

New Hope Lutheran Church

Sand Creek & Pine Creek, Wisconsin

2023 Annual Report

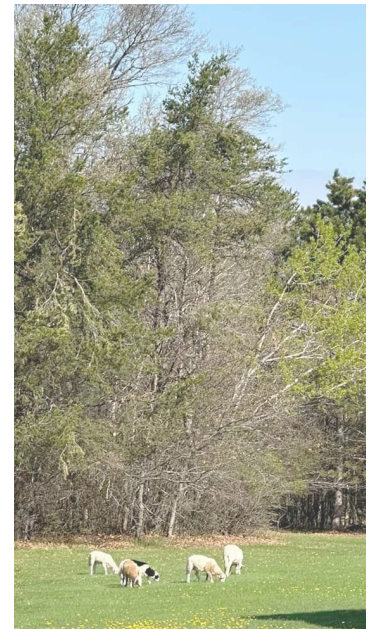
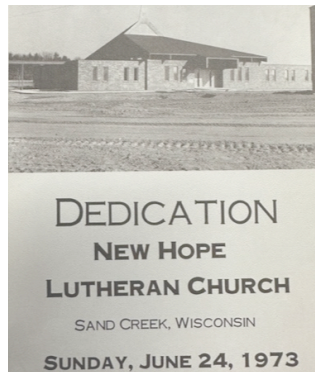


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Agenda

Sunday, January 21, 2024

***Immediately following 10a Worship
at our Pine Creek Site***

CALL TO ORDER

ANNOUNCEMENTS

APPROVE 2022 ANNUAL MEETING MINUTES

- A. Approve Treasurer's Report/Financial Statement 2023
- B. Approve 2024 Budget Summary Proposal
- C. Elect Council Positions for 2024 Church Leadership
- D. Elect delegates/Luther Park (2) and Synod Assembly (2)

ENDING COMMENTS

MOTION TO ADJOURN

THE LORD'S PRAYER

**Church Council meets briefly immediately
following adjournment to elect 2024 officers.**



NEW HOPE LUTHERAN CHURCH

*A welcoming community of faith inspired
by God's grace to love, grow & serve.*



Sand Creek & Pine Creek, WI
1 Congregation with 2 Locations
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America



New Hope Lutheran Church
Annual Meeting Minutes (Draft)
Sunday, January 22, 2023
Sand Creek Site

(Subject to congregational approval at annual meeting January 2024)

CALL TO ORDER: 10:50a by President, John Loy opened by reading President's Report omitted from Annual Report.

DEVOTIONS: Pr. Michael Sparby led prayer celebrating our church with thanksgiving for 156 years blessed, asking guidance through this annual meeting, leading us with a vision for our future.

ANNUAL REPORT REVIEWED

NEW BUSINESS

2023 Proposed Budget: M/S/C adopt as presented (*Juel Smith/Alan Peterson*)

2023 Church Council: M/S/C (*Becky Loftus, Mary Ann Omtvedt*) accept following nominations:

Family Education: *No response/determine later*

Outreach, Stewardship + Evangelism:

Joyce Gilberts (*completing term 2022-24*)

Linda Bilodeau (*1st term 2023-25*)

Property + Management:

Jerry Loftus (*1st term 2023-25*)

2023 Delegates:

Luther Park: *No response/determine later*

1. Pr. Michael Sparby 2. _____ 3. _____

Synod Assembly, April 29, 2023 (*Bethany Lutheran/Rice Lake*) 1. Pr. Michael Sparby 2. Mark Gilberts 3. _____

THANK YOU

Gene Buffington completed his council term serving Property & Management.

John Loy having served as council president will serve as 2023 Vice President.

ADJOURN: 11:18am M/S/C (*Mary Peterson/Stephani North*) Closed with the Table Prayer prior potluck lunch.

Marie Swanson, Council Secretary

Becky Loftus, Parish Admin/Assistant to Council Secretary



Council Meeting Minutes (Draft)

Immediately following annual meeting to elect officers

CALL TO ORDER: 11:20 am by President, John Loy entertaining motion to approve 2023 slate of officers.

M/S/C (*Linda Bilodeau/Joyce Gilberts*) approval as follows:

President Mark Gilberts

Vice President John Loy

Secretary Marie Swanson/*Becky Loftus (parish admin.)*

Treasurer Joe Bilodeau

ADJOURN: 11:22 am M/S/C (*Linda Bilodeau/John Loy*)

NEXT COUNCIL MEETING: Monday, February 12th/SC

Marie Swanson, Council Secretary

Becky Loftus, Parish Admin/Assistant to Council Secretary

2023 PARISH STATISTICS

BAPTISM

Marty Zeke Spang	April 2, 2023
Barrett John Zwiefelhofer	April 23, 2023
Eli Davis	August 19, 2023
Jenie Davis (Adult)	August 19, 2023
Ellison Bea Fatura	September 24, 2023

FIRST COMMUNION

Dominic Flatland
Melanie Flatland
Oliver Link

CONFIRMATION

May 21 at our Pine Creek Site

Sydney Buck
Ozker Kunkel
Aspen Peterson

WEDDING

Paul Omtvedt & David Riegel October 7 at our Sand Creek Site

FUNERALS / GRAVESIDES / BURIALS

Dean Adolph Swanson	Died 1-14, 2023
<i>Celebration of Life elsewhere 4-1-23</i>	
*Betty Jean Crandall Davis	Died 4-18-2019
*Robert James Davis	Died 10-25-2020
*Graveside Burial/PC Cemetery	6-10-2023
Georgia Faye Saastad Burial/Zion Cem.	Died 6-26-2023
Deloris Vivian Scheidecker Paulson	Died 3-30-2023
Memorial Service	8-5-2023

AFFIRMATION OF BAPTISM

Paula Omtvedt	January 17, 2023
David Riegel	January 17, 2023

TRANSFERS RECEIVED

Susan Swanson	May 3, 2023
Jeremy Wold	November 15, 2023
Melissa Wold	November 15, 2023
Elizabeth Wold	November 15, 2023
Jake Wold	November 15, 2023
Rebecca (Becky) Schnacky	November 27, 2023

TRANSFERS ISSUED

None

RELEASED

Jerrold & Audrey Addie	July 31, 2023
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CONGREGATIONAL MEMBERSHIP

12/31/2022	Baptized 485	Confirmed 296
12/31/2023	Baptized 494	Confirmed 301

Pastor's Report

Michael D. Sparby

In Paul's letter to the church at Philippi, he begins by reflecting on the people in that faithful community.

Every time I think of you, I give thanks to my God. I always pray for you, and I make my requests with a heart full of joy because you have been my partners in spreading the Good News about Christ from the time you first heard it until now. And I am sure that God, who began the good work within you, will continue his work until it is finally finished on that day when Christ Jesus comes back again. It is right that I should feel as I do about all of you, for you have a very special place in my heart. We have shared together the blessings of God,...

