



2023

Peace Lutheran Church

ANNUAL REPORT



Annual Meeting
January 28, 2024
Following Worship



SHARING GOD'S LOVE BY SERVING OUR COMMUNITY AND OUR WORLD!

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In 2023 we celebrated **13 baptisms, 7 confirmations, 7 high school graduations, 10 students receiving first communion** and more.

DID YOU KNOW?

More than **50** volunteers hosted over **300** visitors at our annual **Welcome Neighbor Corn Feed**. This event brought the community together for an evening of **entertainment, kids' activities** and food.

Thanks to a generous donation, we **switched the parking lot and sanctuary lights to LED**. This switch will provide better lighting, longer lasting bulbs, and lower electrical bills.



The **Care Ministry Team** started a **Prayer Shawl Ministry**. These handmade shawls are given to those facing a life crisis. The first Prayer Shawl was given to **Renata Dahl**.



2023's **Bazaar and Cookie Walk** hosted **22 vendors** and sold about **300 dozen cookies and other baked goods**. Proceeds help support hospitality activities and the Youth Mission Trip.



During the summer, we hosted our first **Storytime**. We had guest readers **share stories** about God. It was followed by an activity and snack. It was a great time for everyone.

Volunteers welcomed **50 students** to this year's **Twists & Turns VBS**. A yearly favorite for everyone. These students also collected donations for the Watertown-Mayer Royals Room and the Watertown Food Shelf.



Thanks to generous donations, we were able to add **automatic door openers** to our main entrance making it easier to get in the building.



Your gifts **helped support over 12 local & global missions**, including **95 boxes** packed for Operation Christmas Child, **1,769 pounds of food** and **\$2,710** donated to Friends for Life, **numerous layettes** assembled for Orphan Grain Train, a **quilt** sewed for Carver County Veterans services & PLC graduates, **18 blessing bags** assembled & given out to the homeless, and so much more. Check out the missions report to see other ways Peace members served this year.



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2023 Annual Meeting Agenda January 28, 2024

- Welcome/Introductions
- Call to Order
- Opening Prayer
- Open Forum
- Adopt Annual Meeting Agenda
- Approve Meeting Minutes
- Ballot Presentation
- Reports
- Recognition of Ministry Teams
- 2023 and 2024 Finance Review
- New Business
- Nominating Committee - Election Results
- Thank You
- Adjournment
- Closing Prayer



I'd like to open the 2023 Annual President's report with a short prayer, giving thanks.

Lord, as we look at our church family, help us to recall how faithful you've been. We thank you for every victory you've provided. We acknowledge that our strength comes from you and you alone. As we consider your faithfulness, may we serve you with gratitude and see your hand in the ups and downs. You are always at work, Lord. Amen.

It has been an eventful year to date with many blessings and changes to be thankful for. The spring and summer brought us new lighting throughout the church and blessed us with automatic doors in the entrance. We were also able to update and speed up the church's internet and phone system. John Weinzierl and our Property team can't be thanked enough for all that they do to keep our church running smoothly.

This spring we started exploring options for a possible expansion for our building. I am very proud and thankful for all the time and effort that our Presentation and Planning Team, along with our Administrative Team, put into organizing and accommodating a feasibility study to gather your input on our changing needs for a growing congregation. Our entire congregation came together throughout the summer and fall to provide us with great ideas and guidance. With every blessing comes a challenge.

I would like to show my heartfelt appreciation to Pastor David, Mark and Sandy for not only giving us guidance every Sunday, but for all the behind-the-scenes duties they perform. Pastor continues to motivate us both from the pulpit and in our daily interactions. Sandy keeps us informed and organized while Mark is busy with a fast-growing youth ministry. This group is at the heart of our growing congregation.

I am thankful for my fellow Ministry Board members. We have a faithful group with respectful conversations and sincere input. I would like to also acknowledge the time and efforts of our departing board members, Karen Dressel and Jaime Carlson. Your leadership and guidance is greatly appreciated.

Finally, on behalf of the Ministry Board, I would like to thank the entire congregation for your trust and support over the past year. We have seen tremendous growth, and seeing all the smiling faces at JAM every Sunday is proof that we are moving in the right direction, or at least have the best treats! I see new members along with visitors being welcomed on a weekly basis, and I pray that God continues to bless other churches with the same success.

Thank you for your time.

Michael Rupp
Congregational President



A MESSAGE FROM Pastor David Hanson

Remembering back to my first year at Peace, I recall going with a few members of the Ministry Board to an LCMC meeting (Lutheran Congregations in Mission for Christ) at a church in Hutchinson. Pastor Mark Vander Tuig from the LCMC was our keynote speaker. In his message, he asked the question, “Who does the church belong to?” He shared a number of thoughts about what some people in the congregation might think, what pastors might think, and then he concluded, “The Church belongs to God.” When we get that mixed up in our thinking, we lose sight of who we are and what our mission is as followers of Jesus.

Because the audience had a good portion of pastors listening, he unfolded how we (pastors) can sometimes answer this question. Pastors can easily find themselves believing that the church belongs to them. We even hear it said occasionally, “Peace? Isn’t that Pastor David’s church?” For a whole lot of not-great reasons, we come to believe we are in charge. We are called by God to serve. We are called by the congregation to lead. Our past church experience and our theological training prepares us to direct the church. Pastors, like all human beings, are subject to sin - pride, ambition, selfishness and much more. Vander Tuig was quick to point out how that viewpoint will fail us as pastors and take us off course. The Church does not belong to the pastor. The Church belongs to God.

Recognizing our sinfulness is to place things in their proper order. The Church belongs to God. It is His church. Our mission is to share the good news (gospel) of Jesus with

others. We do this, not inviting others to come to our church, but to, as we like to say at Peace, “Come and See what God is doing at Peace.”

In this way, we understand God’s purpose for the Church. The Church is always for the “other,” for the “guest,” the “outsider,” “the one who doesn’t belong,” who hasn’t served on a committee or given a nickel. In the ministry of small groups, there is a principle that a group will agree to: the principle is to set an empty chair in the circle or at the table. That empty chair is to remind us who God’s church is for... it is for the one who will come because the Holy Spirit is calling them to come to His church. The one we will welcome and have a place for ... because we were once that person who needed to find God’s Church. We, sinners all, looking for forgiveness, seeking redemption, look to the cross and the love of God in Jesus Christ.

In both cases, pastor or congregation, when we think we alone are right and know what to do, we have forgotten the fundamental understanding that the Church belongs to God. When we offer our prayers, sing our praises and give our gifts, we do so not to our church, but to God and the good work of God’s people. To answer the question, “Who does the Church belong to?”, the only answer can be “God.”

In Humble Service

David W. Hanson



Area pastors at the Thanksgiving worship.



Lexi DiBendetto and Pastor David enjoying treats following worship.



Don & Mary Barfnecht and Mike Rupp handing out fans at the Rails to Trails parade.



A MESSAGE FROM MARK NISSEN
Director of Youth & Family Ministry

2023 was a fantastic year for youth ministry here at Peace! We have continued to see more and more new faces come in the door and have also seen some students really step up into leadership. I'm so proud of how our youth have grown as young men and women this year, and I look forward to 2024!

Confirmation is an awesome part of what is going on here at Peace. The program continues to grow, with 38 students this year. Most of this growth is due to new families. We had seven students confirm their faith in Christ in May. They are really an amazing group who have continued to stay plugged into our church and their faith! We have been working through the New Testament and its teachings. At the end of this year we will have written a three-year curriculum that covers the Old Testament, the New Testament, and Luther's Small Catechism. Confirmation provides an important foundation for our students to help them understand what we believe and why we believe it.

Our trip this year to South Carolina was an excellent experience once again. We brought 24 youth and 4 adults to Columbia, SC for a week of service. While there, our students helped with construction projects, yard work, a local food shelf, and many other things. The beautiful parts of these trips come in the relationships that are made. Not only between students, but also the relationships that are formed with members of the community we serve. This year we were very impacted by the man in the middle of the top photo, who was working security at Pretty Place Chapel, a beautiful chapel in the mountains. He stopped us and talked to us about his experience of people coming to Jesus there and his ability to minister to people in need through his job. These trips always show us how Jesus is working in a way we don't expect, and He certainly was that this year. Next year we will be serving in Colorado Springs!

Another highlight of our year has been starting Sunday night Bible studies. This came out of the mission trip and students wanting time to dive deeper into scripture. This summer we started with gathering at my house for a meal then took time to talk through the minor prophets together. We made it through all of the minor prophets and have now moved to the book of Romans. This is an opportunity for students to take a deeper step in their faith while also sharing a meal together



and growing in their relationships. I'm excited to see how this ministry will grow!

A very exciting thing happening in Watertown is seeing the area churches working together more and more. Bringing the Christian youth of Watertown together to share and grow in their faith has been a wonderful thing. This year we have participated in Trick-or-Treat for the Food Shelf and See You at the Pole. We also held a unity gathering for all of our youth groups and planned other activities for our youth. Beyond that, the local FCA group has been a great addition, bringing students together to share their faith.

