



**TRINITY**  
LUTHERAN CHURCH

206 E. Badger Street | Waupaca, WI 54981

# 2024 ANNUAL REPORT

# A MESSAGE FROM PRESIDING BISHOP ELIZABETH EATON



Dear friends in Christ,

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

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

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

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

—Psalm 93:4-5

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

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Elizabeth A. Eaton". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

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



**TRINITY**  
LUTHERAN CHURCH

206 E. Badger St. ■ Waupaca, WI 54981  
715-258-7688  
trinity@tlcwaupaca.org

## **ANNUAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING**

March 2, 2025 ■ 10:15 a.m.

In-person and Zoom ([tiny.cc/TLCMeeting](https://tiny.cc/TLCMeeting))

### **■ AGENDA**

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- Opening Devotions
- Approval of Agenda
- Approval of 2024 Annual Meeting Minutes
- Reports
- Budget Review and Approval
- Old Business
- New Business
- Election
- Recognition of Service
- Closing Prayer
- Adjournment



**Meeting Called to Order:** President Heidi Fischer at 10:17 a.m.

**Opening Devotions:** Pastor Andy Behrendt

**Attendees:** In-person and online attendance; quorum requirements were met.

**Motion to Approve Agenda:** Motion by Barry Osicka; 2nd by Debby Kinison; motion carried.

**Motion to Approve 2023 Annual Meeting Minutes:** Motion by Barry Osicka; 2nd by Debby Kinison; motion carried.

**Reports:** Pastor Andy reviewed the year at Trinity.

**Budget Review and Approval:**

- Trinity Lutheran Church's budget presented by Treasurer Pam Gusmer. Motion to approve 2024 budget made by Char Kuenzi; 2nd by David Leder; motion carried.

**Old Business:**

- 80 years of mission.
- Steve Johnson, Call Committee update. Trinity is awaiting candidates.
- Strategic Planning Team.

**New Business:**

- Amendment of Bylaws – Article 1, new mission statement.
  - Much discussion on motion by Nick Barden for Trinity congregation to adopt the amended bylaws as proposed.
  - Paper ballot on adopting the amended bylaws as proposed. Motion carried.
- Phase 2 of sanctuary lighting project.
- Elections:
  - Nominated as additional Tomorrow River Conference Annual Meeting voting members: Char Kuenzi, Terry Nellis, and Tana Griffin.
  - Nominated as additional Endowment Fund Committee member: Marshall Lysne.
  - Withdrawn as nominee for Crossways Camping Ministries Annual Meeting: Molly Reinke.

**Recognition of Service:**

- Heidi recognized outgoing Council members Sue Harrington, Bruce Anderson, and Kayla Keil.

**Closing Prayer by Pastor Andy**

**MEETING ADJOURNED** by President Heidi Fischer at 11:35 a.m.

■ CHURCH COUNCIL

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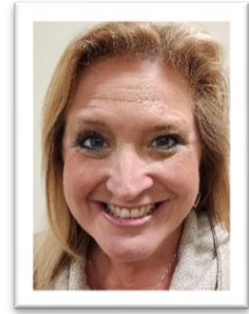
Heidi Fischer  
**2023-24 PRESIDENT**  
Term: 2024-26



Bob Olson  
**2024 VICE PRESIDENT**  
Term: 2023-25



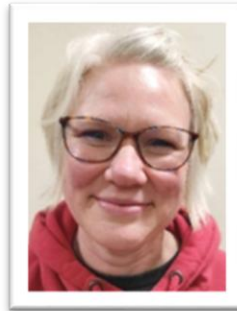
Cheryl Sletten  
**2024 SECRETARY**  
Term: 2022-24



Pam Gusmer  
**2023-24 TREASURER**



Nick Barden  
Term: 2022-24



Kerry Lueders  
Term: 2022-24



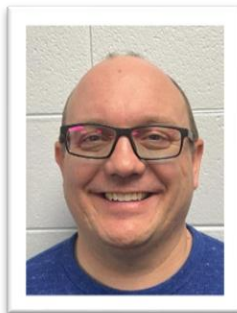
Spencer Grams  
Term: 2023-24



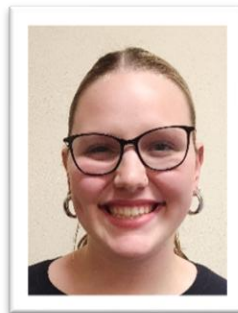
Betsy Sachs  
Term: 2023-25



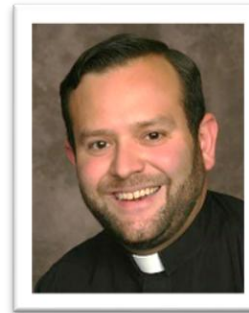
Joe Jones  
Term: 2024-26



Nate Ziemer  
Term: 2024-26



Hannah Newsome  
**YOUTH REP**  
2024



Rev. Andy Behrendt  
**LEAD PASTOR**

**COMMITTEES**

**Audit Committee**

- Tina Grenlie
- Nancy Johnson
- Cassie Pasholk (Staff)
- \*Jacci Peterson (Staff)

**Call Committee**

- Steve Johnson (Chair)
- Jake Foss
- John Lueders
- Barb Nellis
- Melanie Peterson
- Maddy Theis
- Pam Gusmer (Alternate)

**Endowment Fund Committee**

- Kate Gile (Chair)
- Jess Bank
- Eric Hendrickson
- \*Donavan Lane
- Carmen Sondrol
- Cassie Pasholk (Staff)
- \*Jacci Peterson (Staff)

**Finance Committee**

- Pam Gusmer (Treasurer, Chair)
- Kerry Lee Blanke
- \*Marge Gaboda
- Mark Rosicky
- Jim Stoltenberg
- Pastor Andy Behrendt (Staff)
- Cassie Pasholk (Staff)
- \*Jacci Peterson (Staff)

**Governance Committee**

- Steve Johnson (Chair)
- Heidi Fischer
- Tim Gauerke
- Hugh Kress
- Pastor Andy Behrendt (Staff)

**Mutual Ministry Committee**

- Hugh Kress (Chair)
- Nancy Cummings

- Vicki Groth
- Matt Lick
- Jim Peterson
- Melanie Peterson

**Nominating Committee**

- Bruce Anderson (Chair)
- David Leder
- Lisa Zube
- Sue Harrington (Staff)

**Personnel Committee**

- \*Steve Johnson (Chair)
- Laura Colbert
- Penney Frank
- \*Terri Lick
- Pastor Andy Behrendt (Staff)
- Cassie Pasholk (Staff)
- \*Jacci Peterson (Staff)

**MINISTRY TEAMS**

**BeFriends**

- Pete Gasper
- Cathy Gauerke
- Tim Gauerke
- Nancy Johnson
- Anita Olson
- Diane Opperman
- Ann Rasmussen
- Jeff Siemers
- Sue Harrington (Staff)
- \*Jacci Peterson (Staff)
- Pastor Mark Ziemer (Staff)

**Health Team**

- Karen Kress
- Anita Olson
- Alli Reichert
- Chuck Reynolds
- Betsy Sachs
- Paul Sletten

**Invite-Welcome-Connect Team**

- Sue Heideman
- Sue Nielsen
- \*Vicki Poeschl

- Cheryl Sletten
- Sue Harrington (Staff)
- \*Jacci Peterson (Staff)
- Pastor Mark Ziemer (Staff)

**Property & Grounds Team**

- Neil Wenberg (Chair)
- Bruce Anderson
- Kerry Lee Blanke
- Rich Harris
- Jacki Johnson
- Debby Kinison
- \*Greg Peterson
- Doug Pohl
- Dan Tischendorf
- Dave Wood (Staff)
- Cassie Pasholk (Staff)
- \*Jacci Peterson (Staff)

**Stewardship Team**

- DeAnna Hannigen (Chair)
- Kerry Lee Blanke (Secretary)
- Jake Foss
- Ann Rasmussen
- Shannon Anderson
- Pastor Andy Behrendt (Staff)
- Sue Harrington (Staff)
- Cassie Pasholk (Staff)
- \*Jacci Peterson (Staff)

**Worship & Music Team**

- Nancy Cummings (Altar Guild)
- Jacki Johnson (Divine Designs)
- \*Kathy Hurt (Divine Designs)
- Charlene Kuenzi (Secretary)
- Pam Lysne (Choir Director)
- Shana Rogney (Choir Director)
- \*Be Parker (Choir Director)
- Nancy Ross
- Nancy Schanke
- Pastor Andy Behrendt (Staff)
- Wanda Eikenbary (Staff, Chair)

## ■ VOTING MEMBERS & DELEGATES IN 2024

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### **East Central Synod of Wisconsin Assembly Voting Members**

- Jake Foss
- Lexi Koeppler
- Becky Liegl
- Mary Plautz

(Pastor Andy Behrendt, Pastor Ray Claussen, Hugh Kress, and Nancy Schanke also attended.)

### **Tomorrow River Conference Annual Meeting Voting Members**

- Tana Griffin
- Char Kuenzi
- Terry Nellis
- Betsy Sachs
- Jeff Siemers
- Laurie Tellock

(Pastor Andy Behrendt, Pastor Gene Gauerke, and Pastor Chuck Tews also attended.)

