




the
ANNUAL
REPORT
for
2024

 english lutheran
la crosse, wisconsin



CHURCH STAFF



PASTORS

Senior Pastor.....The Reverend Mark Kvale
Associate Pastor.....The Reverend Rebecca Goche

PROGRAM STAFF

Director of Faith Formation.....Jared Kronback
Children's Ministry Coordinator.....Ann Kvale

WORSHIP STAFF

Director of Music.....Trevor DuPey
Director of Worship Technology.....Jarod Griswold
Bell Choir Director.....Jim Knutson
Pianist.....Luke Thering
Senior Choir Director.....Trevor DuPey

OFFICE STAFF

Office Manager.....Jennifer Jones
Administrative Assistant.....Carol Robertson

MAINTENANCE STAFF

Building Maintenance Coordinator.....Dane Melby
Kitchen Coordinator.....Niki Pohnl



VISION BOARD & LEADERSHIP



Adam Hatfield (President)
Karl Green (Vice President)
Michelle Wanders (Secretary)
Lois Oliver (Treasurer, ex-officio)

Kathy Hageseth
Kaitlyn Hamann
Cara Hartfield
Paul Holman
Dennis Naumann
Denise Strudthoff

LEADERSHIP COUNCILS

Five Big Rocks

DISCIPLESHIP COUNCIL: Emily Farmer, Scott Gabriel, Cara Hartfield, Dennis Johnson, Jared Kronback, Ann Kvale, Anna Mueller, Ben Stepanek, Pastor Mark Kvale

EVANGELISM COUNCIL: Jennifer Jones, Maddie Sweeney, Pastor Becky Goche

FELLOWSHIP COUNCIL: Jared Kronback, Carol Robertson

MINISTRY COUNCIL: Mary Fitzpatrick, Sue Johnson, Mike Schnitzius, Denise Strudthoff, Beth Twiton, Bob & Kathy Weeks, Pastor Becky Goche.

WORSHIP COUNCIL: Trevor DuPey, Kirsten Gabriel, Lori Moe, Adam Schneider, Beth Twiton, Pastor Mark Kvale, Pastor Becky Goche

STABILITY TRIANGLE

FINANCE COMMITTEE: Bill Newburg (chair), Lois Oliver (Treasurer), Scott Engebretson, Howard Mills, Paul Moe, Larry Vangen, Pastor Mark Kvale

PERSONNEL COMMITTEE: Adam Hatfield, Vicki Markussen, Lisa Weston, Pastor Mark Kvale

PROPERTY COMMITTEE: Mark Flaten (chair), Mike Buncak, Ivan Fercho, Chuck Gustafson, Rick Heiden, Pastor Mark Kvale, Dane Melby, Howard Mills, Dennis Naumann, Tom Nigon & Jerry Smith

OTHER COMMITTEES

ENDOWMENT COMMITTEE: Adam Hatfield (chair), Chris Dreves, Sarah Herath, Tom Monson, Lois Oliver, Pastor Mark Kvale

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE: Adam Hatfield (chair), Karl Green, Michelle Wanders, Lois Oliver (ex-officio), Pastor Mark Kvale

MEMORIAL COMMITTEE: Howard Mills (chair), Joan Allen, Terri Johnson, Heidi Morris, Mary Sween, Pastor Mark Kvale

STEWARDSHIP COMMITTEE: Tim Durtsche, Denise Ganey, Lois Oliver, Joyce Wichelt, Pastor Mark Kvale

YOUTH STEERING COMMITTEE: Tom Davey, Avery Farmer, Caleb Farmer, Emily Farmer, Bonnie Martin, Henry Martin, Alayna Trushenski, Genny Trushenski, Landon Trushenski, Jared Kronback



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ANNUAL MEETING MINUTES



The 2024 annual meeting of English Lutheran Church was called to order by Vision Board President Adam Hatfield. The opening devotional was led by Pastor Kvale who focused on Ephesians 4:1-7.

A motion to approve the minutes from the 2023 annual meeting was made by Marge Buncak, seconded by Deb Bemis. The motion carried.

Elections by acclamation were held for the 3-year terms for Vision Board. With no nominations from the floor, the new members of the board are Denise Strudthoff, Kathy Hageseth (second 3-year term), and Cara Hartfield.

Three people were on the ballot to be Synod Assembly voting members, and two nominations were made from the floor. All were elected by acclamation, and they are Denise Strudthoff, Adam Schneider, Lydia Rislow, Ben Stepanek, and Pam Strittmater.

Dennis Naumann was on the ballot to be ELC's representative at Sugar Creek Bible Camp's annual meeting. Peter Bemis was nominated from the floor. Both were elected by acclamation to serve in this capacity.

Mike Schnitzius, member of the RIC committee, began the discussion on the Reconciled in Christ ballot item by reading from Colossians as well as reading ELC's Welcome Statement. He moved to approve ELC as a Reconciled in Christ congregation, and Mike Buncak seconded the motion. Discussion followed with Marla Engbloom sharing her daughter's story, as did Mary Sween. Caitlin Hamann also shared her story as well. Pam Strittmater talked about how the Reconciling in Christ process is more than simply accepting a Welcome Statement and that we should vote with love. After the discussion closed, a vote was taken by ballot. With a total of 104 ballots cast, the measure passed 96-8.

Bishop Felix Malpica presented his enthusiastic report via video in which he listed all the ways the 73 churches in the La Crosse Area Synod are building life-giving relationships rooted in God's love. Pastor Mark Kvale shared the touching story of how, in the hospital, when asked what he did, he couldn't remember "pastor" but he could remember that he shared the eucharist. He also thanked Pastor Becky Goche, the church staff, and the congregation for continuing our ministry as he recovered from surgery and a stroke. Pastor Kvale shared that in 2023 we continued to build our trajectory of sharing God's love outside the walls of the church building and did so with a full staff. He closed by thanking the Vision Board and President Adam for their leadership. Pastor Becky Goche echoed many of Pastor Kvale's comments and added that she was so proud that our congregation called her as our first openly-gay pastor. She was sincerely thankful that she was able to take her sabbatical in 2023, and she thanked the staff, the Vision Board, and the councils.

Lois Oliver, Treasurer, presented the 2023 financial report. Please reference pages 21-22 in the 2023 Annual Report. To summarize, total net assets as of December 31, 2023, were worth \$4,489,539.51, with a net operating loss of \$39,488.

Tom Monson presented information about the Endowment Fund. The balance at the end of December 2023 was \$444,508.12. On January 7, 2024, the Endowment Committee met and recommended that the Vision Board make grants to 17 different organizations totaling \$22,000. Peter Bemis said that he'd like to see an annual, automatic contribution to campus ministry. Tom explained that such a donation is made each year through the benevolence fund. Through our relationship with LuMin, it was encouraged that they apply for Endowment funding during the next cycle.

