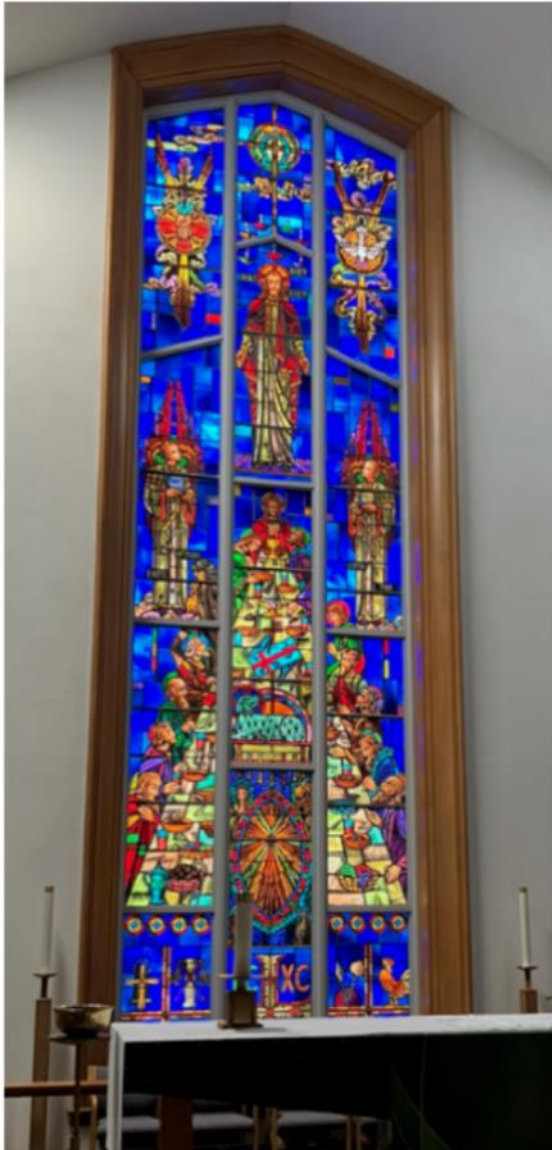


# Edison Park Lutheran Church

WE ARE EPLC THANKS BE TO GOD!

## Annual Report

# 2023



## 96 Years

Our Mission:

To be a people living, loving,  
and serving as Jesus did... so that all may know Him.

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## Agenda for the 2024 Annual meeting or the Congregation

January 28<sup>th</sup> – 10:00 am

- Call to Order
- Opening Prayer
- Approval of Minutes
  - 2023 Annual Meeting
- Reports
  - Senior Pastor
  - Deacon and Business Administrator
  - President of the Congregation
  - Treasurer
  - Director of Worship and Music
  - Children Youth and Family
- Approval of the Budget for 2024
- Old Business
  - Property Report
- New Business
- ◇ 2024 Council Slate
  - Joe Bartel - 2nd term ends Jan 2025
  - Gary Berg - 2nd term ends Jan 2025
  - Kristina Stafen - 2nd term ends Jan 2025
  - Cathy Johnson - 1st term ends Jan 2026
  - Kathleen Burke Melby - 1st term ends Jan 2026
  - John Cherry - 2nd term ends Jan 2026
  - Jonathan Jedd - 2nd term ends Jan 2026
  - Katherine Wendorf - 2nd term ends Jan 2026
  - Kathie Houck – 1<sup>st</sup> term ends Jan 2027
  - Lorene Laubach – 1<sup>st</sup> term ends Jan 2027
- ◇ Approve actions of the 2023 Congregation Council
- Adjournment and Closing Prayer

# Minutes from the 2023 Annual Congregational Meeting

## Sunday, January 29, 2023 at 10:00 a.m.

The meeting was called to order by Council President Carolyn Nasheim at 10:02 a.m. A count of attendees determined that enough members were in attendance to constitute a quorum. Pastor Joe Schultz led us in prayer.

A motion was made by Scott Koenig and seconded by Al Schafer to approve the minutes of the February 6, 2022 Annual Congregational Meeting as presented. Motion approved.

### Reports

Treasurer John Cherry noted the 2023 budget is similar to last year's, with ongoing support still required from the EPLC Foundation. There were no additional questions on the 2023 budget.

Pastor Joe Schultz began his remarks by talking about our mission and purpose at EPLC, and noting that mission is what we are called to do **and** be. In coming months this aspect of mission will become a focus with greater depth. A vision statement articulates the kind of future our congregation desires to see and what we're aiming to do towards that in a specific timeframe.

Deacon Carole Edwards highlighted several items from her report, noting how a number of events and contacts are mission opportunities, where we are able to tell others about EPLC, such as the Pet Blessings. Festivals like All Saints are a great way to do outreach among families in the community who have come to EPLC in a time of need.

Director of Worship and Music Kevin Zehme noted we have an increasing number of children participating instrumentally in the final song at the 11:00 service. The adult choir is up from nine to fourteen members. Several people have already signed up for bell choir, and would like to have 6-8 to get started. We will be hosting concerts by outside groups, which are a great way for the community to see that EPLC is alive and well.

Director of Children, Youth and Family Anastazja Machl is looking to increase overall participation, engage high schoolers, and improve our advertising and outreach.

Technical Director Katie Piskorowski is looking to promote our video content, grow the audio tech team and make improvements in the EPLC website and extend our social media presence.

### Old Business

Property Report – Jonathan Jedd thanked all of those involved with the property team, from maintaining the grounds around the building, assisting with repair projects, and providing expertise on many items on the to-do list. He noted that the windows restored so far are another way to let our light shine, particularly at night, as the restored windows are much brighter without the deteriorated coverings. Upcoming projects for 2023 include:

- Continuation of window project. Next up (and in greatest need of repair) is the window in the choir loft.
- Refinish exterior doors at Oliphant and Avondale.  
Tower repairs and building tuckpointing, currently in the planning phase.