### **Bethany Annual Meeting Delegates**

- Kerry Lee Blanke
- Lori Blanke
- Hugh Kress
- Karen Kress

### **Crossways Camping Ministries Annual Meeting Delegates**

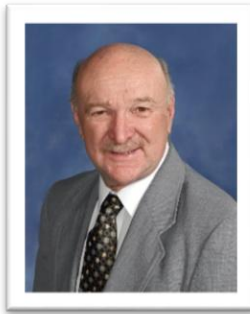
- Gene Nollenberg
- Jeff Siemers

■ CHURCH STAFF IN 2024

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**Rev. Andy Behrendt**  
**LEAD PASTOR**



**Rev. Dr. Chuck Tews**  
**INTERIM ASSOCIATE PASTOR**



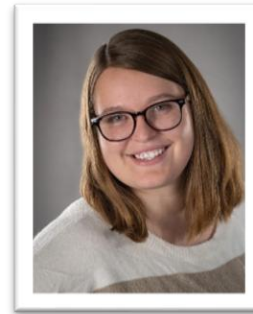
**Rev. Mark Ziemer**  
**INTERIM ASSOCIATE PASTOR**



**Wanda Eikenbary**  
**DIRECTOR OF MUSIC MINISTRIES**



**Jean Schwirtz**  
**SUNDAY SCHOOL COORDINATOR**



**Delaney Barbeau**  
**YOUTH COORDINATOR**



**Sue Harrington**  
**MINISTRY COORDINATOR**



**Cassie Pasholk**  
**ADMINISTRATOR**



**Lori Niemuth**  
**ADMINISTRATIVE COORDINATOR**



**Dave Wood**  
**PROPERTY & GROUNDS SUPERVISOR**

**CUSTODIAN:** Amy Procino

**PAST STAFF WHO ALSO SERVED IN 2024:** Shannon Anderson (volunteer coordinator), Jim Barbeau (custodian), and Jacci Peterson (administrator)



Dear Trinity Lutheran Church Family,

First and foremost, thank you for giving me the awesome, challenging, and enlivening experience of serving as your church president this year. Reflecting on 2024, I see a year marked by both challenges and incredible blessings. Through it all, we are reminded that God is good, guiding us through every step of our journey together.

One of the goals set by the Church Council this year was to focus on relationships and their growth. We explored the one worship service on Sundays, and the feedback has been encouraging. Walking into the Sanctuary on a Sunday feels vibrant, with a sense of chemistry and excitement. The welcoming atmosphere—enhanced by the beautiful new decorations, the renovated coffee area, and the smiles at the Welcome Center counter—reinforces our commitment to being a community where all are welcome.

The addition of the Prayground area in the Sanctuary has been another joy. Seeing young families engage and bring their energy into worship reminds us of the gift of intergenerational life in our congregation.

This year brought its share of challenges, particularly as we continue navigating the call process. Throughout this time, Pastor Andy has shown remarkable endurance and faithfulness. Reflecting on his five years as our lead pastor, I am grateful for his unwavering commitment to Trinity's mission and the immense "work" God has placed before him and our church. We have also been blessed by the contributions of Pastor Chuck and Pastor Mark, who continue to enrich us with their wisdom and presence.

In the realm of staffing, we faced transitions that required adaptation and flexibility. Our faithful team, including Jean Schwirtz, Wanda Eikenbary, Delaney Barbeau, and Lori Niemuth, has been a steady foundation. With their dedication, we've been able to assess and implement the changes needed to align with our strategic plan. The additions of Dave Wood; Cassie Pasholk; and our new ministry coordinator, Sue Harrington, have brought fresh energy and depth to our ministry efforts.

We continue to search for an associate pastor and ask for your prayers as we navigate this extended 20-plus-month transition phase.

As we prepare to step into 2025, I pray that the blessings of the past year will overflow into the new one. May Trinity remain your spiritual home, a place where you encounter God in worship, fellowship, and service. I encourage you to keep God at the center of your daily life. May you experience His presence both within and beyond the walls of Trinity, moving and stirring within you as we live out our mission: *Together in Christ, we welcome, love, and serve all*. It has been an honor to serve as president of this congregation. Thank you for your trust, support, and prayers throughout this year. God's blessings!

*“Surely the LORD is in this place ...”* – Genesis 28:16

A lot changed within our space at Trinity in 2024. To start the year, there was a new mission statement at the front of our Sanctuary. Soon after came the wall-to-floor transformation of the reconfigured Connection Room. By early fall, a few new friendly faces appeared in the offices. But one thing didn't change: *God is in this place.*

No moment of 2024 made that reality clearer than when we welcomed new members in October, appropriately as we were diving into that theme of recognizing God's presence for Trinity's annual stewardship appeal. It was at an Oct. 1 welcome session for recent guests and prospective new members. One month into her new role as our ministry coordinator, Sue Harrington and I were privileged to listen as all those around the table shared at length about what brought them to Trinity. Many if not most of their stories—not unlike Jacob's story in Genesis—involved hardship and specifically loss. But, like the new members who had attended the spring session months earlier, they also spoke of the welcome they felt here at this holy place. Both 2024 orientation events drove home not only how God was actively present at Trinity but also how we were beginning to accomplish our new mission statement: *Together in Christ, we welcome, love, and serve all.*

If there were a single word that summed up 2024, it would be *welcome*. So many of those around the table at the two introductory gatherings used that word in describing their early experience at Trinity, especially as many of them summarized saddening experiences to the contrary with other churches. Having been through all that we had in 2024—from approving the new mission statement after spirited discussion at the annual meeting to revising our wedding policy in order to live more fully into our commitment to inclusion—I myself felt like Jacob, marveling that indeed God was present on our path and actively at work with us.

Welcome became more than a word at Trinity in 2024. It became embedded in the fabric of our identity to an extent heretofore unrealized. As much as we had strived for it in past years, we were now truly developing a community and a culture where people felt as welcome as we wanted. The adjustments to our space didn't hurt—the upgraded Connection Room helped foster a renewed sense of community. So did our Sanctuary's new Prayground, which rolled out a welcome mat (rather literally) for younger families in worship. The previous year's experiment with a single Sunday service became the new standard in 2024, with even people who might not have been fond of the change at first realizing that they appreciated the energy of the fuller Sanctuary and the company of others across the age spectrum.

And, on that note, it was the human dimension that accomplished more than we could ever physically do with our space. Our new guy at the helm of the building and surrounding block, Dave Wood, quickly established himself as one of the most capable and creative property & grounds supervisors we could ever hope to have. In the fall, Cassie Pasholk stepped in as the new administrator we had been praying for to get us down to the business of fulfilling our redefined mission. With relational abilities to match her problem-solving skills, Cassie has

## ■ LEAD PASTOR'S ANNUAL REPORT (CONTINUED)

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been up for any challenge. And the aforementioned Sue Harrington succeeded Shannon Anderson, our dutiful volunteer coordinator, in the redeveloped role of ministry coordinator. Sue was precisely the person we had in mind to help us welcome, love, and serve in this new era, especially as we continued in a pastoral transition. Her initiative and enduring connections in the community empowered her to reboot programs for folks across the age spectrum, maybe most notably the return flight of the Older Wiser Lutherans (OWLs). Fulfilling many longstanding hopes, Sue did as much to develop community and foster involvement in four months as we could ever imagine. Her developing call to minister as well as coordinate our ministries is one of the most promising pieces on the table before us in 2025.

In the many transitions, the generous presence of so many people helped us carry on with God's gracious activity. Custodian Jim Barbeau kept God's house in order until Dave arrived. Treasurer Pam Gusmer, Personnel Committee veteran Penney Frank, and volunteer Sheila Dorsett helped us set the stage for Cassie. And the dedicated duo of Pastor Chuck Tews and Pastor Mark Ziemer continued the care of the community and eventually helped equip Sue to share in the ministry. An array of guest preachers joined the two interim associate pastors in offering powerful messages, especially during our Lenten focus on the different callings God has for us and in our fall stewardship appeal. Two of the year's most memorable lay preachers, Jan Johnson and Jeanne Kirk, were later among our many member ministers who joined the saints in God's eternal care this year. The loss of so many people whose presence embodied God's in so many ways across the years at Trinity was sadly an unmistakable aspect of 2024.

But so many new saints also joined the fold, most bountifully through baptism. The strength of Trinity's ministries for children and youth remained one of our most abundant blessings. Attending July's ELCA Youth Gathering in New Orleans with our extraordinary crew of 31 high-schoolers and five other accompanying adults was a personal highlight for me. It was another revelatory moment that reminded me how blessed Trinity is within our larger Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. And it was just one of so many moments when "this place" extended love and service far beyond our building. There were of course planned community activities like another sensational Strawberry Fest centered on Trinity's block and yet another July 4 parade collection for the Waupaca Area Food Pantry. But there were also improvised efforts like Trinity member Art Bolen's sudden collection of bottled water for his community of Manawa amid the July flooding there. I'll never forget the grateful folks at the Manawa fire station who helped unload the many cases of water asking me with a degree of awe, "What church are you guys from?" Time and again in 2024, our people answered the call—the 150-plus who quickly subscribed to our YouTube channel this summer to put us far beyond the threshold of 500 helped us overcome an unfortunate outage of streaming services.

God is so obviously in this place, especially through our people. Just as God came together with us in Christ to welcome, love, and serve all, Trinity grew as a community where God is actively present. To wrap up 2024 and the foundational efforts that led to it in years prior, I can't help but end by thanking one person in particular. Heidi Fischer has been a godsend as our congregation president the past two years (not to mention as a Confirmation teacher this year). We cannot thank her enough for her leadership at such a pivotal point. Heidi is proof that the presence of every single person in this place matters immensely as we minister in Jesus' name!

Hello, Trinity congregation!