The 2024 budget was presented by Bill Newburg, chair of the Finance Committee. He reviewed budgets for the last 5 years and noted that except for the last two years, even when a deficit was budgeted, the congregation was able to meet or exceed the deficit to end those years in the black. Bill explained that part of the reason we ended 2023 in the red was because of the expenses of updating the HVAC system. The 2024 budget deficit is \$88,723 which is partially due to the requests from the Property Committee for needed updates on the building. We are also still servicing a \$300,000+ loan. Bill suggested that perhaps there are individuals who could donate to the debt service or we could have a capital campaign. Reducing the debt would help the general fund balance immensely.

Sara Olson asked if the proceeds from the possible sale of the house were included in the 2024 budget; they are not.

Pastor Dione Stepanek asked if ELC was keeping up with the recommended guidelines for pastoral staff. Pastor Mark Kvale explained that he waived his raise this year and that Pastor Becky Goche is just at or slightly below the guideline. Pastor Stepanek moved and Lorri Lobeck seconded that ELC commit to bringing pastoral compensation up to synod guidelines during 2024. Motion carried.

Following the budget discussion, Lisa Weston moved and Kaitlin Hamann seconded to approve the 2024 budget as presented. Motion carried.

Vision Board President Adam Hatfield reviewed the 2024 Strategic Plan. Emily Farmer moved and Kayla Anderson seconded to accept the Strategic Plan. Discussion followed. Bishop Felix Malpica asked where the mission and vision statement of ELC was located; it is found on the church website. Lisa Weston mentioned that to meet the goals of the Strategic Plan, we need to include working with college students as well as have listening sessions with members whose voices we don't normally hear. Kathy Hageseth mentioned that each of the Vision Board members will be on a council so that there is better communication between the Vision Board and the council to better meet our goals.

After discussion closed, a voice vote was taken on the motion which passed.

President Adam Hatfield led the discussion on the possibility of selling the house at 131 S. 15th Street. Originally, the house was purchased so that ELC could expand if it needed to do so. The current market value based on comparisons is \$300,000-400,000. The storage that the garage provides is valuable to ELC and when considering the sale of the house, the issue of the garage would be considered. There have been only needed improvements to the house since it was purchased. To demolish the structure would cost \$50,000 or more and then a company would also have to be hired to haul the materials away.

Many people contributed to the conversation with thoughts and questions:

1. Kaitlin Hamann asked if the congregation was using any part of the house. The answer is no; we are not using the house, but we are using the garage for extra furniture as well as for Bethlehem props.
2. Anna Mueller asked about the costs of owning the house. The property taxes in 2023 were about \$9,000. Jennifer Jones added that there are always ongoing expenses such as repairs that occur each month. Each of the rooms in the house are rented at different rates and range from \$250-366 per month. (There are currently 7 tenants in the house, who would need to be given notice in the event that the house would be sold.) Chuck Gustafson added that each year when the insurance on the house needs to be renewed, there are always improvements that need to be made so that the insurance company will continue to insure it.
3. Because of the repairs and improvements that will be needed to the house, Laurie Pfaff noted that the final selling price of the structure would probably be much less than the \$300,000-400,000 market value.
4. Peter Bemis noted that the garage might only be important if we continue to have the Bethlehem event. He suggested that we make a decision about the Bethlehem Event before we sell the property.
5. Brad Quarberg offered that Habitat for Humanity as well as other not-for-profits in the community might have a need for the property.

Paul Holman moved and Lois Oliver seconded the motion to empower the Vision Board to pursue the sale of the house. Motion carried.

The meeting was adjourned at 1:30 p.m. and closed with the Lord's Prayer.

Denise Strudthoff
Secretary Pro-Tem



SENIOR PASTOR



My annual report as Senior Pastor of English Lutheran Church provides me with the opportunity to celebrate and give thanks to God for all the good that has happened in the past year. Here are just a few things that come to mind for us to celebrate from this past year:

1. Becoming a 'Reconciling in Christ' Congregation. At our annual meeting last year, English Lutheran Church voted to become a 'Reconciling in Christ' Congregation. In that vote, we adopted a new Welcome Statement in which we named what we believe Jesus is calling us to be: a 'faith community rooted in Christ and committed to living generously. Celebrating the wondrous diversity of God's creation of sexual orientation, gender identity, race, ethnicity, age, economic status, marital status, physical or mental ability.'
2. Renewed energy in growing in Discipleship. The Discipleship Council has been hard at work this year providing English Lutheran with a growing number of opportunities for people of all ages to learn and grow in our faith, asking hard

questions, engaging in God’s Word, and paying attention to God’s world all around us.

3. Stewardship: Because of your generosity, our congregation can be about the work of Jesus Christ. Every day we are given the great gift of seeing what God is up to in our world as we respond to Jesus’ call to follow him and serve God’s people and creation. I give thanks to God that your call does not just begin and end with showing up on Sundays, but extends outwards into your daily lives; at home, at work, in caring for the least and lowly. God is at work making what seems impossible-generosity, mercy, forgiveness, and love-possible!

I am so grateful for the amazing staff of English Lutheran Church. Thank you, Pastor Becky Goche, Jennifer Jones, Jared Kronback, Dane Melby, Trevor DuPey, Ann Kvale, Carol Robertson, Niki Pohnl, and Jarod Griswold for all your hard work, talent and faithfulness!!

I am continually humbled by you, leaders and members of English Lutheran, for your vision, energy, passion, and the love of Jesus that radiates from you. Thank you!

I would also like to offer a special thanks to the Vision Board, and particularity to Adam Hatfield and Karl Green. Our congregation has been and is blessed by your leadership; thank you!

May this coming year provide us with gift of being able to see God in our everyday lives, reflecting the love of Jesus in all that we do and experience.

Soli Deo Gloria (To God Alone the Glory)
Pastor Mark Kvale



ASSOCIATE PASTOR



Pastoral Care:

I coordinated eleven ELC members who serve as “Caring Ministers” to our congregation. These people visit and celebrate Holy Communion with many of our homebound members.

We have continued to provide care for our members who are grieving the loss of a loved one using the “Journeying through Grief” series of four books from Stephen Ministries. Beth Twiton, who is a member of the Ministry Council, facilitates writing notes and sending out the materials. In 2024, 20 families were reached through this ministry.

Other acts of pastoral care:

- Presided at 11 people’s baptisms.
- Presided at 2 people’s funeral/memorial services.
- Presided at 1 wedding service.

- Visited numerous people and their families in the hospital, skilled care facilities, assisted living facilities, and their homes during times of illness, impending death, and simply trying to stay connected with those who are no longer able to participate in the life of this congregation in person.

Teaching:

- Taught confirmation classes for 7th through 9th grade students.
- Taught a First Communion class for all ages on March 3. Thirteen young people celebrated their first communion Easter weekend.
- Facilitated a 5-week “Before You Go: A Series on Death and Dying” in January and February. Sessions included: A Death Café; Palliative Care, Hospice Care, and Advanced Directives; Estate Planning; Planning Your Funeral; and the Funeral Service.
- Assisted with several Sunday school openings throughout the year.
- Met with all the Sunday school classes twice throughout the year to discuss possible organizations for the Hungry Jar and then helping them choose a recipient.
- Co-led a guided bird hike with Cheryl Groom at Goose Island County Park on April 27.