-Philippians 1:3-7a

The years fly by, and here we are at another New Year. It has been over five years now since I was called to New Hope. It was surprising, and an honor, to receive the call to serve my home congregation. I appreciate the opportunity to serve as your pastor. There's no place like home. It was a joy to celebrate the 50th Anniversary of the Dedication of our Sand Creek Site building this year. It brought back many memories of my high school years at New Hope.



Countless servants of Christ have added to the ministry of New Hope Lutheran Church over its 157 years. We have a great cloud of witnesses who've gone before us. We remember and honor their faith and dedication by our own dedication today. Thank you for your steady walk, and your spiritual Christian commitment which continues to build up this congregation.

I appreciate each one of you, as you support New Hope's ministry in so many ways. Your presence in worship, prayers, financial support, participation, and leadership is vital and inspiring. I can't mention all, but would lift up our staff, Becky Loftus, Dave Anderson, Lon Christopherson, and Jesse and Lacey Buhr, and all who serve in leadership on Church Council and all other organizations. Thanks also to Mike Olson and Jeff and Diana Christopherson who previously served as custodians at our sites.

New Hope, with our Sand Creek and Pine Creek Sites has a far-reaching impact on our communities locally, nationally, and internationally. Beyond your continual prayers, the collections of substantive items that help others is nothing short of astounding. I hope you will read some of the details in this report. We've been blessed to be a blessing, and you are just that in so many ways.

God leads us into 2024!

Council President's Report

Mark Gilberts

God's blessings to you all as we enter 2024. It's been my sincere honor to serve as Council President the past year and I sincerely appreciate the support, encouragement and critical counsel given to me by Pastor Michael and the entire Church Council.

2023 was another year our congregation witnessed changes. After careful and prayerful consideration, New Hope Lutheran Church Council voted unanimously to move on to a new accounting firm, Clergy Financial in March. I personally want to thank Joe Bilodeau for taking over the Council's Treasurer position and guiding us through this critical transition period. Also to our Office Administrator, Becky Loftus, who after 20 years, continues to navigate change and daily brings stability in her role.

One of this year's highlights was the 50-year Commemoration of the New Hope Sand Creek church building. Having Reverend Mark Hall officiate over the celebration made for a perfect event honoring our past church leadership and acknowledging how blessed this church congregation has been over the years.

In this post pandemic world, the return of children to Sunday schools is so encouraging. A special thank you to our Sunday school teachers devoted to our children's walk of faith. I want to personally thank ALL guest clergy and church lay members who stepped up to fill the void during Pastor Michael's 2-month rehabilitation. We were all made aware of the incredible job Pastor Michael does on 3/4 time and we must never take that for granted. I continue to encourage all New Hope members to prayerfully consider serving in the various roles identified in 2024. We are one Family of God.

Finally, the Pine Creek and Sand Creek church facilities at are not getting any younger. Our dedicated work staff deserves the annual cost of living adjustments. Additional costs of future HVAC, parking lots, etc can be anticipated. With ongoing high inflation rates, its is critical that members continue giving as able to meet our projected budget. If you are able, please consider increasing yearly contributions to meet these needs. Your past generosity is so much appreciated.

In closing, it is my sincere prayer God continues to bless this congregation and that our continuing community outreach will bring more souls into His kingdom. Let's honor God always!



Property + Management

Last year both Pine Creek and Sand Creek sites saw issues arise due to aging properties with safety concerns.

Our Sand Creek Site

HVAC contract with Gene's Heating & Cooling in Bloomer for spring/fall preventative maintenance closely monitors the 8 AC units and 28 year-old boiler furnace. Replacing the furnace room venting ductwork resulted in a much more secure, efficient heating system. Synergy documented reduced propane use in 2023 partially attributed to the improvements. Thermostat adjustments in the sanctuary and fellowship hall are to be adjusted only by church administrative staff, custodian, and property/management committee.

Carpets were cleaned in the sanctuary, narthex and fellowship hall in preparation for Sand Creek's 50th Anniversary celebration of the church construction. The southwest entrance canopy of the church and storage shed were repainted. Storage shed was also reorganized to accommodate the Comforters Quilters boxes prior shipment to Lutheran World Relief (LWR) and Global Health Missions in the Twin Cities, MN.

A new commercial grade coffee maker purchased by the Men's Group was installed by Gustum Plumbing, as well as a dishwasher. Thank you to the circles who help clean the kitchen.

Major \$5K sewer repair by Gustum Plumbing late summer should give longevity now being connected to the town sanitary system.

Back northwest parking lot lighting was repaired with automatic timer installed.

We welcome new custodians, Lacey & Jesse Buhr hired in September. We thank Mike Olson for his past two years of service in that capacity. Mike will continue mowing lawn in 2024.

2024 major spring project is the parking lot. Estimates will be sought for sealing/stripping. Parking Lot Fund balance is \$5,143.00. Contributions continue to be greatly appreciated for this project.

Our Pine Creek Site

Major project in 2023 was the Pine Creek site parking lot to correct drainage after last winter's extreme ice. Wirth excavating delivered 7-8 loads shale, 2 loads gravel and 1 load black dirt (\$4,500.00).

Outside of the church building was pressure washed.

Great appreciation is extended to Diana Christopherson for her service as custodian for the last couple of years. After her resignation in November, we hired Lon Christopherson to serve in that capacity. Thank you to Jeff Christopherson for continuing to plow snow.

Property & Management Committee

Mark Gilberts & Jerry Loftus at our Sand Creek Site

Joe Bilodeau & Lon Christopherson at our Pine Creek Site

Worship + Music

Our AV system greatly enhances worship services to include those viewing live-stream from home or elsewhere.

Volunteer lectors and communion assistants are needed. Its a joy to see children assist with communion. Council members rotate a schedule as greeters/offering assistants at Sand Creek. Anyone feeling called to serve may contact a council member or the church office.

Confirmation Sunday was May 21st at Pine Creek. Sand Creek's 50th Anniversary celebration of the church building was June 25th with the company of guest pastor, Rev. Mark Hall. His late father, Pr. Marshall Hall served New Hope during its construction.

Annual Worship in the Park was July 16th. During Pr. Michael Sparby's July vacation, the pulpit was supplied with a guest pastors and 2 congregational ministers. We welcomed 3 guest pastors, as well as 3 congregational ministers who served in October/November during Pr. Sparby's recovery from hip surgery.

Thanksgiving Eve Service was at Sand Creek. Sunday School Christmas pageants were December 17th. Christmas Eve Sunday held 2 candlelight worship services; 10a at our Pine Creek and 5p at our Sand Creek site.

We are blessed with our organist/pianist, David Anderson's inspirational musical ministry. Great appreciation is extended to Judy Anderson, Kathie Irwin and Kathy Peterson who graciously shared the bench.

May we continue to be blessed with such meaningful worship and fellowship.

