

**Vermont  
Lutheran Church**

**ANNUAL REPORT  
2023**

Meeting  
February 4, 2024



Evangelical  
Lutheran Church  
in America

## **AGENDA**

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**Reading & Approval of 2023 Annual Meeting Minutes (p 4-5)**

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**Old Business**

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WELCOME

- Please sign in.
- Take an Annual Report and ballot sheet.
- Review, update and/or sign-up for a committee.

COMMITTEE/TEAM SIGN-UPS

2024 New Year Resolution:  
*All meeting facilitators will try to limit each meeting to one hour.*

All committees should plan their first meeting in February, if they have not already met this year.

By joining a committee, you can look forward to getting to know Vermont Lutherans better — and truly feeling like you're an active part of this special community. We promise you will feel a sense of gratification and pride, whether your volunteer hours are few or many. Also, you will come away with some lasting friendships!

Different committees have different time commitments. Some only meet once a year, other quarterly or weekly. If you have any questions or are not familiar with the committees, do not hesitate to ask.

We need YOU, to help us continue the long tradition of Vermont Lutheran Church. Please consider signing up!

THANK YOU!

Vermont Lutheran Church is a very special place. Thank you to **everyone** that donated their time, talents and contributions in 2023. A special thanks goes out to our Council Members, Call Committee Members and Assistant Ministers for all the extra hours they spent overseeing Vermont Lutheran Church.

OPENING LITURGY

Recognizing that our faith is a living, busy, active and mighty thing, may the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with each of you.

**And also with you.**

Teach us to love you with all our heart, soul, mind and strength.

**Receive our prayer, O God.**

Descend on our hearts, that we may love others in the ways Jesus loves us.

**Receive our prayer, O God.**

Empower us to be enthusiastic in pursuing your vision for our congregation.

**Receive our prayer, O God.**

Move us to engage issues in our community in Christlike ways, and to pursue deep and authentic relationships with those with whom we serve and partner.

**Receive our prayer, O God.**

Strengthen us to face the barriers we encounter in doing your work, learning to work with others amid disagreement.

**Receive our prayer, O God.**

Give us the ability to adapt to the cultural, economic and social changes that occur in the neighborhoods we serve.

**Receive our prayer, O God.**

Guide us to be a healthy congregation that learns from its failures as well as its successes and offers wisdom to others.

**Receive our prayer, O God.**

As we strive to become the church that we proclaim to be, raise up leaders who focus on the gospel of freedom, forgiveness and reconciliation as given to us through God's indescribable act of love in the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Renew us daily in our baptism, that we may discover vitality in our relationships with you, each other and those we serve in the world.

**Amen.**

**Vermont Lutheran Church  
Annual Meeting Minutes  
02/05/23**

Meeting called to order 10:52 am by Vermont Lutheran Council President, Aaron Tigert. The number of attendees exceeded twenty-five and a quorum was established.

Welcome by Council President Aaron Tigert.

Deb Krebs led us in Devotions and Litany.

**Reading & Approval of 2022 Annual Meeting Minutes:** Received request to publish draft version of 2023 VLC Annual Meeting minutes in next month's Messenger and to use complete first and last names in official minutes. Motion to approve by Peter Antonie; second by Jane Hanson. Approved by voice vote. .

**Bishop Eaton and Bishop Joy's Message:** President Aaron Tigert highlighted the reassuring tone of their messages to our congregation. The world has seen many changes through the years; however God is unchanging. It is Jesus who gives us the flexibility to move forward.

**President's Report:** Optimism as we step into the next chapter of Vermont's history. Optimism as we explore new ways to share our congregation's spirit to expand our ministry a. ensure the legacy of Vermont Lutheran Church.

#### **Treasurer**

**2022 Expenses & Contributions Summary:** Contributions and expenses were very much on target with the 2022 spending plan. Budgeted contributions and expenses for 2022 were \$160,100 and \$154,394 respectively. Actual contributions were \$161,998 and actual expenses were \$153,747. The building fund received a \$50,000 contribution which is not reflected in these totals.

**2023 Proposed Spending:** For 2023, the budgeted income will remain consistent at \$162,000, however anticipate 2023 expenses at \$196,339. The approximately \$35,000 deficit is related to Pastor Barry's transition out of Vermont and costs related to hiring an interim pastor and onboarding our new pastor. We have a strong cash reserve to accommodate these additional costs. The significant donation to the building fund, provides funding support for upcoming projects.

#### **Committee Reports**

**All committee reports are published in the annual report. Highlights below.**

**Building:** Aside from regular maintenance, a large exterior lighting project was installed courtesy of John & Jamie Hallick and Terry Doyle & family; wheelchair accessible seating was added to the sanctuary and new speaker installation is in the works.

**Endowment:** Despite a downturn in the market, endowment was able to disperse \$6,900 to support local to international missions.

**Legacy Fund:** We were able to extract money at a high point in the market, which allowed the purchase of the adjoining property 2022. A partnership with Dane County allowed for a substantial cost-share arrangement to plant and maintain the prairie along with the ditch remediation project. Upgrades were made to the Gathering Place, including a bathroom, patio area, and well. We celebrated a successful grand opening in October and are exploring additional programs to improve the area along the creek. For 2023, lower operating costs are anticipated for the Legacy Prairie & Woodland property. It was pointed out that there were no expenditure details in the report. The Legacy Fund report will be modified to include detailed expenditures for 2022. The 2023 Legacy Operating Budget is \$16,500

**Memorials:** The ending balance for all memorial funds in 2022 was just over \$24,000.

**Missions:** We continue to be a generous congregation. For 2022, the Mission budget was \$6,500,

however special collections for Ukraine and Hurricane Ian combined for a total of \$16,410. Larry Ziemer highlighted the increased demand for services provided by both local food pantries we support.

**Confirmation, Sunday School, Youth:** There is only one student eligible for confirmation in 2022 and the decision was made to postpone until 2023. There are only 3-4 active Sunday School students and no superintendent. Sunday School is held when those students are available. Aaron Tigert highlighted the significance of the lack of Sunday School and what that could mean for the future of Vermont Church.

**Worship and Music Committee:** This is unchanged from prior years. Appreciation for latest selection of hymns was expressed.

**Vermont Cemetery:** The ending Cemetery Fund balance was \$163,000. Aside from the expansion due to the land purchase, there are efforts to update the directory and map on Gathering Place and website. A project to add QR codes to cemetery markers is also in the works.

**Parish Statistical Report:** Liz Herrling clarified membership criteria. Peter Antonie noted two new members, Maggie and Jon Kann, were omitted from the report. Pre-COVID, new members were welcomed during a special service, however the consensus is new members should be added to the church roster once membership paperwork is submitted. Jill Dybdahl introduced the Vermont Welcome and New Member Committee which she graciously offered to lead. In general, membership is trending downward. Marlene Ludolph highlighted lack of youth in our congregation. Discussion ensued on ways to increase attendance and membership.