Supervisory Roles, Councils, and Board Activity:

- In 2024, I supervised the Director of Faith Formation, Jared Kronback, and the Children’s Ministry Coordinator, Ann Kvale.
- I served as the staff liaison for the Ministry Council and Evangelism Council. In addition, I was a part of the Worship Council, RIC Team, and the Vision Board.
- I served on the Lutheran Campus Ministry Board and the Habitat for Humanity of the Greater La Crosse Region Board. I resigned my role on the Operating Board of Directors for Lutheran Social Services of Wisconsin and Upper Michigan in June.

I am so grateful that God has surrounded me with a wonderful staff and good people! Thank you for the privilege to be your Pastor as we join together in God’s mission and proclaim the Good News to all the world through English Lutheran Church. Thanks be to God!

Pastor Becky Goche



DISCIPLESHIP COUNCIL



The Discipleship Council reformed this past year after being inactive for the previous two years. We reviewed the previous work of the council, the strategic planning document from our interim pastor as well as the current strategic priorities from the Vision Board, and the mission statements that guide us to help form disciples of Jesus at English Lutheran Church. Our discussion led us to revise and adopt the following mission statement to guide our work together:

Empowering believers to grow in faith, knowledge, and service, the Discipleship Council of English Lutheran Church is committed to cultivating a vibrant community of diverse disciples who passionately pursue the teachings of Jesus Christ. Through

the faith practices of prayer, study, worship, service, and giving, we aim to equip individuals to confidently live out their faith, impacting their world with love, grace, and truth.

From that starting point, the Council worked to continue to support and grow the strong work of the church in the areas of Sunday School, Confirmation, and Small Groups, while launching new opportunities for people to learn and grow in faith. Updates on each of these areas are below:

Sunday School

- 60 students ages 2YO-6th Grade registered Fall of 2024, meeting Sundays from 9:45-10:30 am, including a 10-minute large group opening which involves an introduction to the day's lesson and some singing. We reinstated 2 and 3-year-old Sunday School and operated in combined classes. Two teachers are assigned to each class, taking turns, and we have eight substitutes.
- Spark Activate Faith - Lectionary Series is the curriculum that is used.
- Students are scheduled to go to the church library 3 times during the year for book check out. PreK-2nd grade have story time during this time as well.
- The students participated in a service project in February making cards for fire fighters, police officers and some healthcare workers in La Crosse.
- Rally Day was September 8. Students and families had a Scavenger Hunt trying to locate certain places around the church using the given clues.
- Reformation Sunday was October 27. Students celebrated with a presentation about Martin Luther, writing with feather and "ink," playing "Pin the Theses on the Door" and creating delicious chocolate covered hammers to eat.
- The Christmas program "The Wonder" was presented at the 10:45 worship service on December 15, led by Ann Kvale, Children's Ministry Coordinator.
- Thirteen 3rd Graders received the Spark New Revised Standard Version Bibles and 2 four and five-year-olds received the Spark Story Bible in September.
- Ann Kvale continues to work with the music portion of Sunday School, and children sing during worship periodically. In addition, a Chime Choir has been started for our church youth. Ann and Sara Olson work with seven youth on Wednesday evenings who have done a fabulous job learning to play chimes. The goal is to have them play at least two times each semester.

Vacation Bible School

VBS ran June 10-13 in the evenings with a meal, and was organized by Ann Kvale, Jared Kronback, Kayla Anderson and Ben Stepanek. We had 29 students registered for VBS with 17 youth and adult helpers. The program was called "River of Life" and was put out by ELCA World Hunger. The theme of water and its importance to daily life was discussed throughout the week, including a Scavenger Hunt and had a guided tour of the Marsh from WisCorp out of the Nature Place.

Christlers

Christlers meet during the school year on Wednesday evenings. There are 26 students on the roster from 15 different families and 3 college students help each week. Activities such as crafts, games, puzzles and devotions are planned. Christlers have taken on the responsibility of cleaning out and organizing the Activity Bags for "Little Lutherans" which are used during worship and have also participated in other service projects such as making cards for Hillview Health Care Center, crafts to share with others on May Day and helping prepare for Sunday School projects.

Nursery

The nursery is staffed by a college student and our own high school and middle school youth every Sunday morning from 8:15-11:45am. This past year 20 different families have used the nursery with 10 families using it on a regular basis.

Confirmation

Since the beginning of this school year, the confirmation grades have shifted a bit. Instead of having the Affirmation of Baptism during the spring, we decided to move the Affirmation of Baptism service to the fall time on Reformation Sunday again. We have also decided to bring the 6th grade class into the mix. Once the new year starts and we begin to meet again, they will be coming to class on Wednesday Nights.

- Students confirmed in 2024:
 - Before switching the dates: 11 in the spring
 - After switching the dates: 13 in the fall

New Discipleship Programs

In the fall, we invited the congregation to participate in our Dot Survey to help direct planning for areas they'd like to learn more about. Results of that survey demonstrated a strong interest in reflecting more about the state of our country's politics. On November 23, the Discipleship Council hosted over 30 members for a morning retreat on Christian Nationalism. Dr. Craig Nesson from Wartburg Seminary was our guest and shared the history of the development of Christian Nationalism and advice on what faithfulness looks like in this time and place within our country. The Council is looking at how we invite further reflection and action in response to what we learned as we seek to love our neighbor and share the good news of the Gospel.

As we look forward to the new year, the Discipleship Council based on our above mission statement will look to equip individuals in faith practices and partner with the other councils to help deepen faith in our members. We are exploring ways to focus on prayer and prayer ministry through the season of Lent, service opportunities in and around our region as well as further study and conversation about the Social Statements from the larger church.

Discipleship Council: Emily Farmer, Scott Gabriel, Cara Hartfield, Dennis Johnson, Jared Kronback, Ann Kvale, Pastor Mark Kvale, Anna Mueller, and Ben Stepanek.



EVANGELISM COUNCIL



Council Members: Maddie Sweeney, Jennifer Jones, and Pastor Becky Goche

A BIG thank you to Jennifer Jones for her continued oversight, updates and creativity with ELC's website, social media platforms, brochures, flyers and such throughout the year. Thank you to Carol Solyst who designs and edits the *Voice Newsletter* which is published every other month.

Events

- The outdoor River Service was held at Copeland Park on August 25 at 10:45 am. This was the only worship service offered on Sunday; a service was held at ELC on Saturday evening. Members of the Worship Council along with Trevor DuPey, Pastor Mark Kvale, Pastor Becky Goche and Pastor Phil Waselik from Trinity

Lutheran Church planned the service. A joint choir of both English Lutheran and Trinity Lutheran members, along with several ELC musicians helped lead the worship. Pastor Phil gave the sermon highlighting the growing partnership between English Lutheran and Trinity Lutheran. Following the service, there was a potluck meal. We recorded 186 people who attended.