Cathy Davis

Outreach + Stewardship + Evangelism

We often hear, Actions Speak Louder than Words. This year the New Hope Outreach Committee designed a "Random Act of Kindness" Card for all of us to use. This card reminds us it is not a one time and done action but a continuous act of sharing, spreading kindness, love and caring in our community and beyond. This card can be used as a way of sharing our faith and our church.

Monthly, those in a facility, and others who request it, are visited and given communion.

Sept. 16th we held a Community Picnic. Everyone enjoyed free lunch and music provided by a Barbershop quartet from Menomonie, and John Loy with his concertina. The artistic face painting and the ARK were a hit!

This fall a monthly program "Parents Night Out" began and directed by Samantha Goodremote. Attendance has been good and the children enjoy a night of games, crafts and food. Please feel free to volunteer your time, and share the fun (males are especially needed)! Sign up sheets are located on the church office door.

We look forward to an adult game night Feb. 9th, 2024.

As God is our Master, let us continue to be the light bearers of Jesus's love, grace and mercy in all that we do. God's blessings to all.

Outreach Committee:

Linda Bilodeau, Pat Bechard, John Loy, Joyce Gilberts

Youth + Family Education

Sand Creek Site

Sunday school (Winter/Spring)

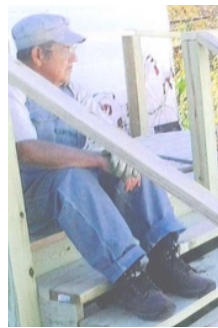
- + 3 teachers rotated a schedule creating their own curriculum corresponding with assigned scripture.
- + Children read and sang for Easter worship.
- + With help, children sent Birthday greetings to New Hope Comforters and congregational members 80+.
- + Sunday school ended the year May 14th concluding with a potluck congregational picnic celebration May 21st at Riverside Park with the Ark.

VBS: 5:30-7p, Sunday, June 4—Thursday, June 8th at Sand Creek Memorial Park. "Operation Restoration" theme focused on how God uses us in mending His world with daily activities:

- | | |
|---------------|---|
| Day 1/Feed | made bird feeders |
| Day 2/Heal | created envelopes/mailed encouraging notes to people on our prayer list |
| Day 3/Forgive | learned deep breathing exercises before acting out and forgiving others |
| Day 4/Pray | prayer marble art |
| Day 5/Rest | tie dyed pillow cases to rest our weary heads |
- Daily attendance was 12-15 children from our congregation and community.

Sunday school (Fall) began September 10th averaging 12-18 children in attendance. Curriculum is "Stories of the Bible" lead with 4 volunteer teachers continuing a rotation schedule. 2023 concluded with December 17th Christmas Pageants and winter break until resuming January 2024.

Stephani North



New Hope Men's Group

Founded by Martin Gyles Tandberg, April 9, 2002 with priority in the future of our youth, connecting through our scholarship program. Our devotion is living an active daily life with God's love, caring for community at home and beyond.

35 "...for I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, 36 I was naked and you gave me clothing, I was sick and you took care of me, I was in prison and you visited me. 40 And the king will answer...truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me." -Matthew 25: 35-36, 40

Recent purchases:

- + Microwave and coffee maker for Sand Creek site kitchen
 - + Financial support for New Hope Comforters Quilting
- No new physical projects as most of us are past our prime. New members of all ages are welcome!

Upcoming events in 2024 are two pancake breakfasts: Palm Sunday, March 24th at our Sand Creek site and our annual fundraiser, Saturday, May 5th at Sand Creek Town Hall.

2023 left us in good shape financially. Year-end balance is \$14,192.56, noting most is contribution received from our founder, Martin Tandberg's Estate.

Clyde Allison

Sand Creek Site

Discipleship, Stewardship & Justice

Discipleship: Circles participate in monthly Bible studies of *Gather* magazine with hymns, devotions, and prayer.

Altar Guild preps communion for worship and adorns the chancel. Thank you to Jodie & Angie Madison for their care for the church and congregation.

Stewardship: We've supported a missionary from the beginning of the ELCA, currently Rev. Dr. Philip Knutson and his wife in South Africa. Upon their retirement this year, we will continue support for the new area missionary.

New Hope Comforters faithfully meet on Mondays creating projects for Lutheran World Relief, Global Mission, local food pantries, those in need and special fund raisers. Several members work at home to maintain a steady supply of finished quilts throughout the year. A napkin and quilt are provided at the baptism of a child by the Cradle Roll chair. High school graduates receive personalized quilts. Quilts are also given to those hospitalized or have a special need: 25 to the "*Spirit of Christmas*" in New Auburn, Chippewa Valley Street Ministry, 40 to Veterans, 65 to local food pantries, 12 to Menomonie Foster Care, several to area nursing homes, 10 to Camp Victory, and HUD homeless shelter.

Memorials and Thrivent grants purchased supplies. Full accounting of monetary projects is in the treasurer's report.

This group is compassionate, energized, thoughtful, generous, fun-loving, creative and committed, to name a few outstanding characteristics! We welcome several community members who help on a regular basis with their very valuable contributions.

During 2023, 1031 quilts were made: (695 to *Lutheran World Relief*, 336 local, 40 to the *Veterans' Nursing Home*), 116 personal care kits, 109 newborn baby kits, 100 school kits and 15 sewing kits to Lutheran World Relief. Sent to Global Health Missions: 130 baby care kits, 46 Hospice kits and 3 boxes of bandages. "*Project Comfort*" collects monetary support for shipping costs. Local quilts disbursed: 22 to Stepping Stones, 7 to Chetek Food Pantry, 28 to Dunn County United Way, 30 to LSS, and 5 to Benjamin House. A Christmas family of 4 children and 1 adult received quilts and gifts.

Supplies were also sent to Global Health Mission for distribution to those in need.

Circles host coffee fellowship 1st, 2nd & 4th Sundays of each month.

Justice: our faith in action addresses inequities in political, economic and social systems.

E-mail and telephone prayer chains offer petitions for specific needs.

Thanks be to God for all the women, men and children who help us carry out service to others.

Carol Anderson, President

Pine Creek Site

We are blessed with people, including men and children who give time, talent and money to make a better place in our church, community and world.

2023 Distributions:

Colfax, Ridgeland, Prairie Farm Schools

65 pairs mittens, 143 hats, 13 sweat pants/slacks, 90 underwear, 108 pairs socks, 86 red pens, 90 glue sticks, 11 glues, 36 plastic folders, 4 boxes washable markers, 6 boxes crayons, 10 pencils.

