue

## **Revenue: TOTAL INCOME**

Actual: 544,304

Budget: 472,131

Over/Under: 72,173

# 2023 Financial Report: Revenue

## Revenue: From SEEDS

Actual: (18,509)

Budget: 0

Over/Under: (18,509)

# 2023 Financial Report: Revenue

## **Revenue: TOTAL REVENUE**

Actual: 525,796

Budget: 472,131

Over/Under: 53,665

# 2023 Financial Report: Expenses

# 2023 Financial Report: Expenses

**Category: Staff**

Actual: 251,594

Budget: 253,832

Over/Under: (2,238)

# 2023 Financial Report: Expenses

## **Category: Mortgage**

Actual: 97,452

Budget: 97,452

Over/Under: 0

# 2023 Financial Report: Expenses

**Category:  
Admin/Benevolence**

Actual: 51,920

Budget: 45,400

Over/Under: 6,520



# 2023 Financial Report: Expenses

## **Category: Building/Utilities/Grounds**

Actual: 52,621

Budget: 55,840

Over/Under: (3,219)

# 2023 Financial Report: Expenses

## **Category: Insurance/Other**

Actual: 49,023

Budget: 23,250

Over/Under: 25,773

# 2023 Financial Report: Expenses

**Category:  
Youth/Education/Fellowship**

Actual: 9,221

Budget: 7,750

Over/Under: 1,471

# 2023 Financial Report: Expenses

## **Category: Evangelism & Worship**

Actual: 11,857

Budget: 13,125

Over/Under: (1,268)

# 2023 Financial Report: Expenses

## **Category: TOTAL EXPENSES**

Actual: 523,689

Budget: 496,649

Over/Under: 27,040

# 2023 Financial Report: Summary

# 2023 Financial Report: Summary

## **2023 Revenues**

Actual: 525,796

Budget: 472,131

## **2023 Expenses**

Actual: 523,689

Budget: 496,649

## **Difference:**

Actual: 2,107

Budget: (24,518)

# 2023 Financial Report: Dedicated Funds



# 2023 Financial Report: Dedicated Funds

## **Adopt A Soldier**

YE 2023: 79

YE 2022: 79

## **Disaster Relief**

YE 2023: 1,625

YE 2022: 2,184

## **Emergency Building Repair**

YE 2023: 0

YE 2022: (461)

# 2023 Financial Report: Dedicated Funds

## **Endowments**

YE 2023: 210

YE 2022: 210

## **Internship Endowment**

YE 2023: 2,361

YE 2022: 2,361

## **King's Embrace**

YE 2023: 4,836

YE 2022: 8,452

# 2023 Financial Report: Dedicated Funds

## **Seminary Scholarship**

YE 2023: 50

YE 2022: 50

## **Stephen Ministry**

YE 2023: 5,415

YE 2022: 5,805

## **Women of TOL**

YE 2023: 913

YE 2022: 1,522

# 2023 Financial Report: Dedicated Funds

## **SEEDS Cash Account**

YE 2023: 18,987

YE 2022: 4,151

## **SEEDS Endowment**

YE 2023: 52,852

YE 2022: 48,217

# 2023 Financial Report: Dedicated Funds

## **Total Dedicated Funds**

YE 2023: 88,981

YE 2022: 72,569

# 2023 Financial Report: Legacy Gift Update

## 2023 Financial Report: Legacy Gift Update

- Approved Tree of Life Legacy Gift Policy
- Formed Legacy Giving Ministry Team:

Mark Danney

Pat Gibbons

Dennis McConnell

Jack Zimmer

## 2023 Financial Report: Legacy Gift Update

- Tree of Life received a \$25,000 Memorial Gift from Pat Voelz
- Gift accepted
  - \$22,500 to SEEDS Endowment
  - \$1,500 to ELCA World Hunger
  - \$1,000 to Principe de Paz Lutheran Church



# 2023 Financial Report: Balance Sheet

# 2023 Financial Report: Balance Sheet

## **Total Cash/Investments**

YE 2023: 128,752

YE 2022: 123,956

## **Fixed Assets**

YE 2023: 3,304,063

YE 2022: 3,303,317

## **TOTAL ASSETS**

YE 2023: 3,432,815

YE 2022: 3,427,272

# 2023 Financial Report: Balance Sheet

## **Church Mortgage**

YE 2023: 1,057,180

YE 2022: 1,109,767

## **New Seeds for Growth**

YE 2023: 159,493

YE 2022: 178,002

# 2023 Financial Report: Balance Sheet

## **Other Liabilities**

YE 2023: 17,950

YE 2022: 28,465

## **TOTAL LIABILITIES**

YE 2023: 1,234,623

YE 2022: 1,316,234

# 2023 Financial Report: Balance Sheet

## **TOTAL EQUITY**

YE 2023: 2,198,191

YE 2022: 2,111,038

## **TOTAL LIABILITIES AND EQUITY**

YE 2023: 3,432,815

YE 2022: 3,427,272

# 7b. Financial Report: 2024 Proposed Budget Overview

Jim Lemaux

*A detailed copy of the budget  
is available online*

# 2024 Proposed Budget: Revenue

2024 Proposed Budget:  
Revenue

**Category: Pledged Offering**

2023 Budget: 228,870

2023 Actual: 233,707

**2024 Proposed Budget:**  
**294,448**



2024 Proposed Budget:  
Revenue

**Category: Non Pledged**

2023 Budget: 197,611

2023 Actual: 186,178

**2024 Proposed Budget:**  
**158,208**

# 2024 Proposed Budget: Revenue

**Category: Misc. Income**

2023 Budget: 15,150

2023 Actual: 81,806

**2024 Proposed Budget:  
23,950**

# 2024 Proposed Budget: Revenue

**Category: From SEEDS**

2023 Budget: 0

2023 Actual: (18,509)

**2024 Proposed Budget:**  
**0**

# 2024 Proposed Budget: Revenue

## Category: TOTAL

2023 Budget: 472,131

2023 Actual: 525,796

**2024 Proposed Budget:**  
**528,606**

# 2024 Proposed Budget: Expenses

# 2024 Proposed Budget: Expenses

## **Category: Staff**

2023 Budget: 253,832

2023 Actual: 251,594

**2024 Proposed Budget:**  
**282,943**

# 2024 Proposed Budget: Expenses

## **Category: Mortgage**

2023 Budget: 97452

2023 Actual: 97,452

**2024 Proposed Budget:**  
**97,452**

2024 Proposed Budget:  
Expenses

**Category:  
Admin/Benevolence**

2023 Budget: 45,400

2023 Actual: 51,920

**2024 Proposed Budget:  
53,300**



2024 Proposed Budget:  
Expenses

**Category:  
Building/Utilities/Grounds**

2023 Budget: 55,840

2023 Actual: 52,621

**2024 Proposed Budget:  
54,560**

2024 Proposed Budget:  
Expenses

**Category: Insurance/Other**

2023 Budget: 23,250

2023 Actual: 49,023

**2024 Proposed Budget:**  
**27,650**

2024 Proposed Budget:  
Expenses

**Category:**  
**Youth/Education/Fellowship**

2023 Budget: 7,750

2023 Actual: 9,221

**2024 Proposed Budget:**  
**17,000**

2024 Proposed Budget:  
Expenses

**Category:  
Evangelism & Worship**

2023 Budget: 13,125

2023 Actual: 11,857

**2024 Proposed Budget:  
11,650**

2024 Proposed Budget:  
Expenses

**Category:**  
**TOTAL EXPENSES**

2023 Budget: 496,649

2023 Actual: 523,689

**2024 Proposed Budget:**  
**544,556**

2024 Proposed Budget:  
Expenses

**Category:**  
**TOTAL EXPENSES**

2023 Budget: 496,649

2023 Actual: 523,689

**2024 Proposed Budget:**  
**544,556**

# 2024 Proposed Budget: Summary

# 2024 Proposed Budget: Summary

## **2023 Budget**

Revenues: 472,131

Expenses: 496,649

Difference: (24,518)