- The Evangelism Council and RIC Team did not officially participate in the annual “Pride in the Park” on September 7 at La Crosse’s Riverside Park because they did not register in time for the event. However, the Pride event people did allow Peggy Sannerud from the RIC Team to represent ELC unofficially as she mingled with others who attended the event.
- The annual “Blessing of the Animals” service (commemoration of St. Francis of Assisi) was held on October 6 at 1:00 pm in the bell tower courtyard. There were treats for dogs, cats and people. Jarod Griswold took pictures of people with their pets for Jennifer Jones to create a commemorative photo postcard. Twenty-three people, 12 dogs, 1 cat, 1 bearded dragon and 2 fish attended.
- Two Community Conversations programs were hosted at ELC: January 17 and May 15. This program is coordinated by the Interfaith Leaders Coalition, chaired by Rabbi Brian Serle from the Congregation Sons of Abraham and Pastor Mark Kvale of ELC.

New Members

We continue with the “New to ELC? Gathering,” that began in 2023. This less formal membership model seems to facilitate organic conversations for interested people centered around a meal, as well as offering a time to learn more about ELC. There is no expectation that those who attend will officially join ELC. Three “Gatherings” were held: February 25, August 20, and November 17. Sixteen family units (35 people) who participated chose to join ELC.

Other Things of Note

- Church letterhead and envelopes were updated, incorporating ELC’s “logo.”
- Signatures for church email accounts were updated, incorporating ELC’s “logo” along with direct links to ELC’s social media accounts.



FELLOWSHIP COUNCIL



Loggers Baseball Game

This revamped event took place in June and was a home run! There were 25 total in attendance and it was a good night to enjoy a great pastime while also allowing connections with congregant members.

Trunk or Treat

This loved and cherished tradition was successful because of many volunteers who helped with games, crafts, and bringing trunks. Since we had inclement weather this year with rain, we decided to move everything inside including trunks. We held the trunks in the Sunday School rooms and the hallway to accommodate everyone. We had 10 families bring a trunk, three of them winning a skeleton trophy and other prizes.

Coffee Hour

On the majority of Sundays throughout the year, there is time spent in the Fellowship Hall with coffee in one hand and a breakfast treat in the other while sitting amongst friends and family. This allows for congregation members to spend time together and get to know each other better. We are always looking for help in the kitchen with both set-up and take-down, and if you are interested in helping out, please contact the church office.

Crafter's Retreats

This group meets 6-8 times per year by gathering in the church to begin or continue with a current project they have. This is meant for anyone who is interested in a time together to create anything that may be of interest to his or her own. This is BYOS (bring your own supplies).

Small Groups

Small groups continue to be diverse and numerous at ELC and a significant way that many members connect and grow in faith. Currently there are many active adult small group ministries at ELC (Thursday Morning Bible Study, Mary Circle, Adult Choir, English Ringers, Quilters, Senior Fun & Fellowship, Seekers, Thursday Night Study Group, OWLS, and the Wednesday Night Bible Study). If you would like to learn more, join one of the groups, or start another group, reach out to the church office and we will help connect you to all available resources.

Submitted by: Jared Kronback, Director of Faith Formation



MINISTRY COUNCIL



To connect the work we do with our faith in God, we provide opportunities for ELC members to serve the church, community, and beyond. Members: Sue Johnson, Mary Fitzpatrick, Beth Twiton, Mike Schnitzius, Bob & Kathy Weeks, Denise Strudthoff, and Pastor Becky Goche.

Mission Interpreters (Sue Johnson & Mike Schnitzius) Connect our work and financial support to that of the synod and larger church. Focuses: Monday Ministries, Companion Synod of Peru, Sugar Creek Bible Camp, Youth Gathering & more.

Lenten Project (B&K Weeks) 99 Personal Care Kits for Lutheran World Relief were collected, and \$2,129 was donated to go directly to LWR work in the Middle East.

Monday Ministries at Trinity Lutheran (B&K Weeks, Ann Kvale, Mike Schnitzius) Ten ELC volunteers help at From the Heart Food Pantry and Clothes Closet each Monday. 650 bags were donated to the Food Pantry. 60+ members provided four Monday Meals serving 165-210 people per meal. Support comes from Mary Circle, Wednesday Night Bible Study & Thrivent Grants.

Sugar Creek Bible Camp (Bob Weeks) 6-8 ELC members volunteer throughout the summer and fall. The Ministry Council continues to clean, paint, and do repairs on the Seeker Cabins.

Quilters (Sharon Odahl & Judi Konop) A total of 212 quilts were made and distributed to: Bethany Homes - 4, Graduating Seniors -8, Lutheran World Relief -157, Boys & Girls Club-20, New Horizons-20, Giving Tree-3, Sugar Creek Bible Camp-2. Twenty ladies are members of the Quilters.

School Kit Project (B&K Weeks) 1,164 school kits were assembled for Lutheran World Relief. Fabric for 204 backpacks was donated by Trinity Meatball Committee. Ten Thrivent Action Grants were donated by ELC members. Target support was again much appreciated. Eighty-five ELC members assembled kits on August 18 and were delivered to LWR Warehouse by Pete Bemis and Mike Betz.

WAFER (B&K Weeks) ELC's weekly donations of non-perishable food items and Packer/Viking challenges and "Souper Bowl" are taken to WAFER Food pantry. ELC collected a total of 1,304 for WAFER this year!

Donation Center (Mary & Jack Fitzpatrick) Bins are maintained for Trinity, New Horizons, Women's Clothes Closet, Trinity Lutheran Kids & Teen clothing and Toys, Jail Ministry and Quilters.

Giving Tree (B&K Weeks) Gifts went to ELCA World Hunger Good Gifts, two Emerson Elementary families, and two Hope Restores families and two teens. \$2,467.00 went to Good Gifts.

Caring Ministry (Beth Twiton) Beth provided grief materials to 20 families experiencing the death of a loved one. Eleven members continue to visit and bring community and communion to our members who are not able to get to church.

Mobile Meals (Karen & Bill Newburg) Thirty-six ELC members deliver meals for the first 15 days of each month.

Other ministries and chairpersons include Sunshine Ministry (Lisa Weston), La Crosse Community Thanksgiving Dinner (Mary Fitzpatrick), Coulee Region Hunger Walk (Kathy Hageseth), Hope Restores (Mike Schnitzius), WINN (Mike Schnitzius), Habitat for Humanity and Faith Build (Pastor Becky, Tim & Lisa Jacobson), Adopt a Sunday School Class (Ann Kvale).