It is with sincere gratitude that I write to all of you as the new administrator at Trinity Lutheran Church. My first couple of months as the administrator have been a whirlwind of learning, connecting with new faces, and diving into the vibrant life here at Trinity. My role encompasses financial oversight; personnel supervision; and the management of protocols, technology, and daily operations. I've been pleasantly surprised by the variety of ministries at our church and the constant activity that fills our days. It's seldom quiet here, and I couldn't be happier to serve alongside all of you while fulfilling my responsibilities to God.

2024 has certainly been a year of changes! We've welcomed several new staff members, with Dave Wood, our property & grounds supervisor; Sue Harrington, our ministry coordinator; and myself joining this incredible team. I feel truly blessed to collaborate with both the new and familiar faces you all know well—Pastor Andy, Wanda Eikenbary, Jean Schwirtz, Delaney Barbeau, and Lori Niemuth. Each of them has been invaluable, answering my questions and guiding me through the training process.

Speaking of support, I must take a moment to highlight Kerry Lee Blanke and Pam Gusmer. These two have been such a tremendous blessing to me, always stepping up to assist with any financial matters. Their kindness and expertise have made my transition smooth, and I owe a great deal of my progress to their help. A heartfelt thank-you to the entire Finance Committee—Kerry Lee, Pam, Jim Stoltenberg, Mark Rosicky, Marge Gaboda, and Pastor Andy—for their guidance and support. Looking ahead to 2025, we'll have a couple of openings on the Finance Committee. If you're interested in reviewing financial reports and discussing how our contributions help keep Trinity thriving, please don't hesitate to reach out to us.

Additionally, I'm part of the Stewardship Team, which emphasizes the significance of giving intentions, member participation, and benevolence donations. Our 2024 campaign centered around the theme "God Is in This Place." Your support—through evangelism and financial commitments—truly reflects the dedication of our congregation, and we are incredibly thankful for your ongoing faithfulness. A big thank-you to everyone who has pledged for 2025; we couldn't continue this mission without you!

Last but certainly not least, I also contribute to the Property & Grounds Team, where I help with long-range planning, assess immediate needs, and determine both short- and long-term expenses. Some of the major projects completed in 2024 include the boiler repair, installation of the Tiny Treasures security door, and parking lot seal coating. There are a few openings on the Property & Grounds Team for 2025 as well, so if you're interested, please reach out.

Thank you once again for your warm welcome and for everything you do for Trinity!  
Blessings to all!

## ■ WORSHIP & MUSIC MINISTRIES

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BY WANDA EIKENBARY, Director of Music Ministries

Trinity has been blessed throughout the years with an amazing number of talented individuals who are always ready to step up and participate in some way, enhancing our worship experience and uplifting our faith. This includes many musicians, Altar Guild volunteers, Banner Team members, and our gifted church decorators known as the Divine Designs group. Looking back on 2024, there is just so much good these folks contributed. They each blessed Trinity enormously with their unique gifts. It will be difficult to squeeze it all in here, but I'm going to try!

I'll start with the choirs. The Trinity Choir, led by Pam Lysne, presented a Good Friday Tenebrae cantata in March and a Christmas cantata in December, along with performing on Easter Sunday, Christmas Eve, and numerous regular worship services. The members of the Handbell Choir, led by Shana Rogney, performed a mini-concert for Waupaca High School's Christmas concert (an annual tradition), and they performed in the Choirs of Trinity Christmas Concert. They, too, led music for Easter Sunday and Christmas Eve worship services. The Children's Choir, led by me, sang in worship twice in the spring, including a special Mother's Day performance. They also participated in the Choirs of Trinity Christmas Concert. All our choir members work hard to prepare special music and bless us with their musical gifts.

Our Altar Guild, led by Nancy Cummings, has done a fantastic job of preparing communion for every communion service and adapting new distribution procedures. A highlight of the Altar Guild's year was purchasing a beautiful new set of communion serving trays, funded by several generous memorial donations. They were also able to gift Pastor Andy with a much-needed new alb (robe), using memorial donations. If you attended a Christmas Eve candlelight service, be thankful to the Altar Guild members who meticulously cleaned and prepared the candles.

Shortly after Easter, our longtime Divine Designs leader, Kathy Hurt, retired and passed the torch onto Jacki Johnson, the current leader. Thank you, Kathy, for your years of dedication and service! Jacki is a professional interior decorator by trade. Her handiwork is visible throughout the church, and it's extraordinary! Our Banner Team, led by Linda Holtebeck, continues to provide and display meaningful banners in the Sanctuary throughout the church year. If you have an interest in joining any one of these groups, please reach out to their leaders. New faces and helping hands are always welcome!

Getting back to music in worship, Trinity has been uniquely blessed with several small groups/ensembles, many of whose members met in church and opted to form a group. Throughout 2024, we were blessed by performances from Triune Voice; 4th Octave; Shepherd's Quarter, which has led WOW service music on Wednesdays since 2010; and One Achord, which carried on despite losing a beloved member, Bonnie Pegel. Shepherd's Quarter gave its annual Christmas Concert at Trinity, donating proceeds to the Waupaca Area Food Pantry. Lastly, we enjoyed the professional gifts of Matt Buchman's jazz quartet, which led our worship music in July, and the Ultimate Polka Band, which led worship music in October. To say that Trinity is blessed by all these individuals and groups is an understatement. Whatever way our gifts are manifested, we should always use them to praise the Lord and make a joyful noise!

## ■ SUNDAY SCHOOL

BY JEAN SCHWIRTZ, Sunday School Coordinator

**WELCOME:** Trinity's Sunday School classes and programs are all open to the community. You do not need to be a member of Trinity to attend. We continue to have new families join us each year. Trinity annually participates in the Souper Bowl of Caring: Nonperishable items are collected by our Sunday School students and the congregation and then given to the Waupaca Area Food Pantry. The community was invited to join us on Good Friday at Pine Lake Camp for the fourth annual Good Family Friday event. This family event is a scavenger hunt activity that explains what Good Friday is about. Our Sunday School and Confirmation students made cards to honor our veterans. The cards were delivered to the Wisconsin Veterans Home at King.

**CONNECT:** Our Palm Sunday parade through Waupaca was led by our favorite donkeys, Mario and Luigi. Confirmation students and their parents were our parade police. The annual Easter Egg Hunt was held following the parade inside at Trinity due to snow. As our students grow in their faith, they are given Bibles: 3-year-olds receive a *Spark Story Bible*, third-graders receive a *Spark Bible* (New Revised Standard Version), and eighth-graders receive the *Lutheran Study Bible*. These Bibles are purchased with funds from our annual Pancake Supper that is open to the community. Splash!, a monthly newsletter for parents of newly baptized children through age 3, is fun and full of ideas for bringing faith into their everyday life. Families also receive a music CD once a year. At this point, we are mailing newsletters to 30 children each month. Thank you to Nancy Pagel, who prepared the mailings for the past year.

**ENGAGE:** Members of the community were invited to send their students to Day Camp, June 17-20, at Pine Lake Camp. Our youth coordinator, Delaney Barbeau, drove the bus from Trinity each day and stayed with the students. Trinity members supplied items for 44 school kits for Lutheran World Relief. Trinity's high-school students packed the kits. These school kits will be sent all over the world, wherever they are needed. *Christmas in the Kitchen* was Trinity's Christmas program for all students age 3 through grade 5. The program was presented on December 15 at the 9 a.m. worship service, followed by a special family event of building your own tacos, making Lego creations, and decorating Christmas cookies. The program was also live-streamed for those who were not able to attend. Trinity is blessed with many volunteers who keep our educational programs growing and available to all.



Youth kicked off the year with our Confirmation programming in full swing as well as our Lock-In on the minds of our middle- and high-school youth. We had roughly 30 middle-schoolers attend our Lock-In, and many new faces were invited by their friends! Our Confirmation program continued to grow in size, reaching over 75 youth by the end of the year. We got to see our youth welcoming so many others into our programs and how many of those youth decided to stay and join the program once again in the fall.

While the middle-schoolers were having fun in the church, our high-schoolers were embracing the *serve* part of our mission statement and getting ready for the ELCA Youth Gathering in New Orleans. Thirty-one youth and six adults spent time fundraising and preparing to head down to the bayou! When not fundraising or prepping for the trip, our high-schoolers met weekly during our Crossover youth group time, inviting new friends and growing the size of our youth group to nearly 20-25 youth each week at the end of 2024.

Trinity youth gathered at many events in and outside the building. Eighteen youth traveled to Imago Dei Village camp in February for the Synod Youth Gathering. We spent time doing activities and hearing speakers including Franki Moscato. Our next youth outing led us to camp again but this time with our younger youth; kindergarteners through fifth-graders spent time at Pine Lake Camp for Day Camp in June! We filled the bus each day and spent time hiking, crafting, worshiping, eating yummy camp food, singing camp songs, and making s'mores! Our seventh-graders headed to Imago Dei once more to spend time at Confirmation Camp! We took a total of 19 to grow closer to each other and in their faith. The campout returned in a different way, as campers pitched tents inside to avoid the rain but still have fun!

Our last big trip was our Faith Ventures mission trip. Our large group of 37 jumped on the train in Milwaukee for a 24-hour ride down to New Orleans! During that week we spent time learning about the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, growing our faith through interactive experiences, serving others, and learning about advocating, as well as exploring the city of New Orleans and meeting some new Wisconsin friends! While down there the youth were able to worship alongside 16,000-plus other youth! This was a great experience that helped grow and spark the faith of the youth who attended.