## **2023 Actual**

Revenues: 525,796

Expenses: 496,649

Difference: 2,107



# 2024 Proposed Budget: Summary

## 2024 Proposed Budget:

Revenues: 528,606

Expenses: 544,556

Difference: (15,950)

## 8. Closing Prayer and Adjournment

# Tree of Life Congregational Meeting

January 22, 2023

President Kevin Solberg called the meeting to order at 9:15 AM. The meeting was conducted live and via ZOOM. Quorum was established. Pastor Chris Lake opened with a prayer. The motion to accept the minutes from the 1/16/2022 congregation meeting was moved to the end of the meeting so members could review the 2022 minutes.

- I. Treasurer Jim Lemaux presented the financial report for 2022 and the proposed budget for 2023. Due to Jill Waldrop being called for jury duty, a printed version was not available for the congregation. In the interest of transparency, the congregation could suspend the meeting until a hard copy of the financial report could be presented to the members. The congregation elected to move forward with the meeting. The 2022 pledged offerings were budgeted at \$227,328 with the actual amount being \$250,346. Non- Pledged was budgeted at \$168,856 with the actual amount being \$171,940. The budgeted miscellaneous and other income was budgeted at \$68,900 with the actual additional income being \$48,509. 2022 Budget was \$465,084 with the actual amount being \$470,795. There was a total of \$57,230 borrowed from SEEDS for a total income for 2022 being \$528,026. The 2022 expenses were budgeted at \$487,711 with the actual expense being \$504,531. With the SEEDS loan the 2022 budget showed an overage of \$23,495. A motion to accept the 2022 financial report was made by R. Whitman and seconded by D. Zimmer. All were in favor and the motion passed
- II. The proposed 2023 budget was presented to members. Pledged offering is projected at \$228,870 with non-pledged at \$197,611. Miscellaneous income is projected at \$15,650 with other income projected at \$30,500 for a total income of \$472,631 there is not a planned garage sell planned this year as no one has stepped forward to coordinate this project. Borrowing from SEEDS is not budgeted this year. Total expenses are budgeted at \$490,274 for a 2023 shortfall of \$17,643. Council will review the budget in April 2023 to monitor the income/expenses up to that point. After some discussion from the members, a motion was made to accept the 2023 budget by J Watson and seconded by P Rowe. All were in favor and the motion passed. Lemaux was thanked for refinancing the church mortgage last year before interest rates climbed up, which saved the church thousands of dollars in additional interest.

- III. The 2023 council was introduced with Kevin Solberg as President, Sandy McCarthy as Vice President, Jim Lemaux as Treasurer, Heidi Beckham as Financial Secretary and Russell Bliese as Secretary. The other council members for 2023 are Deb Zimmer, Pat Rowe, Mark Templet, Peggy Little and Tom Gros.
  
- IV. President presented a report on four key areas for the congregation: Worship, Community Service, Staffing and Stewardship. The church is growing as TOL added 38 new members for 2022 and already two new members in 2023. Attendance in person is averaging 104 with also an online presence. The number of volunteers at church is also increasing. Community Service included the use of the church buildings. Paideia Classical School will be increasing to four days a week in 2023. The YMCA, Girl Scouts and National Youth Theater will also be using TOL facilities. TOL added a Youth Director in 2022, Ikeria Green. The church is looking for additional assistance for Pastor Chris in the form of an ordained pastor. Stewardship, TOL continues to expand its name among the community. Jim Lemaux was able to lock in a five-year interest rate for the church mortgage. There is to be transparency regarding finances and the budget.
  
- V. Pastor Chris Lake presented his report to the congregation. Pastor Chris stated COVID is still on members minds with a strong online presence. The church lost members to death and leaving the church but the church added 38 new members in 2022. There were four baptisms performed and three first communions. Deb Zimmer is calling on all members to distinguish their status with the church so the rolls can be updated. Pastor went to Kenya in May 2022 to visit Kings Embrace. Pastor along with Pat Rowe and Wayne Rambarran will be leaving for Kenya this month to check on the status of the water well that is being funded from the money raised by pastor during his fundraiser. Security measures will also be installed while there for the security of the boys at the home. Pastor mentioned that he received a check from his former church in Geneva, NE to help with the well. Pastor mentioned that Jim Rust got involved in helping with the installation of the water well. The stolen trailer from the property was recovered and a new gate has been installed in the parking lot. Additional safety measures have been initiated at the church during services.
  
- VI. A motion was made by J Zimmer and seconded by R Oberski to accept the 2022 congregation minutes with some minor adjustments in names. All were in favor and the motion passed.
  
- VII. President Kevin Solberg closed the meeting and Pastor Chris led the congregation in the Lords Prayer. The meeting was adjourned at 10:18 A.M.

Respectfully submitted.

Russell Bliese.

Secretary

**TREE OF LIFE LUTHERAN CHURCH  
COMPARATIVE BALANCE SHEET  
AS OF DEC 2023 AND 2022**

<b>ASSETS</b>	<b>12/31/23</b>	<b>12/31/22</b>	<b>INCREASE (DECREASE)</b>
<b>Cash and Investments:</b>			
Operating Funds:			
General Fund Checking	39,665.54	40,370.63	(705.09)
Mission Investment Fund Checking	105.76	105.34	0.42
<b>Total Operating Funds</b>	<b>39,771.30</b>	<b>40,475.97</b>	<b>(704.67)</b>
<b>Designated Funds:</b>			
Internal Ministries	31,292.66	32,652.63	(1,359.97)
The King's Embrace	4,835.95	2,609.05	2,226.90
Endowment Fund	52,852.38	48,217.85	4,634.53
<b>Total Designated Funds</b>	<b>88,980.99</b>	<b>83,479.53</b>	<b>5,501.46</b>
<b>Total Cash and Investments</b>	<b>128,752.29</b>	<b>123,955.50</b>	<b>4,796.79</b>
<b>Fixed Assets</b>			
Buildings	2,623,725.23	2,623,725.23	0.00
Children's Park	66,964.80	66,964.80	0.00
Furniture & Equipment	66,268.63	66,268.63	0.00
Land	411,021.00	411,021.00	0.00
Musical Instruments	88,035.00	87,639.00	396.00
Prayer Garden	4,649.94	4,299.94	350.00
Sound & Video System	43,397.91	43,397.91	0.00
<b>Total Fixed Assets</b>	<b>3,304,062.51</b>	<b>3,303,316.51</b>	<b>746.00</b>
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>	<b>3,432,814.80</b>	<b>3,427,272.01</b>	<b>5,542.79</b>