WORSHIP COUNCIL



This year, we celebrate a diverse year of worship at English Lutheran. Our Vocal Choir continues to grow and is participating at worship on average twice a month. The English Ringers perform three times per semester and are always a joy to listen to! Ann Kvale in doing marvelously with our Sunday School and Youth Musicians. She and Sara Olson created a delightful chime choir. Ann's leadership with VBS and the Christmas Pageant was outstanding. Ann also leads a group called "Just for Fun" it is a group of musicians that gather and play "just for fun!" Mike James joins at worship twice a month with his guitar. He adds a lovely layer to the music when he is playing. Other special music offerings we had this year at English was Coulee Creek, a bluegrass band that includes a few ELC members, and The La Crosse Brass Quintet, a group of brass players who play Easter and Reformation Sunday.

Our annual River Service at Copeland Park is always a popular event, especially because of the tradition of joining with Trinity Lutheran. It is a joy to combine with one of our fellow ELCA congregations. In October, in the Bell Tower Courtyard, we offered a Pet Blessing ceremony. It is much anticipated by all pet owners and lovers, and we are glad that we can include God's furry, feathery, and scaly creatures in our worship experience as well. On December 21, ELC had a solace service, which aimed to sooth attendees at a time of year that is always hectic and often unpleasant for some. After that same service, we hosted a Singing Bowl/Taize style service with the Spirituality Center. This was a huge success and we hope that it becomes a tradition.

Our Holy Week/Easter and Advent/Christmas/Epiphany Services were a highlight. The Worship Council's mission was to make each of these services unique and meaningful.

Worship services require lots of volunteers to read, serve communion, attend to the altar, usher, and to just plain organize. To that end, we've begun trainings for people who are interested in serving but who aren't sure how to do so. If you're interested, please contact one of the pastors or a member of the Council.

Joyce Abernathy, a local fiber artist, has created two of five planned hangings located in the sanctuary. On writing this article, she is half way through the third hanging. We are so excited to see what she creates next!

Members: Trevor DuPey, Kirsten Gabriel, Lori Moe, Adam Schneider, Beth Twiton, Pastor Mark Kvale, Pastor Becky Goche

Thank you to Kathy Hageseth, Cathy Walth, and Gary Walth for your many years of combined service to the Worship Council!



BETHLEHEM EVENT



The Bethlehem Event is a long-standing event at English Lutheran Church. Essentially, we turn the Fellowship Hall into the Village of Bethlehem, complete with shops, characters, animals, goods, along with the smells and sounds of Bethlehem at the time of the birth of the Christ Child. The last Bethlehem Event was held on Saturday, December 17th and Sunday, December 18th, 2022.

The next one is tentatively scheduled in 2025, with co-chairs being Mary Fitzpatrick and Pamela Strittmater.



STEWARDSHIP



This year's stewardship theme was "The Impossible Promise of Enough," inspired by Jesus' profound words in the Gospel of Mark. When Jesus was asked about the possibility of salvation, he says, "For mortals it is impossible, but not for God; for God, all things are possible" (Mark 10:27). His words challenge us to reconsider our assumptions about scarcity and abundance, inviting us into a deeper trust that God will provide enough for our needs.

This year's campaign included a series of weekly questions to discuss at home or at church about money experiences to break the conception that it is impolite to talk about money. Talking about money and finances can bring people closer together, relieve anxiety, lower stress, and help you see where God might be leading you in your relationship with your bank account.

We give thanks for a God who truly makes what this world calls "impossible:" love, mercy, grace, gratitude, hope, acceptance, welcome! How does our faith in Jesus impact the way we live? Our grateful response and answer to the amazing gift of our faith and of Jesus Christ's faithfulness is to give our best so that others experience the love, mercy, and presence of God in all aspects of life.

The ~~Im~~Possible Promise of Enough campaign culminated on November 17, when we gathered at worship to submit our intentions of giving for 2025, and there were many intentions mailed or dropped off throughout the end of the year. At the time of this writing in mid-January, we have received a total of 175 household intentions to give, which results in an estimated giving income of \$605,400! It is a decrease of four households, but an increase of intended giving of about \$8,200. (By the way, you can turn in your 2025 Intention of Giving at any time - even now!)

A reminder that there are so many ways to contribute to what God is about in and through us at ELC: you can set up automatic withdrawals, you can give via text messaging, there is an app that you can download, and of course, you can always write checks to mail or place in the offering at worship. For more information, please see our website: englishlutheran.org/onlinegiving.

On behalf of the Stewardship Ministry Team, Pastor Mark Kvale



PROPERTY



Peace and blessings to you all as we present you with the Property Committee's annual report. The state of the English Lutheran property, building and grounds, is good and has improved throughout 2024. We have continued to find energy efficiencies with the building automation system and more LED lighting. We are safer, more secure and in better code compliance. We have two new trees. And, the rental property next door was sold, relieving the church of ongoing property/tenant management responsibilities and potential liabilities.

- Our Xcel Energy bills are down 25% from 2023, following a reduction of 20% from 2022. In all, since the HVAC automation software and new equipment in the narthex and sanctuary were initialized, we are down 39% on our combined electric and gas bills, even in the face of rising rates and the building coming back into full use, post-pandemic.
- Progress continues installing LED lighting where we can see the biggest impacts.
- Safety and security have been high priorities and improvements have been made throughout the building and grounds. The biggest change is the new fire-rated, fire-code compliant doors at the east end of the Sunday School hallway.

These doors do not allow access to the Sunday School hallway from the vestibule, which resolves a glaring security vulnerability.

- Also for safety's sake, we contacted the city about some damaged sidewalks and now there are several new sections along King and 16th Streets.
- After losing a tree at the corner of 16th & King, we received two new trees, one Serviceberry and one Buckeye on 16th Street.
- The property at 131 S. 15th St. was sold in May. This has freed time for staff from the management and overseeing of the property and relieved the church from having to deal with any unforeseen emergencies or repairs of the rental.

We continue to look for opportunities to improve our facilities and be good stewards of the entire property. If all goes to plan, a couple of Troop 11 Eagle Scout candidates will complete projects around the church giving us a rain barrel and several bat houses. The Troop uses our building regularly and is always willing to complete service in exchange for hosting them.

Nonetheless, there are still challenges, primarily with the operation of the narthex restrooms. Property Committee and staff are discussing potential remedies, with recommendations to come. The Property Committee encourages and welcomes any members to join our ranks and have a voice in the ongoing health and wellbeing of the English Lutheran property as a whole.

Property Committee Chair: Mark Flaten

Property Committee: Mike Buncak, Ivan Fercho, Chuck Gustafson, Rick Heiden, Pastor Mark Kvale, Dane Melby, Howard Mills, Dennis Naumann, Tom Nigon & Jerry Smith



LIBRARY



The library is always available for checking out books when the church is open. If a librarian is not on duty, there is an easy self-check system that can be used. All church members are encouraged to stop in and check out a book or two!

Books purchased for 2024 were made available to the congregation in November. Adult, youth and primary books were put on display in the Fellowship Hall, ready to be checked out. The books are now available in the library and on the red book truck in the narthex.

Sunday School classes are periodically scheduled to visit the library, giving the children an opportunity to check out books. The librarian reads a Bible story to the Pre/K through 2nd grade students before they check out a book.