Finally, Jonathan noted that another big upcoming decision will be what to do about the church tower. The interior walls are crumbling, and brick is exposed.

### New Business

Efforts in 2023 – Pastor Joe showed slides displaying the numerous ministries currently active at EPLC. He would like to see these efforts continue to grow. We always need additional volun-

teers, but this is a passive word. We need to turn volunteering into actions. We can survive, but can't thrive and grow without members being involved and sharing their passions. It is like the movie Field of Dreams: build it and they will come. We need to encourage fellow members to return to worship and invite new people to come. We also need to make use of everyone's time and talents, and encourage sign-ups for our various ministries. Communication in all forms is another area of focus for 2023. We will be looking at increasing our digital footprint, as well as making better use of existing platforms (Instagram, Facebook, YouTube). We want to be engaged with all members, need to confirm our membership lists are accurate, and that we have everyone's current email address.

Approve Council Slate – Carolyn Nasheim thanked all who are serving on the Congregation Council. A motion was made by Scott Koenig and seconded by Cindy Davies to approve the 2023 Council Slate: Second term ends January 2024 - Phyllis Doyle, Joan Yost; Second term ends January 2025 - Joe Bartel, Gary Berg, Kristina Stafen; First term ends January 2026 – Cathy Johnson, Kathleen Burke Melby; Second term ends January 2026 - John Cherry, Jonathan Jedd, Katherine Wendorf. Motion approved.

Approve actions of 2022 Congregation Council – A motion was made by Dave Davies and seconded by Milt Gustafson to approve 2022 Council actions. Motion approved.

President Carolyn Nasheim thanked everyone for their love and support. As she is leaving the council after 40+ years of service, Pastor Joe presented Carolyn with a token of the congregation's appreciation, and thanked her for her service and leadership. Carolyn encouraged everyone to be involved in the ministry of EPLC.

A motion to approve the 2023 budget was made by Mark Dupke and seconded by Laura Rinard. Motion approved.

## Q&A

Beth Burke asked if we know how many persons are attending worship and how many are viewing online. Counts are tabulated for each worship service and the statistics are available in the church office. As for online numbers, Pastor Joe said the following were captured between November 6, 2022 and January 22, 2023: 9 a.m. – 348 views, 11 a.m. 291 views, Thanksgiving/Christmas – 248 views.

Beth asked a follow-up question on where our giving goes. Deacon Carole responded that unless designated or specified in a memorial gift, funds received go into the EPLC general fund. Five percent of giving is then tithed to the Metro Chicago Synod of the ELCA for the work of the wider church. Any designated funds such as property are available for additional needs beyond what is in the budget line item. Other designated gifts such as ELCA World Hunger or Disaster Response are disbursed periodically to the intended recipient.

Mark Dupke asked if we could find a platform for an online church directory where every member could add as much information as desired, including time and talent. Pastor Joe responded that we can likely do this with existing software. As events/opportunities occur, we would have the ability to send emails to specific members based on how their talents intersect with the need/interest. Everyone should let Leslie Martinez in the church office know if not receiving the weekly emails. Also provide updates on email address changes, or changed and dropped phone numbers.

## Adjournment and Closing Prayer



A motion was made by Milt Gustafson and seconded by Gary Duszak to adjourn the meeting. Motion approved. The meeting ended at 10:47 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Gary Berg, Congregation Council Secretary

## Staff Directory

Phyllis Bobor, Custodian

Beth Burke, Custodian

Toby Burkum, Lead AV Technician

Carole Edwards, Deacon and Business Administrator

Angela Garcia, Interim Coordinator of Children, Youth, and Family Ministry

Leslie Martinez, Parish Coordinator

Rev. Joe Schultz, Senior Pastor

Duane Smart, Custodian

Kevin Zehme, Director of Worship and Music

## Staff Reports

### Rev. Joe Schultz, Senior Pastor

Dear Friends,



The book of Revelation tells us that Jesus will make all things new. Knowing how it will end, how then shall we live? This can help us to stress less about how things will turn out and can give us peace in our hearts.

It's time again for our annual meeting. This past year, many good things have happened and some were difficult. This is a time when we typically look back on the year and see how it went, with hopes of an even better coming year.

We are excited that we hired a new Children, Youth and Family Ministry & Digital Coordinator, Kaya Hougen. Kaya is a recent graduate of North Park University. Angela Garcia has been a great help in the interim youth position.

For our worship services, we have a Bell Choir, Adult Choir and a Children's Choir. All have played in our worship services, which has enriched our services. We took in 7 new members this past year. We have increased attendance at our worship services every month compared to last year. At Easter, we had 333 people (309 last year.) and at our Christmas services we had 391 people (315 last year.). That's amazing. I hope we can continue that upward trajectory in 2024.

We are slowly getting more people involved in the life of the church and that's a good sign of congregational health. Sadly, we also had several members pass away this past year.

We completed the second phase of repairs to our stained glass windows, which included the window in the choir loft. Unfortunately, there was more damage than we had hoped. I am very

thankful for everyone who has contributed to the repair of our windows. To this point, we have received \$74,000. We hope to do the third and last phase this year, which is the 5 remaining windows on the Avondale side.

Our growth team has come up with great ideas for how we can connect with each other, across all age groups and out into our community. There were many successes this past year. Edison Park Fest, where we got out into the community and people are starting to recognize us; Rally Day, where we had lots of incredible pot-luck food and well over 100 people of all ages; our pancake breakfast with Santa, was well attended and we had more people than last year and Trivia Night was a big success for bringing members and friends together in a casual setting. We have a bowling night once a month that is well attended.