**TREE OF LIFE LUTHERAN CHURCH  
COMPARATIVE BALANCE SHEET  
AS OF DEC 2023 AND 2022**

	12/31/23	12/31/22	INCREASE (DECREASE)
<b>LIABILITIES</b>			
<b>Current Liabilities</b>			
Accounts Payable	2,815.98	10,660.44	(7,844.46)
Credit Cards	4,671.68	7,414.21	(2,742.53)
Payroll Taxes	5,054.46	9,492.44	(4,437.98)
Benefits	5,407.96	898.06	4,509.90
<b>Total Current Liabilities</b>	<b>17,950.08</b>	<b>28,465.15</b>	<b>(10,515.07)</b>
<b>Long Term Liabilities</b>			
Church Mortgage	1,057,180.19	1,109,767.16	(52,586.97)
New Seeds For Growth	159,493.41	178,002.09	(18,508.68)
Payroll Protection Loan	0.00	0.00	0.00
<b>Total Long Term Liabilities</b>	<b>1,216,673.60</b>	<b>1,287,769.25</b>	<b>(71,095.65)</b>
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES</b>	<b>1,234,623.68</b>	<b>1,316,234.40</b>	<b>(81,610.72)</b>
<b>EQUITY</b>			
Restricted	322.00	322.00	0.00
Unrestricted Fixed Assets	1,969,329.96	1,898,234.31	71,095.65
Unrestricted Net Assets	228,539.16	212,481.30	16,057.86
<b>TOTAL EQUITY</b>	<b>2,198,191.12</b>	<b>2,111,037.61</b>	<b>87,153.51</b>
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES AND EQUITY</b>	<b>3,432,814.80</b>	<b>3,427,272.01</b>	<b>5,542.79</b>

**TREE OF LIFE LUTHERAN CHURCH  
DEDICATED FUNDS  
AS OF DECEMBER 31, 2023**

<b>Dedicated Fund</b>	<b>12/31/2022 Balance Forwarded</b>	<b>Donations / Income</b>	<b>Expenditures</b>	<b>12/31/2023 Balance</b>
Adopt a Soldier:	78.90	0.00	0.00	78.90
Disaster Relief:	2,183.68	0.00	(558.62)	1,625.06
Emergency Building Repairs:	(461.08)	0.00	461.08	0.00
Endowments	210.00	0.00	0.00	210.00
Internship:	2,361.25	0.00	0.00	2,361.25
Seminary Scholarship:	50.00	0.00	0.00	50.00
Stephen Ministry:	5,804.72	0.00	(390.17)	5,414.55
Women's Ministry:	1,521.66	0.00	(608.80)	912.86
New SEEDS for Growth Cash Account:	4,151.36	18,988.68	(2,500.00)	20,640.04
SEEDS Endowment:	48,216.57	4,635.81	0.00	52,852.38
King's Embrace:	8,451.61	6,185.44	(9,801.10)	4,835.95
<b>TOTAL DEDICATED FUNDS BALANCE:</b>				<b>88,980.99</b>



**TREE OF LIFE LUTHERAN CHURCH  
OPERATING FUND REVENUES, EXPENSES & BUDGETS  
THROUGH DECEMBER 31, 2023**

	2023 Actual	2023 Budget	Over / (Under)	% Difference
<b>Revenues:</b>				
Pledged Offering	233,706.84	228,870.00	4,836.84	102.1%
Non-pledged Offering	186,178.08	197,611.00	(11,432.92)	94.2%
<b>Total Offerings</b>	<b>419,884.92</b>	<b>426,481.00</b>	<b>(6,596.08)</b>	<b>98.5%</b>
<b>Other Revenue:</b>				
Amazon Smile Foundation	307.05	0.00	307.05	0.0%
Building Projects	2,750.00	5,000.00	(2,250.00)	55.0%
Camps/Retreats/Missions	1,500.00	300.00	1,200.00	500.0%
Facebook Payout	10.00	2,500.00	(2,490.00)	0.4%
Kroger Rewards	480.38	500.00	(19.62)	96.1%
Memorials	28,175.00	2,500.00	25,675.00	1127.0%
Name Tags	110.00	250.00	(140.00)	44.0%
Other	8,176.44	3,000.00	5,176.44	272.5%
Pastor's Kenya Trip	4,590.00	0.00	4,590.00	--
Prayer Path	(175.00)	1,000.00	(1,175.00)	-17.5%
Summer 2023 Adopt A Project	35,215.00	0.00	35,215.00	--
Thrivent	154.00	100.00	54.00	154.0%
VBS Other	79.51	0.00	79.51	--
VBS T-Shirts	433.87	0.00	433.87	0.0%
<b>Total Other Income</b>	<b>81,806.25</b>	<b>15,150.00</b>	<b>66,656.25</b>	<b>540.0%</b>
<b>Building Use Fees</b>	<b>41,075.00</b>	<b>28,500.00</b>	<b>12,575.00</b>	<b>144.1%</b>
<b>Interest</b>	<b>1,538.32</b>	<b>2,000.00</b>	<b>(461.68)</b>	<b>76.9%</b>
	<b>544,304.49</b>	<b>472,131.00</b>	<b>72,173.49</b>	<b>115.3%</b>
<b>Borrowed from (Repaid to) Seeds</b>	<b>(18,508.68)</b>			
<b>Available Revenue:</b>	<b>525,795.81</b>			