One other new experience we had this year was getting to go on an MEA retreat for our High School youth. We were joined by four other churches and their youth groups at Ingham Okoboji Bible Camp for two nights away. This was a fantastic experience where we spent the weekend working through the book of Ephesians. It was a weekend full of worship, scripture, and just escaping the craziness of our everyday lives. It is certainly something we are looking forward to doing again. It was especially awesome to get to do this with other LCMC congregations and develop some great relationships with other churches and their youth.

It really has been a fantastic year here at Peace. I know my whole family is blessed to be a part of this church and the ministry here. We are so thankful for all the love that is shown to us and both of our daughters. It really means the world to us to see people hold Ellie and to hear people remember our precious Hadley. We so look forward to what the future holds at Peace, and are grateful to be part of this wonderful church family.

Spread Joy,

Mark



2024 PLC Ministry Board Candidates

3-Year Term - Vote for up to two (2)

Karen Dressel

Hi! I'm Karen Dressel and have been a member of Peace since 2018. I was elected to the Ministry Board in 2021 and have found it very rewarding. If you like to learn and be more involved, the Ministry Board affords you those opportunities. I also enjoy choir, attending Bible study, and volunteering where I'm able. I joined the Outreach team in December 2019. Peace has taught me that evangelism can be creative and fun! My husband, Richard, and I have been married 50 years. We have lived in Minnetrista for 49 years, raising three children and enjoying our three grandsons. I look forward to all the energy and opportunities that are in front of us as the Peace Family continues to grow. I thank all of you for the opportunity to have served in a leadership role, and thank you for your consideration for this position.



Marla Erickson

My name is Marla Erickson. My late husband, Tom, and I joined Peace in 2014 after our daughter Meghan Weaver encouraged us to visit. We felt "at home" immediately due to the warmth and friendliness we experienced. We no sooner set foot in the door, and I was encouraged to begin an adult choir. In addition to serving as a church choir director, I have coordinated special music, directed children's choirs, accompanied both church and children's programs, and taught VBS. My other non-music ministries have included serving on church council, pastoral call committees, and coordinating Alpha programs. I currently serve on Worship & Music and Care Teams. I am a recently retired Delta flight attendant and have resumed working a court reporter's business I began 40 years ago. My family, children and grandchildren are the greatest blessings of my life. It would be my honor to serve for the next three years on the Ministry Board as Peace begins an exciting new chapter. Who knows where the Lord is leading us next!



Teri Dressel

Hi! My name is Teri Dressel and my husband, Tim, and I have been members of Peace Lutheran Church for approximately 5 years. This is my first opportunity to be part of an official group here and I appreciate the nomination. Tim and I have 3 wonderful sons, a beautiful daughter-in-law and 3 grandchildren who are such joyful blessings. I have spent my entire adult life bettering the lives of animals through a career in veterinary medicine and am currently an Area Manager for a family-owned group that supports approximately 70 veterinary clinics across the country. My favorite hobbies include traveling, playing games, crafting and gardening; but my favorite way to spend time is with my family! If I am elected, I will be committed to doing the very best job. I am reliable, hardworking, and trustworthy. Thank you for your consideration.



Jon Peterson

My wife, Amy, and I live in Delano and have been married for 35 years. We have two married children who each have a son. I am employed by Karlsburger Foods as a Route Salesman. We came to Peace Lutheran in November 2014. We felt right at home after our first visit and joined shortly after. Pastor David invited Colette Thorson and me to help with confirmation. I have learned a great deal from Pastor David, Colette, and all the students. Today, Colette and I are still part of confirmation, along with many new leaders. In addition to confirmation, I help usher, greet, serve at Peace Café, and help with Operation Christmas Child. In January 2018, I was elected to the Ministry Board. This past year I was asked to serve on the Feasibility Committee. If elected, I will continue to follow and trust the Lord, looking for His guidance as our church grows. I will follow the Constitution and core values of Peace Lutheran Church established by the founders of our church and will do the very best I can. Thank you for your consideration and God Bless.



2023 Ministry Board

(top left to right) Tory Schmidt, Karen Dressel, Cathy Rieckenberg, Jaime Carlson, Mike Rupp
(bottom left to right) Joseph Perez, Pastor David Hanson, Bill Helfritz

Thank You!

We have much to be grateful for this year. We give thanks to God for those who have led our congregation. We are a better church because of their insight, dedication, discernment, and faithfulness. For those who are leaving the Ministry Board (Jaime Carlson and Karen Dressel) we thank you and pray that God will bless you in whatever area of ministry you will serve next. Thank you!

2024 PLC Nominating Committee Candidates

2-Year Term - Vote for up to three (3)

Dan Juncewski

I am Dan Juncewski. My wife (Cindy), three children (Nicklaus, Seth, and Morgen) and I have been members of Peace since 2009. I previously served on the Ministry Board from 2009 - 2013 and assist with technology and livestreaming services. I have worked at Be The Match for the past 11 years. In my spare time I enjoy traveling, watching sports with my family, going to the gym, and playing cards.



Diane Malmin

I am Diane Malmin. Marty and I are charter members of Peace. It was important to us to belong to a God-centered, Bible-based church. It has been exciting to see Peace grow so rapidly. When we started Peace, all of us held various positions. My involvement has mainly been in Christian Education and recently in Hospitality. I have been on the Nominating Committee once before. This committee has an important role in deciphering people's talents and where they can best be used. It presents an opportunity to meet members and aid them in finding an area to serve and grow in their faith.



Jessica McGowan

My name is Jessica McGowan. My husband Andy and I have live in Mayer with our two sons Riley (13) and Nolan (10). I have been an accountant for an IT company for the last 19 years, where I also serve on the culture advisory board, planning fun celebrations and charitable activities. Our family is involved in youth sports and, when not working, Andy and I are normally found on a court or field cheering on our boys. After many years at our previous church, we made the decision to find something closer to home and gladly became members of Peace in 2019. It is important to me to belong to a church that is welcoming and gives you that feeling of home. I am happy to say that we found that here. I am excited to see how Peace evolves and grows over the years to come.



Bob Rieckenberg

I am honored to be asked to serve on the nominating committee. Since we joined Peace in 2015, I have served on several committees. Previously, I have served on and chaired the Nominating Committee. I also served on the Ministry Board, of which I served as President for two years. Currently I am on the Stewardship Committee and on the new Safety Committee, of which I am chair. I feel the Nominating Committee is one of Peace's most important committees, as it selects Peace's future leaders. With my past experiences, I feel I can add insight to the Nominating Committee and would appreciate your support.



Harlan Sundblad

I am Harlan Sundblad. Carole and I are charter members of Peace Lutheran. We lived west of Watertown and farmed. Our oldest son purchased the farm place in 2017 and we moved to a townhouse at Winsted on the Lake. I was on the Nominating Committee some years back. I am on the Finance Team now. Carole and I love camping in the summer, and the last eight years we have traveled to Florida and Texas for two months in the winter. I still help with farm work during the spring, summer and fall. I would be happy to serve on the Nominating Committee again.



Greg Tesch

Hi, I'm Greg Tesch, I live outside of Mayer with my wife, April. We have three grown boys who all went through First Communion and Confirmation at Peace. I've enjoyed watching the church grow from the beginning. We were part of the original membership. I work at Kwik Trip in Waconia three days a week. In my free time I enjoy watching sports and playing games on family game nights.



Proposed Peace Lutheran Church Constitution Revision

The Ministry Board is proposing the following change be made to the constitution regarding absentee ballot voting. The change is proposed to help clarify the wording of absentee ballot voting.

Current Wording

- A6.05 Voting by proxy shall not be permitted for any matter. Voting by absentee ballot shall be permitted under the following conditions:
- The member is out of the state of Minnesota at the time of the congregational meeting.
 - The member shall notify the Ministry Board of their reason for missing the congregational meeting and their desire to receive an absentee ballot.
 - The member shall submit their sealed ballot to the congregational President prior to the congregational meeting. The sealed ballot shall be opened and counted with all other ballots during the congregational meeting.
 - Absentee ballots can only cover elections and ratifications that cannot change during a course of a meeting.

Proposed Wording Change

to be voted on at the January 28, 2024 Annual Meeting

- A6.05 Voting by proxy shall not be permitted for any matter. Voting by absentee ballot shall be permitted under the following conditions A OR B.
- The member, in good standing, is out of the state of Minnesota at the time of the congregational meeting.
 - The member must notify the Ministry Board at their regular meeting prior to the congregation meeting of their reason for wanting an absentee ballot. The Ministry Board will either approve or deny the request.
- A6.06 Absentee Ballot Return
- Submit the approved and sealed Absentee Ballot at least four (4) days prior to the meeting to the church office during regular office hours. The sealed ballot shall be opened and counted with the ballots during the congregational meeting.
 - Absentee ballots can only cover elections and ratifications that cannot change during the congregational meeting.

Altar Care

Submitted By: Wendy Ely, co-chair

Who We Are

Jackie Cramb, Brian Ely, Wendy Ely, Karen Dressel, Sherry Essig, Charlotte Helfritz, Laurie Langner, Karen Lotito, Audrey Nickleby, Sharon Pew, Cathy Rieckenberg, Doreen Seal, Deb Wasser, and Sharon Weinzierl

A special thank-you to Sherry Essig for over 30 years of service!