Motion to accept all committee reports, with addition of 2022 Legacy expenditures and addition of new members to Parish Statistical Report by Lavonne Clason; second by Susan Olson. Approved by voice vote.

#### **Elections:**

**Council:** Jamie Hallick, Karsten Haugen, Pat Powers, and Luke Herrling. Motion to elect all by unanimous ballot by Deb Krebs; second by Klover Schaffer. Approved by voice vote.

**Endowment:** Beth Gold and Erika Forseth. Motion to elect all by unanimous ballot by Peter Antonie; second by Larry Ziemer. Approved by voice vote.

**2023 Synod Assembly Reps:** Synod Assembly is scheduled for 5/20/23. Larry Ziemer and Deb Krebs volunteered. Motion to elect all by unanimous ballot by Klover Schaffer; second by Carol Johnson. Approved by voice vote.

**Discussion of Future Ministry-**Carol J summarized call committee process with update. A transition team, comprised of Deb Krebs and Jill Dybdahl, are seeking any immediate needs of the congregation. Aaron Tigert highlighted the great support from the Synod during this transition process. Jill Dybdahl emphasized that the Call Committee needs the congregation's input as we navigate the next steps.

**Approval of 2023 Spending Plan:** Motion to approve as presented by Bob Clason; second by Peter Antonie. Approved by voice vote.

Motion to Adjourn made by Paul Dybdahl; second by Deb Krebs. Adjourned at 12:11 pm

Deb Krebs led us in the Prayer for the Departed & Lord's Prayer.

## Message from South-Central Synod of Wisconsin

### A MESSAGE FROM PRESIDING BISHOP ELIZABETH EATON



Dear friends in Christ,

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

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

God gives the Holy Spirit, who uses gospel proclamation — in preaching and sacraments, in forgiveness and in healing conversations — to create and sustain this faith. Just as we rely on God to sustain our faith, we rely on each other to sustain the ministries that offer God's love to the world. Through your generosity to each expression

of this church — your congregation, your synod and your churchwide organization — you add to our collective voice proclaiming God's love for all.

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

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

“I am the vine; you are the branches. Those who abide in me and I in them bear much fruit, because apart from me you can do nothing.” —John 15:5



## South-Central Synod of Wisconsin

Dear friends in Christ,

This past October rostered leaders throughout the South-Central Synod gathered under the theme “Building, Learning, Growing.” While we were gathered, the Rev. Kerri Parker of the Wisconsin Council of Churches led us in a visioning process to help us uncover our values. In a summary of the process Rev. Parker made some observations:

- *Prayer and scripture matter to us. We need to attend to the whisperings of the Spirit and be the Church.*
- *We desire to be collaborative.*
- *We have an energy for change and boldness.*
- *It feels good to Breathe, Bless, Dream, Share, Thrive and have Fun....*

These ring true to me as I think about this past year and as we plan for 2024. 2023 continued to bring challenges to the church, to our synod, and for many of our congregations. At the same time, we continued to trust and know that our God is our sure foundation. Our God is the source of all that we are. Lutheran Christians are anchored in God’s grace and we walk by faith and prayer guided by the Holy Spirit. I am honored to have walked with and alongside of many of you in conversation this past year as we’ve counted on God to show up and be with us.

This past year also brought new collaboration around the synod. Congregations are in conversation with each other and with their neighborhoods about how best to share the love of Jesus. New partnerships are being born demonstrating that God is active. We are learning and growing as we trust in God’s promises. As Matthew 13:31-34 reminds us, even a seed as tiny as a mustard seed grows into something mighty and beautiful in God’s hands. God is growing beautiful ministries and relationships around the South-Central Synod.

We continue to step out in faith in this new post-pandemic world. We are changing and wondering even as we are certain of God’s steadfast promise of love through Jesus Christ. We are being bold to dream and to share with one another. We are being courageous enough to sit back and breathe. We are daring to thrive and we are having fun.

I am grateful to you. I am grateful for the generosity you pour into this synod. Your financial gifts make a difference. Your gifts of service make a difference. Your gifts of prayer and encouragement make a difference. Your ministry, wherever God is leading you, makes a difference. Thank you!

Have a blessed annual meeting.

Your partner in Christ,

*Bishop Joy Mortensen-Wiebe*

Bishop Joy Mortensen-Wiebe

**Pastor's Report 2023**

*Commit your work to the LORD, and your plans will be established.*

Proverbs 16:3

A year ago, I never would have guessed that I would now be the Interim Pastor of Vermont Lutheran Church. Some of the wisest “decisions” we make are those that providence makes for us.

I came to Vermont at an interesting time in its life – post-Covid and after the egress of old leadership. The timing was perfect for the revitalization that has taken place. Everyone was ready to put the past behind them, roll up their sleeves, and get to work.

I set about to do the things that all pastors do – worship planning, preaching, teaching, Confirmation, visitations, weddings, funerals, office hours, etc. Along the way, I got involved with the teams that were restructuring themselves – particularly Outreach, Missions, and Visibility. The teams are officially restructured. In the coming year, I anticipate they will become very productive and effective.

In the coming year, my goals are to carry forward all that is underway and to bring more of the outside in. One way to do this is through new members. I am less interested in numerical growth and more interested in the fresh perspectives and ideas they bring with them. A second way to do this is to provide programming and events that caters to outsiders as well as insiders. Visibility is already ahead of this. A final goal, and you are all welcome to join me here, is to go through all the boxes that Liz has alluded to. Someone has to do it!

In all seriousness, to the extent that authentic Christianity exists in the times in which we live, it exists in the local church. In my lifetime, there has never been a greater need for Christian formation than there is today. The work we are doing in and for the church is dire, and I am grateful to partner with you in it.

In service to our common Lord Jesus Christ,

Pastor Rebecca



## Council President's Report 2023

Subject: Reflecting on Gratitude and Anticipating Growth in 2024

Dear Vermont Lutheran Church Family,

As we turn the page into a new year, I am filled with immense gratitude for the journey we've shared as a congregation over the past year. Together, we've demonstrated resilience, collaboration, and a spirit of empowerment that has truly defined our community.

As we turn the page to 2024, I am excited and optimistic about the opportunities that lie ahead. The coming year provides us with a chance to build upon the foundation we've laid, to further mature our ministry, and to deepen our impact in the lives of our members and the broader community.

Let us continue to walk this journey together, embracing the challenges and celebrating the triumphs, knowing that each step we take strengthens the fabric of our faith community. Your dedication and enthusiasm are the driving forces behind our shared success, and I am honored to serve alongside each one of you.

May the coming year be marked by continued growth, joyous moments of fellowship, and a deepening of our spiritual journey. Together, we can make 2024 a year of profound significance for Vermont Lutheran Church.

With heartfelt gratitude and excitement,

See you in church,  
*Aaron Tigert*

## THANK YOU

Thank you Steve Holzhueter for serving as Vermont Lutheran Church's Treasurer for the last 6 years.