**TREE OF LIFE LUTHERAN CHURCH  
OPERATING FUND REVENUES, EXPENSES & BUDGETS  
THROUGH DECEMBER 31, 2023**

	2023 Actual	2023 Budget	Over / (Under)	% Difference
<b>Staff:</b>				
<b>Music Staff:</b>				
Organist/Choir Director	30,402.96	30,403.00	(0.04)	100.0%
Substitute Organist	400.00	300.00	100.00	133.3%
<b>Total Music Staff</b>	<b>30,802.96</b>	<b>30,703.00</b>	<b>99.96</b>	<b>100.3%</b>
<b>Nursery:</b>				
Nursery Staff	2,626.56	2,627.00	(0.44)	100.0%
<b>Total Nursery</b>	<b>2,626.56</b>	<b>2,627.00</b>	<b>(0.44)</b>	<b>100.0%</b>
<b>Office Manager:</b>				
Continuing Education	270.00	450.00	(180.00)	60.0%
ELCA Benefits Package	12,397.68	12,581.00	(183.32)	98.5%
Office Manager Salary:	26,203.20	26,203.00	0.20	100.0%
<b>Total Office Manager</b>	<b>38,870.88</b>	<b>39,234.00</b>	<b>(363.12)</b>	<b>99.1%</b>
<b>Pastor:</b>				
Continuing Education	798.26	1,300.00	(501.74)	61.4%
ELCA Benefits Package	49,058.88	49,059.00	(0.12)	100.0%
Housing Allowance	37,407.00	37,407.00	0.00	100.0%
Medical Expense Savings	2,596.48	3,050.00	(453.52)	85.1%
Professional Expenses	1,090.46	1,600.00	(509.54)	68.2%
Salary	51,676.28	51,676.00	0.28	100.0%
Social Security Allowances	7,384.00	7,384.00	0.00	100.0%
Substitute Pastor	2,400.00	2,730.00	(330.00)	87.9%
Travel/Mileage	2,045.78	2,700.00	(654.22)	75.8%
<b>Total Pastor</b>	<b>154,457.14</b>	<b>156,906.00</b>	<b>(2,448.86)</b>	<b>98.4%</b>
<b>Visual Tech.:</b>				
Salary	3,456.60	2,948.00	508.60	117.3%
<b>Total Visual Tech.</b>	<b>3,456.60</b>	<b>2,948.00</b>	<b>508.60</b>	<b>117.3%</b>
<b>Youth Director:</b>				
Continuing Education	883.23	423.00	460.23	208.8%
Mileage	0.00	125.00	(125.00)	0.0%
Salary	14,905.80	14,906.00	(0.20)	100.0%
<b>Total Youth Director</b>	<b>15,789.03</b>	<b>15,454.00</b>	<b>335.03</b>	<b>102.2%</b>
<b>Payroll Tax Expense</b>	<b>5,591.01</b>	<b>5,960.00</b>	<b>(368.99)</b>	<b>93.8%</b>
<b>Total Staff</b>	<b>251,594.18</b>	<b>253,832.00</b>	<b>(2,237.82)</b>	<b>99.1%</b>

**TREE OF LIFE LUTHERAN CHURCH  
OPERATING FUND REVENUES, EXPENSES & BUDGETS  
THROUGH DECEMBER 31, 2023**

	2023 Actual	2023 Budget	Over / (Under)	% Difference
<b>Mortgage:</b>				
Interest	44,865.03	45,663.00	(797.97)	98.3%
Principal	52,586.97	51,789.00	797.97	101.5%
<b>Total Mortgage</b>	<b>97,452.00</b>	<b>97,452.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>100.0%</b>
<b>Administration:</b>				
Computer/Software	8,771.45	5,500.00	3,271.45	159.5%
Copier, Lease & Maintenance	6,511.85	5,500.00	1,011.85	118.4%
Office Supplies	3,406.95	2,500.00	906.95	136.3%
Postage	264.16	400.00	(135.84)	66.0%
Telephone	7,075.76	6,500.00	575.76	108.9%
<b>Total Administration</b>	<b>26,030.17</b>	<b>20,400.00</b>	<b>5,630.17</b>	<b>127.6%</b>
<b>Benevolence:</b>				
Pastor Discretionary	1,910.70	1,000.00	910.70	191.1%
Synod Benevolence	24,000.00	24,000.00	0.00	100.0%
Missionary Support	(20.73)	0.00	(20.73)	--
<b>Total Benevolence</b>	<b>25,889.97</b>	<b>25,000.00</b>	<b>889.97</b>	<b>103.6%</b>
<b>Buildings:</b>				
<b>Utilities:</b>				
Electricity	21,434.67	20,000.00	1,434.67	107.2%
Natural Gas	800.42	600.00	200.42	133.4%
Water - Inside	3,094.61	5,000.00	(1,905.39)	61.9%
Water - Outside	464.28	500.00	(35.72)	92.9%
<b>Total Utilities</b>	<b>25,793.98</b>	<b>26,100.00</b>	<b>(306.02)</b>	<b>98.8%</b>
Building Maintenance	1,207.63	5,000.00	(3,792.37)	24.2%
Cleaning Service	10,566.94	9,000.00	1,566.94	117.4%
Security	1,924.63	2,000.00	(75.37)	96.2%
<b>Total Buildings</b>	<b>39,493.18</b>	<b>42,100.00</b>	<b>(2,606.82)</b>	<b>93.8%</b>
<b>Education:</b>				
Adult Education	107.73	0.00	107.73	--
Confirmation	562.45	500.00	62.45	112.5%
Education Supplies	0.00	750.00	(750.00)	0.0%
Sunday School	89.76	300.00	(210.24)	29.9%
<b>Total Education</b>	<b>759.94</b>	<b>1,550.00</b>	<b>(790.06)</b>	<b>49.0%</b>
<b>Evangelism:</b>				
Advertising	503.11	1,500.00	(996.89)	33.5%
General Outreach	1,367.90	1,000.00	367.90	136.8%
Outreach Supplies	64.25	100.00	(35.75)	64.3%
Website Fees	812.14	925.00	(112.86)	87.8%
<b>Total Evangelism</b>	<b>2,747.40</b>	<b>3,525.00</b>	<b>(777.60)</b>	<b>77.9%</b>

**TREE OF LIFE LUTHERAN CHURCH  
OPERATING FUND REVENUES, EXPENSES & BUDGETS  
THROUGH DECEMBER 31, 2023**

	2023 Actual	2023 Budget	Over / (Under)	% Difference
<b>Fellowship:</b>				
Fellowship Supplies	1,871.10	1,500.00	371.10	124.7%
Kitchen Supplies	226.49	200.00	26.49	113.2%
<b>Total Fellowship</b>	<b>2,097.59</b>	<b>1,700.00</b>	<b>397.59</b>	<b>123.4%</b>
<b>Grounds:</b>				
Lawn Service	7,920.00	8,640.00	(720.00)	91.7%
Materials & Supplies	2,681.09	100.00	2,581.09	2681.1%
Trash Service	2,527.21	5,000.00	(2,472.79)	50.5%
<b>Total Grounds</b>	<b>13,128.30</b>	<b>13,740.00</b>	<b>(611.70)</b>	<b>95.5%</b>
<b>Insurance:</b>				
Church Liability Insurance	16,450.22	19,000.00	(2,549.78)	86.6%
Worker's Compensation	838.83	450.00	388.83	186.4%
<b>Total Insurance</b>	<b>17,289.05</b>	<b>19,450.00</b>	<b>(2,160.95)</b>	<b>88.9%</b>
<b>Worship &amp; Music:</b>				
Audio Visual Technology	4,046.37	1,000.00	3,046.37	404.6%
Choir & Handbell Attire	6.48	200.00	(193.52)	3.2%
Choir Music	309.57	2,400.00	(2,090.43)	12.9%
Copyrights	1,427.00	1,500.00	(73.00)	95.1%
Sanctuary Supplies	929.31	1,500.00	(570.69)	62.0%
Worship Planning	2,390.43	3,000.00	(609.57)	79.7%
<b>Total Worship &amp; Music</b>	<b>9,109.16</b>	<b>9,600.00</b>	<b>(490.84)</b>	<b>94.9%</b>
<b>Youth Ministry:</b>				
Camp Youth Trips	2,103.65	0.00	2,103.65	0.0%
Curriculum	289.91	0.00	289.91	--
VBS	2,602.98	2,500.00	102.98	104.1%
Youth Fellowship	1,367.38	2,000.00	(632.62)	68.4%
<b>Total Youth Ministry</b>	<b>6,363.92</b>	<b>4,500.00</b>	<b>1,863.92</b>	<b>141.4%</b>
<b>Other Expenses:</b>				
Bank Charges	4,786.51	3,300.00	1,486.51	145.0%
Pastor's Kenya Trip	1,038.29	0.00	1,038.29	--
Summer 2023 Adopt A Project	24,989.27	0.00	24,989.27	--
Synod Conventions	920.00	500.00	420.00	184.0%
Undistributed Credit Card Chgs	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.0%
<b>Total Other Expenses</b>	<b>31,734.07</b>	<b>3,800.00</b>	<b>27,934.07</b>	<b>835.1%</b>
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>523,688.93</b>	<b>496,649.00</b>	<b>27,039.93</b>	<b>105.4%</b>
<b>Net</b>	<b>2,106.88</b>	<b>(24,518.00)</b>	<b>26,624.88</b>	

