

# ANNUAL REPORT 2023



Evangelical  
Lutheran Church  
in America





Redeemer Lutheran Church

Annual Meeting Agenda

January 28, 2024

12:30 pm to 1:30 pm

In-Person and Zoom

Zoom Link:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/5230605954?pwd=RmxHSis4V3FzTIRxYUowQSszS0U4dz09>

Meeting Id: 523 060 5954

Passcode: Redeemer

Welcome

Establish a Quorum

Devotions

Annual / Ministry Reports

2024 Budget

Financial Report

Election of Officers and Ministers

Adjourn





**Redeemer Lutheran Church**  
**Annual Meeting Minutes**  
**January 29, 2023**

**WELCOME**

**ESTABLISH A QUORUM**

**DEVOTION**

**BUDGET UPDATE**

**PRESIDENT'S REPORT**

**QUESTIONS**

**ELECTION OF OFFICERS**

- Motion to **vote on ballot** as presented (who is continuing on as terms; others who have been nominated) - **Motion approved.**
- Comments/Questions on nominations process:
  - Ballot is empty for some positions - will ask for nominations from the floor
  - Question on language for council positions. Now more closely reflect ELCA guidance. Many of the positions have been empty - current terminology for positions keep things more flexible/nimble.
    - Expression of support for new Council structure
  - How do you know they will want those positions without talking to them first?
  - How long can Council President serve? 4 years. Mike T was Treasurer in 2020. Only VP and President for 3 years together.
  - What is the support for Treasurer position?
    - Just hired bookkeeping support. Kelly SF (outgoing Treasurer), willing to help with transition to new treasurer.
    - Finance Committee also supports
- Additional Nominations:
  - Stuart Munk - self-nominated for Council Vice President position
  - Mary Britt - self-nominated for Council President
  - Jane Friendshuh - self-nominated for Council Treasurer
  - Mike Tarras withdrew from ballot as Council President
    - Expressions of gratitude for Mike's contributions/leadership, especially through pandemic
  - Questions about open Council positions -
    - Manny - 6 current opportunities - my gifts/interests in Youth Ministry

- Can fill positions as they align with interests and strengths
    - As ballot is currently, we would have 8 ministers; need at least 7 positions filled to get business done
  - Holly D. nominated Mike T for an open position (to stay on Council in another role)
  - Beth Heinly-Munk - self-nominated for an open position
    - Question raised - Can people who are married/partnered be on Council together at the same time?
  - Motion to move to vote on the ballot - Beth Heinly-Munk; Second - Elizabeth; Favor - All; Opposed - None
  - Dave nominated Roger for an open position
  - **Slate (Council Members serving second year of term):**
    - President - Mary Britt
    - *Secretary - Carolyn Scherer - second year of term*
    - VP - Stuart Munk
    - Treasurer - Jane Friendshuh
    - *Property - Dave Scharnhorst - second year of term*
    - *Fellowship - Christine Garces- second year of term*
    - Manny Lewis
    - JeMarnica Taylor
    - Beth Heinly-Munk
    - Roger Mikelson
- 
- Motion to accept ballot as it stands - Tom Fieberger; second - Curtis Coates; All in favor; opposed - none; Abstain - four. **Motion Passes.**
  - Two other baptisms occurred to add to the Pastor's report. 3 total.
  - Synod Assembly Delegates - Two seats (April 28-29)
    - John and Elizabeth volunteered
  - Motion to approve nomination - Sam; Second - Sarah Stadie; In Favor - All; Opposed - None. **Motion Passed.**
  - Motion to adjourn Annual Meeting - Curtis Coates; Second - Sarah Stadie; In Favor - All; Opposed - None. **Motion Passed.**

*Minutes Submitted by Carolyn Scherer, Council Secretary, on 2/12/2023 (minutes taken from Zoom recording).*

# 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.

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

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“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

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# ANNUAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING

## OPENING LITURGY

### Son of God, Eternal Savior

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.**

1 Son of God, e - ter - nal Sav - ior, source of life and truth and grace,  
2 As you, Lord, have lived for oth - ers, so may we for oth - ers live.  
3 Come, O Christ, and reign a - mong us, King of love and Prince of peace;  
4 Son of God, e - ter - nal Sav - ior, source of life and truth and grace,

Word made flesh, whose birth a - mong us hal - lows all our hu - man race,  
Free - ly have your gifts been grant - ed; free - ly may your ser - vants give.  
hush the storm of strife and pas - sion, bid its cru - el dis - cords cease.  
Word made flesh, whose birth a - mong us hal - lows all our hu - man race:

you our head, who, throned in glo - ry, for your own will ev - er plead:  
Yours the gold and yours the sil - ver, yours the wealth of land and sea;  
By your pa - tient years of toil - ing, by your si - lent hours of pain,  
by your pray - ing, by your will - ing that your peo - ple should be one,