**2023 Expenses/2024 Proposed Spending Plan For Ministry**

	Budget 2023	Incurred 2023	Budget 2024
Operating Expenses			
Administrative Expenses			
Pastor Benefits			
Pastor Continuing Ed			
Pastor Mileage			
Total Pastor Payroll Tax			
Pastor Salary/Housing			
Pastor Severance Package			
Supply Pastor*			
Total Secretary Payroll Taxes			
Secretary Wages			
<b>Total Administrative Expenses</b>			
<b>Total Mission Budget</b>			
Programs			
Accompanist			
Advertising			
Choir Director			
Computer System			
Confirmation Expenses	200	306	200
Contribution Envelopes	600	493	600
Copy Machine			
Easter Lilies / Poinsettias Expense			
Education Expenses			
Event Coordinator			
Legal Fees			
Marketing and Visibility			
Misc. Gifts		1,222	-

Music		59	100
Office Expense	800	950	1,000
Postage	1,000	326	500
Program Supplies	2,000	1,816	2,000
Total Software Expense	1,500	5,668	1,000
Sunday School Expenses	300	466	300
Synod Assembly Meetings	1,500	180	1,500
The Lutheran	300	-	300
Treasurer/Fin Sec	250	250	250
Uncategorized Expense	-	3,434	-
<b>Total Programs</b>	<b>17,575</b>	<b>25,028</b>	<b>50,600</b>
Properties			
Custodial	3,800	4,044	4,200
Elevator Expense	300		300
Elevator Maintenance Agreement	1,000	952	1,000
Miscellaneous	400	9,027	200
Organ/Piano Maintenance	500	-	500
Pastor Expense	200		200
Pastoral Supplies	100		100
Repairs & Maintenance	10,000	19,853	12,000
Supplies	600	1,312	1,400
Vermont Fuel	6,500	6,502	7,500
Total Vermont Insurance	7,500	8,338	8,500
Vermont Phone	2,200	1,802	2,200
Vermont Utilities	4,000	4,279	4,300
<b>Total Properties</b>	<b>37,100</b>	<b>56,109</b>	<b>42,400</b>
<b>Total Operating Expenses</b>		<b>178,838</b>	
<b>TOTAL BUDGET</b>	<b>196,339</b>		<b>217,385</b>

<b>Vermont Income 2023/Proposed Income for 2024</b>
-----------------------------------------------------

	<b>Budgeted 2023</b>	<b>Incurred 2023</b>	<b>Budgeted 2024</b>
<b>Income</b>			
Total Contributions - Operating	162,000	177,651	170,000
Church Usage Income	0	1,625	6,000
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b>162,000</b>	<b>179,370</b>	<b>176,000</b>

<b>Building Fund Report</b>
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<b>2022 Balance</b>		<b>50,617.95</b>
<b>2023</b>		
<b>Contributions/Income</b>		
Contributions	25.00	
Interest	350.52	
	<b>375.52</b>	<b>375.52</b>
<b>Distributions/Expenses</b>		
Carpeting	(28,950.00)	
Moved to Designated/Memorial Fund - Organ Fund	(20,838.00)	
Moved to General Account -Closed Building Acct	(1,205.47)	
	(50,993.47)	(50,993.47)
<b>Balance</b>		<b>-</b>

### **Building and Property Team Report 2023**

Four donated leaded glass doors were installed in our fellowship hall.  
 Pastor’s office was enlarged, painted, new lighting, shelving, and carpeted along with the back stairs.  
 Pews repaired and refinished where necessary.  
 Sanctuary and stairway to balcony had a beautiful quality carpet installed made possible by a generous donation  
 Extensive work was done to provide church with a state of the art sound system.  
 One new A/C  
 Paint touch up outside of church  
 New cabinet built to store puzzles.

Thank you to all our members that made the above possible.

In 2024, Building and Property will not be kept as a separate fund. It will be accounted for in our general operating account and budget.

<b>Memorial Account 2023</b>
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	<b>Balance</b>	<b>Contributions</b>	<b>Distributions</b>	<b>Balance</b>
	<b>2022</b>	<b>2023</b>	<b>2023</b>	<b>2023</b>
Cal's Scholarship	3,780.00	200.00	(600.00)	3,380.00
Cemetery	80.00	75.00	-	155.00
Choir/Music	159.28	250.00	(53.62)	355.66
Interest	995.33	71.96	-	1,067.29
Library	202.10	-	-	202.10
Organ Repair	-	63,775.00	-	63,775.00
Stain Glass	869.00	-	-	869.00
Sunday School	120.00	-	(24.37)	95.63
Undesignated	<u>17,945.19</u>	<u>4,486.85</u>	<u>(13,730.16)</u>	<u>8,701.88</u>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>24,150.90</b>	<b>68,858.81</b>	<b>(14,408.15)</b>	<b>78,601.56</b>

### Cal Tollefson Scholarship 2023 Annual Report

Derek Adler, Cara Boebel and Samantha Herrling were our Cal Tollefson Scholarship recipients in 2023. These were presented to the students during service on May 17th. The scholarship committee wishes to extend our thanks to the congregation for so generously supporting the scholarships each year.

*Liz Herrling*

## Outreach (New Member) Report 2023

Team Members: Jill Y Dybdahl, chair, Pastor Rebecca Clancy, Jane Hanson, Susan Olson

New Members 2023: 13

In February 2023 the Outreach Team was re-established by the Council with Jill Dybdahl as chair. The Team quickly added Pastor Clancy, Jane Hanson, and Susan Olson to the roster. The goal of the Team was to formalize the membership of new members as well as to welcome and integrate them into the community of Vermont Lutheran Church.

Before Pastor Clancy became our interim pastor in April, Jill met with potential new members to discuss membership at VLC. If a person desired to become a member, Jill helped them fill out membership paperwork and review the church structure, membership responsibilities, and benefits. Also covered in this meeting was ways to get plugged into the church community through service teams and various committees. Once we gained Pastor Clancy, potential new members met with the Pastor first, and then met with Jill to finalize membership paperwork.

Meanwhile the Team met to discuss ideas to help guests and potential members feel welcome. We discussed ways to help them feel comfortable in hospitality following service, joining in special events at the church, and introducing them to existing members. We also had a lot of ideas for Outreach into the community which evolved into the Council establishing the Visibility Team.

A New Member Orientation program was designed by the Team. We handwrote invitations to all new and potential members. The program was held in August following the church service. It was well-attended by several new and potential members. Pastor Clancy presented a short history of Martin Luther; Pastor Dan Odden discussed what it means to be a member of ELCA; John Urness presented Early Church History; Joan Haugen and Marguerite Parrell presented church history from 1940s to present; Pastor Clancy talked about the future of Vermont Lutheran Church; and Jill Dybdahl talked about ways to get involved at VLC. See attached document for the New Member Orientation agenda.

The Team is also working on aligning Sponsors to New Members. A sponsor is an existing member who will take a new member under their wing and help integrate them into the church community. The sponsor will perhaps sit with them during service, accompany them to hospitality, and introduce them to other members. A sponsor could invite the new member to church events, and also help answer any questions they may have about anything related to the church. We look forward to formalizing the sponsor program in 2024.