We have 10 students in confirmation who are working hard on growing in their faith, and we are partnering with Lutheran Church of Hope, in West Des Moines, IA. We had a great confirmation retreat at Lutherdale in March last year and looking forward to the coming retreat in Feb. We are still working on getting our high school group up and running.

We have adult education with a small group/bible study on Monday evenings. We typically have 9-12 people. We also have Tap into Theology at Edison Park Inn on the first Tuesday of the month in the evening. Both are a great way of getting to know one another and grow in our faith.

I can't believe that I have already recorded 35 Theology Thursdays this year! I hoped to get people interested in growing in their faith and to come to EPLC.

I am really proud of our church council (especially the Executive council), our staff and pastoral staff for their tireless work. I am also proud of our members who have stepped up and volunteered in our ministries.

It has been a long time since we had a picture directory. Thankfully, two of our church members found an online directory that we can use to connect all of our members. You will be able to put your own picture in it and any info you want to share. If you don't have a computer, we can enter your info for you. We will have one or two laptops to help get your information into the directory. A paper directory will be printed out for anyone who wishes.

As we look towards 2024, I hope and pray that we can continue to reach out beyond our walls and invite our friends and neighbors to come and see. This is a great way for the church to grow.

Peace, Pastor Joe

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## Carole Edwards, Deacon and Business Administrator



After three years of dealing with the pandemic, it was good to resume many of the activities and events we missed enjoying with our church family. Although Covid isn't completely gone, we're learning to live with it. Thankfully we're able to worship in person, sing in worship, enjoy fellowship time at coffee hours, hold meetings in person, families can gather again, visitors are allowed in hospitals, weddings can take place, and when we lose loved ones, we are able to hold services as we gather to celebrate their lives.

Some good things actually came out of that time. We continue to live stream our worship services, provide zoom options for meetings, and provide individual communion cups with both wafer and wine, that can be used in church, as well as at home, or in hospital settings. Ministry took place in new and innovative ways. And we were reminded that God is present with us whether we were together or apart.

And we continue to stay in touch with our members by phone, email, home visits, and hospital visits.

At Easter and Christmas, we deliver Easter plants and poinsettias to our homebound. Our Stephen Ministry program continues to minister to people on an ongoing basis. Please let me know if you'd like to become involved in this program, or if you feel you'd benefit from the ministry of a Stephen Minister.

One of the highlights of the year was the annual Pet Blessing, which always takes place on the first Saturday in October. This year we partnered with the Edison Park Community Council and held it along with their Pet Fair. And again this year we had live music thanks to Kevin! It was a great time of fellowship as we celebrated the bond we have with our pets and all of creation. It's a great outreach opportunity to the community and another way to invite people to become part of our church family.

Another highlight of the year was All Saints Day, which we celebrated on the first weekend of November. This past year, 15 of our members passed away. All Saints Day gives us a time to reflect and remember all of our dear family and friends who died in the past year and who now rest with God. It's always a very sacred and meaningful experience as we come together to light candles, pray, and remember our loved ones.

In addition to our own EPLC families, we invite the families of those from the community whose services we officiated. Many of those families have since joined EPLC and now make this their church home.

And through it all, we give thanks to God in all circumstances. The ministry of this congregation remains healthy and vibrant. New people visit and are moved to become a part of our ministry. I'm thankful for the dedicated leadership and guidance of Pastor Joe. He's always ready to help wherever needed, or to respond to an emergency or crisis. We have a talented and dedicated staff that works hard to keep us focused on our mission.

My role as Deacon includes ministry, as well as serving as the Business Administrator and Human Resource Manager. This year we had a few staffing changes:

Early in the year, our part time Accounting Assistant, Dean Scimeca, resigned, and we have not yet hired a replacement.

Our Tech Director, Katie Piskorowski, resigned. Toby Burkum was promoted to the position of Lead Tech and has been doing a great job. Toby and the AV techs all report to our Director of Worship and Music, Kevin Zehme.

Our CYF Director Anastazja Machl resigned mid-year. Angela Garcia was hired as the Interim CYF to keep programs active for the small children with BLAST and Sunday School and we were grateful for her willingness to help in that area. We actively searched for the right candidate to fill the CYF vacancy, and after interviewing five candidates, hired Kaya Hougen, who graduated from North Park University in December. Kaya will serve as the Children, Youth & Family Ministry and Digital Marketing Coordinator. She will begin her ministry with us in mid-January and will live in the Oshkosh house. Please welcome her and keep her in your prayers.

We are blessed to have a strong and dedicated Council who prayerfully discern decisions that need to be made. And we are blessed to have the ongoing and much needed financial support of the Foundation. And thank you to each of you, for continuing to support this ministry with your prayers, volunteer hours and generous financial support. We could not do this ministry without you.



Often I'm reminded of the rich traditions that make EPLC so special to many of us. The window project was so lovingly supported by members and former members alike. Our treasured stained glass windows tell a story, and are part of our history. Last week a long time member told me that she was blessed by going through several old EPLC cookbooks. She said it brought her so much joy to look at the variety of recipes, but even more importantly, to read through the many names of the people who submitted them. Many of these dear saints have now passed on to their eternal glory, and it warmed the heart of this dear woman to have a chance to reflect on their memory and remember days spent with them at church. Another member mentioned the rich history of the Chrismons hanging on the Christmas tree. Several years ago I focused one of my newsletter articles on the history of them and I'd be happy to share that if you're interested.

It's a good reminder for me of the faith foundation I received from this church. Many of my EPLC friends have commented on how we were so richly blessed by our experiences while growing up in this congregation, from Vacation Bible School, Sunday School, Selah Singers and Luther League, and what an impact they had on our lives and spiritual journey. And in my adult years, I was blessed to serve in many volunteer positions in leadership, and after 30 years in corporate management in the secular world, God led me to leave that path, and follow the Call to serve in full time ministry. What a blessing to have served my home congregation these past 16 years!