On the young-adult side of ministry, Trinity is working to rebuild the mission trips for our college-aged-and-beyond adults while also creating a space to gather and create relationships with one another. This past spring I was able to take a trip with one of our young adults along with a partnering ELCA church to San Diego. While there we served the community, learned about immigration, and spent time seeing the impact of homelessness on the San Diego community. We look forward to launching our own young adult trip in the spring of 2025!

Finally, we were able to complete and officially launch the Playground! This space helps connect young families while also welcoming our youngest members of the congregation into worship. We are so thankful that we now have a place where our 0-to-3-year-olds can worship at their own level and families can gather in our Sanctuary.

## ■ MINISTRY COORDINATOR'S REPORT

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BY SUE HARRINGTON, Ministry Coordinator

*“For I know the plans I have for you,” says the Lord, “plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.” – Jeremiah 29:11*

I have nothing but gratitude in my heart when I think of how awesome our God really is and how he uses us to minister to one another. I have been on staff here at Trinity for just a few months, but in that time, I have witnessed people, young and old, stepping up to be the hands and feet of Jesus here at Trinity.

Even as I write to you today, the smell of pancakes and sausage still lingers here at Trinity and reminds us of the fun we had at the annual Pancake Supper. Young families, Confirmation students, and adults of various ages all came together with Trinity's staff to serve more than 300 people from our community. Our feet were sore, but our hearts were full as we watched everyone come together to serve our church community and the community of Waupaca. Many thanks to the many volunteers who made this event so successful!

Coordinating volunteers for big events like the Pancake Supper really stands out, but one of the most important things I do is coordinating worship and office volunteers, offering counters, mailing volunteers, and event volunteers. These are the people who work alongside Trinity's staff to make Trinity Lutheran Church a place where we welcome, love, and serve all! We could not do this without our ushers, greeters, live-streamers, readers, slideshow operators, coffee and treat ministers, and Welcome Center attendants. What a joy it is to worship in a full sanctuary, staffed with wonderful volunteers, and then enjoy coffee and fellowship after worship in our new Connection Room with our Hospitality Team ready and waiting to serve. If you would like to volunteer to be part of our Hospitality Team, office volunteers, offering counters, or worship volunteers, please let me know. We would love to have you join any of these very important ministries.

As the ministry coordinator, I have had the pleasure of starting some new ministries as well as reviving some oldies but goodies! The Helping Hands ministry was started many years ago by Jan Johnson and Linda Holtebeck, among others. We have since lost Jan, but her memory lives on in the many folks who have offered to be the hands of Christ to others in need. My heart was full as I watched more than 20 people and families sign up for this important ministry. Many folks signed up in memory of Jan. If you would like to be part of this ministry or if you need a helping hand, please contact the church office.

In conjunction with the Helping Hands ministry came a new Gift Card Ministry. We have gift cards for food and gas that many of our Trinity members have generously contributed for our members who are in need. Please come and see me if you would like to be part of this ministry.

The Older Wiser Lutherans (OWLs) got a new start as well. This group of folks who are 50 or older gets together every other month for food, fellowship, and fun! More than 40 of us enjoyed the wonderful Waupaca High School production of *Camelot* along with a yummy meal and fellowship at Simpson's Restaurant. Stay tuned for many more fun events to come!



## ■ MINISTRY COORDINATOR'S REPORT (CONTINUED)

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I cannot forget to mention the wonderful work of the Invite-Welcome-Connect Team. We are a small group, but we do big things here at Trinity. We have welcomed many new members to Trinity this year. We continue to welcome folks at the Welcome Center desk each Sunday, showing them God's love through the power of connection with one another. If you have a gift for hospitality and would like to join us in our mission to welcome, love, and serve all, contact our office. We would love to have you!

As a teacher for over 37 years, I've always had a special place in my heart for families and children. During the last few months, it has been a joy to watch families with children building relationships with God, each other, and our community. Our annual Hayride at the Sondrols' was so fun! Thanks to many of our families for coming out to enjoy good food, fellowship, and a beautiful hayride through the historic town of Rural. Many thanks to the Sondrols for hosting the event again!

Trunk or Treat was another successful Trinity family event! Hundreds of folks from Trinity and our larger community came to enjoy our spooky hospitality that evening. Thanks to the Trinity staff for hosting the community!

Trinity folks, young and old, came together to provide much-needed hygiene items to Foundations for Living. Our youth packed more than 50 bags with things like shampoo, body wash, and soap for folks in need. Many thanks to our Trinity members, Delaney, and the seventh- and eighth-graders for making the hygiene drive so very successful!

Our congregation has been very blessed in that we have people who have been trained as BeFrienders and Lay Ministers. These ministries are so very important in the care of our homebound members, those who are grieving, and people who otherwise need a listening ear. Contact our office if you feel a call to care for others in this way.

When I reflect on my last few months at Trinity, my heart is full! I see the promise of a bright future when I think about the kindness and generosity of our congregation where we will always welcome, love, and serve all!

■ **MEMBERSHIP STATISTICS ■ ENDING DECEMBER 31, 2024**

BY LORI NIEMUTH, Administrative Coordinator

<b>Baptized Members</b>		<b>2,208</b>
Baptized	23	
New Members	31	
Transferred/Removed	-11	
Member Deaths	-16	
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>2,235</b>

■ **BAPTISMS ■ 23**

Alana Mae Bock	Harper Lyn Naeyaert	James Scott Roth
Charlie Hupalo Curtis	Taylynn Marie Nickel	Olivia Dawn Roth
Fina Louise Friedel	Aidan William Nelson	Dean Michael Schmaus
Millie Danielle Giefer	Evelyn Claire Parent	Emma Lynn Smith
Nola Jean Gliniecki	Oaklee Jean Parent	Mya Lynn Stafslie
Jakoby Derrick Gunter	Rylee Anne Parent	Sigrid Ilana Stark
Gabrielle Lyn Huber	Kolter Phillip Pecher	Cal Wayne Williams
Connor Michael Kenke	Charlotte May Roth	

■ **NEW MEMBERS (CHILDREN) ■ 31**

\* TRANSFERRED IN

Julie Anderson	Rachel Giefer	John & Eloisa "Lulu" Selsing
Andrea Brace & Ann Sheahan (Hayden Zwicky)	(Harper, Griffin & Millie)	Vicki Stichman
Ruth Brown	Rich & Vicki Harris	Gail Springsteen
Lori Dahl	Christine & Wayne Neumann (Angel)	*Ron & Nancy Wight
*Doris Galleske	Adam & Dennise Ross (Alton & Addison)	Jolynn & Steve Wucherer (Lucas, Nate & Leona)

■ **MEMBERS TRANSFERRED OUT (CHILDREN) ■ 11**

Kenn Elandt	Billie Kirwan	Pat Marks
Nancy Gartzke	(Amari Schulke & Brayden Kirwan)	Avery Nowak
Tana Griffin	Peter Kraeger	Gail Schulke
		McKena (Schultz) Loehrke

■ **MEMORIAL SERVICES/DEATHS ■ 19**

\* NON-MEMBERS

James "Jim" Anderson	Janice Johnson	Bonnie Pegel
Gene Anderson	Theresa Johnson	Steve Pegel
*Arlin "Butts" Barden	Jeanne Kirk	Audrey Schmidt
Sven Carlson	Kenneth Knutson	Larry Smith
Linda Dobbe	Margaret Mae Kuehl	Lane Streck
*Phil Hagen	William "Bill" Marks	
*Kristen Holowesko	Beatrice Olsen	

## ■ FINANCE COMMITTEE REPORT

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BY FINANCE COMMITTEE

The Trinity Finance Committee was established in 2020. The committee is led by the treasurer, Pam Gusmer. Members of the Finance Committee include the treasurer and members of the congregation elected by the Church Council. Committee members in 2024 included Pam, Jim Stoltenberg, Kerry Lee Blanke, Marge Gaboda, and Mark Rosicky. The lead pastor and church administrator are advisory members of the committee.