2024 New Members: Lexi Dibenedetto, Robert Lotito, and Kimberly Tetzlaff

Any member of Peace Lutheran Church is welcome and encouraged to join the Altar Care Ministry Team. We are devoted and feel very privileged to serve our Lord and hope you may also be ready to experience this joy!

What We Do

We are the caretakers of the altar, lectern, and baptismal font, along with their presentation based on the Biblical church calendar and events. As we prepare for worship, our duties consist of setting up and maintaining supplies for Holy Communion, baptism, and the various festivals and seasons of the church year as well as to care for the acolyte robes. Our responsibility is also to assist with seasonal decorations in our worship sanctuary.

Highlights of 2023

Special Events: Pentecost, Confirmation Sunday, Pregnancy & Infant Loss Awareness Month, All Saints' Day, Veterans Day, Advent, Christmas, Ash Wednesday, Palm Sunday, Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, Easter, etc.

This year's Easter Garden, that so beautifully adorned our sanctuary, consisted of 62 flowers.

We helped prepare for 13 baptisms. We also helped with Confirmation Sunday which saw seven students confirmed in their faith.

This year we purchased one additional banner which was on display during the Advent season in the church calendar.

Available to all congregation members is the opportunity to sign up to share flowers to be displayed on the altar during worship services. Thank you to all members who have so graciously provided us with beautiful flower arrangements over this past year. Information on how to provide flowers is on the bulletin board by Mark's office.

Several women in the church continue to make beautiful blankets to be shared at baptisms. These blankets are a true treasure to the families.

Contact Information:

Wendy Ely: 763-221-5328 /
wendyjohansonmn@hotmail.com
Sharon Weinzierl: 952-955-2400 /
jsweinzierl@gmail.com

Care

Submitted by Mary Fritz-Barfnecht, chair

Who We Are

Thank you to our team members for their ideas and dedication: Sue Beulke, Jan Carlson, Marla Erickson, Stephanie Hanson, Cathy Rieckenberg, Karen Lotito and Mary Fritz-Barfnecht.

What We Do

Our mission statement reflects our goals. We believe that we can change the world through prayer and acts of kindness to others by demonstrating Christ's love. We provide a window to the life-altering power of a relationship with Jesus.

At Peace we strive to show compassion to members of our church by supporting each other as we experience life journeys together.

Highlights of 2023

Visited homebound members Glenn Johnson, Renata Dahl and Mary Ann Hoese.

Mailed cards for Valentines, First

Communion, Confirmation, Veterans Day, Thanksgiving, milestone birthdays and anniversaries, sympathy, get well, and thinking of you.

Delivered May Day baskets.

Provided send-off prayer card and a little spending money for youth going to Bible camp and the mission trip.

Provided flowers in October for Pregnancy and Infant Loss month.

Recognized veterans during worship and provided dessert for Watertown Legion Veterans Day dinner.

Hosted our third community grief class called *Surviving the Holidays* through GriefShare. Eleven women attended.

Implemented our first 13-week grief series through GriefShare in January. A second series started in August and ended with *Surviving the Holidays*. We will be planning another series in 2024. A goal might be to ask other community churches to participate in this as well.

Something new is the Prayer Shawl Ministry. Thank you to Doreen Seal for helping to coordinate this ministry. Kits with yarn and instructions are available at the bottom of the kiosk in the fellowship Hall. Anyone interested in knitting or crocheting a prayer shawl is

welcome to take a kit. Once finished, prayer shawls can be returned to the church. The Care Team will distribute them to people who are ill, suffering a loss or are in the midst of a life crisis. If you know someone who could use a prayer shawl, let one of our members know. Our first shawl was given on December 13 to Renata Dahl.

Quarterly, a series of *Journeying Through Grief* devotionals were sent to members of our congregation who experienced a death of a loved one. In 2023 we sent to nine families and completed sending to eight additional families. We sincerely hope they have found these mailings helpful on their grief journey.

We have coordinated meals to those needing help. We thank the members who have helped with this ministry.

The Facebook Prayer group is open and active. If you haven't joined, look for Peace Prayer in the Facebook groups and ask to join. We currently have 32 members and could use more. We lift up all prayer requests throughout the year.

As we reflect on 2023, we are thankful to be able to make a difference in lives of those in need. We pray our Lord continues help us identify ways to love our congregants and our community.

Christian Education

Submitted by: Nicole Johnsrud, Chair

Who We Are

Our team includes Nicole Johnsrud, Joseph Perez, Colette Thorson, Mark Nissen, and the many volunteers who help with Sunday School, adult Bible Studies, Confirmation, the Children's Christmas Program and VBS.

What We Do

Christian Education provides opportunities for our church family and the community to grow in spirit and faith.

Highlights of 2023

SUNDAY SCHOOL:

Sunday school continues to see significant growth. We started our third year of a wonderful Lutheran curriculum called *Enduring Faith* which is offered through Concordia Publishing House. This is a curriculum that has a range of educational materials for preschool through adult. Currently we are only using the preschool-through elementary portions of the curriculum. The kids seem to enjoy the full-color lessons. Learning with a Lutheran base was something important we wanted to work towards. It has been exciting to see this come together.

We had over 30 kids register for our Prek-4th grade Sunday School program.

In addition, our wonderful Sunday School teachers include:

- PreK: Jessica Bogema-Baumann & Laura Wendland
- K-1st: Elizabeth Schulze & Leslie Schultz
- 2nd-3rd: Shawn Perez & Andrea Plahn
- 4th: Nicole Johnsrud & Billie Tharaldson

For our 5th-8th grade kids we are now offering Youth Group on Sundays after worship to accommodate busy schedules while still serving our kids with valuable Lutheran lessons.

Many have probably noticed that we no longer all fit in the large classroom and have had to expand to the sanctuary. We moved the youth group to the large classroom, preschool to the old youth group room, and the rest of our Sunday school classes into the sanctuary. This has worked well since all the classes are learning the same lessons so if attendance is small or if we need to combine for other reasons, we will all be studying the same thing. This also works well for the music portion and practicing with JoAnn. We believe as a committee that there is very little as important as having our youth strong in their faith. That comes with a solid curriculum, as well as a wonderful group of dedicated teachers. We are always open to ideas and encourage anyone who is interested in teaching or subbing to please reach out. We would love to put you into the rotation of this very rewarding program.

VBS:

The 2023 VBS theme was called *Twists and Turns*. *Twists & Turns* was a fantastical celebration of games of all kinds. From classic tabletop games to video games and more, kids played their way through VBS while learning that Jesus guides them through all the twists and turns of their lives. This is where imagination kicked creativity into high gear. The Bible Verse that was the centerpiece of the week was Psalm 25:4 "Make Your ways known to me, Lord; teach me your paths." This was a great week with lots of games, fun snacks and learning. We had many adult and youth volunteers, and we were blessed with 50 kids in attendance, which is lower than our prior years' attendance. We were competing with many camps and community kids events that week.

NOISY OFFERING:

Noisy Offering is collected during worship after JAM on the second Sunday of the month. These funds are used to assist congregations, families or areas impacted by disasters or tragedies. The beginning of this year we chose to direct funds to Operation Christmas Child, the Royals Room and the hurricane victims in Florida. We are always open to ideas on where to donate funds. Talk to a Christian Ed member with your idea. We want kids to learn the value of being generous and helping

others in need.

CONFIRMATION:

The confirmation program is stronger than it has ever been. Every year we are amazed at the growth and remind ourselves of the early class sizes of Peace's confirmation days. It's truly amazing to see how the numbers have grown. We currently have 38 registered students in the confirmation program (1 - 10th graders, 11 - 9th graders, 15 - 8th graders, and 11 - 7th graders). Our confirmation students meet at 6:15 p.m. on Wednesday evenings. This enables them to participate in youth group that evening as well.

Pastor David and Mark have done an amazing job with the confirmation program and have successfully created Peace's very own confirmation curriculum. The program is designed to present the core of the Christian and Lutheran faith through the study of scriptures and Luther's Small Catechism. We use these texts as the context for exploring current issues in the confirmands' lives. Pastor and Mark work to put material into students' hands and to create something that can be reused for years to come. This year's focus is the New Testament and why it's an important piece in a Lutheran's faith walk.

Teachers this year include Colette Thorson, Jon Peterson, Mark Nissen, Pastor Hanson, Nicole Johnsrud, Jessica Bogema-Baumann, Andrea Plahn and Josh Sommer.

ADULT EDUCATION:

There were some wonderful opportunities for adults to partake in education throughout the year at Peace. There was a great study offered during Lent and another in the Fall for both men and women.

The last Saturday of October was when the IF: Gathering was brought for a fourth time to Peace Lutheran. This women's gathering had 48 registrants. This is a wonderful experience for the women of Peace as well as the community to build and grow in their faith.

Hospitality

Submitted by: Dani Hahn, chair

Who We Are

The Hospitality Ministry Team for 2023 consisted of the following members: Stephany Allen, Dani Hahn, Laurie Langner, Rachel Lotito, Karen and Robert Lotito, Alyssa Paschke, Shawn Perez, Kevin and RaKel Schroeder, Beth Seefeldt and John Weinzierl.

What We Do

The Hospitality Ministry Team's primary responsibility is to provide a welcoming atmosphere where members of the Peace family can enjoy time together around our favorite things: Jesus, coffee, and snacks. We enjoy facilitating events to bring members of the congregation together for fellowship and fun.