I'm humbled and grateful to serve this congregation. As we begin another year of ministry together, we look forward to seeing where God will take us on our paths!

Thanks be to God!

With appreciation and blessings,

Deacon Carole Edwards

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## **Angela Garcia, Interim Coordinator of Children, Youth, & Family Ministry**

I am very grateful for this opportunity to work in the interim as our CYF Coordinator while we have searched for a full time candidate the last 6 months. I appreciate all those who have supported me, volunteered for events or to teach classes, and/or participated. It is because of all you the last year has been so successful and filled with so many fun events. Below I will review my last 6 months in this position.

In July when I started, I helped organize a teen game night with our teens and our visitors from Minnesota who were staying at the church. I also created a contact list of all our families with children, this list had been composed of active members, inactive members, and families who had a child(ren) baptized in the last 8 years or so. The list was then used to send out mailers about Sunday School starting and to invite families to come to Rally Day. I also started organizing the nursery to prepare for the start of the toddler play group. I also began setting up the children's corner in the North Hall for kids to play and color during coffee hour, which I continue to do each week.

In August, I began to contact Sunday School volunteers to create a schedule for who would be helping to teach classes on a regular basis. I organized all the old Sunday school curriculums and ordered a new one for this year. The curriculum chosen for this year was chosen specifically because it was geared to serve all age groups. I then updated the registration form for all classes and emailed out to families. In September, our classes began including the toddler play group. We originally had 8 students signed up for confirmation, but it has since gone up to 10. We originally had 3 students signed up for blast, but has since gone up to 6 students now. Sunday School ranges an average of 5-8 students a week. The toddler play group meets weekly, and we have consistently had 3-6 kids in attendance.

In October we had our first fundraiser, where we sold Dominos Slice the Price cards. Profits went toward our ELCA National Youth Gathering in New Orleans. We also went on a fun trip to Goebbert's Pumpkin Patch. We had about 20 people join us in. Lastly, in the month of October, we had our annual Trunk Or Treat event. We had 13 cars decorated and giving out candy as well as having the church bus decorated to be a "haunted bus". The event was very popular with members from the community coming out to join us. In November, we had our Family and Friends Thanksgiving Potluck. There were about 60 people in attendance and everyone brought a dish to share.

To end the year we had our annual cinnamon roll Sunday fundraiser for our youth program. We sold out before the end of coffee hour, selling a total of 96 rolls at \$3 a roll. We also had our Christmas card decorating party where youth came in to make cards for our homebound members and residents of Danish home. Lastly, we had our Pancake breakfast with Santa. Tickets were \$10 per person, children under 10 were free. We sold approximately 73 tickets. The kids really enjoyed getting to visit with Santa. A generous member donated beanie baby toys to be given away by Santa. We also had Santa give out candy canes to the children who came up for a visit.

I am excited to see our programs continue to grow. My goal for the CYF department is to work on bringing our teens back together and build the teen program up. I would also like the department to work on engaging with the community more, so we can start building a bigger youth program as a whole. I again want to thank you all for the opportunity to work in the interim. It has been an absolute pleasure. I could not have done it without all those who have volunteered to make all our events successful.

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## Kevin Zehme, Director of Worship and Music



This past year went very quickly, but was a lot of fun. I am still very grateful to be part of this church and to work with so many talented and wonderful people and to do it for such a warm congregation.

Many things have been accomplished since last year's annual report. I have met many of the goals that I have set forth to complete or to start. The Adult Choir is doing very well this year. They work very hard to help enhance worship with their singing and leading of Hymns, service music and anthems that relate to the theme of each service. The Adult Choir currently meets on Tuesday evenings from 6:15pm - 7:30pm. The Bell Choir has also worked very hard to come together and provide music at the Christmas Day service. We are currently preparing to also be at the Easter Services. The Bells currently rehearse on Tuesday evenings from 5:00pm – 6:00pm. Joy Choir has also been formed and has performed a few times. I hope to have them perform more often as we go along. The Joy Choir meets for about 20 min, after the 11:00am service on Sundays. The Praise band musicians have also grown. Such a great group of talented volunteer musicians and singers! They work very hard to bring such good music to our contemporary service. I also would like to thank the volunteer musicians that help enhance our worship services on holidays as well as through the year. Jennifer Nelson, Bruce Nelson, Tim Nelson, La Verne Myers, Griffin Davis, Bob Hotton, Max Guerra, Synoma Hays and Rich Heath. They have all contributed in providing solo music performances. I am also working with others to hopefully add their names to this growing list of volunteer musicians and singers. Also, I would like to thank Toby Burkum for stepping up this summer to take over as Lead AV Technician and his work with the other Techs.

He has done a great job solving many problems that we have had and is always making improvements where possible. I would also like to acknowledge the outside groups that have come this last year to perform some beautiful concerts here in the sanctuary. We hope to continue this in the future as well. The music at EPLC would not be as vibrant and exciting if not for the help from all of these groups and individuals. As always, we are ever looking for more people to be involved. If you have any interest to be involved with any of these groups, please reach out to me by email or stopping by after services or my office. If you even have only limited time, we can work with that as well.

In conclusion, I would like to thank the church for putting their faith in me to continue to bring beautiful music to this church and the worship services. I will work to the best of my ability to keep the music program strong and fulfilling!

Respectfully yours,  
Kevin Zehme

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## Jonathan Jedd, President of the Church Council

1 Peter 4:10 NRSV

“Like good stewards of the manifold grace of God, serve one another with whatever gift each of you has received.”