We wish to thank all contributors who gave books, money and other materials to the library as they help sustain the growth of your church library. The library staff also appreciates your suggestions for new books and continues to use the library policy regarding your book donations.

Chair: Nancy Mills

Librarians: Christina Fenton, Carmen Gustafson, Barb Myers, Karen Newburg, Sharon Odahl, Vivian Storm and Kathy Weeks

ELC Library Financial Report for 2024

Balance as of 1/1/24	\$3,613.95
<i>includes CD and interest</i>	<i>633.51</i>
<i>and checkbook balance</i>	<i>2,980.44</i>
Income:	
Special Gift	\$100.00
Interest Earned on CD	<u>18.01</u>
	\$118.01
Expenses:	
Books	588.36
ResourceMate contracts (2024 & 2025)	404.00
Supplies	<u>100.92</u>
Total Expenses	\$1,093.28
Balance as of 12/31/24	\$2,638.68
<i>includes CD and interest</i>	<i>651.52</i>
<i>and checkbook balance</i>	<i>\$1,987.16</i>



ENDOWMENT FUND



The Endowment Fund Committee met on January 16, 2025 and voted to recommend to the Vision Board and congregation that the following grants be made in 2025:

A. Global Mission:	
1) LWF Augusta Victoria Hospital	\$1,500.00
2) Lutheran World Relief	\$2,000.00
3) Churches for Middle East Peace	\$1,000.00
<i>Sub-Total</i>	<i>\$4,500.00</i>
B. Domestic Mission:	
1) ELCA Disaster Response '24 Hurricanes	\$2,000.00
2) WINN (What I Need Now)	\$2,000.00
3) La Crosse Jail Ministry	\$1,500.00
4) WAFER	\$1,500.00
5) Karuna House	\$2,000.00
6) CouleeCap/SOAR Program	\$1,000.00
7) GROW La Crosse	\$500.00
8) Salvation Army	\$1,000.00
9) Habitat for Humanity	\$2,000.00
<i>Sub-Total</i>	<i>\$13,500.00</i>
C. Congregation Mission:	
1) Sugar Creek Bible Camp	\$1,500.00
2) Monday Ministries @ Trinity Lutheran	\$2,000.00
3) LuMin Campus Ministry	\$1,100.00
4) La Crosse Area Synod Migrant Justice	\$1,000.00
<i>Sub-Total</i>	<i>\$5,600.00</i>
GRAND TOTAL	\$23,600.00

Thank you for past contributions and continued future support. Because of those contributions, we can help many wonderful missions both here in La Crosse and globally. If you want information on how to contribute to the Endowment Fund,

contact a committee member: Adam Hatfield (chair), Chris Dreves, Sarah Herath, Tom Monson, Lois Oliver and Pastor Mark Kvale.

Endowment Fund Activity for the Year Ending December 31, 2024:

Beginning Balance January 1, 2024	\$444,508.12
Investment Activity:	
Contributions Received	0.83 (litigation proceeds)
Realized & Unrealized Gains (Losses)	34,490.75
Distributions made in 2024	(27,666.77)
Other Expenses: Administrative Service Charges	(4,433.59)
Ending Balance December 31, 2024	\$446,899.34

The Bible Fund is a subset of the Endowment Fund. Beginning year balance was \$12,670.89 and end of the year balance was \$12,216.48. We distributed Bibles to Pre-K, 3rd and 7th Graders and new members in 2024. Total cost of Bibles was \$1,348.40.

Note: The range of distributions per Endowment Fund documents fall between 3-6% of year end market value. The minimum Endowment Fund balance is \$300,000. No distributions are allowed if the balance is below \$300,000. Furthermore, distributions may not take the fund balance below \$300,000.



MEMORIAL COMMITTEE



The Memorial Fund Committee members are Howard Mills, Chair, Joan Allen, Mary Sween, Heidi Morris, Terri Johnson, and Pastor Kvale.

During 2024 memorial gifts were received for the following individuals: Marilyn Wildt, Chuck Forer, Larry & Sharon Norris, DeLaney Gilster, Marjorie Renner, Bernice Facticeau, Lois Betz, Jeff Miller, Marge Terry, Nancy Matchett, Willard & Irene Sill, and Stephanie Stannard.

Honorarium gifts were received for the following individuals: Charles & Carmen Gustafson - 60th wedding anniversary, Wesley Sprague - baptism, Barbara Manthei - 80th birthday, Therese Pudenz & Dennis Naumann commitment ceremony, Kent & Mary Sween - birthdays.

Disbursements from the fund were for quilting supplies, sanctuary banners, handbell choir anniversary, sensory bins, conference room equipment update, conference room and tech booth chairs, synod fee for deacon candidacy, Seekers anniversary, Easter and Christmas flowers.

ELC Memorial Committee Financial Report for 2024

Balance as of December 31, 2024	\$58,155.70
Designated	\$30,357.41
Undesignated	\$23,236.08
Balance as of December 31, 2024	\$53,593.49



FINANCE COMMITTEE



The Finance Committee monitored the financial needs of the congregation during 2024, including Synodical and other benevolence commitments as well as

administrative, operating and programming funds and the insurance needs of the congregation. The committee is also responsible for preparing the Annual General Fund budget as well as reporting receipts and expenditures to the congregation during the year.

At the Annual Congregational Meeting on February 11, 2024, the congregation voted to sell the rental property (Soell House) at 131-133 15th Street South. A realtor was contacted. We continued to make mortgage payments of \$2,127 per month to Mission Investment Fund until the property was sold. In August 2024, the property was sold for \$415,000. Prior to the sale we paid \$8,443 in principal and \$9,335 in interest during 2024. Sale proceeds allowed the remaining principal of \$326,173 to be paid. This will save the church a total of \$25,524 in mortgage payments yearly in 2025 and beyond.

In 2024, church attendance continued to grow to pre-covid numbers both in person and on line. In the early part of the year General Fund receipts and expenditures were in line with our budget, even showing a surplus through April. After Easter, receipts dropped off with several months showing deficits. During December, receipts improved, and we had a net gain of \$18,000, which lowered the year's deficit to \$9,600 for the year, compared to a deficit of \$37,500 for 2023.

Church offerings are counted during the week following Sunday and/or a holiday. Four teams each serve one week per month. We thank Judi and Dave Konop, Barbara and Richard Morrison, Lois and Dennis Peterson and Karen and Bill Newburg for their faithful service during 2024. If you are interested in being a substitute counter, please let Jennifer Jones or a member of the Finance Committee know.

Your prayers and your contributions of time, talents, and treasure are greatly appreciated.

Finance Committee: Scott Engebretson, Howard Mills, Paul Moe, Bill Newburg, Lois Oliver, Larry Vangen and Pastor Mark Kvale



AUDIT COMMITTEE



The Audit Committee met on January 21, 2025 to review the operations of the various funds of the congregation during 2024. Committee members present were Jeff Schneider, Paul Moe, Finance Committee Chair Bill Newburg, Larry Vangen and Office Manager Jennifer Jones. (Excused: Lois Oliver)

The committee reviewed the balance sheet for 2024. All bills have been paid but since disbursements exceeded revenue, we had a deficit of \$9,627. This compares with a deficit of \$37,492 for 2023 and \$74,788 for 2022.