Barron School: Greeting card tops to Heidi Osvak, teacher
Sons of Norway: Cancelled stamps for mentally challenged
Food Pantry

Homeless Shelters Women

70 purses, 30 clutches, feminine products, coffee

Bridge of Hope: 26 pillows, pillow cases, purses

Lutheran World Relief: 90 school kits, 55 health kits

Barron Care/Rehab, Colfax Health/Rehab, Monroe Manor, and our 80+ young members: Christmas Gifts

Colfax Health/Rehab

\$ donation to activity department, 32 trial-size shampoo

Dunn County Health Care Center: Puzzles

Barron and Dunn County Jails

Puzzles, reading glasses, magazines, 2 duffle bags, t-shirts, underwear, socks, devotion books

Maplecroft

Bingo prizes, shampoo/misc, stuffed toys, candy, plants

Homeless Veterans

20 towels, 38 wash cloths, 10 soaps, sheet set

Chippewa Falls Veterans Home

Brewers Bingo basket, Comfort basket, 20 XL gift bags, wrapping paper rolls, gift tags, pens, puzzle books, 3 pair shoes, 15 pair socks, 4 nail polish

Pioneer Village: Blue jeans for rugs

Beds 4 Kids: Monetary donation

Community

Church members delivered meals, 700 Valentines mailed, as well as 300 Christmas cards to Veteran/Nursing Homes.

Hot Beef Supper at the Ridgeland Farmer's Market

Graduates/Confirmants/Pageant

Hosted coffee fellowship with cake. Lisa Mickelson created & donated Christmas treat bags for children.

Sand Creek Santa Project: 1 doll

Confirmation Homeless Youth Christmas Project Items

Pine Creek Christmas Ornaments

In memory of Danette Mason Crenshaw and Maggie

In honor of Bartels children who helped decorate church for Christmas.

Pine Creek 100th Anniversary Cookbooks

A box each donated to Prairie Farm Lions Club, Ridgeland School, New Auburn School, Sand Creek Security Bank, Ridgeland Library, our Sand Creek site church.

Grandma Great's Happy Sewers Donations

22 catheter bags, 26 gait belts, 16 lap robes, 7 shawls, 39 large blankets, children's blankets, 16 walker bags.

Every WELCA meeting, we remember members in nursing homes and others by signing and sending greeting cards.

We thank God for each and every one of you!

Annette Mason

Church Council 2024 Ballot

***To Be Elected**

COMMITTEES: 3-year terms with eligibility to serve 2 terms consecutively

**Completing council terms 2023 – Thank you Desiree Buck & Cathy Davis!*

FAMILY EDUCATION

Jesse Buhr	1st term 2023-2025	
Stephani North	2nd term 2023-2025	
Kristi Welle	1st term 2022-2024	
<i>Samantha Goodremote</i>	<i>1st term ends 2026</i>	<i>*new</i>

PROPERTY & MANAGEMENT

<i>Mark Gilberts (SC)</i>	<i>1st term ends 2023</i>	<i>*eligible to serve a 2nd term 2024-26</i>
Jerry Loftus (SC)	1st term 2023-2025	
Joe Bilodeau (PC)	2nd term 2023-2025	
Lon Christopherson (PC)	1st term 2022-2024	

OUTREACH, STEWARDSHIP & EVANGELISM

<i>Pat Bechard</i>	<i>1st term ends 2023</i>	<i>*eligible to serve a 2nd term 2024-26</i>
John Loy	2nd term 2023-25	
Linda Bilodeau	1st term 2023-2025	
Joyce Gilberts	1st term 2024-2026	

WORSHIP & MUSIC

<i>Lou Ann Gilberts</i>	<i>1st term ends 2023</i>	<i>*eligible to serve a 2nd term 2024-26</i>
Marie Swanson	2nd term 2023-2025	
Dawn Kunkel	2nd term 2023-2025	
	<i>2nd term ends 2026</i>	<i>*new</i>

2023 COUNCIL OFFICERS

President	Mark Gilberts
Vice President	John Loy
Secretary	Marie Swanson (<i>Becky Loftus/Assist</i>)
Treasurer	Joe Bilodeau



DELEGATES 2024

Luther Park: Annual Meeting Saturday, February 3, 2024

9:30am Coffee/Refreshments 10am Annual Meeting

Will be amending the Constitution & By-laws. Copies are available in the church office upon request.

This meeting will also be live-streamed through Facebook.



Delegates to be Elected

***Pastor**

Each congregation is entitled to 3 voting delegates, either clergy or lay. Any number from your congregation may attend but only 3 may serve as delegates; each shall have 1 vote.

Annual Synod Assembly: Friday, June 7th & Saturday, June 8th

UW Eau Claire Davies Center

Delegates to be Elected

Elect **2** from congregation

***Pastor**

***Mark Gilberts (Male)**

***Joyce Gilberts (Female)**



*A welcoming community of faith inspired
by God's grace to love, grow & serve.*

DEDICATED ACCOUNTS TOTALS SUMMARY 12/31/2023

**Details for each fund on following pages*

Total Dedicated Accounts 12-31-2022 \$ 447,389.71

Parish Checking Balance.....	\$ 12,504.80
Parsonage Proceeds Fund.....	\$ 201,535.33
PC Building Fund.....	\$ 2,427.09
PC Site Esther Wright Fund.....	\$ 170,290.06
PC Sunday school Checking.....	\$ 543.29
PC Site Women/ELCA.....	\$ 3,454.84
SC Site Women/ELCA.....	\$ 5,364.03
SC Site Memorial Fund.....	\$ 48,087.76
<u>Men's Group.....</u>	<u>\$ 14,180.00</u>

Total 12/31/2023 \$ 458,387.20

Dedicated Accounts Detail

Parish Checking

Balance 12/31/2023 \$ 12,504.80

SC Safe Deposit Box (\$12/yearly fee)

Pr. Michael Sparby, Becky Loftus/Parish Admin.

Parsonage Proceeds Fund

Thrivent Investments

Est. March 2020 from parsonage sale 10/14/2019

Board: Church Council

Balance 12/31/2022 \$ 184,888.14

Balance 12/31/2023 \$ 201,535.33

Becky Loftus/Parish Admin., Joe Bilodeau/Treas.

PC Site WELCA

Annette Mason, Treasurer

12/31/2022 Balance \$ 4,144.84

Income

Meetings & Lunches	525.03	
Card sales	15.50	
Cookbook sales	70.00	
100 Year Anniversary Books	60.00	
Medallion	5.00	
Hot Beef Supper	2,231.00	
Thank-offering	127.00	
Memorial Ornament	5.00	
Total Income	\$ 3,038.53	\$ 7,183.37

Expense

Benjamin House	\$ 200.00	
State WELCA	300.00	
Graduates cake	54.84	
Confirmation cake	54.84	
Quilt batting	148.06	
Hot Beef Supper	146.30	
Beds 4 Kids	200.00	
Homeless Youth Christmas	200.00	
Christmas Gift cards/other	330.00	
Christmas Critters	500.00	
Luther Park Bible Camp	750.00	
SC ELCW	12.25	
Grief Group leader	125.00	
Homeless School children	150.00	(Menomonie)
25 Pillows	105.24	
Colfax Health/Rehab	300.00	(Activities)
WELCA Thank-offering	127.00	
LWR Transport	25.00	
Total Expense	\$ 3,728.53	
12/31/2023 Balance	\$ 3,454.84	