Highlights of 2023

We had a busy year in 2023 with our events: the Corn Feed, Pie Auction, chili feed, cribbage tournaments, Easter breakfast, fish fry, Christmas decorating, IF gathering, craft weekend, and the Cookie Walk/Christmas Bazaar. These events are growing and becoming more fun with each passing year. We love serving our growing congregation!

Peace Café is as busy as ever with coffee, donuts, pies, and other treats. We are grateful for those who help serve after worship on Sundays.

On an ongoing basis, we coordinate the greeters, provide support for funeral receptions and other luncheons, organize Easter breakfast, and maintain and order all the various supplies for the Peace Café.

This year we have continued to focus on organizing the kitchen and pantry, providing more tables for events, adding appliances and maintaining the kitchen supplies, and supporting events such as the IF gathering, craft weekend, and a future cinnamon roll fundraiser.

If Hospitality is something you are interested in joining or you would like to help out for specific events, please let us know— we would be so happy to have more members join the committee!

Finance

Submitted by: Dan Cowger, chair

Who We Are

The members of the Finance Ministry Team for 2023 were Dan & Sue Beulke, Judy Jacobson, Andy Johnsrud, Jeremy Baumann, Harlan Sundblad, Andrea Plahn, Bill Holmquist, Nathan Wendland, Bill Helfritz, Dan Cowger, Cathy Rieckenberg (MB Liaison).

What We Do

The Finance team oversees the financial matters of the church, proposes budgets, and keeps the congregation informed of its finances. Their goal is to be good stewards of the congregation's gifts to God and to encourage stewardship in all areas of ministry and mission.

Highlights of 2023

The Finance Ministry Team would like to thank the members of Peace Lutheran Church for their generous gifts this year. The 2023 budget projected a 9% increase in expenses to cover the growing cost of our ministries. The 2023 budget also projected a 9% increase in giving to cover those costs. We are very pleased to report that our current numbers

indicate that we will have a balanced budget for the 2023 calendar year.

A financial review was conducted by an outside accounting firm at the end of 2022 and showed that everything was in good order, following generally accepted accounting principles (GAAP).

I would like to extend a very special thank you to Jeremy Baumann (chair), Sue Beulke (financial secretary), RaKel Schroeder (financial secretary assistant) and Judy Jacobson (financial administrator) for all of their hard work and dedication this past year.

Recording, tracking, and analyzing and reporting Peace Lutheran Church's financial condition would not be possible without the efforts of these individuals and the entire Finance Ministry Team.

Looking ahead to 2024, we are proposing a balanced budget. This includes increased expenses of 6-7%, which is very similar to our membership growth rate. We are also projecting an increase in giving by 6-7% which is supported by an increase in the year's Faith Promises. We again, thank each and every member for their continued generous support of God's work here at Peace Lutheran Church.

Missions

Submitted by Ruth Clark

Who We Are

The Missions Team at PLC is comprised of people who are passionate about helping others. Our quarterly meetings are open to all, and we would love to have you join us. Whether or not you choose to join us at meetings, we ask that you please continue to support us, via prayer, donations and/or event participation.

2023 Team Members: Jan Carlson, Ruth Clark, Maggie and Jim Grosshuesch, Edie Hanson, Karen Hoernemann, Karen Lotito, Nikki McClurg, Amy and Jon Peterson, Sharon Weinzierl, Sue and Curt Ziermann, and Cathy Rieckenberg (MB Liaison).

What We Do

The Missions Team recommends recipients of PLC's annual benevolence dollars and utilizes its operating and designated funds to financially support those in need locally via the Good Samaritan Fund.

What We Need

Following eight-plus years of service, all of our "officers" -- Team Coordinator, Assistant Team Coordinator, and Recorder -- have stepped down from their duties. We are in dire need of replacements, or the team may fold. Please ask the Lord if this is your calling.

continued →

Highlights of 2023

In addition to monetary gifting decisions, the Missions team organized several opportunities for PLC members to volunteer and to serve those in need. Some of the organizations supported were local, while others were national and/or international (see the *Supported Mission in 2023* table for Mission specifics).

Our more notable activities for the year were as follows:

January 28 - Missions Service Work Day

Sewing machines, sergers and 19

workers (14 adults and 5 youth) gifted 99 3/4 hours of service. We assembled and tied two full-size quilts (graduating senior gifts), ripped and rolled white cotton sheets into 191 medical bandages (GHM), tied four 48x60 fleece blankets (Vinland National Center, Loretto), serged/tied nine fleece/flannel receiving blankets (OGT), sewed five pillowcase dresses (OGT), and cut flannel and fleece for 11 additional receiving blankets (OGT).

August 12 - Welcome Neighbor Corn Feed “Stuff the Truck” Food Drive

“Stuff the Truck” yielded 412.4 pounds of non-perishable food and \$100 monetary donations, which were delivered to the Watertown Friends for Life Food Shelf.

September 24 - Missions Sunday

Our guest speakers were Andrea and Kirk Hinnichs from Hosanna Lutheran Church in Lakeville, MN. They addressed having Servant Hearts and the “HEART” Ministry at Hosanna. PLC Missions volunteer activities for the year were highlighted with a video and bulletin insert. The Missions team also served as greeters and provided special music for the service.

October 11 - Confirmation Servant Night

We partnered with the Confirmation students for a Servant Night at PLC. Orphan Grain Train was highlighted first by video and then by the rolling and boxing of 108 infant layettes.

Supported Missions in 2023

Organization	Coordinator(s)	PLC’s Active Participation
Love In the Name of Christ (Love INC) - Heartland	Nikki McClurg	Peace continued to partner with Trinity Lutheran to provide personal care items (PCI) to families participating in the “Fresh Start” program. Four quarterly deliveries were made in 2023. PCI donations were collected the second Sunday of the month.
Watertown Food Shelf	Maggie & Jim Grosshuesch	The fourth Sunday of each month, PLC collected cash and non-perishable food. In 2023, PLC contributed 1,769.4 pounds of food and \$2,710.50 above PLC’s benevolence gifting. During MN Food Share month, the Mountain of Love food drive was held at PLC, and 344 pounds of food and \$1,500 were donated.
Nutritional Assistance Program for Seniors (NAPS)	Nikki McClurg	PLC continued to coordinate distribution of NAPS boxes the third Tuesday of the month. NAPS provides low-income seniors, age 60 or older, with a free box of nutritious food provided by Second Harvest. Two seniors are currently using NAPS at the Watertown Food Shelf site. If you know of a senior who may benefit from NAPS, contact Nikki.
Orphan Grain Train (OGT)	Curt & Sue Ziermann	Volunteers helped make simple dresses from pillowcases and diapers from used white t-shirts. The diapers were assembled with other natal necessities into layettes. Total donations for 2023 included 108 layettes and 10 pillowcase dresses.
Carver County Veteran Services	Sue Ziermann	One full-size quilt was donated to CCVS for distribution to veterans.
Feed My Starving Children (FMSC)	Ruth Clark	Several times during the year, Peace members of all ages traveled to Chanhassen to hand-pack Manna meals for malnourished children.
Mittens of Hope	Sharon Weinzierl	PLC members purchased 20 Christmas gifts and one gift card for needy students anonymously submitted by the WM school social worker. The social worker then wrapped and distributed the gifts to the students.
Homeless Blessing Bags	Ruth Clark	The HS Youth helped assemble 18 winter blessing bags. The bags were made available to PLC members for distribution to homeless victims they encountered in their daily lives. Each bag contained non-perishable food items, seasonal clothing, and a New Testament outreach pocket Bible.
Royals Room (RR)	Sharon Weinzierl	Located at the W-M Elementary School, the RR houses nutritious food, school supplies, clothing & winter gear for students who come to school hungry or inadequately dressed. PLC collected and delivered non-perishable food and clothing throughout the year.
Ronald McDonald House (RMH) @ Gillette Children’s Hospital	Karen & Robert Lotito	PLC began collecting pop can tabs to monetarily support RMH. The Missions team awaits the day RMH once again opens its kitchen for outside groups to volunteer for meal preparation (a by-product of COVID-19).
Operation Christmas Child (OCC)	Amy & Jon Peterson	For the second year running, official red, green and white boxes were put out for OCC use. The colorful boxes, along with some creative marketing, inspired PLC members to fill 95 boxes, 15 boxes fewer than in 2022. Many families included in their box(es) a \$10 check for postage.
Global Health Ministries (GHM)	Jim & Maggie Grosshuesch, Cathy Rieckenberg, Sue & Curt Ziermann	Donated white cotton sheets were ripped, rolled, and rubber-banded, thereby creating compact bandages. The bandages were delivered to GHM for distribution around the world. To our best count, 1,330 bandages were rolled by PLC in 2023.

Outreach

Submitted by: Karen Dressel, chair

Who We Are

Our committee members include Brenna Demeules, Brian & Wendy Ely, Mary Fritz-Barfnecht, Robert & Karen Lotito, Tom & Audrey Nickleby, Cathy Rieckenberg, Karen Dressel (chair) and Pastor David.

What We Do

We work to share the love of Christ to the community of Watertown and surrounding areas, supporting and hosting community events.