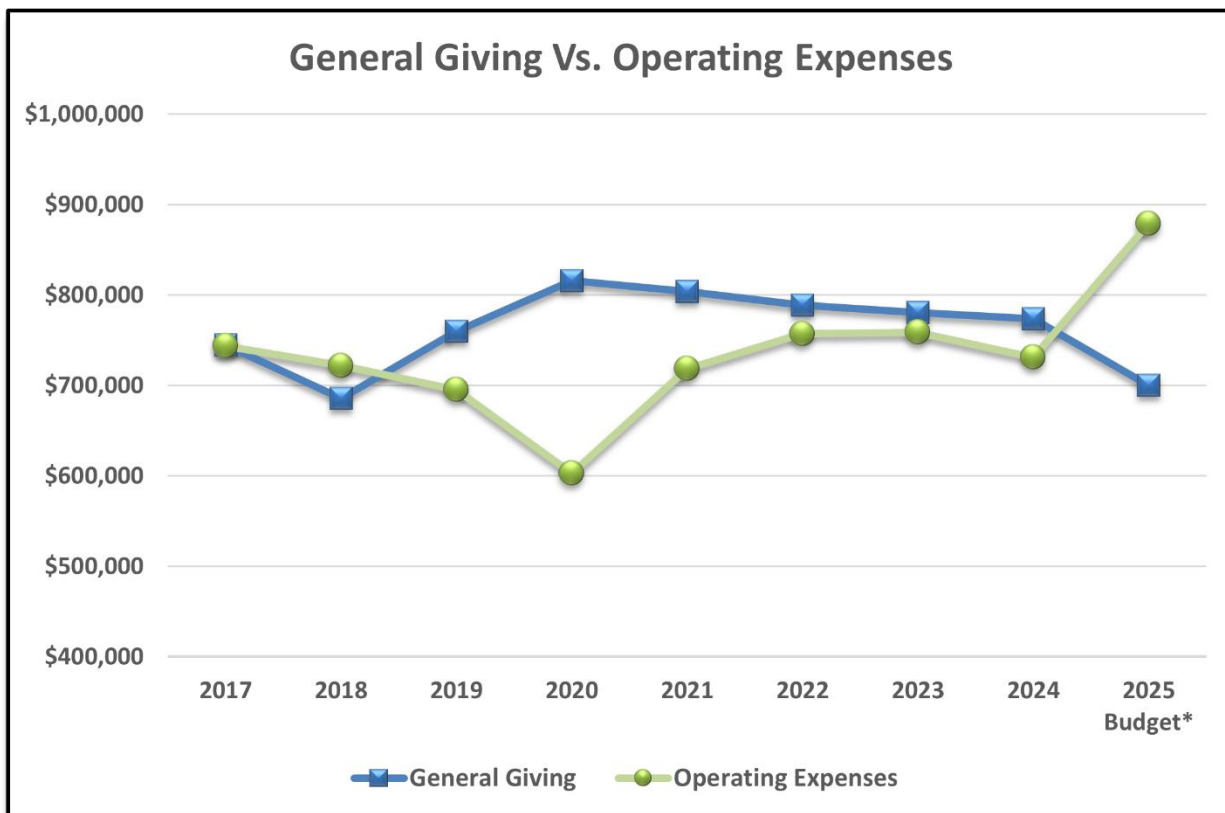
The Finance Committee had an interesting year, with a primary focus on keeping our financial transactions moving and our church in a healthy financial position during a major transition as we searched for a new church administrator, who performs the majority of our daily, weekly, and monthly financial functions. We are still just over a year in on our financial software change to QuickBooks in 2023, and we used this opportunity for learning, clarification, and streamlining on this new-to-us system. As a benefit to this transition, we have a greater knowledge of our financial accounts and software, with built-in backups for processing financial transactions as needed. In addition to keeping the financial functions moving this year, we also advised on funding for Property & Grounds needs and other special projects, paid down some additional mortgage debt, advised and approved an updated wedding policy fee schedule, and submitted the 2025 budget to the Church Council for approval.

Trinity continues to be blessed with many members who give faithfully and allow our many missions and activities to occur, covering the annual expenses of the church and equipping us to serve our Lord. We are ending the 2024 year again in a very stable financial condition. We have seen another year of a declining trend in giving, and with costs and expenses increasing in our 2025 budget, we are hoping to reverse this trend to stay financially viable and able to support thriving ministries.

We have a couple of committee members who are moving on in 2025 and are hoping to find additional members from the congregation to fill vacancies on our committee. We ask that you prayerfully consider joining our group!

## Trinity Lutheran Church Budget Planning 2024 *General Fund Giving & Operating Expenses*

Year	General Giving Fund	Year over Year % Change	General Expenses	Year over Year % Change	Annual Income/ Loss
2017	\$744,633.00		\$743,662.00		\$971.00
2018	\$685,540.00	-7.9%	\$721,734.00	-2.9%	-\$36,194.00
2019	\$759,954.00	10.9%	\$695,108.00	-3.7%	\$64,846.00
2020	\$815,750.00	7.3%	\$602,819.00	-13.3%	\$212,931.00
2021	\$804,053.00	-1.4%	\$718,130.00	19.1%	\$85,923.00
2022	\$788,990.00	-1.9%	\$756,960.00	5.4%	\$32,030.00
2023	\$780,715.27	-1.0%	\$758,512.53	0.2%	\$22,202.74
2024	\$773,716.62*	-0.9%	\$730,564.57	-3.7%	\$43,152.05
2025 Budget	\$700,000.00	-4.6%	\$878,330.67	15.8%	-\$178,330.67



\*NOTE: 2024 Giving includes \$40,000 from government from COVID reimbursement.

**FINANCIAL STATEMENT**  
*Summary of Accounts 2024*

<i>Account</i>	<i>Beginning Balance 01/01/24</i>	<i>Income</i>	<i>Expense</i>	<i>Ending Balance 12/31/24</i>
<b>General</b>	<b>\$53,544.28</b>	\$773,716.62	\$730,564.57	
Clearing account		\$2,404.50	\$4,324.07	
		+ \$776,121.12 -	\$734,888.64 =	<b>\$94,776.76</b>
<b>Payroll Clearing</b>	<b>\$21,766.41 +</b>	\$395,947.57 -	\$384,692.85 =	<b>\$33,021.13</b>
<b>Designated Savings</b>	<b>\$517,672.55 +</b>	\$194,256.19 -	\$244,368.68	<b>\$467,560.06</b>
<b>CD Investment</b>	<b>\$51,659.39 +</b>	\$1,557.97 -	\$0.00 =	<b>\$53,217.36</b>
<b>Mission Endowment</b>	<b>\$452,176.29 +</b>	\$8,462.77 -	\$0.00 =	<b>\$460,639.06</b>
<b>Education Endowment</b>	<b>\$665,500.80 +</b>	\$91,089.90 -	\$46,413.32 =	<b>\$710,177.38</b>
<b>Agape</b>	<b>\$8,992.51 +</b>	\$3,696.16 -	\$2,039.25 =	<b>\$10,649.42</b>
<b>Faith Ventures</b>	<b>\$19,617.94 +</b>	\$36,602.50 -	\$44,278.47 =	<b>\$11,941.97</b>
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>\$1,790,930.17 +</b>	<b>\$1,507,734.18 -</b>	<b>\$1,456,681.21 =</b>	<b>\$1,841,983.14</b>
<b>Mortgage:</b>				
Principal	<b>\$1,100,036.55</b>	-	\$98,975.41	<b>\$1,001,061.14</b>

■ DESIGNATED SAVINGS

BY PAM GUSMER, Treasurer

**Trinity Lutheran Church**  
*Designated Savings*

		Balance 1/1/2024	Receipts	Expenses	Balance 12/31/2024
1	Abigail Circle	\$52.17	\$7.00	\$0.00	\$59.17
2	Altar Flowers	(\$544.04)	\$3,679.05	\$3,196.00	(\$60.99)
3	Badger/Jefferson St. Entrance	\$15,621.01	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$15,621.01
4	Bethel Circle	\$19,167.51	\$300.00	\$2,870.23	\$16,597.28
5	Camperships/Scholarships	\$1,150.00	\$6,430.00	\$6,355.00	\$1,225.00
6	Card Ministry	\$355.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$355.00
7	Cont Ed - Pastor Andy	\$6,507.79	\$600.00	\$1,579.41	\$5,528.38
8	Cont Ed - Pastor Erin	\$1,180.48	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$1,180.48
9	Disaster Relief - Mission Trips	\$675.12	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$675.12
10	Electric Sign Fundraiser	\$948.67	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$948.67
11	Gifts - non memorial	\$40,452.20	\$0.00	\$2,303.06	\$38,149.14
12	Helping Hands	\$405.21	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$405.21
13	Holiday Meals	\$5,512.42	\$0.00	\$5,512.42	\$0.00
14	Interest	\$9,865.52	\$8,610.40	\$0.00	\$18,475.92
15	Kitchen Appliances	\$7,480.43	\$525.00	\$0.00	\$8,005.43
16	Memorials/Estates	\$37,855.96	\$4,185.00	\$11,013.81	\$31,027.15
17	Men In Mission	\$724.85	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$724.85
18	Mission Quilters	\$2,570.31	\$1,163.00	\$1,875.38	\$1,857.93
19	Mortgage Donation/Payment	\$31,463.41	\$148,279.80	\$141,637.00	\$38,106.21
20	Music Series	\$10,332.22	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$10,332.22
21	Other Global Mission	\$11,293.82	\$400.00	\$150.00	\$11,543.82
22	Pancake Supper	\$10,272.20	\$4,500.00	\$2,640.02	\$12,132.18
23	Pastor Assistance Ministry	\$4,425.42	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$4,425.42
24	Rental Property	\$2,287.26	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$2,287.26
25	Sabbatical - Pastor Andy	\$5,955.09	\$0.00	\$300.00	\$5,655.09
26	Sabbatical - Pastor Erin	\$1,000.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$1,000.00
27	SafeGuarding Youth	\$12,306.51	\$0.00	\$486.05	\$11,820.46
28	South Africa - Global Mission	\$9,966.10	\$932.02	\$0.00	\$10,898.12
29	Special Projects	\$93,247.85	\$8,505.00	\$43,795.90	\$57,956.95
30	Technology	\$44.86	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$44.86
31	TLW-ELCA Income	\$1,421.44	\$92.00	\$570.00	\$943.44
32	Van / Bus	\$3,988.56	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$3,988.56
33	Weddings	\$2,485.72	\$775.00	\$1,175.00	\$2,085.72
34	Womens Youth Mission	\$191.89	(\$191.89)	\$0.00	\$0.00
35	Young Adult Mission Trip	\$1,136.51	\$2,113.49	\$3,250.00	\$0.00
36	Youth Gathering	\$5,181.10	\$10,478.30	\$15,659.40	\$0.00
37	Youth Ministry	\$7,126.98	(\$7,126.98)	\$0.00	\$0.00
38	General Account Reserve *	\$153,565.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$153,565.00
	<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>\$517,672.55</b>	<b>\$194,256.19</b>	<b>\$244,368.68</b>	<b>\$467,560.06</b>