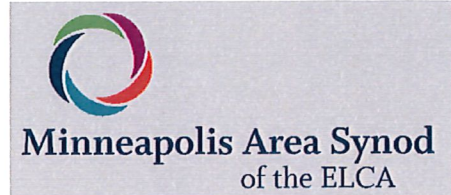
fill us with your love and pit - y, heal our wrong, and help our need.  
we but stew - ards of your boun - ty held in sol - emn trust will be.  
quench our fe - vered thirst of plea - sure, stem our self - ish greed of gain.  
grant, oh, grant our hope's fru - i - tion: here on earth your will be done.

Evangelical Lutheran Worship, 655

Text: Somerset C. Lowry

Music: IN BABILONE, Oude en Nieuwe Hollandse Boerenlities en Contradansen, 1710;  
arr. Julius Röntgen

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Grace, peace, and hope through our Savior, Jesus Christ.

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*Day by day ... they ate their food  
with glad and generous hearts,  
praising God and having the good  
will of all the people. – Acts 2:46-47*

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In May, we meet for our 2024 Synod Assembly under the theme “With Glad and Generous Hearts.” The phrase describes the early church as they gathered on Pentecost. It is also an appropriate description of the past year of our life and ministry together.

In 2023, our hearts were gladdened by:

- Your congregation, along with the other 136 congregations in our synod, faithfully proclaiming the Gospel of Jesus Christ in Word and Sacrament, nurturing community, and loving neighbors and neighborhoods.
- The privilege of accompanying congregations in 72 Call Processes; presiding at 14 Ordinations and 30 Installations; and walking with 34 people preparing to become pastors or deacons.
- 142 lay leaders and 28 clergy from 31 congregations learning to be church in the 21st century through our Faith Practices and Neighboring Practices intensive learning communities.
- 6,500 people receiving our weekly enews. (Sign up at [mpls-synod.org/sign-up](https://mpls-synod.org/sign-up) to feel more connected.)
- 100s of rostered and lay leaders involved in synod sponsored peer groups, conferences, and retreats.
- 100s of leaders from synod congregations helping pass the state’s “100% Clean Energy By 2040” and “Restore The Vote” legislation that advance both climate justice and racial justice.
- 100s of leaders faithfully serving as Deans, on Synod Council, and Candidacy, Audit, Program Committees.
- 15 gifted and devoted synod staff members: 10 funded by Mission Support from you and other congregations, and 5 funded by Lilly Endowment and other external grants.

We praise God for the congregational generosity that makes all this happen. At the same time, we recognize that mission support from congregations has declined 16% over the past 10 years, resulting in a reduction in synod staff hours. Especially as we prepare to elect a new bishop this spring, we invite you to consider strengthening your support for the future of the synod’s work.

Conference Assemblies are just around the corner: Saturday, February 10, 9:30 a.m. – Noon. Of particular importance will be conference nominations for bishop as well as for voting members to the ELCA Churchwide Assembly, July 28 - August 2, 2025. We encourage congregations to send the same voting members to both the Conference and Synod Assemblies.

As we look at declining mission support or grieve the closing of a congregation, we can become discouraged. In such moments, I encourage you to listen to a remarkable conversation from our 2023 Synod Assembly. Our keynote speaker, the Rev. Otis Moss III, was asked: “what do you say to those who think the church is dying?” Filled with courage and hope, Moss responded, “the church is not dying, it is being born, refashioned, and remade. The early church was an alternative community. Today we use the metrics of the market to evaluate the church – buildings, budgets, numbers. But, the early church looked at **impact**: were people hearing the good news of Jesus who lived and died for our salvation? Was suffering being relieved? Were people being welcomed and healed?” ([mpls-synod.org/our-synod/synod-assembly-2/2023-synod-assembly-archives](https://mpls-synod.org/our-synod/synod-assembly-2/2023-synod-assembly-archives) 4:57:27 of the second day)

Rev. Moss reminds us that we are called to be alternative communities. What might it take to measure our churches by **impact**? The work of synod leadership is to support the 137 communities and the thousands of leaders who are making an **impactful** difference in the 21st century: sharing the good news of Jesus, extending radical welcome into beloved community, engaging their neighborhoods in love with justice.

I am filled with both gratitude and sadness as I write this, my final annual report to congregations. I have loved serving as your bishop and am profoundly grateful for this calling. We pray for the year ahead, trusting in the goodness and faithfulness of our God, made known in Jesus Christ.