Since the rental property at 131-133 15th Street South was sold during the year, we did have lower expenses for that property than previous years. Updates to the church building were minor during the year and were all paid with church funds. Further updates will be scheduled for 2025.

The committee also reviewed the cash reserves in the church accounts and the value of church assets. All were found to be in good order.

The budget for 2025 was approved by the Finance Committee and the Vision Board and will be voted on for approval at the annual meeting. The Audit Committee determined that funds were being managed properly and had appropriate safeguards.

Respectfully submitted,
Audit Committee



TREASURER'S FINANCIAL REPORTS



BALANCE SHEET - as of December 31, 2024

Assets

Bank

102 General Fund	32,879.10	
103 Funeral Lunches	3,912.19	
111 Communion Fund	3,579.79	
153 Hungry Jar	1,327.93	
155 Thrivent Choice	2,587.74	
	<u> </u>	
Total 102 General Fund		44,286.75
120 Memorial Fund		30,514.72
152 Building Fund		8,507.21
Certificates of Deposit		
128 Memorial Fund	23,078.77	
129 MIF	651.12	
	<u> </u>	
Total Certificates of Deposit		23,729.89
141 Bethlehem Event		5,222.72
150 Endowment Fund		446,899.34
		<u> </u>
Total Bank		559,160.63

Fixed Assets

Buildings		
182 Stoffel Hall	1,651,973.00	
183 Church	1,808,839.54	
184 Building Improvement	3,687,428.37	
	<u> </u>	
Total Buildings		7,148,240.91
185 Maintenance Equipment		189,773.41
186 Piano		66,712.00
187 Organ		75,390.00
181 Land		315,822.01
189 Accumulated Depreciation		-3,853,730.87
		<u> </u>
Total Fixed Assets		3,942,207.46

Total Assets		4,501,368.09
		=====

BALANCE SHEET (continued) - as of December 31, 2024

Liabilities

Other Current Liabilities

Payroll Withholding & Taxes		
202 Federal Withholding Tax	75.00	
203 Wisconsin Withholding Tax	868.55	
Total Payroll Withholding & Taxes		943.55
228 Other Current Liabilities		
210 Senior Pastor Sabbatical Set Aside	3,450.00	
211 Associate Pastor Sabbatical Set Aside	3,644.10	
212 Synod Benevolence	7,781.85	
215 Prepaid Pledges 2025	5,801.00	
Total 228 Other Current Liabilities		20,676.95
Total Other Current Liabilities		21,620.50

Total Liabilities

21,620.50

Net Assets

Unrestricted

Building Fund	1,965,146.06
General Fund	2,355,275.10
Memorial Fund	159,326.43

Total Unrestricted

4,479,747.59

Total Net Assets

4,479,747.59

Total Liabilities + Net Assets

4,501,368.09

CONSOLODATING INCOME STATEMENT - as of December 31, 2024

English Lutheran Church												
Consolidating Income Statement												
and Cash/Liabilities Summary												
Year 2024												
	Revenue	Cash Expenses	Amortization Depreciation	Change in Value	Total Expenses	Net Income (Loss)	Checking Account	Cert of Deposit	Investments	Total Cash	Liabilities	Net Current Assets
General Fund	759,353	768,980			768,980	(9,627)	32,879			32,879	(23,621)	9,259
Communion Fund	8,670	8,958			8,958	(288)	3,580			3,580		3,580
Rental Property	10,479	13,428			13,428	(2,949)	0			0	0	0
Hungry Jar	8,954	7,626			7,626	1,328	1,328			1,328		1,328
Thrivent Choice	1,061	915			915	146	2,588			2,588		2,588
Funeral Lunches	0	0			0	0	3,912			3,912		3,912
Wedding Fees	450	430			430	20	0			0		0
Total River Bank General Fund	788,967	800,336	0	0	800,336	(11,370)	44,287	0	0	44,287	(23,621)	20,666
Building Fund (Mortgage Reduction)	14,424	1	197,076		197,077	(182,653)	8,507	651		9,158	0	9,158
Building Fund (Investments)	0	0		0	0	0			0	0		0
Memorial Fund	6,673	7,443			7,443	(770)	30,515	23,079		53,593		53,593
Endowment - Trust Point	0	32,100		(34,492)	(2,391)	2,391			446,899	446,899		446,899
Bequest Fund	0	0			0	0		0		0		0
Bethlehem Event	0	0			0	0	5,223			5,223		5,223
Total Funds - General Ledger	810,064	839,881	197,076	(34,492)	1,002,466	(192,401)	88,531	23,730	446,899	559,161	(23,621)	535,540
Youth - Scrip Fundraising	46,693	49,883			49,883	(3,190)	4,775			4,775		4,775
Global Mission Trips	12	0			0	12	8,860			8,860		8,860
Youth & Family - Mission Trips	14,711	17,152			17,152	(2,441)	7,300			7,300		7,300
Library Committee	118	1,093			1,093	(975)	1,987	652		2,639		2,639
TOTAL	871,598	908,009	197,076	(34,492)	1,070,594	(198,996)	111,453	24,381	446,899	582,734	(23,621)	559,114

PROPOSED BUDGET FOR 2025

	Budget 2024	Actual 12/31/2024	2025 Proposed Budget	2024 Actual vs Budget
REVENUE				
Envelope, Electronic, Loose Offerings	764,000	741,518	764,000	(22,482)
Initial & Special Offerings	8,150	12,742	8,100	4,592
Misc: Interest, Building Use, Etc.	1,200	5,092	2,620	3,892
TOTAL REVENUE	773,350	759,353	774,720	(13,997)
EXPENSES				
Benevolence	85,500	86,104	85,500	(604)
Personnel				
Pastoral Staff (Salary, Housing)	126,318	126,318	136,652	(0)
Lay Staff Salary	262,966	246,397	280,835	16,570
Payroll Tax (All Staff)	29,780	28,508	31,938	1,273
Benefits - All Staff	118,884	107,539	117,176	11,346
Finance/Stability Triangle				
Administration (Vision Board, Conventions & Meetings, Etc.)	4,000	2,241	3,500	1,759
Technology, Office Supplies & Equipment, Postage	30,885	21,007	28,500	9,878
Financial Expenses (Envelopes, Bank/Payroll Fees, Etc.)	8,500	8,314	9,500	186
Utilities (Gas, Electricity, Phone/Internet, Water & Sewer)	44,600	32,876	42,800	11,724
Insurance (Property & Workers Comp)	26,000	23,283	26,000	2,717
Property Supplies, Maintenance, & Repairs	41,050	29,399	51,070	11,651
Mortgage (Principle & Interest)	25,524	17,778	0	7,746
Five Big Rocks				
Discipleship	20,245	11,846	20,750	8,399
Evangelism	6,500	5,448	8,500	1,052
Fellowship	4,000	1,876	4,000	2,124
Ministry	5,300	1,447	3,500	3,853
Worship	22,020	18,600	22,020	3,420
TOTAL EXPENSES	862,073	768,980	872,241	93,093
GAIN/LOSS	(88,723)	(9,627)	(97,521)	79,096