Thank you to those who have given their time, talents and abilities during 2023. Whether organizing a mission trip to Feed My Starving Children, hosting our friends from Argentina, or gardening around the campus, its demonstrative evidence of God’s special gifts bestowed upon this Congregation’s members.

At the beginning of the year, Pastor organized a Growth Team as a form of outreach not only to the community but to our own members as well. A number of events planned by the team of volunteers brought people together whether watching the Chicago Dogs or being part of Edison Park Fest. A creative idea of Kathy W. led to Pastor’s *Theology Thursday* as another way to reach outside our doors.

Despite Anastazja’s departure in May, Angela G. kept our CYF programs running as interim and initiated our first *Breakfast with Santa* which was a huge success! Angela was also responsible for starting a weekly Toddler Playgroup. Kaya H. was hired in December for CYF and Social Media and begins her ministry in January 2024. We were also fortunate that Toby B. stepped up to lead the tech team and work with Pastor and Kevin on our live-stream and YouTube presence.

Our attendance numbers at the traditional and contemporary services continued to grow throughout the year. Our staff and team of volunteers continue to work diligently in growing our Church.

We are thankful for many volunteers whether involved in Altar Guild, Quilters, Ushers, Readers, Coffee Hour, Choir, Bell Choir, Praise Band or teaching Sunday School. You are all truly appreciated!

We are saddened by the death of dear friends and long-time members but are grateful for new friends and families who have found a spiritual home at EPLC this past year.

Respectfully yours,  
Jonathan Jedd

## John Cherry, Treasurer of the Church Council

I would like to first and foremost thank everyone for all your support this past year. If it was a prayer, time volunteered, a suggestion, or maybe a financial contribution toward EPLC, I truly appreciate all your support. The involvement of everyone at EPLC is what makes this place so wonderful.

On a personal note, I would like to thank everyone for all the visits, calls, notes and words of support as I navigated my way through a major physical injury this year. I could not have recovered if it was not for the support of my family, along with my friends, especially the wonderful people of EPLC. THANK YOU SO MUCH!

I would also like to thank the staff at EPLC. They have continued to be fantastic wards of our finances, and manage to get so much accomplished while still managing to keep the spending to a minimum. Great job!!! I appreciate all your efforts!!

As most of you might be aware, EPLC is running essentially at a deficit. While our Congregation is very generous, we just don't have enough people to support the mission of EPLC. We received more income then we budgeted for in 2023, however, that was still significantly less then what we need to operate our church. You can look in the budget page for the specific numbers, or feel free to talk to one of the staff or council members if you have questions.

As I have been talking about for several years now, we rely on the EPLC Foundation more and more all the time. Without the ongoing support from the Foundation, EPLC would not exist. We have been slowly draining the resources of the Foundation, despite the fantastic investment strategy they have employed. While they have been getting excellent returns on the investments, we are still taking more then they are gaining. I know this is not a comfortable subject, however I think everyone needs to be aware of how things are trending.

We need to grow, and we need everyone's help to grow. I would ask that you all please help us grow in any way possible. Pray for the Church, ask someone to come visit one of our services, talk to your friends about it. We have had a good year, adding some new members, which is wonderful. Lets hope we can continue the trend!

We now have a complete staff, who are working diligently on programs and activities to help spread the word of the good news at EPLC. If you are able, please assist with running these programs. Volunteer if you are able, help spread the news that EPLC is spreading God's love!

With that in mind, we are presenting a budget very similar to last year. We have some small increases in our projected expenses, mostly based on increases in costs for personnel. We will also most likely spend more on property this year also, as we continue to do repairs and improvements that have been much needed. Thank you to Jon and Debbie Jedd for all their countless hours of time volunteered to fix and repair so many things between the Church and the 3 additional properties we have.

We will be asking you to approve of this budget for 2024, and look forward to your ongoing support.

Thank you for allowing me to serve here at EPLC. This wonderful group of people have shown me the wonders of our savior Jesus Christ through ALL OF YOU! I look forward to seeing you either in Church or at one of the many awesome activities planned for 2024! May God bless you all!

Respectfully Submitted,  
John Cherry

# Ministry Reports:

## Mission Quilters:

This year, the 7 quilters have been busy every 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Friday of the month, designing, sewing and stitching quilts for Lutheran World Relief. We ship them off to all over the world via truck and cargo ships. This last September we sent 100 quilts and gave 4 high school graduates a quilt as they open a new phase in their lives. We have been blessed with so many more fabrics, double bed and larger sheets, yarn, and thread given from the congregation and continue to request these items. Our current quilters are Lynda Hartwig, Debbie Schug, Lois Johnson, Alice Rybak, Laverne Myers, Marilyn Baalson and Jane Hammar. We are always very happy that anyone wants to join us to see if this might fit their calendar.

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## The Night Ministry Holiday Stockings

Thank you very much to our church members who filled a stocking with warmth and essentials during the holiday season for the Night Ministry of Chicago. Together we donated 45 filled stockings that included essential toiletry items, warm hats, gloves, and socks based on a list given to us from The Night Ministry. Thank you to Sheri Sears who volunteered her time and sewed all of the stockings. Also, thank you to those who donated fabric remnants for Sheri to use. The sewn stockings were then placed at the Welcome Center for our church members to take and fill from October to early December. The stuffed stockings were delivered to The Night Ministry who distributed them in mid-December to the unhoused Chicago-area youth and young adults.

It was very helpful in 2023 to have sewn stockings available so that our church members would not have to purchase them. Our dollars were better spent on purchasing quality warm items to put in the stockings. If we continue with this ministry in 2024, please consider donating fabric, volunteering to cut fabric from a pattern, and sewing stockings for our members to fill. Again, thank you all for your generosity, your time, and your compassion for this ministry during the holiday season!