Highlights of 2023

The Pineapple Express is a great activity our team does. Quarterly, we continue to deliver pineapples to households new to the area. Members of our committee and other church members helped to deliver 200+ pineapples this year. Thank you to all of the volunteers and to Cathy Rieckenberg for leading the project.

In March we hosted the Watertown firemen/women Chili Feed. The fire department and EMTs are so appreciative. It's a great way for all of us to get to know our community volunteers, plus it's a fun event to do.

We hosted an opportunity for our church and community to purchase plants and flowers during the spring from Gerten's. All the proceeds go toward support of the Welcome Neighbor Corn Feed.

April 8th, we were at the door to welcome families to Watertown's Easter Eggstravanga. We handed out silicone bracelets and pinwheels - both imprinted with 'He Is Risen'.

The last weekend in April, we were at the curb serving coffee during Watertown's Clean-up Day.

In August we helped host the Welcome Neighbor Corn Feed (WNCF). The weather was beautiful and may have contributed to our record turnout from the community coming and enjoying the afternoon. All committees and a lot of the congregation volunteered their time by

helping with setup, concessions, various booths, and cleanup. Every year it gets bigger and better. Thank you all!

In October we hosted a table at the Watertown's Ladies Night Out. We handed out the Chamber of Commerce bags, and from Peace - we gave out 240 cookies with information for our Christmas programs. A great time for camaraderie and some local shopping.

In November, we had a *Poinsettia & Wreath Sale*. This gave members an opportunity to purchase a poinsettia in honor/memory of a loved. These poinsettias decorated the church during Advent and Christmas. Members could also purchase a poinsettia, wreath or spruce tip pot to decorate their homes. Thank you to Wendy Ely for coordinating this event. Proceeds to support Outreach activities.

We hosted our first Advent concert on December 9th, enjoying a full concert from *The Preacher's Daughters*. Wonderful way to enjoy the music of the Season. Any proceeds went to supporting the WNCF.

Four times a year Outreach hosts *Coffee, Cake & Conversation* after worship followed a few weeks later by *New Member Sunday*. New members are given a WELCOME to our church family swag bag that includes information about Peace, a member directory, homemade jam and a loaf of bread. We continue to be blessed with people who have heard about PLC from the WNCF, a pineapple delivery, a postcard mailing, social media or by YOU. Thank you to all our new members and for sharing our love of PLC to others.

I want to thank our hard-working team for always being there, helping out, sharing ideas and making Peace a place to call home for everyone. Special thanks to Sandy Fleischman for her help with Outreach posters and handouts. And to Pastor and Sandy for their artistic creativity.

We also thank our Peace members for their help.

The Outreach committee meets the first Monday of every month at Peace, at 6 p.m. We always welcome new people to our committee as we enjoy new ideas, inspiration and energy! Please consider joining.

Property

Submitted by: John Weinzierl, chair

Who We Are

The Property Ministry Team is made up of volunteers who offer their time and talents to ensure the facilities are maintained and are in good repair and appearance. Team members are Bill Hoernemann, John Lobitz, Tom Mittelstaedt, Paul Nesvold, Jim Grosshuesch, Kris Hanson, Andy Johnsrud, Tim Dressel, Jason Raser, Leif Pederson, Cory Meyer, John Weinzierl and Mike Rupp (MB liaison).

What We Do

This group maintains the heating, plumbing, mechanical, electrical and security systems within the church. Property is responsible for the maintenance of supplies, carpet cleaning, light bulb replacement, HVAC monitoring and the job of custodial services, which includes regular cleaning (once per week and on an as-needed basis.) The exterior maintenance includes regular gardening, weeding, mowing, fertilizing, irrigation system maintenance and snow removal.

This group works diligently all year to keep Peace looking well maintained.

Highlights of 2023

- Relandscaped some of the north side of the church.
- Through generous donation, the sanctuary and parking lot lights were changed over to LED.
- Coordinated installation of new automatic door openers.

A special thanks to all of the helpers who responded as needs arose. Special thanks to the Monday morning cleaning group, Bill Hoernemann, Paul Nesvold, Jim Lindgren, Bill Helfritz, Bob Carlson, Ted Pew, Dewey Swenson, Bob Rieckenberg, Harlan Sundblad, and Jake Jacobson. Thanks to Jerry Berg for providing the lawn care services, Kris Hanson and Tom Mittelstaedt for providing the snowplowing, and John Lobitz and Paul Nesvold for taking care of the sidewalk snow removal.

There is always a need for more members. Contact John Weinzierl if interested.

Technology

Submitted by Kevin Schroeder, chair

What We DO

The Technology Team is responsible for the electronic equipment throughout the church including the office equipment, telephones, PCs, and audio/video equipment, as well as coordinating upgrades and changes to software.

Highlights of 2023

We purchased two new wireless microphones for the church worship area. These new microphones will provide us options for every worship service. They can be used for singing, speaking (“Yay God”, announcements, children's play, etc.). These new microphones gave us enough microphones for the children's program, so we did not have to rent any additional mics this year.

We upgraded the internet and phones this year as well. We now have faster speeds, allowing us to work more efficiently and makes livestreaming more reliable.

Stewardship

Submitted by: Tricia Rupp, chair

Who We Are

Our team includes Sue Beulke, Amy Peterson, Andrea Plahn, Bob Rieckenberg, Tricia Rupp, Melissa Stuntebeck, Bill Helfritz (MB liaison), and YOU! It is your time, your talents, and your gifts that allow Peace to spread God's word and do God's work all year long. Fun Fact: did you know there are at least 30 volunteers and over 36 volunteer hours needed for one Sunday morning worship with communion and children's Sunday School, and even more if the Praise Band is playing?

What We Do

Stewardship 360 is a yearlong effort focusing on time, talents and gifts.

2023 Highlights

Breathe, 40-Days of Giving emails were sent to members during Lent this year. These emails included a Stewardship quote, Bible verse, two Generosity In Action items and a prayer. Following worship each Sunday during Lent, members were invited to a table to discuss the week's email.

Our summer 12-week stewardship theme was *Summer Road Trip with Flat Jesus*. Families received “suitcases” with fun summer travel items and a picture of Jesus to color, attach to a stick and bring with them throughout their summer travels.

This was a fun theme as members were invited to send in pictures of themselves with Flat Jesus on their summer vacations. Members also tagged their summer trips on a map.

Our fall theme was *God's Story, Our Story, My Story*. We all have a story and we all play a part in God's story. We interviewed and videotaped various members of the church beginning with some of the founding members telling *Our Story*, how Peace started and what their vision was for the church. The videos were played in worship during the fall campaign. In September, 162 stewardship packets were picked up at church or mailed. We are very thankful for the 96 responses that were returned. 91 faith promises were received totaling \$343,309. We celebrated these gifts with a brunch on Celebration Sunday, November 12th.

Interest Inventories were made available to the congregation via paper copies and online. Peace needs YOU! Please pray about how you can become more involved at Peace.

We're looking forward to our Stewardship journey in 2024!

91
2024 Faith Promises Received

\$343,309
2024 Total Pledged

15
Brand New Pledgers

38
Households Increased 2024 Giving

Safety

Submitted by Bob Rieckenberg, chair

This is a new team being formed at Peace. The church safety team will be comprised of members from various church functions, guided by the PLC Executive Committee and the PLC Ministry Board. The committee allows for a more comprehensive approach to safety and enhances the effectiveness of safety measures across PLC's ministries. Their focus is on the development of safety programs and emergency plans through self-inspections and activity reviews. A more detailed description of committee functions and how you can apply to be a member of the team will soon be available.



Arvin Senne with granddaughter



Ella May, Shelby Dressel & Rylee May



Tiffany & Lena Molitor



Sophia & Olivia Pederson



Sawyer Schmidt



Dylan, Katie & Weston Young

Worship & Music

Submitted by: Edie Hanson, chair

Who We Are

We are thankful to the many people who contribute to the Worship & Music ministry: to Pastor David, for his wonderful leadership and quick wit. To JoAnn Deveny, for her tireless devotion to our music and scheduling of special guest musicians. To Marla Erickson, for scheduling our special music and directing the choir. To Marla and Ruth Clark who provide accompaniment when JoAnn is on vacation. To our Sunday School children's choir led by Nicole Johnsrud who usually bless us with a song on the second Sunday of each month during the school year and performs a wonderful Christmas Program every December. To all our volunteer musicians and vocalists, for their many gifts. To the members of the Worship & Music Ministry Team, for their support in selecting our music. To the ushers and greeters, sound board operators, recorders and slide presenters. To Mark Nissen, who arrives early to set up the video recording and cameras. To Kevin Schroeder, who ensures the sound system is set up and ready for every worship. There are so many who contribute behind the scenes to make our worship time blessed.

We thank our Lord Jesus Christ, for what He has done in our lives and the people He has guided to our Peace doors. We welcome all feedback regarding the music selections, flow of the worship experiences, and worship atmosphere of Peace.

What We Do

Worship & Music volunteers are a group of people who graciously share their gifts and talents, volunteering as musicians, greeters, ushers, readers, and more. Our members are what makes Peace special. Members of the core team meet monthly to plan the music for the next month's worship services.