PC Site Esther Wright Fund

Board: Vern Ellefson/Treas., Linda Bilodeau, Dawn Kunkel, Lon Christopherson, Anna Lien

12/31/2022 Balances

\$ 152,169.96	High Yield
789.96	Money Market
\$ 152,959.92	

2023 Activity

<u>High Yield Account</u>	<u>Shares Owned</u>
1/1/23 share price 3.98	38,233.659
12/29/23 share price 4.19	40,444.471
Dividends reinvested	17,292.37
(YTD 11.36% Since inception 4.87%)	

Money Market Account Shares Owned

1/1/23 share price 1.00	789.960
12/29/23 share price 1.00	827.730
Dividends reinvested	37.77
(Effective yield 5.19%)	

No withdrawals in 2023

High Yield	169,462.33
Money Market	827.73
Balance 12/31/23	\$ 170,290.06

***Note:** With both accounts, fund returned all but \$540.00 of its losses in 2022. Losses were \$17,878.72. Gain in 2023 was \$17,330.14.

PC Sunday School Checking

Mary Peterson, Treasurer

Balance 12/31/2022 \$ 694.14
Balance 12/31/2023 \$ 543.29

PC Building Fund

Alan Peterson/Treas., Joe Bilodeau/Financial Sec.

Balance 12/31/2022	\$5,384.13
Sunday lunches	728.60
Playground Equip	500.00
Ck 1053 Wirth Excavating	(3,920.00) Parking lot
Ck 1054 Floor Mops	(23.00)
Ck 1055 Shark Vacuum Cleaner	(242.64)
Total Income	\$1,228.60
Total Expense	(4,185.64)
Balance 12/31/2023	\$2,427.09

SC Site WELCA

Janet Allison, Treasurer

Balance 12/31/2022 \$ 7,067.95

Accounts

Altar Guild	\$ 354.61
Greeting Cards	430.13
Comforters	3,761.41
General Fund	417.88
Local Triennial Scholarships	400.00
Balance 12/31/2023	\$ 5,364.03

Memorials Received:

Kenneth Welle
Dean Swanson
Deloris Paulson
Avis Hanson

Disbursements to:

Food Pantries (Chetek, Bloomer/New Auburn, Colfax
Caring Ministries, Feed My People, Stepping Stones)
Missionary, Rev. Philip Knutson/Africa
Benjamin House
Rice Lake Pregnancy Help Center
Menomonie Free Clinic
LSS-Refugee Resettlement
Coins for Hunger
Katie's Fund
ELCA Good Gifts
Christmas Critters
Christmas Family
"Project Comfort" (Shipping)
Thank-offering (Church-wide)



NOISY OFFERINGS

*See pg. 14 - Statement of Activity for totals

JAN	Missionary, Philip Knutson/Africa	2,158.61
FEB	Malawi Campaign (Ministry Health)	617.04
MAR	Luther Park Camperships	365.91
APR	Stepping Stones Emergency Shelter	1,002.66
MAY	Lutheran Disaster Relief	829.18
JUNE	Plaster House (Orthopedics), Arusha, Tanzania, East Africa	
JULY	5 Local Food Shelves	612.11
AUG	Neighbor to Neighbor: Together in Ministry (Rev. Greg Kaufmann's retirement from Northwest Synod of WI)	543.65
SEPT	World Hunger	855.88
OCT	LSS Homeless Youth Christmas Stockings	1,115.70
NOV	Disaster Relief	466.50
DEC	Christmas Critters	2,932.46

SC Site Memorial Fund

Becky Loftus/Parish Admin., Joe Bilodeau/Treas.

Balance 12/31/2022 \$ 55,606.69

Unrestricted \$ 35,902.11

Restricted \$ 9,303.64

*details on Statement of Financial Position Report pg. 13

Balance 12/31/2022 \$ 48,087.76

*A short-term loan of \$12,000 to General will be repaid when cash flow in General Checking allows.



Arise, shine, your light has come!

Dean Adolph Swanson	1/14/2023
Betty Jean Crandall Davis	Burial 6/10/2023
Robert James Davis	Burial 6/10/2023
Georgia Faye Saastad	6/26/2023
Deloris Vivian Scheidecker Paulson	3/30/2023
	Memorial 8/5/2023

2023 Memorials /Honorariums

Memorials

Dale Paulson
Dean Swanson
Kenneth Welle
Deloris Paulson
Dwayne Mason
Danette Mason Crenshaw

Honorariums

Lyndon & Kathy Peterson's 50th Wedding Anniversary

Reports from Affiliated Organizations



Pine Creek Cemetery Association

Cemetery Board:

Brian Ellefson, Alan Lien/Treas., Alan Peterson, Joe Bilodeau

12/31/22 Balance \$12,716.73

CHECKING

12/31/2022 Balance \$11,334.50

12/31/2023 Balance \$ 11,147.50

OTHER

CD \$5,284.04

TOTAL ACCOUNTS BALANCE 12/31/2023 \$ 16,431.54

Zion Cemetery Association

Cemetery Board: Alden Berg, Bob Hanson, Roger Paulson, Dan Dietsche, Sue Favero, Matt Branville, Michael Sparby
12/31/2022 Total Balance \$ 77,683.76

CHECKING

12/31/22 Balance \$12,716.73

Income (+) Interest/Lots/Misc/Memorials 722.34

The Cemetery Board is thankful for memorials.

Expense (-)

Mowing \$1,225.00

Lawn Equipment \$1,330.95

J-LOEW Welding/New Gates \$1,275.00

Geraniums for Memorial Day \$ 333.72

Safety Deposit Box Rental \$12.00

Total Expense \$4,176.67

12/31/23 Balance \$ 9,262.40

OTHER

Security Bank CD Investments \$ 13,475.13

ELCA Mission Investment CD Bal \$ 52,281.07

TOTAL ACCOUNTS BALANCE 12/31/2023 \$ 75,018.60

**\$19,865.00 is designated as Perpetual Care*

New Hope Lutheran Foundation Sand Creek Site

Board: Gene Buffington/Pres., Carol Gerner/V. Pres., Mary Ann Omtvedt/Sec., Roger Paulson/Treas., Mark Gilberts, Pastor Sparby, *ex officio*

Five meetings were held in 2023 with additional phone conversations regarding donations. \$ 6,500.00 monetary gifts were disbursed. Mary Ann Omtvedt/Sec.