**TREE OF LIFE LUTHERAN CHURCH**  
**2024 RECOMMENDED BUDGET TO CONGREGATION**

	2023 Budget	2023 Actual	2024 Budget Dec Council Recommendation
General Fund Checking - Year End	--	\$40,475.97	\$4,500 after Adopt-a-Project Charges and Legacy Gift

REVENUE			
<b>STEWARDSHIP</b>			
Pledged Offering	\$228,870.00	\$233,706.84	\$294,448
<b>Sub Total Pledged Offerings</b>	<b>\$228,870.00</b>	<b>\$233,706.84</b>	<b>\$294,448.00</b>
ONLINE-NOT PLEDGED (REALM)			\$24,280
NOT PLEDGED			\$116,365
ONE OFF DONATIONS			\$595
CASH OFFERING			\$1,968
COUNCIL OVERVIEW			\$15,000
<b>Sub Total Not Pledged Offerings</b>	<b>\$197,611.00</b>	<b>\$186,178.08</b>	<b>\$158,208.00</b>
<b>TOTAL STEWARDSHIP</b>	<b>\$426,481.00</b>	<b>\$419,884.92</b>	<b>\$452,656</b>
<b>MISC. INCOME</b>			
Amazon Smile Foundation	\$0.00	\$307.05	\$0
Audio Visual	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0
Building Projects	\$5,000.00	\$2,750.00	\$2,500
Camps/Retreats/Missions	\$300.00	\$1,500.00	\$0
Facebook Payout	\$2,500.00	\$10.00	\$0
Kroger Rewards	\$500.00	\$480.38	\$500
Memorials	\$2,500.00	\$28,175.00	\$10,000
Name Tags	\$250.00	\$110.00	\$250
Pastor's Kenya Trip Donation	\$0.00	\$4,590.00	\$0
Prayer Path	\$1,000.00	(\$175.00)	\$500
Summer 2023 Adopt A Project Donation	\$0.00	\$35,215.00	\$0
Thrivent	\$100.00	\$154.00	\$200
VBS Other	\$0.00	\$79.51	\$0
VBS T-Shirts	\$0.00	\$433.87	\$0
Other	\$3,000.00	\$8,176.44	\$10,000
<b>Sub Total Misc Income</b>	<b>\$15,150.00</b>	<b>\$81,806.25</b>	<b>\$23,950</b>
<b>OTHER INCOME</b>			
Building Use Fees	\$28,500.00	\$41,075.00	\$50,000
Interest	\$2,000.00	\$1,538.32	\$2,000
<b>Sub Total Other Income</b>	<b>\$30,500.00</b>	<b>\$42,613.32</b>	<b>\$52,000</b>
<b>TOTAL REVENUES</b>	<b>\$472,131.00</b>	<b>\$544,304.49</b>	<b>\$528,606</b>
Borrowed from (Repaid to) Seeds	\$0.00	(\$18,508.68)	\$0
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b>\$472,131.00</b>	<b>\$525,795.81</b>	<b>\$528,606</b>

STAFF EXPENSES			
Organist/Choir Director	\$30,403.00	\$30,402.96	\$31,619
Substitute Organist	\$300.00	\$400.00	\$800
Nursery Salary	\$2,627.00	\$2,626.56	\$2,732
<i>OFFICE MANAGER</i>			
Office Manager Continuing Education	\$450.00	\$270.00	\$450
Office Manager ELCA Benefits Package	\$12,581.00	\$12,397.68	\$12,500
Office Manager Salary	\$26,203.00	\$26,203.20	\$27,251
<i>Office Manager Subtotal:</i>	\$39,234.00	\$38,870.88	\$39,153
<i>PASTOR</i>			
Pastor Continuing Education	\$1,300.00	\$798.26	\$3,600
Pastor ELCA Benefits Package	\$49,059.00	\$49,058.88	\$49,059
Pastor Housing Allowance	\$37,407.00	\$37,407.00	\$37,407
Pastor Medical Expense Savings	\$3,050.00	\$2,596.48	\$0
Pastor Professional Expenses	\$1,600.00	\$1,090.46	\$1,700
Pastor Salary	\$51,676.00	\$51,676.28	\$53,743
Pastor Social Security Allowances	\$7,384.00	\$7,384.00	\$7,685
Pastor Travel/Mileage	\$2,700.00	\$2,045.78	\$2,700
Substitute Pastor	\$2,730.00	\$2,400.00	\$5,400
<i>Pastor Subtotal:</i>	\$156,906.00	\$154,457.14	\$161,294
Visual Tech Salary	\$2,948.00	\$3,456.60	\$6,000
<i>YOUTH DIRECTOR / EDUCATION DIRECTOR</i>			
Youth Director Continuing Education	\$423.00	\$883.23	\$550
Youth Director Mileage	\$125.00	\$0.00	\$125
Youth Director Salary	\$14,906.00	\$14,905.80	\$15,502
Education Director Salary	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$16,500
Payroll Tax Expense	\$5,960.00	\$5,591.01	\$7,619.75
<b>TOTAL STAFF EXPENSES</b>	<b>\$253,832.00</b>	<b>\$251,594.18</b>	<b>\$282,943</b>