Highlights of 2023

The continuing goal for the Worship & Music Ministry Team in 2023 has been to create a worship experience that has something meaningful for everyone who attends Peace Lutheran Church. To that end, we strive to select music that includes traditional hymns and newer praise music. The intent is to find something that speaks to each worshiper's heart. We believe that a blended worship experience benefits everyone, and we want all to feel blessed and filled with the Holy Spirit.

We are continuing to develop our livestreaming of worship. Every Sunday there are people who join us online and others who view the worship later via YouTube and Facebook. We continue to be grateful for the groundwork our brother in Christ, Robert Dean, did to make this possible. We are so happy to welcome all the volunteers who manage the livestreaming of every worship, especially our youth who seem to adapt to it so quickly.

During the year, we held monthly meetings to plan for Sunday worship and special worship opportunities, such as Lenten mid-week, summer mid-week, and more. We're excited about the increased number of people coming to worship with us at Peace and focusing on worship timing to ensure our Sunday School has the time they need after worship. We continue to work with the Technology Team and Ministry Board to improve the sound quality. If you are interested in volunteering to present slides, record worship, read the scripture, operate the sound board, present a children's message for JAM or be the person who carries the camera and mic around the church during the announcements and "Yay God" moments during worship, please contact the church office and let us know. We're always happy to train new volunteers. All ages are invited to volunteer to serve during worship. We have found that our Middle School and High School members are extremely good with technology and enjoy doing livestreaming, slide presentation and soundboard operations. We are so grateful for their service!

Adult Choir

Submitted by: Marla Erickson,
Adult Choir Director & Special Music Coordinator

Who We Are

A group of adults who love to praise the Lord in song.

What We Do

Peace's Adult Choir continues to enjoy adding music to our Sunday morning worship. We have changed up our rehearsal opportunities going into 2024, where we will rehearse the last two Wednesdays of the month at 5:00 p.m. and sing for Sunday morning worship the **first Sunday of each month**. This will give our choir more rehearsal time together, with an eye towards Holy Week, Easter and beyond, in addition to honoring the many requests for individuals desiring to provide special music on a Sunday morning. We heartily welcome and encourage new members to join choir at any time throughout the September-to-May choir year. (Note: We are in strong need of male voices, but all voices welcomed.) We truly would love to have you in our midst. Contact Marla Erickson (763) 331-2525 with any questions.

Highlights of 2023

CHOIR HIGHLIGHTS:

Participating in Watertown's annual Thanksgiving Eve community worship, hosted by Trinity Lutheran this year, was an opportunity for our choir to both rehearse and sing in a larger, combined choir to give thanks to God for His many blessings in an ecumenical worship setting. Peace looks forward to coordinating and hosting this service in 2024.

SPECIAL MUSIC HIGHLIGHTS:

Peace's congregation has been blessed with many music vocalists, flutists, trumpet players, drummers, Praise Team guitar and bass players and others, who greatly enhance our worship by adding their talents to Easter, Reformation Sunday, All Saints Sunday and Christmas Eve worship.

Special thanks to Harm Bents, Weinzierls' grandson, for sharing his wonderful vocal talent more than once this year. And also to Ruth Clark, who has filled in at both piano and trumpet.

Summer worship always offers a great opportunity for special music. Please contact me regarding ideas you'd enjoy sharing musically, and I will get you scheduled. JoAnn and I are available to assist in both choosing music and rehearsing. Your gifts are a welcome enhancement to Peace's music ministry.

Sol Deo Gloria!

Youth Activities

Submitted by: Jessica Bogema-Baumann, chair

Who We Are

Committee Members: Jessica Bogema-Baumann, Mark & Gladys Nissen, Joseph Perez, Meghan Weaver, Nicole Johnsrud, Andrea Plahn, Nancy & Troy Sandin, and Grace Carlin

What We Do

Our Youth Activities Team strive to strengthen our youth to develop a mature and active relationship with Jesus Christ and to be disciples and leaders for Him in this church and in the community. We seek to demonstrate care and concern for all students. This ministry focuses on youth who have completed their first communion through 12th grade.

Highlights of 2023

The youth activities ministry had a busy 2023! I always say it is hard to believe another year has gone by! When you look around Peace during a Sunday worship service or on a Wednesday night during youth group, you will see a huge blessing, so many kids! The number of kids attending Sunday service, Wednesday confirmation and youth group just continues to grow each year. If you look around in the Sanctuary, you will see our youth as readers, special music, J.A.M, ushers, running the slides and the livestream for online worship!

Mark continues to lead youth group every Wednesday night for high school and after service on Sunday for middle school. Youth group is not only available for members of Peace but is also open to our community and friends

of our youth. We continue to see kids who are not members of Peace join Mark and the youth on these nights. A typical youth group night or event sees about 30-40+ kids!

The youth committee and Peace's youth planned and partook in multiple service events this year. Some of these include; yardwork day, Trunk-or-Treat, Trick-or-Treat for the food shelf, a youth-led Easter celebration, See You at the Pole, college care packages, and a youth-led Valentines Dinner. The youth and committee also can be seen helping our fellow committees with their events like VBS, Rally Sunday and the Corn Feed!

Our committee made sure to have some extra fun events too in 2023 as well. Some of the events were: broomball, Urban Air, tubing, bowling, Valley Fair, egg olympics, color war, water war, nerf war, swimming, and multiple Bible Studies led by Mark at his home with dinner!

Yay God, Peace went on a third mission trip! We had 24 youth and four adult leaders head to Columbia, South Carolina to spread the good news of our Savior and to volunteer their time serving the community of Columbia. They cleaned, organized, painted houses, did yard work, spent time with children, helped wherever needed. They spent time every day in worship and prayer, and building relationships, and had some fun as well on the way! Peace has a fourth mission trip on the books for this upcoming summer. The youth will be heading to Colorado Springs, Colorado to serve and spread the good news of our amazing Lord!

Our committee is excited for the future. It is hard not to be! One word that continues to come to mind when thinking about the future is GROWTH! I say this every year, but boy God is good! We have many families that are

excited for their kids to be a part of Peace's youth, and we are having more and more interest from families outside of Peace as well. As a committee, we are excited to see the youths' faith grow. We continue to support them with their faith walk and strengthen our relationships. With the continued support from our congregation, I believe this program is only going to gain more and more momentum and be able to reach so many more youth.

We know 2024 is going to be a busy year! We are looking forward to continuing traditions and building and strengthening our current youth group. Nothing is impossible with God!

"Lord, I want to give you all the glory for giving us our youth, the events we get to partake in, the work that is being done inside and outside our church. Lord it is our desire to grow your Kingdom and bring more and more kids to personally know, love and worship you. I pray that everything we do is pleasing in your eyes."

I would like to thank our congregation for supporting Mark's position and our youth. We can be a rowdy bunch, but this church is home to these kids and they take much comfort in these walls and in all of you. I would also like to thank Pastor Hanson for always giving his time and talents, for loving and supporting our youth, and being a real good sport hanging out with a bunch of teens! I need to thank Mark for being an amazing asset to our church, youth, families, and community. Your love and passion for our youth and our church is easily seen in everything you do. Thank you. Last, but not least, I want to thank my fellow committee members for giving their time and talents. Without you, none of this would be possible.

Praise God.



Trunk-or-Treat (moved inside because of the cold)



Trick-or-Treat for the food shelf



Egg Olympics

**UNAPPROVED MINUTES OF THE
JANUARY 15, 2023 SPECIAL
CONGREGATIONAL MEETING**

Welcome given by President Joseph Perez.

I. Call to Order: Call to order at 10:30 a.m.

II. Opening Prayer: Opening prayer lead by Pastor David Hanson

III. Adopt Agenda:

Motion to adopt Special Congregational Meeting Agenda. Chuck Venske/Doreen Seal/Carried

IV. Presentation of Motion: Mike Rupp presented information regarding the motion.

Motion to approve the expenditure of up to \$17,000 from the Building the Future Fund for a Phase 1 Feasibility Study and, if deemed necessary by the Ministry Board, a Phase 2 Development of a Master Facilities Plan. Tory Schmidt/Shawn Perez/Carried

V. Ballot Presentation Given by Bob Rieckenberg: Bob explained parliamentary procedure for voting on the motion. Members were given time to vote. Ballots were collected and counted by nominating committee.

VI. Election Results: The election results were presented. 71 “Yes” votes and 15 “No” votes. The motion passes.

Motion to destroy ballots: Bob Rieckenberg/Bill Holmquist/Carried

VII. Adjournment: Closing statement from the president of the congregation, Joseph Perez.

Motion to adjourn Bill Holmquist/Tory Schmidt/Carried

Meeting Adjourned at 11:03 a.m.

VIII. Closing Prayer: Closing Prayer by Pastor David Hanson.

**UNAPPROVED MINUTES OF THE 2022
ANNUAL MEETING - January 29, 2023**

Welcome given by President Joseph Perez. Following Robert Rules of Order. We have a quorum.