Kendra Kelly

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## Veterans Task Force:

We had an outstanding year thanks to the support of members and friends of EPLC. During the months of March & October donations of individual snack items and some sport magazines were received and delivered to the O'Hare Airport USO. Upon delivery the USO volunteers and troops there greeted us and asked that we extend their sincere appreciation to EPLC. During the months of April & May generous donations were received in total of \$4,352.96 for support of the Chaplaincy Scholarship Endowment Fund.

A thank you letter was received from Rev. Murray D. Finck, Convener. In the letter he said, the next generation of ELCA Military Chaplains will continue to proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ around the world, often to places and people in very challenging situations. ELCA Chaplains have an outstanding reputation, as they serve all people in any and every circumstance and do so with a maturity of faith and experience.

On behalf of the Veterans Task Force, bless everyone for your generosity and all you have done toward the success of these missions. Please continue to keep our active duty military men and women in your thoughts and prayers.

Sincerely,  
Tom Benson  
Chairman



## Property Committee Report

Greetings from the Property Team...

This past year we worked on a variety of major and minor projects maintaining the church properties.

Daprato Rigali Studios completed Phase 2 restoration of our beautiful stained glass windows. This phase focused on the window above the main church doors. The organ pipes needed to be removed so plaster work could be completed. The remaining windows will be completed in 2024.

Vandals damaged the basketball hoop in the parking lot. A new rim was ordered and installed.

One of the church boilers and the water heater might need to be replaced in 2024.

A Sanctuary lighting proposal was received and approved by the Council to be completed in the first quarter of 2024.

A new portico for the parsonage was completed as an Eagle Scout project.

A tuck-pointing contract was approved by the Council. We missed the Fall window so work will be done in 2024.

John K. donated his time on a variety of projects, including, painting entrance doors, railings, and washing the radiator covers in the Sanctuary. Also, he donated a new plaque holder for the Memorial Garden. Thanks John!

Gil Y. has provided guidance on restoring the Church doors that have been beaten by the summer heat and sun over the years. This project will roll into 2024.

We found new floor tile in the storage area under the Oshkosh house that will be used to replace the tile in the lower level men's washroom, another 2024 project.

Paul S. donated his time working on the 6651 Oshkosh house.

Todd B. changed several of the Sanctuary lights using the lift and has offered assistance on other projects. Welcome aboard!

Greatly appreciated the painting at the Oshkosh house by Pastor and Jason.

Thank you Kevin Z. for maintaining the Oliphant house and sharing the garage with the Church.

Thank you to Joe B. for being a resource for the Memorial Garden plaques.

Peoples Gas identified six natural gas leaks. Unfortunately these leaks were on the church side of the meter and our responsibility to correct.

Eric G. and Frank M. have been working on the plaster in the coat room off the Narthex. Thanks guys!

Thank you Jane H. and Deanna E. for keeping our campus grounds looking great and watering the gardens and plants during the spring/summer months.

Working behind the scenes were people like Duane Smart and PB Cleaning (Phyllis and Beth) making sure our church sparkles for the parishioners and is cleaned after use by outside groups as well.

Our Tower still needs TLC and we will start removal of the damaged wall board in 2024.

The year ended with our Silent Knight fire alarm circuit board shorting out. Council approved the necessary funds to replace the box, hopefully in January 2024.

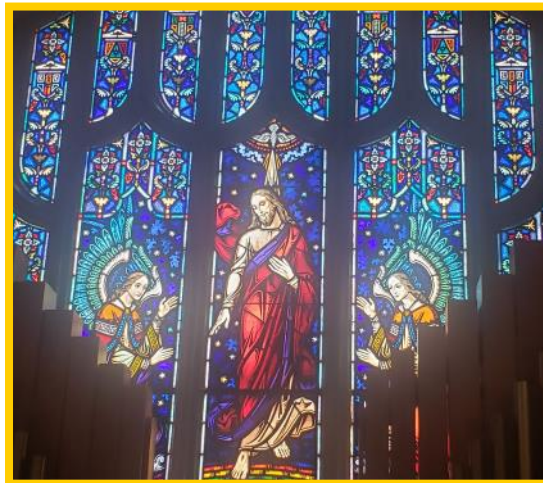
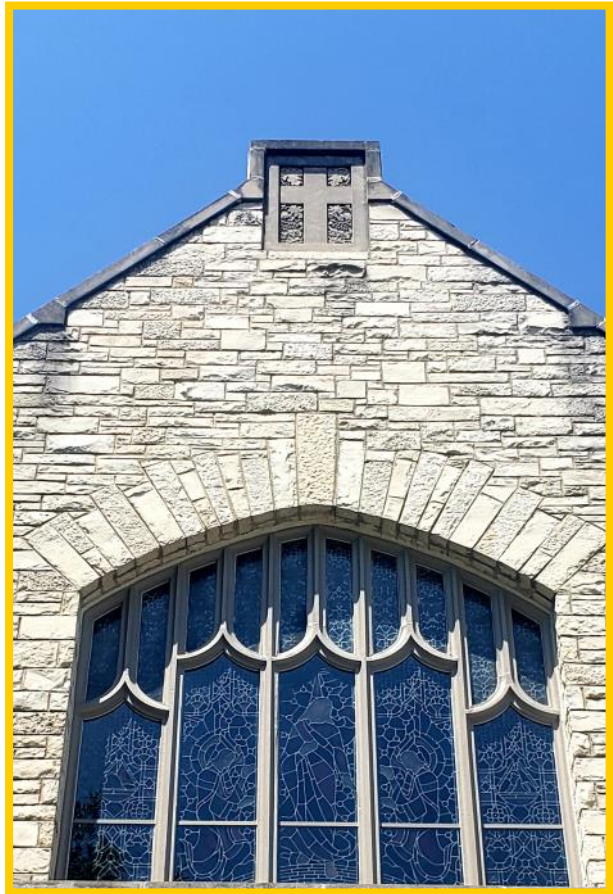
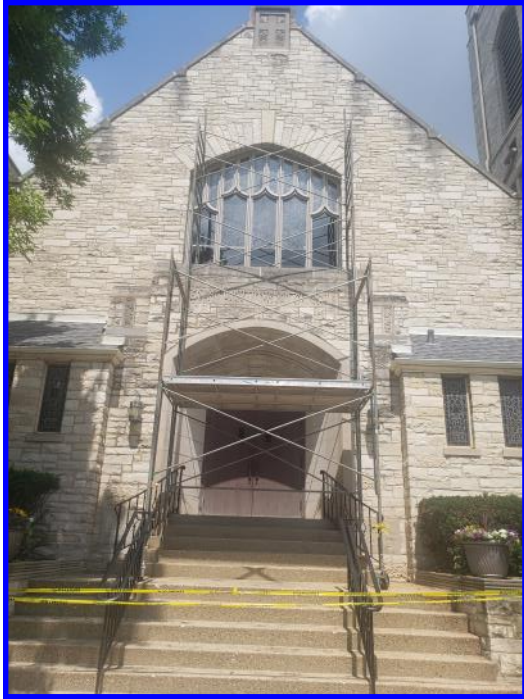
Thank you for your generous support in maintaining our assets.