Assets

Security Bank Checking \$ 242.98

Security Bank Savings 1,567.26

Security Bank (CDs) 180,105.14

Thrivent Investment Funds 139,239.43

Mission Invest. Fund). 25,312.72

Total Assets 346,467.53 12-31-2023

Preserved Principal 318,373.90

Interest Income Available to Disperse 28,093.63

**Note: numbers are before year-end reports received from investments.* -Roger Paulson, Treas.

Pine Creek Site

Currently inactive

Our Savior's Cemetery Association

Cemetery Board: Lee Killoren/Treas., Marc Anderson/Sexton
12/31/2023 Total Balance \$51,367.70

Receipts

Perpetual Care 243.70

Disbursements

Lawn Care 427.00

Checking Balance 12/31/23 \$ 3,483.70

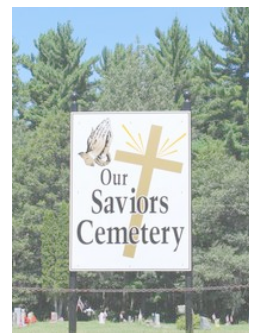
On Deposit

CD's \$ 49,049.64

Interest gained in 2023 1,431.62

TOTAL ACCOUNTS BALANCE

12/31/2023 \$ 52,533.34



Statement of Financial Position / Balance Sheet 12/31/2023

ASSETS

Current Assets	
Bank Accounts	
10100 Congregation	
10101 Checking 1776 - Parish	1,019.86
10101.1 Missions Support - Synod	11,670.00
10101.2 Noisy Offering	1,202.88
10101.3 Flowers	-850.28
10101.4 Other Benevolence	-3,936.90
10101.5 Luther Park	50.00
10101.6 SC World Hunger	1,980.00
Total 10101 Checking 1776 - Parish	11,135.56
Total 10100 Congregation	11,135.56
10200 Pine Creek	
10201 Checking 0761 - Sunday School	543.29
10202 Checking 0826 - Building Fund	2,553.09
10203 Checking 5020 - PC WELCA	3,454.84
10204 Checking 0813 - Cemetery Association (Affiliated)	11,147.50
10205 Savings 0488 - Cemetery Association (Affiliated)	5,284.04
Total 10200 Pine Creek	22,982.76
10300 Sand Creek	
10301 Checking 1613 - Crisis Fund	0.00
10302 Checking 1697 - Men's Group	14,192.56
10303 Checking 9235 - SC WELCA	6,851.77
10304 Checking 5718 - Family Ed	0.00
10305 Savings 3743 - Memorial Fund	36,801.64
10305.1 AV Fund	243.25
10305.12 Crisis Fund	2,208.23
10305.13 Family Ed	1,262.16
10305.2 Culligan Softener	-18.66
10305.3 Landscape	-258.75
10305.4 Air Conditioner	2,000.00
10305.5 Parking Lot	3,590.00
10305.6 Camperships	-94.11
10305.7 Youth Convention	2,354.00
Total 10305 Savings 3743 - Memorial Fund	48,087.76
Total 10300 Sand Creek	69,132.09
Total Bank Accounts	\$103,250.41
Total Current Assets	\$103,250.41
TOTAL ASSETS	\$103,250.41
Credit Cards	
71000 Security Bank -CC	1,210.60
Total Credit Cards	\$1,210.60
Other Current Liabilities	
72000 Payroll Liabilities	0.00
72100 Portico - FSA	244.48
72200 Portico - Retirement	488.84
72300 Portico - Vision	0.00
72400 Portico - Supp Life	0.00
Total Other Current Liabilities	\$733.32
Total Current Liabilities	\$1,943.92
Total Liabilities	\$1,943.92
Equity	
90000 Opening Balance Equity	0.00
92000 Unrestricted Net Assets	1,332.23
93000 Restricted Net Assets	102,230.55
Net Revenue	-2,256.29
Total Equity	\$101,306.49
TOTAL LIABILITIES AND EQUITY	\$103,250.41

Statement of Activity by Class 12/31/2023

Page 1 of 3

	CONGREGATION	PINE CREEK	SAND CREEK	TOTAL
Revenue				
41000 Unrestricted Income				\$0.00
41100 Tithes/Offerings	100.00	28,942.06	168,084.81	\$197,126.87
41110 Thrivent Choice	3,154.00			\$3,154.00
41190 Interest	0.18	41.98	30.85	\$73.01
41195 Other Income			0.00	\$0.00
Total 41000 Unrestricted Income	3,254.18	28,984.04	168,115.66	\$200,353.88
42000 Restricted Income				\$0.00
42100 PC Building Fund		1,331.60		\$1,331.60
42101 PC Cemetery		605.00		\$605.00
42103 PC WELCA		3,038.53		\$3,038.53
42104 Luther Park			25.00	\$25.00
42203 Benevolence Offerings	715.00		-715.00	\$0.00
42203.1 Mission Support- Synod	2,550.00	225.00	10,040.00	\$12,815.00
42203.2 Noisy Offering	92.74	3,974.80	8,050.97	\$12,118.51
42203.3 Other Benevolence	-1,300.00		1,300.00	\$0.00
42203.4 SC Crisis Fund			205.00	\$205.00
42203.5 SC World Hunger			1,980.00	\$1,980.00
Total 42203 Benevolence Offerings	2,057.74	4,199.80	20,860.97	\$27,118.51
42206 Flowers	250.00		1,036.00	\$1,286.00
42301 SC Men's Group			1,883.05	\$1,883.05
42303 SC WELCA			6,949.73	\$6,949.73
42305 Memorial Fund			3,437.71	\$3,437.71
42305.5 Parking Lot			1,590.00	\$1,590.00
42305.6 Camperships			100.00	\$100.00
42305.8 Family Education	0.00		80.00	\$80.00
Total 42305 Memorial Fund	0.00		5,207.71	\$5,207.71
Total 42000 Restricted Income	2,307.74	9,174.93	35,962.46	\$47,445.13
Total Revenue	\$5,561.92	\$38,158.97	\$204,078.12	\$247,799.01
GROSS PROFIT	\$5,561.92	\$38,158.97	\$204,078.12	\$247,799.01
Expenditures				
50100 Administration				\$0.00
50101 Office Supplies & Equipment	8,252.90	169.00	1,828.71	\$10,250.61
50102 Insurance Expense	8,143.00			\$8,143.00
50103 Treasurer/Bookkeeper	9,958.00			\$9,958.00
50104 Bank Service Charges	465.09		0.00	\$465.09