■ GENERAL ACCOUNT INCOME (UPDATED)

BY PAM GUSMER, Treasurer

**Trinity Lutheran Church**  
**General Account Income**

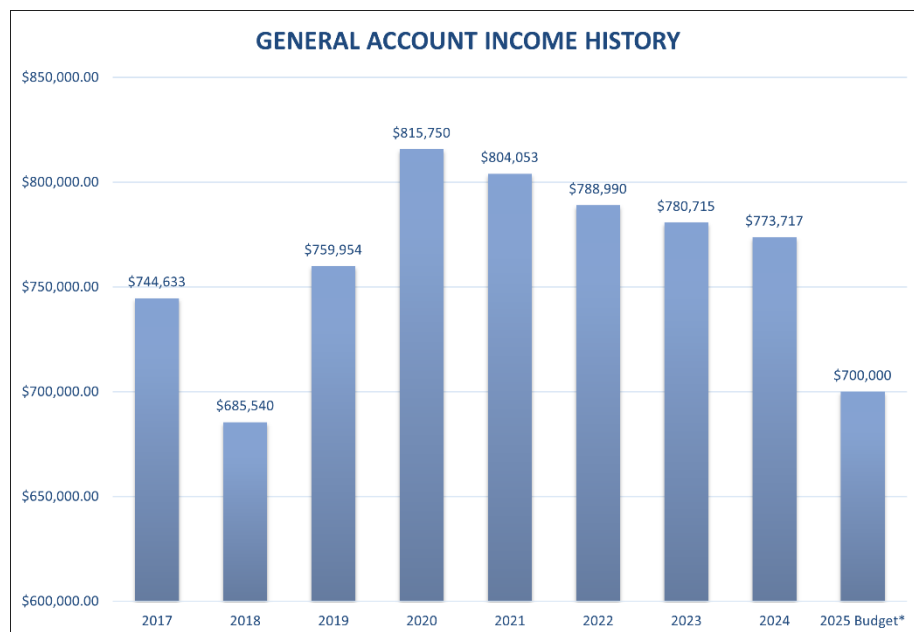
	<b>2023</b>	<b>2024</b>
1 . Envelope Offering	\$720,376.84	\$722,165.42
2 . Loose Offering	\$7,501.17	\$7,986.42
3 . Sunday School	\$171.80	\$99.00
4 . Special Envelopes	\$21,739.00	\$22,361.00 *
5 . Benevolence	\$12,992.79	\$4,545.55 **
6 . Committees	\$9,629.11	\$12,049.86
7 . Chapel on the Lakes	\$2,391.13	\$2,696.99
8 . Radio	\$5,050.00	\$1,800.00
9 . Other Receipts	\$863.43	\$12.38
<b>Total General Offering:</b>	<b>\$780,715.27</b>	<b>\$773,716.62</b>

\* Special Envelopes Detail

1 . Initial	\$506.00	\$462.00
2 . Lenten	\$1,527.00	\$870.00
3 . Easter	\$4,776.00	\$4,748.00
4 . Good Friday	\$705.00	\$446.00
5 . Ash Wednesday	\$285.00	\$615.00
6 . Maundy Thursday	\$453.00	\$764.00
7 . Thanksgiving	\$120.00	\$228.00
8 . Christmas	\$13,367.00	\$14,228.00
<b>Total Special Envelopes:</b>	<b>\$21,739.00</b>	<b>\$22,361.00</b>

\*\* Benevolence Detail

1 . World Hunger	\$1,435.00	\$932.79
2 . Disaster & Lithrn Wrld Relief/Social Servic	\$6,988.79	\$2,713.95
3 . Waupaca Area Food Bank	\$919.00	\$658.81
4 . Mission Churches	\$3,300.00	\$0.00
5 . Crossways	\$0.00	\$200.00
6 . Other Benevolence	\$350.00	\$40.00
<b>Total Benevolence Income:</b>	<b>\$12,992.79</b>	<b>\$4,545.55</b>



■ GENERAL FUND: 2024 EXPENSES & BUDGET ■ PROPOSED 2025 BUDGET

BY CASSIE PASHOLK, Administrator

Trinity Lutheran Church  
Proposed 2025 Budget

	Proposed 2024 Budget	2024 Actual	Proposed 2025 Budget	24' vs 25'	% Change
<b>Benevolence</b>					
ELCA	\$52,885	\$46,000	\$45,000	10% of total giving income -\$1,000	-2%
Tomorrow River Conference	\$550	\$550	\$550	\$0	0%
Crossways Campership	\$4,750	\$10,347	\$0	-\$10,347	-100%
Boy Scouts	\$515	\$500	\$500	\$0	0%
Crossways Ministries	\$1,650	\$0	\$2,000	\$2,000	100%
Faith Venture - Mission Trips	\$500	\$0	\$0	\$0	0%
Bethany	\$1,500	\$1,500	\$1,500	\$0	0%
Waupaca Area Food Pantry	\$2,000	\$2,000	\$2,000	\$0	0%
Bread Basket	\$1,000	\$1,000	\$1,000	\$0	0%
Foundation For Living (FFL)	\$2,000	\$2,000	\$2,000	\$0	0%
FFL Middleton House	\$440	\$440	\$500	\$60	14%
Project Backpack	\$500	\$500	\$500	\$0	0%
Big Brothers/Big Sisters	\$250	\$0	\$0	\$0	0%
Operation School Supply	\$250	\$250	\$250	\$0	0%
Lutheran Social Service	\$3,500	\$3,500	\$3,500	\$0	0%
Lutheran World Relief	\$3,000	\$3,000	\$3,000	\$0	0%
ELCA Lutheran Disaster Response	\$2,000	\$1,600	\$2,000	\$400	25%
World Hunger	\$2,065	\$2,000	\$2,200	\$200	10%
Mission Churches	\$1,750	\$0	\$1,000	\$1,000	100%
Mission Projects	\$1,750	\$0	\$2,000	\$2,000	100%
Other Benevolence	\$875	\$120	\$500	\$380	317%
<b>Total Benevolence</b>	<b>\$83,730</b>	<b>\$75,307</b>	<b>\$70,000</b>	<b>-\$13,730</b>	<b>-16%</b>
<b>General Operating Expenses</b>					
Total Office Expense	\$11,980	\$12,243	\$10,000	-\$2,243	-18%
Total Other Expense	\$12,000	\$15,705	\$14,000	-\$1,705	-11%
<b>Total General Operating Expenses</b>	<b>\$23,980</b>	<b>\$27,948</b>	<b>\$24,000</b>	<b>-\$3,948</b>	<b>-14%</b>
<b>Payroll Expenses</b>					
Pastors and Administrator	\$277,349	\$205,811	\$305,066	\$27,718	10%
Staff and payroll expenses	\$287,149	\$259,113	\$287,149	\$1	0%
<b>Total Payroll Expenses</b>	<b>\$564,497</b>	<b>\$464,924</b>	<b>\$592,216</b>	<b>\$27,718</b>	<b>5%</b>
<b>Committees &amp; Teams</b>					
Total Stewardship	\$4,500	\$3,840	\$4,000	-\$500	-11%
Total Invite-Welcome-Connect	\$11,463	\$9,832	\$10,550	-\$913	-8%
Total Parish Education	\$18,500	\$13,904	\$31,600	\$13,100	71%
Total Worship & Music	\$12,425	\$10,107	\$13,200	\$775	6%
Total Family & Youth	\$4,950	\$6,986	\$9,500	\$4,550	92%
Total Technology	\$15,800	\$20,074	\$15,800	\$0	0%
Health	\$750	\$0	\$500	-\$250	-33%
<u>Property &amp; Grounds</u>					
Utilities	\$32,450	\$27,113	\$31,900	-\$550	-2%
Snow Removal & Yard Care	\$8,600	\$12,417	\$15,000	\$6,400	74%
Maintenance & Cleaning	\$11,550	\$14,588	\$12,850	\$1,300	11%
Property Insurance	\$14,000	\$12,383	\$16,500	\$2,500	18%
Elevator, Fire Protection & Inspections	\$8,150	\$7,267	\$8,150	\$0	0%
Bus Expenses	\$1,985	\$1,387	\$2,565	\$580	29%
Capital Equipment/Maintenance	\$20,000	\$23,498	\$20,000	\$0	0%
Total Property & Grounds	\$96,735	\$98,652	\$106,965	\$10,230	11%
<b>Total Committees &amp; Teams Expenses</b>	<b>\$165,123</b>	<b>\$163,395</b>	<b>\$192,115</b>	<b>\$26,992</b>	<b>16%</b>
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>\$837,330</b>	<b>\$731,574</b>	<b>\$878,331</b>	<b>\$41,000</b>	<b>5%</b>
<b>Special Projects for 2025:</b>					
1. Phone System Upgrade	\$10,000	>	Special Projects account		
2. Youth Room Upgrade	\$22,000	>	Special Projects account		
3. Coffee & Connection Area Finish Cabnets and Countertops	\$25,000				
Sink, Faucet, Fridge, Micro, 4 Keurigs	\$1,700				
	\$26,700	>	Gifts and Memorials account		
4. Technology Upgrade	\$15,000	>	Special Projects account		



■ MORTGAGE INFORMATION

BY CASSIE PASHOLK, Administrator

**Trinity Lutheran Church**  
*Mortgage Information*

Mortgage Loan Balance on 01/01/2024 \$1,100,036.55

**Principal From:**

Principal Payments	\$73,618.41
Additional Principal Payments	<u>\$25,357.00</u>
Loan Reduced By	\$98,975.41

**Mortgage Loan Balance on 12/31/2024 \$1,001,061.14**

**Total Payments in 2024:**

Interest Payments	\$42,661.59
Principal Payments from Building Fund	\$73,618.41
Other	\$20,000.00
Other	\$3,270.00
Other	<u>\$2,087.00</u>
Total Paid in 2024	\$141,637.00

**Debt Retirement Schedule:**

<u>Year</u>	<u>Interest</u>	<u>Principal</u>	<u>Total Payment</u>
2025	38,618.78	77,661.22	116,280.00
2026	35,454.75	80,825.25	116,280.00
2027	32,161.80	84,118.20	116,280.00
2028	28,819.85	87,460.15	116,280.00
2029-2035	93,133.91	670,996.32	764,130.23
<b>Total</b>	<b>228,189.09</b>	<b>1,001,061.14</b>	<b>1,229,250.23</b>

Notes:

- 1) No extra payments are made above the minimum monthly requirement of \$9,690.
- 2) The interest rate of 4.0% stays the same.
- 3) Payments are made at the same time every month. Paying early or late even by a day will change the monthly interest charge.
- 4) Final payment will be made July 2035.