MEMBERSHIP & STATISTICS



	<u>Baptized</u>	<u>Confirmed</u>
MEMBERSHIP END OF 2024	1,310	1,067
Members Received in 2024:		
Child Baptism	14	0
Adult Baptism	1	0
Transfers In & Affirmation of Faith	<u>38</u>	<u>30</u>
Total Members Received	53	30
Members Removed in 2024:		
Death	10	10
Transfers Out	9	7
Inactivity & *Statistical Adjustment	<u>28</u>	<u>22</u>
Total Members Removed	47	39
2024 Confirmation Class		24
MEMBERSHIP END OF 2024	1,316	1,082

**Few statistical adjustments were made in 2024.*

AVERAGE IN PERSON WEEKLY WORSHIP ATTENDANCE: 231
 Plus an average of 67 joining us on our livestream each week!

Your Ministry Impact: 2024 in Numbers

Your support for Sugar Creek Bible Camp makes a *lasting difference* for kids, families, and churches! You teach skills for faith & life to *strengthen their connections to your church* through fun, Christ-centered adventures. Youth face big new challenges, but Jesus answers in a bigger way, through you! Celebrate all the "God stories" *you made possible* this year:



Summer Bible Camp

20 unique **Summer Camp Programs** for K-12 & Families

448 Overnight Summer Campers

129 Explorer/Forester Day-Campers onsite + **50** at Congregational Day Camps

154 Family Campers

29 Summer Youth Ministry Staff + **42** Professional Leaders Volunteering (pastors, youth leaders, nurses, doctors, & builders) at Summer Bible Camp

Special Programs led by Sugar Creek

- **20** Adult Programs & Events: craft retreats, bus trips, special events, and more
- **8** Weekend Youth Retreats including church lock-ins & synod youth events
- **3** Family Camp sessions with **36** families attending
- **33** Church Visits – preaching, WELCA, Council Visits, Camp Sundays & Trainings
- **15** Full-Time Equivalent (F.T.E.) Youth & Family Ministry staff employed at Sugar Creek through 2024, providing Christian Education *with and for your church*

Meaningful Retreats & Events

88 Retreats & Events at Sugar Creek in the "off season!" (Sept. to May)

- **3592** guests at **116** events for Churches, Families, Schools, and Hobbyists
- **117** guests at other **Christian Youth Retreats** at Sugar Creek
- **898** guests at multiple **Outdoor Education Days**
- **45** hard-working supporters at **3** Volunteer Weekend programs
- **56** Volunteer Day events: Volunteer Tuesdays, Mass Mailing & more
- **4176** guest-nights and **7227** guest-days graciously hosted
- **52** of **52** Weeks of 2024 hosting groups and events in lodges & cabins!

All are Welcome at Bible Camp

272 Summer Bible Campers awarded **financial aid** from camp totaling **\$74,300**

+15 Summer Bible Campers received extra need camperships totaling **\$7,740**

Recent Sugar Creek summer staff ordained as Lutheran Pastors in 2024: **+3**

Contact Hours of intentional Christian Education this year at camp: **51,454***

*conservative estimate

Thank you for YOUR ministry to the future of our Church and World!

SugarCreekBibleCamp.org † **608-734-3113** † office@SgrCreek.org † **ACA Accredited**



ADDENDUM ITEMS



NOTE: These reports were missed in the original printing of 2024's Annual Report. Copies of this page were made and handed out at the Annual Meeting and included in the reports left at the Welcome Center.

Companion Church in Peru

On behalf of the La Crosse Area Synod, 11 representatives from around the synod, along with a delegation from the Lutheran Church in Canada and Texas, traveled to Peru July 31-August 10, 2024. Four of the 11 representatives are members of English Lutheran: Jennifer Carr, Barbara Oettel, Irene Ten Eyck, and Bishop Felix Malpica. The purpose of the group's visit was to foster and grow our relationship with the IL-P Congregations (La Iglesia Luterana del Perú), strengthening each of our synods in faith and encouraging one another that we do not travel this journey of faith alone. The La Crosse Area Synod has had a relationship with IL-P for over twenty years.

Youth Steering Committee

This group has continued to meet throughout the year on a monthly basis to plan and discuss events and activities for the youth to participate in. We welcome anyone of any age to attend our meetings to be informed and bring different ideas to the table as well. We meet on the second Wednesday of the month in the Conference Room.

ELCA Youth Gathering | Our group of 12 traveled down to New Orleans along with First Lutheran in Onalaska. It was a week full of service, education, and worship! We were able to go on a bayou tour, visit a plantation, and have some traditional Cajun dishes. Leading up to the gathering, there were many fundraising opportunities that happened including pancake breakfasts, Parent's Night Out, and a car wash.

Peer Ministry | A new Peer Ministry began at ELC in November for 9-12 graders and is led by Emily Farmer, Caroline Pohnl and Jared Kronback. Peer Ministry gives youth the relational leadership skills to know how to listen, care, help, when to seek help, and welcome, the very skills needed to love every neighbor (Luke 10:25-37). The group of 7-9 youth began meeting twice a month in November 2024. The PML group also will choose and organize service projects throughout the year.

Middle School and High School Sunday Youth Group | This program has been reintroduced again this year and began in October and is meant for anyone in grades 7-12 and can be joined at any time! There are different games, group activities, and service projects that take place during these times together.

Faith Webs | This new program is designed to create relationships and connections intergenerationally between participants. Students can sign up for camp at Sugar Creek Bible Camp and Camp House. Supporters are able to both financially and spiritually walk alongside youth and help them attend faith-forming opportunities.

P.A.C.K. | (Pre-confirmation Activities at Church for Kids) serves the 4th, 5th, and 6th grade students and each time we meet, it allows for fellowship and fun to be had. Within this year activities included tie-dye, bingo, movie night, carved pumpkins, and escape rooms! By building relationships with each other earlier on, it will allow for those students to have even stronger friendships when they reach confirmation.

Vision Statement

Live
Life
ABUNDANTLY

By the grace of God, we shall
be a healthy, mission-focused
congregation,

full of life.

Mission Statement

IN CHRIST
WE
Welcome

WORSHIP

& Work

IN THE WORLD

Welcome Statement

The faith community of English Lutheran Church

is rooted in Christ and committed to living life generously.

We celebrate diversity of sexual orientation, gender identity,

race, ethnicity, age, economic status, marital status, physical

or mental ability. We are united in the Holy Spirit as we embrace

our differences. We welcome all as we strive to be a community

equipped for God's mission in the world.

We invite you to join us as we seek to promote racial equity,

social and economic justice, and care for our environment.

Wherever you are on your faith journey, there is a place for you here.