Bishop Ann Svennungsen





Annual Report 2023

Pastor Jen Collins

*The Lord is my light and salvation; whom shall I fear? The Lord is the stronghold of my life; of whom shall I be afraid? -Psalm 27: 1*

Beloveds of Redeemer, as we reflect this past year, we have accomplished a lot of good things and simultaneously wrestled with challenges along the way. I want to acknowledge that in our journey through 2023 there was a tremendous amount of resiliency within this community. As we crossed the threshold of a new year, may these words from a young prophetic leader speak to us:

*"For there is always light.*

*If only we're brave enough to see it.*

*If only we're brave enough to be it." -Amanda Gorman*

I have been so deeply honored to be with you thus far in this called journey. I am so inspired by the ways we've been brave enough to see the light AND to BE LIGHT. Redeemer has continued to discover new ways and welcome back reimaged ways to practice our faith.

- We are navigating the changes to our rituals as people of faith. We are a hybrid community, still striving to grow, learn and deepen our relationship with God from our homes and in-person as best we can.
- We soaked up all the outdoor possibilities we could when Minnesota weather would allow for us to be together: Outdoor Summer worship, Collaborative Northside Holiday Worships (Memorial, 4<sup>th</sup> July and Labor Days), Summer Community Cookouts, J.A.M Camp (with Edina Community Lutheran Church, Christ River of Life and St. Paul/San Pablo), Family Camp at Luther Park and Block Party's return.
- We've started a NEW food ministry program, offering monthly meals with the Synod's Imagination Grant. In hopes of addressing community access to healthy food, in partnership with Salem and other Northside organizations, we dream of expanding and implementing a broader Food Network to create solutions for our Harrison and Northside neighbors.
- We still carry heartaches and grief as well as glistening moments of healing and transformation. We have been able to honor and remember Redeemer friends who commended their loved ones at funerals and All Saints Sunday.
- Overflowing with grace that I and others were able to meet, in-person for visitations and receive communion. We made appointments to sit with one another, those in need, lonely, hurting, yearning for companionship. We have been so glad to tend and care to one another, we are on our way together. Keep loving each other! Keep connecting, it is so important that we do this together.
- Kid + Family Faith Formation at Redeemer, we are in process of developing and reengaging faith forming and fellowship (connection based) opportunities for our young people to learn and discover who God is and what God is doing in their lives resumed exploring varied approaches to help walk with families, meeting them where they are at. It is a blessing to have gifted Bibles, created a playground (exploratory space to be in worship learning together at different developmental stages of life), baptisms. We hope for more opportunities to gather and grow!

Discerning what are our next most faithful steps, is an important question for us to be asking in this time. Redeemer folks, you have also been answering God's call to live out the love and justice of Jesus Christ, to be a *Beacon of Hope*. You have been stretching and striving to commit time and energy, in hopes of opening opportunities for Redeemer to be a healthier, more grounded, sustained, and empowered community ready

to confront any challenges that may lie ahead. It is an intrinsic part of who we were created to be, to keep striving *“to be a faithful witness to the love of Jesus Christ for all people, and to be recognized by the community as a safe and caring place for area residents, especially youth and children. We seek to maintain a dynamic and impactful ministry through the development of authentic, transformational relationships.”* I believe Redeemer has the capacity to change for the better by starting this path.

What will 2024 hold?

*“For there is always light.*

*If only we’re brave enough to see it.*

*If only we’re brave enough to be it.” -Amanda Gorman*

We will always be changing. The way we are called to be church is and will continue to be different, and we’re on the threshold of opportunity in this next chapter of Redeemer’s history to experience new ways to be Christian community that are life-giving. Our staff and leaders are focusing on cultivating meaningful and faithful steps, following Jesus, Light of the World and seeing where we go next!

-Pastor Jen Collin (she/her)

## Council President's Report

Mary Britt

"I lift my eyes to the hills. From where does my help come? My help comes from the Lord, who made heaven and earth." Psalms 121

As I sit in the still of the evening to pen this report, I am unsure of where to start and what to write. What a year 2023 has been, not only for each of us personally but for Redeemer Lutheran Church (RLC) and our partner organizations and churches.

The 2023 RLC Council began our year with enthusiasm and high expectations. We spent time at our February retreat working with members of the 2022 council, getting to know each other and identifying strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and challenges, with the goal of making a smooth transition. The year proved to be one of opportunities and challenges, which each council member met with a real sense of positive energy and determination.