## ■ AGAPE

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BY PASTOR ANDY BEHRENDT

Named with a Greek word for sacrificial love—a love that we know from our loving God—Trinity’s Agape ministry continues to serve those in our community who are in need. The Agape fund in 2024 benefited 32 area households with a total of \$2,039.25—\$160.35 in food vouchers, \$524.62 in gas vouchers (as well as \$145 in transportation vouchers already on hand to start the year), and \$1,354.28 for miscellaneous needs (like winter coats, vehicle repairs, etc.). Trinity also maintains a small, onsite pantry in our offices to help people with immediate food needs.

We thank you, just as we thank God, for your combined contributions of \$3,682.20 in 2024, which, along with \$13.96 in generated interest and funding on hand from previous years, allowed this important ministry to continue. Your ongoing gifts make a difference for folks in our community, and we hope and pray that the assistance also lets them experience personally the generous, sacrificial love of God through Jesus Christ.

## ■ MUTUAL MINISTRY COMMITTEE

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BY HUGH KRESS

This is a unique committee that is appointed by the pastor and president of the congregation. Its main purpose is to support the ministry of the pastor by first listening in a confidential manner. Secondly, to respond to the expressed needs and concerns of the pastor with words of encouragement, support, and clarification. Lastly, if needed, to communicate any needs or concerns to the proper congregation committee or team that can address these needs.

It has been an honor and privilege to serve as chair of this committee since its inception. My main purpose has been to act as “The Convener” who brings together the rest of the committee at the request of the pastor and to check in regularly with the question, “How is it going?” My term expired this year along with committee members Vicki Groth and Matt Lick. Their insights and experiences were invaluable and a blessing.

Nancy Cummings, Jim Peterson, and Melanie Peterson will continue to serve in the next year. Pastor Andy and President Heidi Fischer will appoint three new members for two-year terms beginning in 2025. I encourage anyone called to serve to prayerfully join this unique group to support our present pastor and ones added by the grace of God to our ministry team in the years to come.

The 2024 Stewardship Team was made up of eight members: Shannon Anderson, Pastor Andy, Kerry Lee Blanke, Jake Foss, DeAnna Hannigen, Sue Harrington, Cassie Pasholk, and Ann Rasmussen. The new additions of Jake, Ann, Cassie, and Sue energized the team. These new additions brought fresh, exciting ideas about how to accomplish our work. We are thankful for their service to Trinity.

The Stewardship Team talks about money; how to bring in enough to pay for the work of the church and how best this money can serve God's purpose when it is received. The Stewardship Team also talks about member involvement; how to bring people to the community of Trinity to do the work necessary to keep old programs going and get new programs started.

The main way we take these two things—money and involvement—from the confines of the Stewardship Team and into the greater Trinity community is through the Stewardship For All Seasons campaign. In 2024 the theme of the campaign was “God Is in This Place.” Through letters, emails, a brochure, and three fabulous sermons by members of the Stewardship Team, we told about the history of Trinity and how the backing of the congregation is essential to keep this *Place*, this pillar of the community, strong. The team showed ways in which God is *Present* at Trinity and how the presence of God is reflected in us. Finally, we considered the *Promises* of God and our response to those promises.

During the campaign, we asked the congregation to think about giving more to reduce the mortgage and explained how to designate intentions for mortgage giving vs. general fund giving. We will be talking more about a capital campaign to reduce our debt in the future. We also introduced a Chain Challenge to encourage members of Trinity to try something new or invite a new person to enjoy one of the 60-plus groups or ministries that benefit from the giving of money to Trinity.

Throughout the year the team continued to develop a budget for benevolence giving and oversee the undesignated memorials and gifts. Each meeting also featured a financial update where we have seen a shortfall in giving vs expenses over the last few years. This is a concern going forward as we look for an associate pastor and a way to pay the additional expenses for this very necessary addition to the staff.

One of our goals for 2024 was to work on a spiritual gifts program for Trinity. We started a special team designated to figure this out. Delaney, our youth coordinator, joined us because we thought that starting with the youth and then bringing the program into the larger congregation may be a good beginning. Our superhero, Delaney, identified a workable spiritual gifts survey and with the participation of an interested group of high-school students planted the seeds for a spiritual gifts program.

The Property & Grounds Team has worked diligently to ensure the church building and grounds remain a welcoming, safe, and well-maintained environment for all our congregation members, visitors, and the surrounding community. We are pleased to present our efforts and vision for the upcoming year. The team of volunteers, staff, and external contractors collaborates to maintain and improve the church's physical spaces. We are committed to enhancing the church's appearance, ensuring safety and accessibility, and fostering an environment conducive to spiritual growth.

### Key Accomplishments in 2024

1. Major facility upgrades:

- **New flooring in the Connections area:** One of the major improvements this year was the installation of new flooring in the Connection Room. This upgrade has significantly enhanced the appearance of this high-traffic space, providing a cleaner, more modern environment for gatherings, events, and fellowship.
- **Chapel painting:** The Chapel, a central part of our worship experience, underwent a fresh coat of paint to restore its aesthetic appeal and brighten the space. This project was completed with great attention to detail, helping to create a more inviting atmosphere for services and special ceremonies.
- **Energy-efficient lighting upgrades in the Sanctuary:** We completed a significant lighting overhaul, replacing older fixtures with energy-efficient LED lights. This upgrade not only improves the visual appeal of our Sanctuary but also reduces our energy consumption and long-term maintenance costs.
- **New door at the east end of the preschool hallway:** To improve safety and security, a new door was installed at the east end of the preschool hallway. This addition ensures better control over access to the preschool area and enhances the safety of our young learners and staff.

2. General maintenance, landscaping and lawn care:

- **Seasonal planting and maintenance:** Throughout the year, we completed seasonal plantings, including annual flowers, shrubs, and trees. Our dedicated volunteers helped with mulching, weeding, trimming, and planting.
- **Regular groundskeeping:** We implemented a regular schedule for mowing, trimming, and clearing debris, ensuring that the church grounds are always in excellent condition.
- **Trash and recycling:** Increased efforts in waste management were made, including a new recycling service through the City of Waupaca and waste disposal with Harter's Fox Valley.

3. Special Projects:

- **Memorial Garden:** The garden was designed and created to honor the memories of loved ones. The perennial plantings in this space continue to mature, providing a peaceful space for reflection and remembrance. To date, 11 memorial bricks have been inscribed and installed, with space available for many more. Church members and friends can purchase these bricks in memory of a loved one or to mark a special occasion. Funds raised from the sale of these bricks will be used to support future grounds-related projects.

## ■ PROPERTY & GROUNDS TEAM (CONTINUED)

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### Plans for 2025

1. Landscaping, gardening, and volunteer engagement:
  - **Deer Street lot landscaping:** We plan to enhance the landscaping around the Deer Street lot, focusing on improving curb appeal and functionality. This may include adding plants, creating pathways, and addressing areas in need of attention.
  - **Trinity's Gardening Angels:** In 2025 we strive to continue beautifying our outdoor spaces. We encourage more members to participate in both gardening and general upkeep activities. We aim to launch a volunteer recruitment campaign to increase participation within the Gardening Angels initiative.
2. Building and facility upgrades:
  - **New furniture and cabinetry for the Connection Room café:** Aiming to improve both the aesthetic and functionality of the Connections-area café, we hope to install new furniture and cabinetry to better accommodate the needs of the congregation and enhance the fellowship experience.
  - **HVAC upgrades and maintenance:** The team will continue working on HVAC system upgrades to ensure comfort and energy efficiency in our building, addressing any necessary maintenance and improvements.
3. Long-term building plans:
  - **Northwest building entrance repairs:** Looking further into the future, the Northwest entrance at the corner of Badger and Jefferson streets needs repair. Plans include installing new doors and windows and replacing the entry canopy to restore the entrance's functionality and aesthetic appeal. This project is a key part of improving the church's overall safety and accessibility.
4. Energy efficiency projects:
  - **Continuing our focus on energy efficiency:** We will research renewable energy solutions such as solar panels to reduce our carbon footprint and long-term energy costs.