<b>BUILDING EXPENSES</b>			
<b>MORTGAGE</b>			
Interest	\$45,663.00	\$44,865.03	\$43,447.15
Principal	\$51,789.00	\$52,586.97	\$54,004.85
<b>TOTAL MORTGAGE</b>	<b>\$97,452.00</b>	<b>\$97,452.00</b>	<b>\$97,452.00</b>
<b>ADMINISTRATION</b>			
Computer/Software	\$5,500.00	\$8,771.45	\$5,000.00
Copier, Lease & Maintenance	\$5,500.00	\$6,511.85	\$5,500.00
Office Supplies	\$2,500.00	\$3,406.95	\$3,400.00
Postage	\$400.00	\$264.16	\$400.00
Telephone	\$6,500.00	\$7,075.76	\$7,000.00
<b>TOTAL ADMINISTRATION</b>	<b>\$20,400.00</b>	<b>\$26,030.17</b>	<b>\$21,300.00</b>
<b>BUILDINGS</b>			
Building Maintenance	\$5,000.00	\$1,207.63	\$0.00
Cleaning Service	\$9,000.00	\$10,566.94	\$11,820.00
Security	\$2,000.00	\$1,924.63	\$2,000.00
Electricity	\$20,000.00	\$21,434.67	\$23,000.00
Natural Gas	\$600.00	\$800.42	\$800.00
Water - Inside	\$5,000.00	\$3,094.61	\$3,600.00
Water - Outside	\$500.00	\$464.28	\$500.00
<b>TOTAL BUILDINGS</b>	<b>\$42,100.00</b>	<b>\$39,493.18</b>	<b>\$41,720.00</b>
<b>GROUNDS</b>			
Lawn Service	\$8,640.00	\$7,920.00	\$8,640.00
Materials & Supplies	\$100.00	\$2,681.09	\$1,500.00
Trash Service	\$5,000.00	\$2,527.21	\$2,700.00
<b>TOTAL GROUNDS</b>	<b>\$13,740.00</b>	<b>\$13,128.30</b>	<b>\$12,840.00</b>
<b>INSURANCE</b>			
Church Liability Insurance	\$19,000.00	\$16,450.22	\$17,000.00
Worker's Compensation	\$450.00	\$838.83	\$900.00
<b>TOTAL INSURANCE</b>	<b>\$19,450.00</b>	<b>\$17,289.05</b>	<b>\$17,900.00</b>
<b>TOTAL BUILDING EXPENSES</b>	<b>\$193,142.00</b>	<b>\$193,392.70</b>	<b>\$191,212.00</b>

MINISTRY AND OTHER EXPENSES			
<b>BENEVOLENCE</b>			
Pastor Discretionary	\$1,000.00	\$1,910.70	\$2,000.00
Synod Benevolence	\$24,000.00	\$24,000.00	\$30,000.00
Missionary Support	\$0.00	(\$20.73)	\$0.00
<b>TOTAL BENEVOLENCE</b>	<b>\$25,000.00</b>	<b>\$25,889.97</b>	<b>\$32,000.00</b>
<b>EDUCATION</b>			
Adult Education	\$0.00	\$107.73	\$150.00
Confirmation	\$500.00	\$562.45	\$700.00
Education Supplies	\$750.00	\$0.00	\$700.00
Sunday School	\$300.00	\$89.76	\$300.00
<b>TOTAL EDUCATION</b>	<b>\$1,550.00</b>	<b>\$759.94</b>	<b>\$1,850.00</b>
<b>EVANGELISM</b>			
Advertising	\$1,500.00	\$503.11	\$1,000.00
General Outreach	\$1,000.00	\$1,367.90	\$1,250.00
Outreach Supplies	\$100.00	\$64.25	\$100.00
Website Fees	\$925.00	\$812.14	\$800.00
<b>TOTAL EVANGELISM</b>	<b>\$3,525.00</b>	<b>\$2,747.40</b>	<b>\$3,150.00</b>
<b>FELLOWSHIP</b>			
Fellowship Supplies	\$1,500.00	\$1,871.10	\$2,000.00
Kitchen Supplies	\$200.00	\$226.49	\$350.00
<b>TOTAL FELLOWSHIP</b>	<b>\$1,700.00</b>	<b>\$2,097.59</b>	<b>\$2,350.00</b>
<b>WORSHIP &amp; MUSIC</b>			
Audio Visual Technology	\$1,000.00	\$4,046.37	\$2,000.00
Choir & Handbell Attire	\$200.00	\$6.48	\$0.00
Choir Music	\$2,400.00	\$309.57	\$1,000.00
Copyrights	\$1,500.00	\$1,427.00	\$1,500.00
Sanctuary Supplies	\$1,500.00	\$929.31	\$1,000.00
Worship Planning	\$3,000.00	\$2,390.43	\$3,000.00
<b>TOTAL WORSHIP &amp; MUSIC</b>	<b>\$9,600.00</b>	<b>\$9,109.16</b>	<b>\$8,500.00</b>



<b>MINISTRY AND OTHER EXPENSES</b>			
<b>YOUTH MINISTRY</b>			
Camp Youth Trips	\$0.00	\$2,103.65	\$0.00
VBS	\$2,500.00	\$2,602.98	\$3,000.00
Curriculum	\$0.00	\$289.91	\$0.00
Youth Fellowship	\$2,000.00	\$1,367.38	\$2,000.00
Youth Gathering	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$7,800.00
<b>TOTAL YOUTH MINISTRY</b>	<b>\$4,500.00</b>	<b>\$6,363.92</b>	<b>\$12,800.00</b>
<b>OTHER EXPENSES</b>			
Bank Charges	\$3,300.00	\$4,786.51	\$5,198.32
Pastor's Kenya Trip	\$0.00	\$1,038.29	\$3,551.71
Summer 2023 Adopt A Project	\$0.00	\$24,989.27	\$0.00
Synod Conventions	\$500.00	\$920.00	\$1,000.00
Undistributed Cr. Card Charges:	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
<b>TOTAL OTHER EXPENSES</b>	<b>\$3,800.00</b>	<b>\$31,734.07</b>	<b>\$9,750.03</b>
<b>TOTAL MINISTRY AND OTHER EXPENSES</b>	<b>\$49,675.00</b>	<b>\$78,702.05</b>	<b>\$70,400.03</b>

<b>BUDGET SUMMARY 2024</b>			
PLEGGED GIVING	\$228,870	\$233,707	\$294,448
NON PLEGGED GIVING	\$197,611	\$186,178	\$158,208
OTHER REVENUE	\$45,650	\$124,420	\$75,950
<b>TOTAL REVENUE</b>	<b>\$472,131</b>	<b>\$544,304</b>	<b>\$528,606</b>
BORROWED FROM SEEDS	\$0	(\$18,509)	\$0
<b>TOTAL AVAILABLE FUNDS</b>	<b>\$472,131</b>	<b>\$525,796</b>	<b>\$528,606</b>
TOTAL STAFF EXPENSES	\$253,832	\$251,594	\$282,943
BUILDING EXPENSES	\$193,142	\$193,393	\$191,212
MINISTRY EXPENSES	\$45,875	\$46,968	\$60,650
OTHER EXPENSES	\$3,800	\$31,734	\$9,750
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>\$496,649</b>	<b>\$523,689</b>	<b>\$544,556</b>
<b>SHORTFALL / OVERAGE</b>	<b>(\$24,518)</b>	<b>\$2,107</b>	<b>(\$15,950)</b>

Tree of Life Lutheran Church  
Annual Report 2023  
Pastor's Report

Last year I ended my report with “we went back to Kenya...” and I can now conclude that sentence with “it was amazing.” Two years ago I went to The Kings Embrace, a ministry started by former Tree of Life members Linda and David Fisher in Bungoma, Kenya. What we discovered was a very thriving and valuable ministry that I became deeply moved by, and with the help of Tree of Life and its members raised close to 25k dollars to help build a new well, make some repairs, and help hire some teachers. Wayne Rambarran, his mother-in-law and Tree of Life council member Pat Rowe and I completed every task we had hoped achieve, which included:

- Installing a voltage regulator
- Installing a Generator Bypass
- Installing a security system
- Repairing a significant portion of the roof

And most significantly, we were able to diagnose and repair the new water well which has been running with little concern for one year now. I also did a little bible teaching in the evening and, with my two companions, was able to spend significant time with the boys.