Respectfully submitted by The Outreach Team.

## Missions Report 2023

		Budgeted	
	2022	2022	2023
<b>Mission Disbursements</b>			
ELCA - Disaster Response	790		554
ELCA - World Hunger			415
Elderly Baskets	178		
Florida Disaster Fund - Hurricane Ian	860		
Food Pantries	1,113		1,997
Homeless Vets	1,572		790
Individual in Need - Rent			100
Lutheran Social Services	1,000		1,000
Lutheran World Relief	5,470		
Mission Project Expenses			1,058
Mission Project - Christmas			35 Hats & Mittens
Neighbors Helping Neighbors	-		
Pennies for Poverty	-		
Quilt Mission	-		
<i>Supplies</i>	1,272		1,327
School Supplies and Kits	284		
			381
Seminarian Fund - ELCA Fund for Leaders	200		75
South Central Synod of Wisconsin	3,300		3,300
Sugar Creek	-		
Special Service - Music free will offering	371		Bluegrass Band
			405
<b>Total Disbursements</b>	<b>16,410</b>	<b>6,500</b>	<b>11,437</b>

## Mission Team Report 2023

*Truly I say to you, as you did it to one of the least of these my brothers and sisters, you did it to me.*

The Vermont Mission Team held its first meeting in November 2023 via Zoom. Members include Pastor Rebecca, Klover Schafer, Ellie Boebel, Jeff Dickinson, and Joanie Haugen.

We began with some basic questions:      Historically, what has Vermont Mission looked like?

Who is doing Mission already and who may be interested in participating?

What does our current Mission consist of?

How do we learn what the Vermont Congregation is interested in?

What are ideas for Vermont's Missions for 2024 and beyond?

What is our role as a Team in the process?

We also began with some observations about the Missions of Vermont. We believe that Vermont is a Mission-minded Church. Vermont takes Mission work seriously. We have both long term, such as Quilting and seasonal Missions throughout the year, such as School Kits for the local school and beyond. Also have events, such as the Meatball dinner, whose funds go for Mission work. We regularly provide for the two local Food pantries and the Homeless Vets. In times of disaster, we help to provide comfort and support as needed. A recent example are the donations for Maui in 2023. The Endowment Fund is run by a separate



committee, but is also a mission of this congregation. The Council also has designated budget for Mission. The youth have projects to help others while they learn about Mission. Mission is often done quietly with few others knowing about them until a report is given. We have a mix of local, regional and global projects

We see the role of the Mission Team as lifting up and supporting the Committees that are already in place. We look to communicating our Mission work to the Congregation. We look to see what other Mission work we can do.

In early 2024, we will be asking the Congregation members what type of Mission work they may be interested in doing. We also plan to meet with groups already doing Mission and with the youth's ideas for Mission. We will provide a Calendar of Mission Events as the year progresses.

We look forward to 2024 and what it will bring!

*Klover Schafer*

## **Missions—Food Pantries Report**

### **Christians In Action – Mazomanie**

CIA Food Pantry has completed another successful year! Under the excellent guidance of its administrator, Barbara Blattner, the Food Pantry continually has an amazing inventory of a wide selection of food and personal care products! With that availability, the area patrons that rely on the Pantry received nutritious and varied options to fulfill almost every dietary needs.

The Food Pantry continued to be open on the second and fourth Saturday of every month. The large Community Arts Building in Mazomanie continues to be an excellent facility from which to serve the public. The basement is used for storage of new donations and looks like a mini Piggly Wiggly. The upstairs front room has the well organized shelving, filled with the food and products to be distributed. Because of the buildings many events the Food Pantry's time slot requires a complete set up of tables and carrying out all items to be offered and reversing the procedure at the end of the morning. Eight local churches and the Lions Club provide volunteers to complete these tasks on a rotational schedule.

The number of community members that utilized the Pantry for their personal well being increased throughout the year. At the beginning of the year we were serving about 20 families or 40 individuals a month. Starting in July there was a steady rise in participants, that by December 34 families and 60 individuals were served. Home deliveries averaged about 2 families a month. So without a doubt the Christians In Action Food Pantry is serving a very critical need in the community. It is a pleasure for me to take the generous donations of food and goods from Vermont Church to the Pantry. Vermont rotates delivering these donations with The Grove Food Pantry in Mazomanie. It is always good to hear Barbara report that due to continued strong support the financial condition of the Pantry is very good! This allows her to continually make shopping trips to fill in the gaps of needed supplies.

Vermont is on the calendar to supply volunteers for set up and take down three times a year. We have had a fair number of members answer the call as our date is advertised. We surely could use an even greater response as 6-8 would be welcome! It is a gratifying experience! A huge Thank You for all who helped in 2023! Also Thank You to Paul Ohlogge who continues to be Vermont's representative on the Board of Directors. By the Grace of God let us continue this mission with a joyful heart!

*"Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of these who are members of My family, you did it to Me" Matthew 25:40*

Larry Ziemer, Volunteer

## **Heights Unlimited**

In October of 2023, Heights Unlimited completed its planned move to The Grove located at 314 Anne St in Mazomanie. They received a grant which allowed them to outfit the space with more shelving, freezer, and refrigerator space. The new space is much larger and more efficient than before and they are able to more comfortably serve more clients. They continued to see a steady need for food assistance in our local area as the pantry had a total of 1,857 visits and distributed over 88,000 lbs. of food. Thirty-one families visited the pantry for the first time in 2023. From these numbers, we can see there is still a significant amount of food insecurity close to home.

Heights Unlimited sources most of its food through partnerships with Second Harvest and CAC. They also benefit from regular donations from Kwik Trip stores in Black Earth and Cross Plains, Piggly Wiggly, and Walgreens. While the pantry is able to receive a significant amount of product from these sources, they do still need to regularly purchase inventory from grocery stores to provide a healthy variety of options for clients. One way Vermont could help would be to hold food drives as these seem to be the best way of getting a variety of different products on the shelves.

The Clothing Closet also saw an increase in visitors with 489 total visitors. Families are able to shop at the Clothing Closet for in-season and gently used clothing of all sizes. Over the summer, Heights Unlimited once again served over 1,100 weekly lunches at the parks in both Mazomanie and Black Earth. They were also able to further expand the Backpack Buddy program at Wisconsin Heights to provide additional food to families. This program currently serves 17 families which includes 33 children. This program is available to any family enrolled at Wisconsin Heights School District.

Heights Unlimited appreciates the continued support of Vermont Lutheran Church and we look forward to continuing to serve the needs of our community.

*Ellie Boebel*

## Confirmation Report

Confirmation is robust and exciting. After a year of hiatus in confirmation classes, in the fall of 2023 we enrolled six students in confirmation.