Contd. Statement of Activity by Class 12/31/2023

Page 2 of 3

	CONGREGATION	PINE CREEK	SAND CREEK	TOTAL
50105 Payroll				\$0.00
50105.1 Salaries & Wages				\$0.00
50105.11 Pastor				\$0.00
50105.111 Salary & Housing	56,699.96			\$56,699.96
50105.112 Soc Sec Allowance	4,339.92			\$4,339.92
50105.113 Pension & Benefits	15,168.18		1,955.30	\$17,123.48
Total 50105.11 Pastor	76,208.06		1,955.30	\$78,163.36
50105.12 Office Administrator	22,296.97			\$22,296.97
50105.13 Organist/Pianist	5,334.97		1,250.00	\$6,584.97
50105.14 Custodian		3,136.14	11,572.96	\$14,709.10
Total 50105.1 Salaries & Wages	103,840.00	3,136.14	14,778.26	\$121,754.40
50105.2 Payroll Taxes	2,398.98	222.78	959.26	\$3,581.02
Total 50105 Payroll	106,238.98	3,358.92	15,737.52	\$125,335.42
50106 Telephone, Internet, Ministry, Cell	600.00			\$600.00
50108 Convention Exp	100.00			\$100.00
Total 50100 Administration	133,757.97	3,527.92	17,566.23	\$154,852.12
50200 Worship				\$0.00
50201 Worship Supplies	4,087.77		41.12	\$4,128.89
50202 Pulpit Supply	2,650.00			\$2,650.00
Total 50200 Worship	6,737.77		41.12	\$6,778.89
50300 Family Ed	62.35			\$62.35
50301 SS, VBS, Youth	1,489.35			\$1,489.35
Total 50300 Family Ed	1,551.70			\$1,551.70
50400 Outreach, Stewardship, & Evangelism	597.36			\$597.36
50500 Property			457.44	\$457.44
50501 Snow Removal		550.00		\$550.00
50502 Janitorial Supplies	17.92		350.17	\$368.09
50503 Lawn Mowing	20.34	200.00	35.89	\$256.23
50504 Electricity		2,284.60	3,406.13	\$5,690.73
50505 Water			214.80	\$214.80
50506 Garbage/Sewer			1,311.00	\$1,311.00
50507 LP Propane	9,147.12			\$9,147.12
50508 Telephone	80.00	1,855.53	1,719.52	\$3,655.05
50509 Repairs and Maintenance	685.90	4,332.45	9,789.08	\$14,807.43
50510 Building and Property Security		514.13	420.57	\$934.70
Total 50500 Property	9,951.28	9,736.71	17,704.60	\$37,392.59
62000 Restricted Expenses				\$0.00
62101 PC Cemetery		650.00		\$650.00
62102 Sunday School		245.85		\$245.85
62103 PC WELCA		3,716.28		\$3,716.28
62104 Luther Park	25.00			\$25.00

Contd. Statement of Activity by Class 12/31/2023

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	CONGREGATION	PINE CREEK	SAND CREEK	TOTAL
62203 Benevolence				\$0.00
62203.1 Mission Support - Synod	10,260.00	25.00	1,300.00	\$11,585.00
62203.2 Noisy Offering	8,033.59	664.11	4,632.29	\$13,329.99
62203.3 Other Benevolence	2,106.90		10.00	\$2,116.90
Total 62203 Benevolence	20,400.49	689.11	5,942.29	\$27,031.89
62206 Flowers	2,992.22		43.28	\$3,035.50
62301 SC Men's Group			270.00	\$270.00
62303 SC WELCA	100.00		7,110.23	\$7,210.23
62303.1 SC Comforters			670.23	\$670.23
Total 62303 SC WELCA	100.00		7,780.46	\$7,880.46
62305 Memorial Fund			3,493.50	\$3,493.50
62305.1 AV Fund	54.99			\$54.99
62305.2 Culligan Softener			708.38	\$708.38
62305.3 Landscape			350.00	\$350.00
62305.6 Camperships	1,074.25		77.74	\$1,151.99
Total 62305 Memorial Fund	1,129.24		4,629.62	\$5,758.86
Total 62000 Restricted Expenses	24,646.95	5,301.24	18,665.65	\$48,613.84
66500 Postage and Delivery	268.80			\$268.80
Total Expenditures	\$177,511.83	\$18,565.87	\$53,977.60	\$250,055.30
NET OPERATING REVENUE	\$ -171,949.91	\$19,593.10	\$150,100.52	\$ -2,256.29
NET REVENUE	\$ -171,949.91	\$19,593.10	\$150,100.52	\$ -2,256.29



Trends in Giving / Thank you!

Giving Historical Summary	2020	2021	2022	2023
General Offerings/Thrivent Choice	\$154,410	\$180,090	\$171,875	\$200,354
Totals with Benevolence Giving	\$180,608	\$241,501	\$204,124	\$227,472

Historical Data & Proposed 2024 Budget

BUDGET SUMMARY 2024		Actual 2020	Actual 2021	Actual 2022	Actual '23	Propose '24
1	Convention/Heart of the North Expenses	150	0	100	100	150
2	Insurance	8508	9001	8,770	8143	8000
3	Office (equip/supp/postg/lease/repair/software/fees)	6886	7825	11,679	10250	10500
4	Financial Firm	3600	4500	4,500	9958	7500
5	Pastor's Mileage @ .545/mile	0	2151	1,380	0	2000
6	Pastor's Pension & Benefits	20244	17012	16,716	17123	18000
7	Pastor's Salary/Housing	53678	54487	54,487	56700	57834
8	Pastor's Social Security Allowance	4049	4172	4,172	4340	4427
9	Pastor Continuing Education	900	0	0	0	900
10	Pastor Meeting, Books & Conf	0	0	0	0	500
11	Pulpit Supply	1150	850	3,800	2650	2650
12	Office Administrator Salary	17840	20060	20,280	22297	22130
13	Other Payroll Expenses	4801	4468	3,268	2399	3500
14	Organist/Pianist	4750	5050	5,850	5335	6000
15	Worship Supplies	3262	3320	8,603	4129	4000
16	Family Education	912	899	1,211	1552	500
17	Office Telephone/Internet, Ministry Cell	1480	1560	1,700	600	1750
18	PC & SC MUTUAL PARISH TOTAL	132210	135355	146,516	145576	150341
19	PC Snow removal		550		550	550
20	PC Custodian	2500	2800	2,943	3136	3300
21	PC Lawn Mowing (pd to Pine Creek Cemetery)		0	0	200	100
22	PC Financial Secretary/SS		379	0	0	0
23	PC Electricity	1816	1841	2,109	2285	2100
24	PC Janitorial Supplies	83	630		0	350
25	PC LP Propane	1491	2023	4,734	2744	3000
26	PC Site Telephone/Internet	623	668	1,400	1856	1000
27	PC Repairs/Maintenance/Security	430	474	681	4847	600
28	PC Synod/Other Benevolence/Noisy/Hunger	2443	2405	1712	4200	
29	PINE CREEK SITE TOTAL	9386	11770	13,579	19818	11000
30	SC Snow Removal	0	0	200	200	200
31	SC Janitorial Supplies	99	317	223	350	300
32	SC Custodian	8962	8000	9,999	10073	11000
33	SC Lawn Mowing	1500	1500	1,860	1500	1500
34	SC Financial Secretary/SS	560	560	582	600	600
35	SC Electricity and Water	2891	2897	3,823	3621	3500
36	SC Garbage & Sanitation	500	540	812	1311	1000
37	SC LP Propane	4319	6783	7,101	6403	7000
38	SC Site Telephone	1252	1001	1,223	1720	1300
39	SC Repairs/MaintenanceSecurity/Property	4550	6048	11,197	10667	5000
40	SC Synod/Other Benevolence/Noisy/Hunger	23885	23464	16,346	24959	
41	SAND CREEK SITE TOTAL	48518	51110	53366	61404	31400
42	NEW HOPE CONGREGATION TOTAL	190114	198235	213,461	226,798	192,741

Bishops' Reports

Dear friends in Christ,

As our church finds ways to adapt to this changing world around us, we find hope in the unchanging and always present promise of God's love through Jesus Christ. We change and adapt not to conform to the world but because we believe that the gift God's Son is for the world, and that our congregations and worshiping communities are places to gather and be sent into the world, where we tell the story of God's love in word and deed.