This was how we started the year. It was not the only highlight of last year though. We had 22 new people join Tree of Life which, combined with the previous year, is 50 new people who have joined our congregation.

We also had people pass away last year in the promise of the resurrection:

- Bill McArthur
- Bob Dinklage
- Bea and Ed Johnson

I performed one wedding last year for two non members, Teresa Wommack and Ken Neal. I also began premarital meetings with two couples who will be marrying early in 2024.

I performed three baptisms and we had one child take her first communion on Maundy Thursday.

Worship continues to grow as well. At our 8:00 service, we had an average attendance of 29 (up from 25 in 2022). The 10:30 service attendance was up to an average of 93 (up from 78 in 2022).

Overall it appears that Tree of Life is trending in the proper direction and is making significant jumps in the right direction. Another wonderful moment in our congregational life was having eight of our “children” (one who has moved to Brenham) serve as staffers at Lutherhill. All those years of sending kids to camp has developed into having college kids who still want to participate and serve the church. I could not be prouder. I should add that Ainsley Lake went a

step further and convinced two graduating students from Conroe High school to come and serve at Lutherhill as well.

Jill Waldrop continues to serve Tree of Life as our church administrator, John Burkwall continues to serve as a church musician and Ikeria Green is still our youth director. However, if all goes to plan for 2024 we plan to bring on an additional staff member; Diana Fredrick has degree in youth and family education from Luther Seminary and she is positioned as such to come on board to help Ikeria with our student ministries. Ikeria would focus on our younger children and Diana would take on our older children and adults.

In a less formal relationship, but just as significant: it is my hope that we will also continue to utilize Keith Swatzel in the pulpit next year as his preaching is excellent. Because he holds Methodist credentials as a pastor, he is allowed to practice as such in our congregation. We also have on file a letter from his Bishop's office allowing him to act in the capacity as needed.

What will 2024 bring? I honestly don't know. I am headed back to Kenya this year but not for another month or so depending on how my mother handles back surgery this year. My hope is that we continue to grow both in numbers and strength as we move past the covid years and into future ministry.

God's Peace-

Chris Lake

Tree of Life Lutheran Church  
Annual Report 2023  
Office

It seems like just yesterday that we started 2023, and now it's over already! Time does fly when you're having fun!

And yes, it's fun. There are days that are hard, and there are days that are busy, and there are days that are long, and there are days that are physically and/or mentally and/or emotionally exhausting. And, honestly, there are some days that are a bit on the boring side.... But: I love being at Tree of Life and working with the people I work with and working for the people I work for and I DO have fun sometimes. (Want to know a little secret? Hosting "Movie Night" wasn't really "work"! So yeah...plan on seeing more Movie Nights in 2024!) Even with that being said: I know I need to make better use of the "paid time off" available to me so that I can relax, recharge, and renew and *stay* happy, energized, and focused! Luckily - there are several awesome members of the congregation who step in and do a marvelous job covering the office whenever I need to be gone. I so appreciate them!

Besides the regular office and worship planning team activities that keep the church running, the bills paid, and the pastor somewhat organized and sane, I've been kept very busy with the building use at Tree of Life. For several weeks during 2023, our buildings were in use *seven days a week* as Paideia, the YMCA, Girl Scouts, Piano Lessons by Kara, and National Youth Theater (and a few other one-off groups) used our space as their space. It meant a bit of additional work for me, keeping things scheduled and organized and managing multiple groups that needed space and time that sometimes overlap, and balancing it all with the church's need for the buildings. Having so many groups using the church meant some phone calls and texts early in the morning and late in the evenings and on weekends. And the biggest challenge was keeping track of supplies and finding a janitorial service that could keep up with the growing building use and resulting higher expectations. But I love having people around the church and I hope to see 2024 bring in as many people as 2023 did.

I continue to do some things that are a little outside my "job duties" but that make me feel more connected as a *member* of Tree of Life. I serve as Assisting Minister once or twice a month, sing in the choir, participate as a Stephen Minister, and take part in the group that bakes the communion bread. Sunday mornings are a little crazy for me, but I try to attend the new member classes so that I can get to know our newest members a little bit, and I drop in on the Bad Girls or the Adult Bible Study from time to time. I love spending time with our young people - we have some AWESOME young people at this church! - so I help with VBS, try to spend a day at youth camp at Lutherhill, and, as of the fall of 2023, serve as a Confirmation Mentor. I look forward to attending the "Unwind" women's retreat again, and hope to maybe get another retreat planned for later in the year. I also hope to get more fellowship activities happening because I really enjoy "peopling" with our people!

Blessings to you all,

Jill Waldrop  
Office Manager

Tree of Life Lutheran Church  
Annual Report 2023  
Youth & Families

In the year of 2023, I completed my 2nd year as a Youth Director! I have learned so much over the past 2 years and I hope to learn much more.

June of 2023 we were off to Lutherhill...again!!! The experience just gets better and better. You will never believe it; we brought along 10 kids and we had a total of 3 sponsors!! Seeing the smiles and excitement in their faces gave me pure joy. The whole week was about having "The Best Week Ever" and that is just what we had. Each day consisted of Worship, Bible Study, Activities, Eating, Sing-A-Long, All Camp (which was fun), eating again, worship again then bed. The kids enjoyed Worship, rock climbing, swimming (also in the pond) and arts/crafts the most!!!! We are planning on going back the second week of June of 2024!

In July of 2023, something STELLAR happened!! My second year of VBS that I was actually able to join this time was a hit! The amount of volunteers and youth we had was outstanding and I couldn't have made this happen without them! It was full of sing-a-longs, different activities that involved arts and crafts, bible stories, outside games/activities and cinema action. Lots of laughs and smiles that I will never forget! The kids definitely shined Jesus' light that week!!

August of 2023 brought us Sunday School, Confirmation and Blessings of backpacks. This year it was growing even more!! I gained outstanding teachers for Sunday School and Confirmation and I couldn't be more excited and thankful for them!

In September, we had a confirmation outing to the Main Event! We had a total of 5 kids and 3 chaperones. It was a great turn out. I am pretty sure the Main Event won't forget who we are! The kids played so many games and just enjoyed each other. Bowling was our last activity to do and it was adults vs. kids, let's just say the kids are pretty competitive! We all ended the night off with a win and it will be happening again here soon!! Also, something BIG happened!! We had an Adoption!! Two of my youth were adopted this month and I along with others were able to attend. It was the most beautiful thing I've witnessed! It was such an honor to be there!

In October we unfortunately did not have a fall festival but we did have an Oktoberfest that was run by Deb Zimmer, thank you so much for that! I do vividly remember how many kids we had during Sunday School this month as well and it was a lot. All 3 classrooms were full.

In November we started our Christmas Program Practice and we did our 2nd Angel Tree! The Angel Tree meant so much to me, not only because it was helping families with children who couldn't provide Christmas to them, but it was also because it was families from the school that I work at and I work with those kids daily. It genuinely makes my heart happy! I hope to continue this from this point forward.