Two notable changes occurred this year. Confirmation classes are now held on Sundays at 10:45 am following church service. Previously, classes have been held on Wednesdays after school. Wednesday classes became a conflict with after school sports practices so we moved classes to Sundays. We meet on the first and third Sundays of each month September through May from 10:45am to noon. Families report that they prefer Sunday classes because they can attend church with their children and then enjoy hospitality while the children are in class. The second notable change is that students in the 6<sup>th</sup> grade through the 9<sup>th</sup> or 10<sup>th</sup> grade are welcome to begin the two year program. In the past, high school children were not encouraged to participate, but it is apparent that any child/youth who wishes to attend confirmation is welcome no matter their age or grade level.

The class is taught by Jill Dybdahl, first year seminarian, and Pastor Rebecca Clancy. The curriculum is “Echo the Series” which is engaging and enriching including Bible text, instruction, drawing, freestyle writing, and conversation.

As tradition and beginning again in 2024, another integral part of confirmation is connecting with an elder of the church during Lent. An elder is paired with each student and meets with the student on Wednesday evenings during soup supper for instruction and then attend Lenten service together. We are very grateful for the elder volunteers who mentor our youth!

Respectfully submitted by Jill Yvette Dybdahl January, 2024

## Sunday School

Sunday School is in full swing! This year we are using the rotational method for our curriculum. This method repeats the same lesson for 4 weeks, each week teaching the material in a different way. The 4<sup>th</sup> week the students share what they have learned with the congregation through song or a short skit. We are very fortunate to have Krystal Lonsdale as our Sunday School teacher! We typically have 5 regular students and weekly visitors.

This Fall, the student’s lessons were

Adam and Eve

10 Commandments

In 2024, we will be starting the New Testament by learning about Epiphany and the Flight to Egypt. Our Christmas program, “Christmas Memories” was performed on 12/10/23 with assistance from the Confirmation students. We were very excited to have nine Sunday School students participate in the program. This program told the story of the nativity and shared the Christmas memories of several members of our congregation.

The children choose a Fish Farm from Lutheran Good Gifts as the mission project for the Fall Semester. Thanks to the generation donations from the congregation, a fish farm was purchased for \$250 and \$34 was donated to Second Harvest for a total of \$284 donated to missions. The children will be choosing and announcing another mission project for Spring Semester.

We are excited to watch Sunday School continue to grow in 2024!

Joanie Haugen  
Sunday School Superintendent

## Youth

No youth activities took place this year.

## **Safety & Security Team Report**

The Safety and Security Committee currently consists of Bill Meddings, Steve Holzhuetter, and Peter Antonie. In addition, Jim Herrling provided valuable input, as did Greg Herrling in evaluating different options for physical security of the facilities. We met in early May of 2023 to review a template provided by our insurance carrier (and adopted in total by a mega church in Plover, Wisconsin). This template addressed the need for both a comprehensive safety and security program for our Church in light of recent events happening in Churches nationwide.

On May 21, 2023 we presented our need to establish a comprehensive Safety and Security program to the Council. Rather than adopt the plan proffered by our insurance carrier, we agreed that it needed to be scaled to the size and rural location of our Church. The following are the major components of this program:

We must have and train first responders for medical emergencies occurring on Church property.

We must have and train Guardians to insure a welcome and safe place for worship and regularly scheduled Church activities.

We would like to have a cadre of "docents" to expand our welcome to guests and facility users, explain our history, our unique place in the township, and to provide guided tours of our facilities and grounds

In addition, we provided a comprehensive breakdown of costs associated with the full implementation of our safety and security program. The Council agreed upon the need, but prioritized the implementation with an emphasis on medical emergencies and how to best address the selection and training of personnel. Authorization was given to pursue both the training requirement (for both first aid and the use of an AED) and the ultimate purchase of two (2) AED's (Automated External Defibrillator), one for installation in the Church sanctuary and one in the Gathering Place. Both were ordered, arrived and have been installed.

Training of 17 volunteer first aid and AED operators was conducted in September, by Melissa Hanson, RN. We now have sufficient personnel in the congregation ready and able to respond to any medical emergency. As volunteers, any medical care they provide is covered under "good Samaritan" statutes and does not subject the Church to any liability.

Notwithstanding the fact that the incidence of violence against places where people gather in large numbers continues to rise, particularly against places of worship, we need to proceed cautiously with the selection and training of Guardians. In understanding mass shooting and incidents, the following information is extracted from FBI Crime Statistics and Mass Shootings reported:

Between 1986 and 2020 there were in excess of 500 mass shooting (five or more victims). There have been 73 since 2020.

5.9% in Churches or places of worship (increase of 35% since 2015)

159 Total Church shooting since 2016 with 40% in Church Parking Lots

32% against soft targets (designated as firearm free zones)

Our rural setting further complicates matters, because our response time from law enforcement is a minimum of 18 minutes from notification. We understand the risk, but have decided to proceed with caution in identifying and committing the cost of training Guardians to be our in-house responders. In the meantime, we have evaluated the cost of providing perimeter camera surveillance and restricting access to the Church once services commence.

This is something we can do immediately with sensitivity to cost of obtaining cameras and effectively denying access to the building for anyone we do not recognize. We hope to have this effort in place in the Spring of 2024.

The "Docent" role will be coordinated with the Engagement Committee in the spirit of welcoming visitors and new members and with anyone utilizing our facilities. Training of Docents do not present any significant challenges or costs.

The formal drafting and implementation of our written Safety and Security Plan will be completed by May 1, 2024.

## Visibility/Marketing Team Report

Team/Committee Members: Jill Dybdahl, Bill Meddings, Peter Antonie, Larry Ziemer, Polly Kawalek, Tracy Yaktus, and Jane Hanson. Pastor Rebecca Clancy was also a contributing member in attendance at every scheduled meeting.

It is important to note that the composition of this committee provided unique talents and perspectives as to how increased "visibility" and effective marketing would benefit our goals of growing our congregation and maximizing the participation and assimilation of existing as well as new members. To this end, we looked at where we have been, what has made us unique or special, and how our "special resources" enhance our ability to appeal to new members. The committee met once a month beginning in March 2023, and developed new and exciting goals through the remainder of the year.

Accomplishments to date:

1. We reviewed our old "logo" and agreed that it needed a fresh look. We developed and presented a new logo to the congregation for approval in July.
2. We developed a new tag line to be used on our website and in printed materials and accepted it in August. "Vermont Lutheran Church - worship, Witness, Woodland. We Welcome You!"
3. We requested and received authorization from Council to engage outside, professional guidance (Amy Raleigh in Seattle) for website development. Jill had worked with Amy in her professional capacity and was our initial point of contact.
  - A. We created a website working team consisting of Tracy Yaktus, Larry Ziemer, and Peter Antonie (in coordination with Liz Herrling) to work with Amy on website development. This took the onus off an already busy Liz.
  - B. We obtained a budget commitment from Council to formally engage Amy.
4. We reviewed and locally purchased promotional items with our new logo to present to members of both the Council and the Call Committee (funded by donations from Committee members) to generate interest from the congregation and acknowledge their volunteer service.
5. We identified an opportunity for "new member" interviews to insure effective sponsorship and welcome to the congregation. We hope to formalize this sponsorship in the role of "ambassadors" to better facilitate the assimilation of new members.
6. We identified five (5) areas of emphasis for visibility and marketing efforts going forward. These five areas or strategies will be addressed in greater detail later.
7. We secured Council approval for a 2024 marketing budget in support of our defined strategies.
8. We formulated a "planning matrix" for scheduling any events in the Church, Gathering Place or our Legacy Woodland and Prairie to insure that it is calendared and follows established "use" procedures.
9. We developed and presented to Council a formal "Job Description for an Event Coordinator" to insure proper coordination prior to, during, and following scheduled events. This position will be funded from fees assessed to users of our facilities. We hope to fill this position with a qualified candidate in 2024.