If you have any questions or issues you feel need to be addressed, or if you would like to join the committee please feel free to contact me via the church office.

Respectfully yours,

Jonathan Jedd



## EDISON PARK LUTHERAN CHURCH FOUNDATION, INC.

### 2023 ANNUAL REPORT

In honor of the founding members of the Foundation, it is again with gratitude that I am able to address you on behalf of the Edison Park Lutheran Church Foundation. While we have continued to support the financial backings of the Church with gifts designed to provide temporary relief of the income shortfalls, we have assisted in other areas in order to preserve our property and assets and foster growth and expansion in the ministries at Edison Park Lutheran Church.

Again, as a result of ongoing support and gifting to the Foundation, the exceptional Board of Directors have worked to manage the financial holdings and in tandem with a robust market, have navigated a fairly undisturbed transaction portfolio. However, we are looking to brace ourselves in a cautious state, in light of the upcoming year.

This year the Investment Committee (a sub-group of the Directors of the Foundation) have met frequently and discussed strategies that might enable us to even our portfolio holdings to protect us against any downturn in the market while simultaneously seeking funds or fund groups designed for some modest growth. We have warmly accepted new ideas in order to better position ourselves going forward.

The 2023 Gifts to EPLC were \$329,502.32 (\$29,000 was dedicated to support the CYF position in 2023), and (\$502.32 went towards The Lutheran Magazine, which has ceased to be produced). Also, the Foundation led a campaign and provided matching funds for the Stained Glass Window restoration (an additional \$13,201.63). This enabled the Church to complete phases I and II of the project; phase III remains in 2024.

The Foundation began its work after 1965 and was incorporated by 12 members of the congregation, each donating \$100 for a total of \$1200. Our Foundation has had members come and go, and we have run with less, but are now back to 12 Directors. I am blessed to be joined by the following individuals. Please enable me to recognize them. The Board of Directors is comprised of: Mark Dupke, President; Joe Bartel, Vice President; Cindy Davies, Secretary; Gary Duszak, Treasurer; Chris Behrns, Tom Benson, Todd Bridges, Kent Davies, Monika Hemm, Julio Hernandez, Alice Rybak, Paul Specialle.

In order to invite more members to be a part of the community of Edison Park Lutheran Church, it is essential to keep the perpetual life of the church at the forefront. In the same manner, when considering your financial gifts, above your general offerings, please consider entrusting contributions to the Foundation. We will continue to navigate the turbulent times and provide opportunities for growth when applicable.