December of 2023, as the year was coming to an end I started to embrace how far I've come and how much more I was starting to understand how important serving is. Let's start with the Children's

Christmas Program... I had a total of 26 children. 26!!! I myself was shocked. I went from 2 handfuls of kids to doubling and more! The kids did their part and more! The hard work and effort that they showed me was beyond what I asked for. Thank you to all that made this happen!

2023 was the year of growth and I look forward to what this new year has to come!

My vision for the year of 2023 was to get our High School group more involved in church itself and to find more things for them to be involved in and we did just that, we got them back in Sunday School, but there is more to make happen. I look forward to this new year and learning new things. I look forward to continuing to build relationships with the youth and parents.

2024 is going to be even more growth for this youth program and I can't wait for things to happen! I will continue to do my best in everything I do!

Blessings,

Ikeria Green  
Youth Director

Tree of Life Lutheran Church  
Annual Report 2023  
Music and Worship

2023 has stretched all of Worship to its utmost this year. With many of the staff having to wear many hats, it has been a productive and stressful year. However, we have grown and are moving forward because of it.

The Choir has been going strong all year and has grown to 16 at times. There is still a need for more Tenors, of course, but the confidence of the ensemble is strong, and they are confident in trying harder material. This year we brought back the Rutter Requiem for All Saints, and it was like seeing an old friend. We have pulled off several high-quality pieces this year, a testament to the growth of our choir.

The Bell Choir has suffered a loss or two, but we are still able to play most pieces we put our attention to. Currently it is at 9 members and can do Level 2-3 pieces. This is considerably better than two years ago, when we brought in fresh players and started with simpler pieces. Thankfully, everyone is very adaptable and has changed with every shift in players! We are also doing more complicated pieces and use some of our more advanced players in playing two parts (or more!).

One thing that is still somewhat stagnated since last year is our brass ensemble. I am afraid due to time constraints I have not been able to put in the time to get everyone together throughout the year. This past year we had brass for Easter, but not for Christmas (since the bell choir played). I hope to get this started again for this Easter.

Overall, the Worship committee has been very active this past year, with meetings every week. Discussions on themes for the various liturgical seasons and making sure our live-streaming is of good quality is constantly on our mind. We have a great group of volunteers who help keep things in motion, between Pastor Chris on service and tech issues, Susan Rinehart and Jill Waldrop on slides and worship bulletins, Peggy Little taking the volunteer wrangling business, Susie Rust on Altar guild needs, Linda Bliese on copyright issues and Jeremie Brown with contemporary service needs.

One last thing to mention is the major change in my life, as I became a full-time choir teacher at Cleveland High School in August 2022. As a second-year teacher, things have gone much smoother and I am using several techniques from high school in my church choir, and vice versa. Both groups are growing because of it!

Overall, this has been a very busy year, and it looks to continue in 2024!

John Burkwall

# Tree of Life Congregational Meeting

January 28, 2024

President Kevin Solberg called the meeting to order at 9:15 AM. The meeting was conducted live and on line. Quorum was established. Pastor Chris Lake opened with a prayer. A motion was made by Lemaux and seconded by McCarthy to accept the agenda. All were in favor and the motion passed. The motion to accept the minutes from the 1/22/2023 congregation meeting was made by McCarthy and seconded by Templet. All were in favor and the motion passed.

- I. Presidents report by Kevin Solberg: Retiring from the 2023 council board are Bliese, Gros, Little and Rowe. Continuing board members are Solberg-President, McCarthy-Vice President, Lemaux-Treasurer, Beckham-Financial Secretary, Zimmer, and Templet. Nominated for the 2024 council board are Jenny Jenkins, Russ Larson and Ronnie Whitman. The secretary position will be determined later. A motion was made by Pastor Chris and seconded by Broome to accept the new church council members. All were in favor and the motion passed.

Solberg provided a report on the past year at TOL. The buildings at TOL are open for the community and YMCA is still using the building as is Paideia School who uses the education building four days a week. The rental of this building has contributed to the finances for TOL. The youth are also using the building. Pictures were shown on the improvements and the work done at the church with the assistance of the Adopt A Project. We have a new security gate in the parking lot that will help cut down on thefts. The water leak was fixed. The AC went out and a new part was delivered. The sprinkler system is being brought up to code and upgraded. There was concrete work done on the driveway. There was an adoption conducted at TOL. New projectors and a new camera were installed. There is a new storage container at the back of the parking lot. This was placed by the Tool Bank that assists in projects for the community and will allow the church to use their tools. A motion was made by Larson and seconded by Whitman to accept the presidents report. All were in favor and the motion passed.

- II. Pastor Report: Pastor Chris reported that he will be going back to Kenya to Kings Embrace most likely in March with the help of Wayne Rambarran. Whitman will be



going to Kenya in February. There were three baptisms in 2023. There are more members coming back into the church on the early side and late side. There are still members that watch the live feed on Sundays. Diana Fredrick was introduced to the congregation as she has accepted a part time position working with the youth. Diana has a master's degree in Christian education. She has been working with the youth in confirmation class. Steven Ministry training will be starting in March. A motion was made by Solberg and seconded by Whitman to accept the Pastor Report. All were in favor and the motion passed.

- III. Treasurer Jim Lemaux presented the financial report for 2023 and the proposed budget for 2024. The 2023 pledged offerings were budgeted at \$228,870 with the actual amount being \$233,707. Non- Pledged was budgeted at \$197,611 with the actual amount being \$186,178. The budgeted miscellaneous and other income was budgeted at \$45,650 with the actual additional income being \$124,420. 2023 Budget was \$472,131 with the actual amount being \$544,304. There was \$18,509 repaid to SEEDS. The 2023 expenses were budgeted at \$496,649 with the actual expense being \$523,689. The 2023 budget showed an overage of \$2,107. Dedicated funds were at \$88,981 for 2023 compared to \$72,569 for 2022. Legacy Gift Update: Policy was approved and Legacy Gift team is led by Zimmer, Gibbons, Danney and McConnell. \$25,000 was received from Pat Voelz. Council voted to send \$1,500 to ELCA World Hunger and \$1,000 to Principe De Paz Lutheran Church in Houston for assistance with AC issues. The rest of the funds were placed into the Endowment Fund. The Balance Sheet showed \$3.4 million in assets and \$1.2 million in liabilities. A motion to accept the 2023 financial report was made by McCarthy and seconded by Obrosky. All were in favor and the motion passed
- IV. The proposed 2024 budget was presented to members. Pledged offering, non-pledged, and miscellaneous income is budgeted at \$528,606. Borrowing from SEEDS is not budgeted this year. Total expenses are budgeted at \$544,556 for a 2024 shortfall of \$15,950. A motion was made to accept the 2024 budget by Zimmer and seconded by Self. All were in favor and the motion passed. Lemaux advised members that the mortgage on the church will be below one million by March 2025.
- V. President Kevin Solberg closed the meeting and Pastor Chris led the congregation in the Lord's Prayer. The meeting was adjourned at 10:15 A.M. after a motion by Broome and seconded by Gros. All were in favor and the motion passed.

Respectfully submitted.

Russell Bliese.

Secretary