Items requiring further discussion and coordination:

1. Our website working team is looking for input from the congregation as a whole and we encourage everyone to review what is currently posted, and see how we can insure ease of use, effective drop down menus, pictures, etc. We are making progress but are still a long way from making the website the "informational tool" needed in in our net savvy world.
2. Everything we have reviewed in literature and studies of effective congregations underscores the need for making "visitors" return to become members, and then making them feel welcome and providing them support.

- a. This accountability overlaps with the engagement committee and we need to discuss with them who takes the lead to create a defined approach to assist new member in 2024.
  - b. We never want new members or visitors to sit by themselves in fellowship, and one idea proffered is to establish a "NEW MEMBERS TABLE" with existing members sitting with them and interacting each week.
  - c. The sponsorship idea is also powerful, and the best spokesperson for our Church family is already a member of that family!
3. We identified communication strategies for Church services and special events (how do we best communicate or promote them, i.e. Mailings, media PSA's, brochure development, limited paid advertising).
- a. Church services are in the bulletin. Things are announced "within us" at the beginning of every service. We don't have effective communication to people who are "without us."
  - b. We need to identify someone within the congregation who is media savvy and knows the effective media to reach (Facebook, Bing, Instagram, etc.)
  - c. We need to establish our market geography and the amenable people who might be our target audience.
  - d. One clever idea was to network with realtors and develop a welcome packet for new move-ins to the Vermont Township and immediate communities.
4. Liz shared the different kinds of mailing lists that she uses and the fact that they are all up to date:
- a. Those who have ever attended an event held at our Church (Lutefisk, Deer Hunter's Potluck, Our Picnic, Meatball & Lefse dinner)
  - b. Actual attending member list
  - c. Visitor list (attended wedding or special event like a baptism)
  - d. Attender at Christmas or Easter and donated
  - e. People requesting our newsletter (some are cemetery only).
5. Vermont Lutheran Church services appear in the weekly list of services in the papers serving Sauk, Mazomanie, Black Earth and Mount Horeb. Do we want to add Cross Plains and Middleton to the weekly's?
6. We currently mail postcards announcing our Easter services to zip codes in Mazomanie, Black Earth, Cross Plains, and Mount Horeb. Do we want to expand our reach?
7. We discussed the development of flyers (single sheet) that could become invitations for members to give to their friends and neighbors. We have several members who are quite adept in extending invitations to friends and neighbors (Greg Herrling, Peter Antonie, and Debbie Krebs come to mind).

Suggestions for Special Events taking advantage of the full range of our resources (Our Classic Country Church, our Cemetery, our Gathering Place, our Memorial Garden, our Veteran's Memorial, and our Legacy Woodland and Prairie):

Advent Pageant

Christmas Eve Service

Epiphany

Earth Day

Lent (Palm Sunday)

Easter

Mother's Day  
Father's Day  
Pentecost  
Confirmation Sunday  
Musical Service (Repeat of Bluegrass Group)  
Nativity Scene in Shelter with light display

Community outreach:

Hunter's Safety Instruction  
Community Picnic  
Vermont Township Picnic  
Fall Festival  
Deer Hunter's Potluck  
Hill & Dale Bicycle tour  
Winter sledding and Cross Country Skiing  
Glacier's Edge Scouting Council projects  
5K Trail Run  
Partnering with Trek Store, Fleet Feet, Groundswell  
Movie Night in the Gathering Place  
Card Night in the Gathering Place  
Trivia Night in the Gathering Place  
Cheese and Wine dine in the Gathering Place  
Full Moon Dinners in the Gathering Place  
Travelogue Member presentations in the Gathering Place  
Presentation with Driftless Area Organizations and Hike  
Land Navigation Geocaching Event  
Coordinated release of Pheasants or Wild Turkeys with DR  
Local Channel TV Special Highlighting Legacy Woodland & Prairie

As a special project, the committee reviewed extensive literature references in a major study conducted by Faith Communities Today, titled "Attracting and Keeping Congregational Members". There were a total of ten (10) books cited in congregational resources.org, and we ordered the books and prepared individual book reports accordingly. The results of this project will be summarized and presented to the congregation in early 2024.

Obviously, 2023 was a busy year for our committee and we accomplished a great deal with much to be addressed in the future. We are open to any and all ideas from the congregation and all you have to do is reach out to any committee member with your input. We are a family at Vermont and we want to insure that everyone feels welcome here. We welcome you whether church life is familiar to you or you are just beginning your faith journey. We invite you to Vermont because God is inviting you to be here with us to share in his unconditional love.

## **Worship & Music Team Report**

Worship & Music Committee Report Vermont Lutheran Church provides a traditional worship service based upon the liturgy provided in the Evangelical Lutheran Worship (ELW) hymnal. We have continued using three of the liturgies provided in the hymnal and have considered trying a couple others. Our church is blessed to have members who appreciate music and love to sing.

This year we were blessed to add Bruce Case to our roster of organists Ingerid Kvam and Marguerite Parrell. They take turns leading the liturgy, accompanying the hymns, and providing additional music for the services. Laura Winchip has directed and Ingerid Kvam has accompanied our very dedicated and talented choir who sing for nearly every service from September through May. During the summer months we relied on volunteers to provide additional music selections.

At the beginning of the year we were without a full-time Pastor, we hired substitute Pastors for communion Sundays and filled in the other Sundays with the Assistant Pastors. During the season of Lent the Assistant Pastors led a Bible study after the Soup Supper each Wednesday evening in place of the traditional service.

Pastor Clancy joined us as our interim pastor in April and provides the Bible readings for our Sunday Services. The hymns for the day are chosen to complement the readings and the sermon topic.

Bruce Case was asked to perform an evaluation of our 100-year-old organ and we are now in the process of developing a new team to work on replacing our organ and beginning a fund-raising campaign. We have expanded the committee of our musicians and 4 congregation members to include the Assistant Pastors. We will benefit from more available opinions and information for some of the larger decisions and responsibilities ahead.