We would like to express our gratitude to the following individuals and groups for their continued support and contributions:

- Volunteers who dedicated time and energy to keep the grounds in pristine condition.
- Church staff members for their coordination and assistance with maintenance needs.
- Congregation members for their donations and support of our projects.
- Local businesses for generously providing supplies and services at discounted rates.

Trinity's Property & Grounds Team had a productive and rewarding year. Accomplishments such as the Connection Room flooring upgrade, Chapel painting, lighting in the Sanctuary, and the new door in the preschool hallway demonstrate our commitment to both aesthetic and functional improvements. While we faced challenges, the dedication of our volunteers and the support of the congregation have allowed us to continue to improve and maintain our church environment. We look forward to building on our successes in 2025 and continuing in dedicated service to the church and its members. We are always eager for new team members. Whether you have expertise in landscaping or building maintenance or simply want to help keep our church looking its best, there's a place for you on our team!

## ■ INVITE-WELCOME-CONNECT TEAM

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BY SUE HARRINGTON

The members of the Invite-Welcome-Connect Team have a critical role as our congregation works together to welcome, love, and serve all! The Invite-Welcome-Connect team has welcomed many new families into our congregation this year through our new-member classes, personal connections, and welcome events. We also help our congregation feel welcome and connected before, during, and after worship. Usually, we can be found near the Welcome Center counter before and after worship welcoming folks and helping them to connect with our many ministries. If you have a gift of hospitality, a good listening ear, or just like to visit, we would love to have you on our team. Contact Sue in the office if you would like to serve in this important ministry.

## ■ CHAPEL ON THE LAKES

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2025 marks the 50th year of Chapel on the Lakes!

You won't find wooden pews, stained-glass windows, or even a roof on this "church." Chapel on the Lakes is a one-hour floating worship service aboard a 60-foot sternwheeler, also known as the Chief Waupaca, from Clear Water Harbor in King.

The ministry was started in 1975 by Shepherd of the Lakes Lutheran Church. Trinity Lutheran Church had the blessing of taking this over in 1977 and has continued every summer since.

Chapel on the Lakes occurs every Wednesday night from 6 to 7 p.m., rain or shine, for 10 weeks from June through mid-August. The boat can hold 80 people. Registration is required. There are rental fees associated with the Chief, so weekly offerings are taken during the cruise to help cover costs. Julie Kesler, along with others, helps to organize the cruises each week.

The 2024 season had 399 worshipers. Two of the services were completely full.

It is a wonderful experience—come aboard and enjoy the wonderful Chain O' Lakes that God created!

## ■ WOMEN'S BIBLE STUDY

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BY SUE HEIDEMAN & CATHY GAUERKE

The Monday Women's Bible Study included a 13-week winter session on understanding the Old Testament and a 10-week fall session on the book of Isaiah. The focus of the Old Testament study was to identify the key characters, where they lived, and what was important to them. The Isaiah objectives were to understand the content of the writings of Isaiah, what Israel's religion and economy were in the eighth century BC, and the role of the prophet in Israel's world.

Both studies enrolled 26 participants, half being from Trinity. The study reached out to the community to assist in the spiritual growth of women through Bible studies. Every class included large- and small-group discussions and prayers for people in need, which helped build relationships among the members. Study participants were encouraged to participate in community activities including donations to the hygiene project, food pantry, and other activities.

The number of participants and topics discussed continues to grow, and members say their relationship with Jesus and each other continues to improve. The key challenge is the physical location for a group of this size.

The goal of the group will be to continue a winter and fall study for women in our community. Since we have provided studies over the past 10 years, we want to encourage other members of Trinity to utilize the resources we've collected to continue the spiritual growth of individuals in our community.

## ■ TRINITY LUTHERAN MEN IN MISSION

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BY DOUG PICKAR

For more than 40 years, Trinity Lutheran Church of Waupaca has had an active men's group that meets on the first Saturday of each month for Bible study and casual conversation. The meetings start at 8 a.m. at the church. Volunteer members start with a song and Bible study—this year we've been reading Deuteronomy from the *Master Builders Bible for Men*. We also plan to begin studying Hebrews.

It should be noted that membership at Trinity is not a requirement, nor is in-depth knowledge of the Bible. It is a great opportunity to spend some quality time with men of all ages and backgrounds and to share stories about our walk with God.

Each year, we try to provide funds for local charities and assist with church activities. We support the ELCA Lutheran Men in Mission. By God's grace, we continue to build a life-changing ministry for men.

As we prepare for 2025, we hope you will consider enriching your life with the study of God's word. Please know that you're always welcome to join us!

Our preschool has bloomed and grown in so many wonderful ways this year! This summer, we were able to start a Bridge Program to provide families with a few weeks of summer learning and fun. It was great to treat the children to some bigger community adventures after all their hard work learning new things during the school year. They were able to safely explore the community. It was a blast!

We kicked off our 2024 school year with many new faces and were happy to see just as many returning faces. We have almost doubled our enrollment and currently have 22 students. We are a busy bunch, but I am thankful each day for all of them.

Have you seen our wall? What an amazing blessing it is to be able to boast about our secure preschool. Through joint efforts, Trinity Lutheran Church and Tiny Treasures got it done! We could not be happier with the finished product and are forever grateful to everyone involved.

Our partnership with Trinity goes beyond construction; we welcomed a familiar visitor to our Jesus Time, Miss Delaney, Trinity's youth coordinator. Delaney leads our students one Thursday a month. They love seeing her. It is a beautiful collaboration that we hope helps preschool families feel welcome to explore other options at Trinity.

We continue to welcome new board members and give thanks for those who have served and led to our success. Our board continues to be full of dedicated individuals who only want the best for our program. Current members are Amanda Johnson, president; Megan Thoe, vice president; Kyle Everson, treasurer; Cheryl Sletten, church liaison; Charlene Kuenzi; Trisha Everson; Amber Koski; Kathy Hurt; and Hugh Kress.

We operate as a licensed childcare facility with two full-time and one part-time staff. We passed our biannual inspection with zero code violations. Staff diligently work on their continued education by completing training/accreditations in Pyramid Model, Triple P, Love and Logic, and ASQ assessments to ensure a happy, safe, and educational environment for our students.

A message from Treasurer Kyle Everson regarding our financial state: "Thanks to increased enrollment, successful fundraisers, and the generous support from grants and donations, Tiny Treasures Preschool has seen a significant improvement in its financial outlook this year. A particularly meaningful contribution was a generous financial gift from the late Beatrice Olsen, whose legacy will continue to support our mission. Additionally, we received a childcare grant from the City of Waupaca, which has provided valuable resources to enhance our programs. These contributions, along with our continued focus on sustainability, have allowed us to invest in enriching the experience we offer to our students. While we remain mindful of future challenges, the progress we've made this year positions us for continued success and growth, and we're grateful for the ongoing support of Trinity and our community."

We continue to fundraise: our second annual brat fry was a success! We are feeling optimistic about our program's future and thankful to call Trinity our home.



The Crossways Camping Ministries annual meeting was held March 16, 2024, at St. Mark's Lutheran Church in Neenah. It opened with an emphasis on designing all programs to be inclusive, catering to people of all ages, backgrounds, and abilities.

Leadership is moving toward a collaborative model where all three camps—Imago Dei, Pine Lake, and Waypost—will work in unison. Under this new approach, Robyn Koehler will serve as the chair of operations. The goal is to capitalize on the unique strengths of each camp instead of sticking with "the same old routine."

In 2023, several new programs were introduced, including:

- Family Week
- One-Day Camps
- A Self-Determined Camp
- A Disabilities Camp

Looking ahead to 2024, teams from Imago Dei and Pine Lake will travel to Waypost to facilitate programs. This summer's offerings will focus on all age groups, aiming to promote outdoor activities, resource stewardship, personal discovery through trying new things, community living, and strengthening faith among campers.

The budget has seen improvements due to the restructuring of salaried positions, the sale of land from Imago Dei, and the collaboration of staff from Imago Dei and Pine Lake to run programs at Waypost, along with the closure of the Appleton office. This strategic shift has positioned Crossways in a strong financial standing, and it's noteworthy that the line of credit was not utilized last year. In discussions on boosting income, there was a strong encouragement for Thrivent members to tap into Thrivent Action Team funds for various projects and direct their Thrivent Choice dollars to Crossways.

Finally, new officers were elected using the slate procedure:

- Rick Oleson
- Tom Scheuerman
- Laura Welden
- Joe Wilkinson

The 2025 annual meeting is scheduled for Saturday, March 8, at St. Mark's Lutheran Church in Neenah.

■ NOTES

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# ANNUAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING

## OPENING LITURGY

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

God, we praise you and give you thanks.

**You are good, and your mercy endures forever.**

You gave us a garden with good food to eat.

**We praise you for food that nourishes us.**

You rescued your people from slavery.

**We praise you for freedom.**

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

**We bless you for your justice and mercy.**

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

**We praise you for his death and resurrection.**

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

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

Strengthen your church with every spiritual gift

**and commission us again to be your servant people.**

Multiply in us the fruit of the spirit:

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

Send us in your love and mercy,

**that the world may know you and praise you.**

### Now Thank We All Our God



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



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



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



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

*Evangelical Lutheran Worship, 840*

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

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

Let us pray.

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

**Amen.**

Through your generosity, God is at work across the ELCA. A portion of your offering, called Mission Support, advances the ministry of our church, helping the ELCA nurture Christian community, raise up leaders, serve our neighbors and strive for justice. Read stories and learn more at **[LivingLutheran.org/SOFIA](https://LivingLutheran.org/SOFIA)**.



Evangelical  
Lutheran Church  
in America