...with God all things are possible,

Mark Dupke  
President, EPLC Foundation



# EPLC 2024 Proposed Ministry Plan/Financial Budget

## Edison Park Lutheran Church Ministry Plan 2017 - 2023 Actual Income and Expenses 2024 Proposed Budget

1/16/2024 v3

	Actuals							Final	Budgets	
	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023		2023	2024
<b>Income</b>										
Genl/Fest Giving	\$ 398,346	\$385,621	\$354,512	295,202	323,241	312,703	329,387		\$ 315,000	\$ 315,000
*Other Income	\$ 41,965	\$90,271	\$30,976	231,165	29,407	23,829	23,926		\$ 24,000	\$ 24,000
Memorials Transferred	\$ 3,900	\$0	\$6,790	0	0	0	0		\$ -	\$ -
Preschool Income	\$ 54,065	\$43,673	\$33,280	22,684	45,884	0	0		\$ -	\$ -
Foundation	\$ 175,000	\$165,000	\$165,000	150,000	270,000	275,000	300,000		\$ -	\$ -
Foundation-Special Projects	\$ 10,915	\$30,000	\$0	11,570	148,367	38,759	42,221		\$ 29,000	\$ 34,000 ***
Total Income	\$684,191	\$714,565	\$590,558	710,620	816,899	650,291	695,533		\$ 368,000	\$ 373,000
Total Income Less Foundation	\$498,276	\$519,565	\$425,558	\$549,050	\$398,533	\$336,532	\$353,313		\$ 368,000	\$ 373,000
*Includes Estate gifts, Program income, building usage, Misc. benevolence										
***CYF 11.5 mo sal & benefits committed by Foundation										
**Includes Loan Forgiveness: \$94,662(2021) ; CYF salary & benefits(2022-3); Window match										
<b>Expenses</b>										
Salaries	\$ 362,639	\$ 349,349	\$355,466	299,547	279,181	307,102	308,322		\$ 350,000	\$ 355,000
Benefits	\$ 97,817	\$ 97,153	\$81,594	49,408	50,168	84,147	83,233		\$ 94,500	\$ 99,500
Salaries & Benefits Total	\$ 460,455	\$ 446,502	\$437,060	\$348,955	\$329,349	\$391,248	391,555		\$ 444,500	\$ 454,500
<b>Ministry Teams:</b>										
<b>Outreach Team</b>										
Fellowship	\$ 4,017	\$ 2,127	\$3,397	3,640	3,534	1,695	3,530		\$ 2,000	\$ 2,000
Outreach	\$ 3,960	\$ 3,324	\$4,480	988	-136	26	1,232		\$ 2,000	\$ 2,000
Growth Team	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	-		\$ -	\$ 2,000
Vision	\$ 7,063	\$ 2,708	\$4,948	3,384	0	-	-		\$ 2,000	\$ 1,000
Campaigns	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	58		\$ 2,000	\$ 1,000
Team Total	\$ 15,040	\$ 8,159	\$12,824	\$8,012	\$3,398	\$1,720	4,820		\$ 8,000	\$ 8,000
<b>Growing Team</b>										
Education	\$ 4,522	\$ 4,981	\$4,071	5,829	9,214	1,253	3,387		\$ 2,000	\$ 2,000
Preschool	\$ 7,831	\$ 7,204	\$3,029	2,345	3,979	2,656	-		\$ -	\$ -
Youth	\$ 3,594	\$ 4,184	\$3,265	4,133	2,085	(934)	1,446		\$ 2,500	\$ 2,500
Team Total	\$ 15,947	\$ 16,369	\$10,365	\$12,307	\$15,279	\$2,975	4,833		\$ 4,500	\$ 4,500
<b>Worship Team</b>										
Worship, Music & Arts	\$ 17,861	\$ 20,508	\$20,900	18,043	9,124	24,870	14,322		\$ 25,000	\$ 25,000
Team Total	\$ 17,861	\$ 20,508	\$20,900	\$18,043	\$ 9,124	\$ 24,870	14,322		\$ 25,000	\$ 25,000
<b>Leadership Team</b>										
Stewardship	\$ 3,024	\$ 1,545	\$1,843	1,596	1,237	1,535	1,767		\$ 1,800	\$ 1,800
Property	\$ 97,170	\$ 101,154	\$114,255	110,731	120,448	174,036	164,767		\$ 120,000	\$ 120,000
Foundtn-SpecProjects	\$ 15,000	\$ -	\$33,753	0	11,570	-	-		\$ -	\$ -
Office	\$ 22,231	\$ 22,949	\$27,694	26,586	26,975	33,364	35,607		\$ 30,000	\$ 30,000
Benevolence	\$ 75,204	\$ 71,716	\$53,247	48,607	27,490	27,180	29,915		\$ 30,000	\$ 30,000
Team Total	\$ 212,629	\$ 197,365	\$230,791	\$187,520	\$187,719	\$236,116	232,056		\$ 181,800	\$ 181,800
Total Expenses	\$ 721,932	\$ 688,903	\$ 711,941	\$ 574,837	\$ 544,868	\$656,929	\$ 647,585		\$ 663,800	\$ 673,800
Income/Deficit	\$ (8,512)	\$ (4,712)	\$ 2,624	\$ 15,721	\$272,031	-\$6,638	\$47,949		\$ (295,800)	\$ (300,800)

<b>Benevolence from EPLC 2023</b>		
ELCA/Metro Chicago Synod	\$ 16,104	
Other:		
World Hunger	\$ 6,153	
Disaster Relief	\$ 2,903	
New Hope Food Pantry	\$ 200	
ELCA Chaplaincy Program	\$ 4,353	
Holy Family School	\$ 202	
Sub-total	\$ 29,915	
Other Benevolence efforts:		
Care kits made for the homeless	\$ -	
Cards sent to Seniors in Care facilities	\$ -	
Cards, Easter flowers, & Poinsettias sent to shut-ins	\$ -	
2023 Benevolence	\$ 29,915	
2022 Benevolence	\$ 27,400	
Increase in benevolence giving over last year	\$ 2,515	
% Growth	9.2%	
<b>Total Given by EPLC in 2023</b>	<b>\$ 29,915</b>	
*Seminary Tuition	\$ 8,191.00	
*Anderson-Nasby Seminary Scholarship dispersed on behalf of EPLC by the ELCA.		

# Membership Statistics 2023

## Edison Park Lutheran Church

Baptized Membership at <u>end of 2013</u>	867	+4%
Baptized Membership at <u>end of 2014</u>	904	+4%
Baptized Membership at <u>end of 2015</u>	889	-2%
Baptized Membership at <u>end of 2016</u>	884	-1%
Baptized Membership at <u>end of 2017</u>	864	-2%
Baptized Membership at <u>end of 2018</u>	881	+2%
Baptized Membership at <u>end of 2019</u>	890	+1%
Baptized Membership at <u>end of 2020</u>	878	-1%
Baptized Membership at <u>end of 2021</u>	871	+1%
Baptized Membership at <u>end of 2022</u>		
Baptized Membership at <u>end of 2023</u>		

Children Baptized in 2023	6
Adults Baptized in 2023	0

Transfers/Additions	7	
<b>Total members received</b>	<b>13</b>	

<b>Baptized Members Removed during 2023</b>	
By death	15
By transfer/statistical adjustment	10
<b>Total members removed this year</b>	<b>12</b>

**Baptized Membership at end of 2023**                      **879**

<b>Total confirmed members</b>	<b>762</b>
<b>Number confirmed in 2023</b>	<b>5</b>

# **THANKS BE TO GOD!**



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**Evangelical Lutheran Church of America**