I. Call to Order: Call to order at 10:30 a.m.

Motion: Dewey (Duane) Swenson/Second: Chuck Venske/Carried

II. Opening Prayer: Opening prayer lead by Pastor David Hanson

III. Open Forum: None

IV. Adopt Agenda:

Motion to adopt Annual Meeting Agenda with changes. Sharon Weinzierl/Beth Seefeldt/Carried

V. Approve Congregational Meeting Minutes:

Approve 2021 Congregational Meeting Minutes held on Sunday, January 30, 2022

Motion to approve the congregational meeting minutes held on January 30, 2022. John Weinzierl/Sue Beulke/Carried

VI. Nominating Committee Ballot Presentation Given by Bob Rieckenberg:

Ministry Board Positions (3-Year Term) Vote for Two: Bill Helfritz, Andy Johnsrud, Cathy Rieckenberg, Tory Schmidt, and Beth Seefeldt.

Nominating Committee (2-Year Term) Vote for Three: Mary Fritz-Barfnecht, Jessica Feltmann, Andrea Plahn, Harlan Sundblad, Greg Tesch and Meghan Weaver.

President (After Ministry Board Election Results)

VII. Reports

Pastor’s Report given by Pastor David Hanson.

Director of Youth & Family Report given by Mark Nissen: Given by Pastor David.

Ministry Board Report given by Joseph Perez.

VIII. Recognition of Ministry Teams

IX. Remembering Our Departed Members: Doris Swenson and Marty Malmin were remembered. Moment of silence, offered prayer and remembering that grieving is a journey.

X. 2021 and 2022 Finance Review Presented by Judy Jacobson Financial Administrator.

Audit Report of 2022 Financial Records – Done by an independent agency, Jeanne Matter CPA, and found our books to be in order. Verified accurate.

Review of 2022 Finance Report –

Judy reviewed income and expenses.

Proposed 2023 Budget – Judy discussed the 2022 budget.

Motion to approve 2023 Budget: Chuck Venske/Bob Carlson/Carried

XI. New Business: None

XII. Nominating Committee Election Results Presented by Bob Rieckenberg

Elected Nominating Committee Members for the 2023 year serving a 2-year term are: Mary Fritz-Barfnecht, Andrea Plahn and Meghan Weaver

Elected Ministry Board Members for the 2023 year serving a 3-year term are: Bill Helfritz, Cathy Rieckenberg and Tory Schmidt.

2023 Ministry Board President: Mike Rupp has agreed and accepted the 2023 Ministry Board President position.

Motion to destroy ballots: Bob Rieckenberg/Glen Hulley/Carried

XIII. Thank You Past Ministry Board Members and Candidates

XIV. Adjournment: Closing statement from the president of the congregation, Joseph Perez.

Motion to adjourn Bob Rieckenberg/Dan Langner/No discussion/

Meeting Adjourned at 11:15 a.m.

XV. Closing Prayer: Closing Prayer by Pastor David Hanson.



Giving Analysis at a Glance

PROFILE

Fiscal year January 1, 2023 - December 31, 2023

This represents offertory giving only, including EFT, envelopes and online giving to general fund.

142

TOTAL HOUSEHOLDS GIVING (AS OF 12/31)

133

TOTAL CONTRIBUTING MEMBER HOUSEHOLDS

496

TOTAL MEMBERSHIP

78

PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL HOUSEHOLDS CONTRIBUTING

45

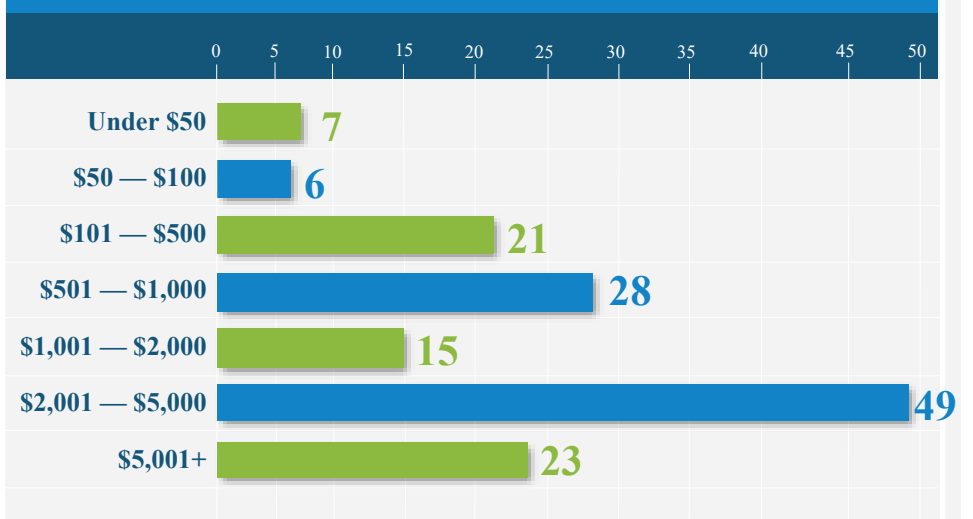
AVG. WEEKLY CONTRIBUTION PER CONTRIBUTING HOUSEHOLD

2,330

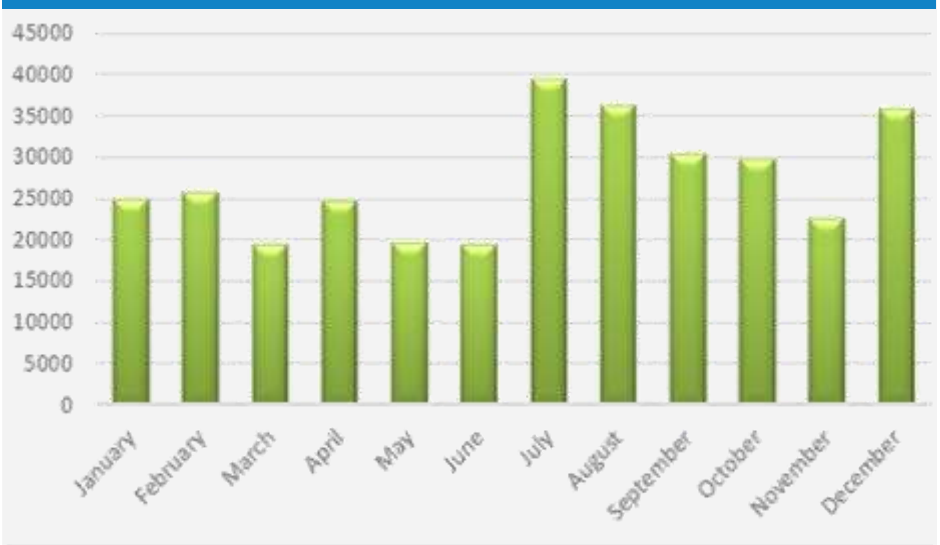
AVG. ANNUAL CONTRIBUTION PER CONTRIBUTING HOUSEHOLD

of Contributing households

ANNUAL GIVING



AVG. GIVING BY MONTH



INCOME SUMMARY	2023	2022	2021
Faith Promises - General Fund	\$ 358,854	\$ 328,853	\$ 297,248
Cash Offerings	7,385	5,921	4,430
Holiday Offerings	8,981	10,908	17,654
Interest Income	1,847	439	213
Miscellaneous Income	1,555	500	4,998
Education & Youth Events	<u>7,434</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>

OPERATING INCOME \$ 386,056 \$ 346,621 \$ 324,543

Brick & Mortar Fund	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 889
Undesignated Donation Fund	100,000	67,335	64,000
Youth Mission Trip	23,984	17,787	16,502
Projector Fund	-	-	17,000
Various Funds	41,944	46,374	18,882
Memorials—Undesignated	50.00	-	650
Refunded Transactions	<u>7,347</u>	<u>3,524</u>	<u>6,368</u>

NON-OPERATING INCOME \$ 173,325 \$ 135,020 \$ 124,291

TOTAL INCOME **\$ 559,381** **\$ 481,641** **\$ 448,835**

EXPENSE SUMMARY	2023	2022	2021
Altar Care+	\$ 1,575	\$ -	\$ -
<i>+(previously combined with church supplies)</i>			
Benevolence	32,000	29,710	27,100
Care	1,165	1,338	518
Christian Education	8,942	4,969	4,404
Communications & Technology	3,808	2,215	2,760
Hospitality	2,975	3,333	3,336
Missions	1,987	2,844	1,774
Office and Church Supplies	26,942	15,317	14,216
Outreach	6,999	6,236	3,837
Property	33,253	31,092	23,971
Salaries & Benefits	244,693	232,277	228,646
Stewardship	2,864	1,475	1,712
Worship & Music	2,183	1,262	1,701
Youth Activity	<u>8,903</u>	<u>4,524</u>	<u>3,811</u>

OPERATING EXPENSE \$ 378,289 \$ 336,592 \$ 317,787

Brick & Mortar Fund	\$ -	\$ 3,691	\$ 598
Build the Future	18,721	-	-
Properties Fund	13,220	1,554	8,532
Rainy Day Fund	-	6,781	-
Noisy Offering	1,200	1,948	-
Youth Mission Trip Fund	21,220	14,646	15,680
Outreach Fund	12,465	6,640	8,247
Projector/Technology Fund	-	25,636	-
Various Funds	13,280	10,930	12,744
Memorials	1,348	771	662
Refunded Transactions	<u>-</u>	<u>2,376</u>	<u>4,908</u>