Respectfully submitted, Your Worship and Music Team



## **Cemetery Association Report 2023**

Significant accomplishments for the Cemetery Association in 2023 included the following:

- Completion of grading, seeding and surveying of the new north section of the cemetery.
- Planning, staking, grading and establishment of curbing, sidewalk, a bench and an irrigation system for the Betty Underwood Rosenbaum Memorial Garden on the southwest side of the cemetery. And most significantly, a volunteer effort of some 15-20 members and non-members who helped plant the garden and have committed to maintain the garden in the future. The Stuart Petsel plan yielded a very attractive addition to the cemetery and the church grounds as a whole.
- Through a gift of Jeff and Cathy Dickinson and their Mark-Serve company, approximately half the cemetery (eastern half) has been tagged with QR codes that link burials to Find-A-Grave and information on each. The second half should be complete by the end of 2024.
- For many years the Township has kept the cemetery drive plowed of snow but because of larger equipment, it is now deemed hazardous to negotiate the narrow driveway. The Association has contracted to have the work done by a private contractor.
- Plans have been developed to designate the wooded area in the northwest corner of the cemetery as a Memorial Woods where scattered ashes can be placed. A central marker will be placed for names and dates. Cemetery maintenance fees will apply to this area just like the rest of the cemetery to assure funds for future maintenance.
- The Cemetery Association has again contracted with Joel Schultz for mowing in 2024.
- An addition to the Vermont Veteran's Memorial is targeted for completion for memorial Day 2024. Names have been collected and Spellman Monument will produce the additional marble slab with names from the service era since Viet Nam which we will call "Gulf War and Beyond". There are 11 names for this marker. At the same time, we'll update names of new member service people and omissions from the previous markers produced in 2014. The Cemetery Association will cover the cost estimated to be about \$5000.

There were seven burials at Vermont in 2023, five of which were cremation burials. Four of which were non-members.

At year-end, funds held by the Cemetery Association include approximately \$134,400 in our investment fund and \$27,163 in checking. Cemetery Association members include Dave Haugen, Greg Herrling, Jon Urness, Gary Olsen, Karsten Haugen and Jim Herrling.

Karsten Haugen was elected chairperson of the Association at our 2023 Annual Meeting held November 27, 2023.

Respectfully submitted by Jon Urness, sec/treas

<b>Endowment Report 2023</b>
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	Budgeted	
<b>Endowment Fund Disbursements</b>	2022	2023
American Family Children's Hospital		
American Red Cross	400	
ARC Community Services, Inc.		<b>500</b>
Black Earth Historical Society	400	
Carbone Cancer Center		<b>500</b>
Care Net Pregnancy Center of Dane County		<b>1,000</b>
Dream Bikes (Bike Breakfast)		
Family in Need		<b>500</b>
Family in Need (House Fire)		
Family in Need (Medical Costs)		1,000
Good Samaritan Fund (Cash)	200	
Heights Unlimited Food Pantry/Buckets for Hunger	1,000	1,000
Homeless Veterans		500
Individual in Need - Oxygen Concentrator		
Luke House	250	800
Lutheran World Relief - Quilt Mission Postage		
Lutheran World Relief - Ukraine	1,000	
Make a Wish Wisconsin	500	300
Mazomanie Food Pantry	1,000	1,000
Porchlight	250	500
Salvation Army	400	
Second Harvest	500	500
Seminarians		1,000
Shelter from the Storm Ministries		1,000
Special Olympics Wisconsin, Inc.	1,000	
Springdale Lutheran Church		500
Sugar Creek Bible Camp		300
UW Children's Hospital		
Vermont Youth Group (2020 Deer Hunter's Meeting)		
<b>Total Disbursements - Endowment Fund</b>	<b>6,900</b>	<b>10,900</b>

<b>Legacy Fund Report</b>
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	SBCP	Vanguard	Total
2022 Balance	(26,401.97)	39,833.51	13,431.54
2023 Contributions	216,683.78		216,683.78
Change in Mutual Fund Balance		8,089.44	8,089.44
Disbursements			
Advertising/Signage	10,972.75		10,972.75
Gathering Place	38,034.91		38,034.91
Golf Cart	9,589.00		9,589.00
Lighting	1,077.39		1,077.39
Misc.	1,193.10		1,193.10
Prairie & Woodland	82,154.54		82,154.54
Property Taxes (2022 & 2023)	4,097.69		4,097.69
	147,119.38	-	147,119.38
Account Balance	43,162.43	47,922.95	91,085.38

Thank you to ALL the volunteers that participated this year, 2023.

## **Legacy Fund Team Report 2023**

2023 was an active year for continued development and maintenance of the Prairie & Woodland.

Submitted a Stream Bank Easement application to the DNR to explore the opportunity for selling an easement for the wetland – several meetings have taken place with DNR representatives and no decision has been made nor have we received a proposal for how much the DNR would pay if we sold the easement.

Received a grant from the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) to fund hiring a forester to draw up a Forestry Management Plan for the Woodland areas. That plan was delivered to us with a detailed explanation of six “stands” to work on in the Woodland. Having the plan allows us to seek other grants to fund the work we do, such as managing invasive species, cutting and spraying trees like Buckthorns, restoring remnant Oak-Savannah in two areas, etc.

Woodland Trails: Leonard Schaub and Gary and Gaila Olsen mapped out over 2 miles of trails throughout the Woodland and hired a grader and brush cutter to clear the trails.

Reseeded a Portion of the Prairie: With melting of snow and rains that came in April there was some erosion that required remediation and replanting of a few acres of prairie near the plunge pool and detention pond. Dane County had paid us for planting the prairie and authorized paying for the reseeded.

Placed a large culvert in the gully below the detention pond dam so one of the Woodland trails could get from one side of the gully to the other. Leonard Schaub positioned the culvert while Aaron Tigert ran the front-end loader.

Survey & Boundary Markers: We hired Bruce Bowden to survey the boundaries of the new property including the Cemetery extension, plotting for the new grave sites, and markers for all the corners.

Mowed the Prairie areas in mid-summer to discourage weed growth and reseeded

Constructed a Shelter House on the Gathering Place patio

Constructed a Woodland shelter house – the “Retreat” - at the top of the hill in the woods just past the cemetery road turnaround.

Constructed a rustic observation tower in the middle of the uppermost prairie area

Placed a large Welcome sign for the Prairie & Woodland, created and donated by Bill Meddings, that was placed next to the east side parking lot near the Gathering Place patio.

Used a printing company in Dodgeville to create a large map of the Prairie & Woodland trails for display on the Welcome sign, as well as a Prairie & Woodland brochure that includes the map

Submitted an NRCS grant request for funds to manage the invasive species and undesirable trees in 18 acres of Woodland (to be accomplished in 6-acre segments over 3 years) and brush cutting, managing invasive species and cutting some trees in the wetland along the Vermont Creek corridor.

Amended the Prairie & Woodland sign along Vermont Church Road to include a second rough cut plank inscribed with “The Complexity of Creation Surpasses All Understanding” as well as small shingled roof on top to protect the sign.

Placed Blue Bird houses throughout the Prairie areas, by David Lucey, Gary Olsen Dennis Schafer and Jon Urness, which will be monitored by Joanie Haugen.

Applied colored protective coating to the Gathering Place patio.

Removed four large overhanging oaks with oak wilt and used some of the lumber to construct four 8’ benches to be used along trails.

Enhanced the Patio pond by lining the bottom with fabric and placing 150 tons of washed rock on top. The 15 Koi are now visible in crystal clear water.