The ministries of our congregations, synods and church-wide organization provide ways for the church to move beyond boundaries of structures and geography and to share God's love with people in our neighborhoods, cities, country and beyond. We engage in this ministry knowing our church walks by faith, trusting in God's promise in the gospel, and that we exist by and for the proclamation of this gospel word. John 15: 5, Jesus reminds us, ***"I am the vine; you are the branches. Those who abide in me and I in them bear much fruit, because apart from me you can do nothing."*** We are connected by the promise that we do all through Christ and can do nothing apart from him.

God gives the Holy Spirit, who uses gospel proclamation—in preaching and sacraments, in forgiveness and in healing conversations—to create and sustain this faith. Just as we rely on God to sustain our faith, we rely on each other to sustain the ministries offering God's love to the world. Through your generosity to each expression of this church—your congregation, synod and church-wide organization—you add to our collective voice proclaiming God's love for all.

I'm grateful for your generosity over this last year. My gratitude spreads beyond your generous financial gifts. You've shared your gifts of time through countless hours of volunteering, serving and accompanying. You've shared the gifts of your voices as we've tried to discover and learn how God calls us to be the church now and into the future. And, finally, dear church, you've shared the gift of the realness of God's love with the world around you. Be well, and stand steadfast in the promise of God's love and grace as you take that promise with you into the world.

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



Your congregation's annual meeting is a great opportunity to reflect on last year's faithful ministry. Now is time to ask BIG questions! How were we faithful in ministry? How were we faithful in participating in God's simple mission to love our neighbor? Now is time to celebrate how God's Spirit inspired your ministry! Give thanks to God and celebrate the good your congregation accomplished!



Now is also time to tell the truth about your ministry. How has your congregation fallen short and not been faithful to God's will? Lacked energy, a sense of purpose or mission? Now is time to humbly tell the truth if your congregation has lost its focus or has little energy for God's work.

We all need to take an honest look at last year and ask how have we been faithful and how have we failed to be faithful to our baptismal promises. Then we can boldly move into 2024 asking how we can do better with God's help.

The Church of England took a long look and with much prayer has discerned that moving forward they will strive to be a Simpler, Humbler and Bolder Church in the future. The Church of England described their future vision this way:

Simpler, humbler, bolder are virtues we believe God is calling from us at this point in our history. They run through the vision and shape all we do and all that we are.

- **Simpler** because we're not as big a church as we used to be.
- **Humbler** because we're facing our failures; this isn't easy.
- **Bolder** because the love of Christ compels us. We have a gospel to proclaim where we live and minister in a world of much pain and confusion.

These virtues could also help us this year. I invite your councils and leaders to lean into these questions:

1. **Simpler:** How can we simplify our structure so more time and energy is spent on loving our neighbors and joining in God's mission in our community? How can we focus on what is really important and let go of the trivial or unnecessary?
2. **Humbler:** What isn't working? How have we fallen short? We can't do everything we use to do so what ONE thing can we do for Jesus? How can we work with other churches, denominations in our community?
3. **Bolder:** How can your congregation be braver and bolder in sharing the good news about Jesus in a hurting world? In prophetic witness to justice issues in our world? In working for right relationships with our neighbors and all of creation?

Friends, I'm truly grateful for your partnership in the gospel and all the ways you are faithful in ministry. Move joyfully, simply, humbly and boldly into God's future.

Bishop Laurie Skow-Anderson
Northwest Synod of WI

A Simpler, Humbler, and Bolder Church
[Jesus Christ Centred and Shaped | The Church of England](#)



Bishop Laurie Skow-Anderson

January 15, 2024

Dear Pastors, Deacons, SAMs and Lay Leaders of the Northwest Synod of Wisconsin,

After much prayer, reflection and conversation with my family I have decided not to seek a second term as bishop. It has been an honor and privilege to serve this synod first for four years as the Director of Evangelical Mission and now for the last six years as Bishop. I am grateful for your partnership in ministry, your prayers, support and trust through these years. Serving through COVID was an unexpected challenge! Through it all I was proud of your creativity, hard work and determination to continue to proclaim the good news and care for your congregations and communities. I am confident that you will continue to serve faithfully walking in the way of Jesus in the future. Please know that I will pray for you and for the next bishop.

I invite you to take time in these next few weeks to pray about the bishop's election. Please plan to attend your conference assembly in February. This meeting will be the nominating ballot to begin the pre-identification process for the bishop's election. Your Deans will be sending information about the meeting. (I am grateful to the Deans for their leadership in the election process.) [Here is the link to the synod constitution which lists the expectations for the bishop.](#) [Here is the link to the synod assembly 2024 election information.](#) We will have some time to talk about the Bishop's Election process on January 30 at 2:30 p.m. at the end of the Winter Theological Gathering at Luther Park. (Spirit Focused Ecclesiology with Rev. Dr. Cheryl Peterson) If you haven't, please register [here](#).

You are receiving this letter on Martin Luther King Day, January 15. Martin Luther King Jr., the Baptist pastor and civil rights leader was born on this date in 1929 and was assassinated on April 4, 1968. This federal holiday is declared to be a National Day of Service. We are encouraged to volunteer and do something to improve our communities. Martin Luther's dream was to address the racism, violence, hatred and poverty and create the Beloved Community. I hope and pray that you and your members will take your faith to the streets and be servant leaders in your communities for Jesus' sake. In these last six years we have tried to create space for intentional conversations about racial, environmental and gender justice. It is my dream you will continue to do so. Please read the latest edition of the synod's justice newsletter, Just Love, Just Act for ideas on ways to continue the conversation. [December 2023 Newsletter](#)

I am so grateful for you the rostered and lay leaders of this synod and for the amazing synod ministers I've had the opportunity to work with over the course of these years as bishop. A heartfelt Thank You to Liz Bartsch, David Behling, Sara Bishop, Diane House, Greg Kaufmann, Lidix Montoya, Erin Nelson, Randy Olson, and Laura Ramlow. I am honored to have been a part of such great team of leaders. I have been inspired and learned so much from each one of you. Thank you all.

God's blessings, as we moving forward bravely in this new year taking the next most faithful step!

Bishop Laurie Skow-Anderson

Epiphany 2, Martin Luther King Day



Northwest Synod of Wisconsin
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America



Go in peace and serve the Lord. Thanks be to God.