NON OPERATING EXPENSE \$ 81,454 \$ 74,973 \$ 51,371

TOTAL EXPENSE **\$ 459,743** **\$ 411,565** **\$ 369,157**

**totals rounded to the nearest dollar*

Cash & Fund Balances

as of 12/31/2023

General	\$ 100,528
Undesignated Donation	100,000
Brick & Mortar	23,375
Build the Future	62,804
Prepaid 2024 Faith Promise	26,533
Memorials	
Undesignated	70
Jerry Hendricks	222
Rainy Day	3,449
Altar Care	462
Christian Education	
Noisy Offering	853
Care Ministry	745
Hospitality	19,500
Mission Ministry	3,557
Good Samaritan	7,282
Thrivent Mission	1,000
Outreach	414
Property	555
Worship / Technology	1,013
Music Ministry	5,465
Youth Ministry	2,055
High School Scholarship	8,700
Youth Mission Trip	<u>12,066</u>
TOTAL FUND BALANCES	<u>\$ 380,648</u>
Credit Card Payable	\$ 840
CASH IN BANK	<u>\$ 381,488</u>

2023 Benevolence & Missions

LOCAL

Blessing Bags/Recycled Purses	\$ 48
Carver County Veterans Council	2,000
Friends for Life Food Shelf	6,000
Gas Cards	698
Heart Ministries	300
Holiday Meal Baskets	500
Hope House	2,000
LCMC	1,500
LCMC—Augustana District	3,500
Love INC	3,000
MN Asst Council for Veterans	2,000
Noisy Offering—Hurricane Relief	822
Noisy Offering—Chicks	378
Ronald McDonald House	500

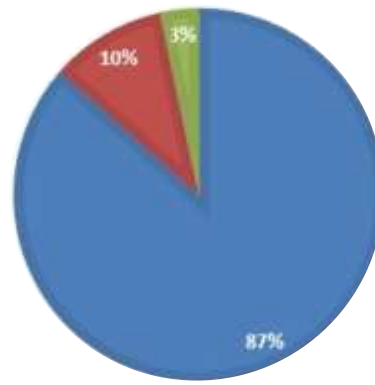
GLOBAL

Feed My Starving Children	4,000
New Hope Mission Society	2,500
Orphan Grain Train	6,000
Samaritan's Purse	<u>2,241</u>

TOTAL **\$ 37,987**

2024 Estimated Income

Faith Promises (96/91)	\$ 343,309
Other Giving	\$ 38,285
Other Offerings	\$ 13,350
TOTAL	\$ 394,944



- Faith Promises (87%)
- Other Giving (10%)
- Other Offerings (3%)

2024 Budget - Ministry Team Summary

	2024 BUDGET	2023 BUDGET
Finance	\$ 319,366	\$ 305,336
Property	\$ 25,395	\$ 25,485
Education Ministry	\$ 8,460	\$ 8,860
Activity Ministry	\$ 7,000	\$ 6,400
Missions Ministry	\$ 1,550	\$ 2,065
Stewardship Ministry	\$ 3,000	\$ 3,000
Care Ministry	\$ 1,800	\$ 1,800
Outreach	\$ 8,545	\$ 7,140
Hospitality	\$ 4,850	\$ 4,360
Music	\$ 3,830	\$ 2,980
Altar Care	\$ 1,980	\$ 1,980
Communications & Technology	\$ 9,168	\$ 2,500
TOTAL	\$ 394,944	\$ 371,906

2024 Benevolence Budget

LOCAL

Carver Cty Veteran's Council	\$ 2,000
Friends for Life	\$ 3,000
Hope House	\$ 2,000
LCMC	\$ 2,000
LCMC—Augustana District	\$ 4,000
Love INC	\$ 3,000
MN Asst Council for Veterans	\$ 2,000
Ronald McDonald House	\$ 500

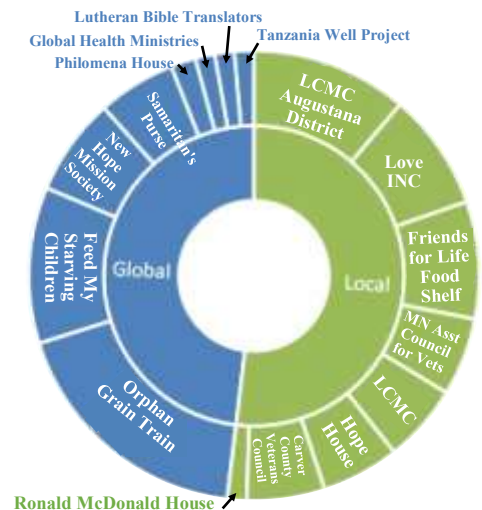
GLOBAL

Feed My Starving Children	\$ 4,000
Global Health Ministries	\$ 500
Lutheran Bible Translators	\$ 500
New Hope Mission Society	\$ 2,500
Orphan Grain Train	\$ 6,500
Philomena House	\$ 640
Samaritan's Purse	\$ 2,000
Tanzania Well Project	\$ 500

TOTAL **\$ 35,640**

2024 Budget & Income Comparison

Budgeted Expenses	\$ (394,944)
Estimated Income	\$ 343,309
Other Giving	\$ 38,285
Other Offerings	\$ 13,350
TOTAL	\$ 0



Membership & Worship Stats

	2022	2023
◆ Baptized Membership	473	496
◆ Confirmed Membership	332	346
◆ Number of Member Households	162	170
◆ Members Removed	15	26
◆ Average Sunday Worship Attendance <i>(not including Easter or Christmas Eve)</i>	166	177
◆ Average Midweek Worship Attendance		
• Ash Wednesday	158	171
• Lent	78	85
• Maundy Thursday	168	154
• Good Friday	127	110
• Summer Series	N/A	N/A
◆ Easter Worship Attendance		
• 6:30 am	103	129
• 9:00 am	280	270
• 11:00 am	83	68
◆ Christmas Eve Worship Attendance		
• 3:00 pm	156	237
• 5:00 pm	126	110
• 9:00 pm	94	57



Bible Presentation Sunday September 17, 2023

3rd Grade

- ✚ Piper Griebel
- ✚ Noah Kamps
- ✚ Henrik Knutson
- ✚ Levi Knutson
- ✚ Rylan McClurg
- ✚ Faith Schulze

7th Grade

- ✚ Tanner Baumann
- ✚ Daven Daubenspeck
- ✚ Finley Demeules
- ✚ Nolan DiBenedetto
- ✚ Cade Lommel
- ✚ Lydia Marquette
- ✚ Gavin McNeilly
- ✚ Levi Meyer
- ✚ Zachary Potter
- ✚ Westin Raser
- ✚ Michelle Schoening
- ✚ Grady Sommer



2023 First Communion Bread Baking

2023 Pastoral Acts

BAPTIZED

- 2022 — 16 2023 — 13
- Josiah Darryl-Robert Shablow
January 22, 2023
 - Jace Ryan Molitor
February 12, 2023
 - Jace Leroy Braegelmann
April 23, 2023
 - Nora Elizabeth Penke
June 11, 2023
 - Amelia Jean Hunter
July 23, 2023
 - Lincoln Scott Pawelk
July 30, 2023
 - Emma Mae Kleve
August 13, 2023
 - Gracie Autumn Kleve
August 13, 2023
 - Harper Jane Kleve
August 13, 2023
 - Idris Jerome Ismail
September 3, 2023
 - Tate Russel Schurmann
September 24, 2023
 - Riley Jan Young
December 10, 2023
 - Weston John Young
December 10, 2023

FIRST COMMUNION

- Thursday, April 6, 2023
- Oliver Butler
 - Callen Cox
 - Hanna Gosha
 - Garret Hanson
 - Gracie Kleve
 - Gavin McNeilly
 - Addison Paschke
 - Jack Plahn
 - Sawyer Schmidt
 - Wyatt Sprenger

CONFIRMED

- Sunday, May 21, 2023
- Tristan Johnsrud
 - Ellie Lommel
 - Sophia Pederson
 - Abigail Plahn
 - Amelia Schmidt
 - Rylie Sommer
 - Victoria Thorson



	2022	2023
Baptized members	62	45
Households	20	15

Sunday, February 12, 2023

- 3 people / 2 households
- Nate & Grace Carlin
 - Taylor Laumann

Sunday, June 11, 2023

- 14 people / 4 households
- Tony & Amanda Griebel
Abel & Piper
 - Jered & Holly Hokenson
Henry, Arthur, Gretta & Winston
 - Mark & Jammie McClay
 - Arvin & Linda Senne

Sunday, October 8, 2023

- 8 people / 3 households
- Dan & Lori Nelson
 - David & Kimberly Tetzlaff
 - Brevik & Billie Tharaldson
August & Casper

Sunday, December 10, 2023

- 20 people / 6 households
- Jody & Becky Forland
Alexa, Cole, Tyler & Avalynn
 - Nate & Nikki McNeilly
Kaitlyn & Gavin
 - Lizzi Ohm
Kaycie & Keith
 - Tony & Jen Voca
Emmet & Emma
 - Terri Wilkerson
 - Alan & Jan Young

Congratulations!



2023 Graduates

Graduate Recognition
Sunday, May 7, 2023

High School—Ella Baumann, Peyton Feltmann, Morgen Junczewski*, Rylee May*, Tanner Schmidt*, Andrew Seefeldt, Malorie Thorson*

College—Janessa Berrios, Vanessa Schroeder

*High school students who received PLC Graduate Scholarships