Constructed a storage building for garden and patio equipment along with area for firewood.

Fountain purchased for summertime enjoyment.

Purchased a four passenger new golf cart for trail touring. A 6 passenger golf cart and a 2 passenger work cart are available as needed.

Installed a 12 compartment Martin House for seasonal use.

Estimated 300 Cliff Swallows arrived and built mud nests on the Church and Gathering Place and entertained observers with their acrobatics while catching bugs over the ponds. They left abruptly June 29<sup>th</sup> and hopefully will be back next year.

Installed a rustic custom made weathervane (Rusty) on the Gathering Place Roof.

Planted ornamental grasses and flowers on the patio pond bank.

Made five more Leopold benches for placement along trails

Poured a foundation in preparation for a cemetery cross and ornamental bench donated by Jamie Hallick.

<b>Legacy Fund Budget 2024</b>
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## 2024 Proposed Spending Plan for Legacy Fund

	Budget 2023	Budget 2024
<b>Maintenance</b>		
Mowing of trails	2,100	600
Mowing of prairie	5,000	4,000
Fertilizer & Weed Control	900	3,000
Trails repair	1,500	-
Trimming & brush removal	1,500	4,000
Property Taxes	2,500	2,100
<b>Total Maintenance</b>	<b>13,500</b>	<b>13,700</b>
<b>Improvements</b>		
Signage	-	
Benches	1,000	2,000
Tree Planting		600
Woodland Trails	-	
Reseal Asphalt Pavement		4,000
<b>Total Improvements</b>	<b>1,000</b>	<b>6,600</b>
<b>2024 Contract Costs</b>		
NRCS - Woods		4,000
NRCS - Marsh		3,000
		<b>7,000</b>
<b>Additional Items</b>		
Baby Changing Table and Installation	1,000	
Locks	400	
Event Sign	200	
Legacy Prairie Sign	400	
Golf Cart	-	
<b>Total Additional Items</b>	<b>2,000</b>	-
<b>TOTAL BUDGET</b>	<b>16,500</b>	<b>27,300</b>
<b>2024 Contributions Expected</b>		
Grants		20,000
<b>TOTAL CONTRIBUTIONS</b>		<b>20,000</b>

**Parish Statistical Report 2023**

Baptisms - 7

Amelia Alice Burton  
Rhett Alan Thronson  
Hazel Marie Klein  
John Lee Syrjamaki  
Sophie Lucille Hurley  
Andrea Dyreson  
Caleb Ronald Kann

Confirmations - 0

Funerals - 6

John Nicholas Hallick  
Doris Corinne Hayes  
Donna Lea Dybdahl  
Patricia Anne Erickson  
Doreen Ione Steensrud  
Shirley Ann Danz

New Members - 13

Johanna Friedericks  
Sophie Gresens  
Polly Kawalek  
Allan & Barb Koch  
Jacob Laurent  
Andrew & Krystal Lonsdale and Donovan and Bridget  
Steven Miller  
Bruce & Sue Case

Transfers In - 3

Julie Uselman  
Mike & Tracy Yaktus

Transfers Out - 0

Weddings—2

Tom Watkins & Eileen S. Newby  
Alex Fjeld & Kara Kvam

Number of Worship Services (excluding weddings and funeral services) – 60

Average Sunday Worship Attendance – 64 in person + 4 on-line = 68

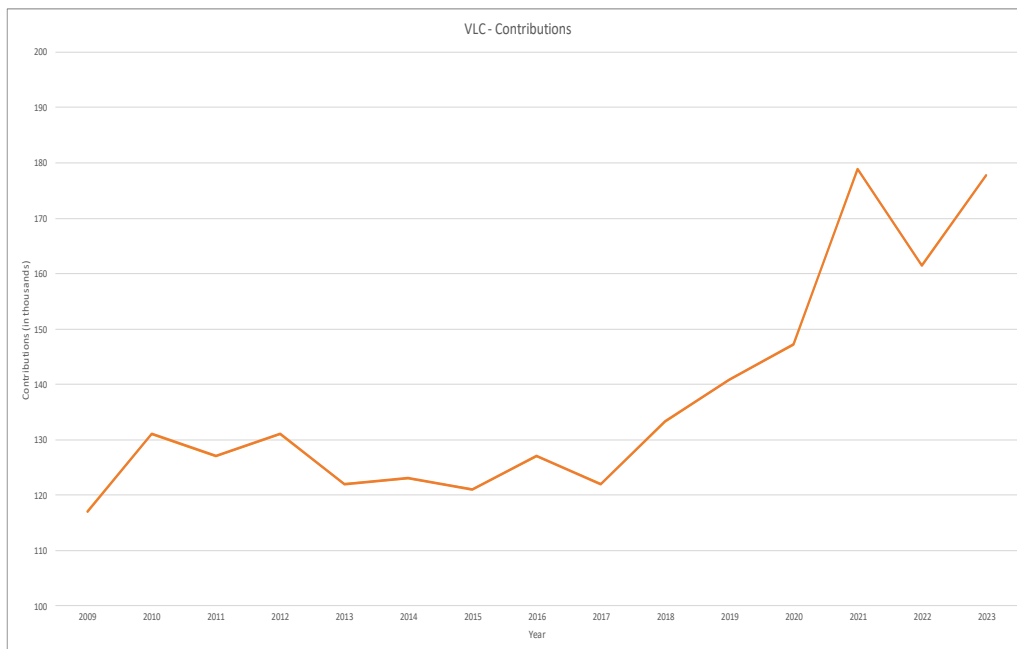
Vermont's Total Number of Members at year end - 273

## Historical Data

Average service attendance:

2013	96
2018	60
2023	68

Total Contribution—Operating:



Contributions Analysis:

In 2022, contributions were \$161,500.  
 In 2023, contributions were \$177,651.  
 2024 Budget is \$217,385.

If each member donated an equal portion of the contributions, each member would need to contribute \$796 per year in order to not incur a budget deficit.

## PRAYER

O God, You have called your servants to ventures of which we cannot see the ending, by paths as yet untrodden, through perils unknown. Give us faith to go out with good courage, not knowing where we go, but only that your hand is leading us and your love supporting us; through Jesus Christ our Lord. With remembrance of those who have gone before us, let us make solemn tribute to the deceased of our congregation (please stand).

*With reverence and affection, we remember before you,*

*O God, all our departed friends and neighbors in Christ (year 2023):*

John Nicholas Hallick, Doris Corinne Hayes, Donna Lea Dybdahl, Patricia Anne Erickson,  
Doreen Ione Steensrud and Shirley Ann Danz

*(Pray The Lord's Prayer)*

Our Father, who art in heaven,  
hallowed be thy name,  
thy kingdom come,  
thy will be done,  
on earth as it is in heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread;  
and forgive us our trespasses,  
as we forgive those who trespass against us;  
and lead us not into temptation,  
but deliver us from evil,

For thine is the kingdom,  
and the power, and the glory,  
forever and ever. Amen.



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