Each month provided us with new opportunities (sometimes surprises), but we worked to anticipate options and provide solutions, keeping the mission to be a beacon of hope to the residents of the Harrison Neighborhood in the forefront. When looking at these opportunities or planning events, Pastor Jen Collins continued to ask us to reflect on "how this opportunity was being a Beacon of Hope"?

We experienced a few staff changes during the last year. Our Office Administrator, Amy Koopman completed seminary and received a call to Gethsemane Lutheran in Hopkins. Renee Christensen, completed an internship in the church office during her Spring Semester at Augsburg and was able to stay on as a Summer Intern. We began September with no office administrator but many "office" needs. A special Thank You to everyone who has been volunteering in the office and providing technical support for our online worship services, while the Staff Support Committee along with Pastor review and determine what the office support position should look like. Also, due to staffing changes at Redeemer Center for Life, we were able to hire (and keep) Tyrone Wade as our RLC custodian.

I would be remiss if I failed to thank Pastor Collins and each of the council ministers for their tireless commitment to ensuring that RLC lived into our mission. While a few of our council ministers were unable to complete their terms, everyone played an important role. Thank you to Christine Zene-Garces, Dave Scharnhorst, Beth Heinly-Munk, Roger Mikelson, Manuel Lewis and Nica Taylor. And a special thank you to our Executive Council consisting of Pastor Collins,



Stuart Munk, Carolyn Scherer and Jane Friendshuh, for all their support. They each spent many additional hours in meetings and discussion focused on brainstorming and identifying positive outcomes and solutions for Redeemer Lutheran Church. And, Thank you to each of you, members, partners and visitors for your continued prayers, and the sharing of your time, treasures and talents.

Blessings,

Mary Britt  
2023 RLC Council President

Diaper Drive Ministry Report  
Lead Coordinator: Sally Ankerfelt

## **More Than Diapers**

Recently, I listened to a report on National Public Radio about a study done by a sociologist who was interested in knowing the value of everyday, brief interactions. She was both surprised and encouraged to discover that seemingly insignificant communication between people, even strangers, can alleviate loneliness and decrease depression. A wave from a bus driver, a smile from the barista, or a nod from the neighbor when walking the dog can have a positive impact on a person.

After hearing this report, I reconsidered what happens at the food shelf every Saturday. Being there consistently, I have come to know many of the people who receive food and diapers. Just this past Saturday, a woman I hadn't seen for a couple of months returned and gave me a hug and we both said we missed seeing each other. Another person arrived in his car, hopped out, and gave a beautiful plant to another volunteer as a thank you to her for all the times she helped him this year. Again, today, I checked in with a man to see how his court case was going. On another recent Saturday, I greeted a woman with the knowledge of the diaper size she would be requesting. We had a chuckle together.

These may seem like small interactions. But, they have huge benefits for everyone involved. They create community. They tell people that we *see* them and they, in turn, *see* us, that we matter to one another. When we multiply these interactions by the number of people who use the food shelf each week, such as this past Saturday when we served 300 families, we bear witness to the miracle of caring.

Redeemer is a part of the network of people who create the opportunity for these interactions of care and joy. Your diaper contributions not only help families survive financially, but they help families know that there are people who see them and care about them. Your donations help us as volunteers create community.

I think of the joy we will be uplifting next week as we celebrate the birth of Christ. In the midst of tension, upheaval, and need, in an unassuming manger, in the tiny body of a baby, God said, "I *see* you." With Christ's arrival, loneliness and sadness gives way to connection and caring.

Thank you to Redeemer for your diaper donations, for willingness to support this ministry and being so faithful in your giving. We know that diapers are not cheap, but we can assure you that your generosity is bearing more fruit than any of us will ever know.

May God's grace, joy, and peace be with you! We look forward to 2024 when we continue to celebrate the amazing ways we care for each other, especially through the food shelf and the diaper ministry.

In Christ,  
Sally Ankerfelt  
Redeemer Lutheran Church Diaper Ministry Coordinator







## **2023 Redeemer Christmas Store –**

Thanks to the support of Redeemer and our ministry partners, the spirit of generosity, community, and love flowed in abundance for the annual Christmas Store on December 9th!

Together we were able to make another joyous Christmas shopping event happen in and with the Harrison neighborhood. Watching 99+ children thoughtfully shop for the people they care about and come together with families and community around the spirit of giving was a joy!

None of this could have happened without the gift of community: donating presents, gift cards, gift wrap, and supplies; lovingly organizing the shopping experience; preparing and serving lunch and snacks; wrapping gifts with care; accompanying the kids while they shop; sharing with families in crafts and games; and the countless other ways we lived into abundance together.

Over 70 youth and adults volunteered in some way before, during, or after the event! This beautiful collaboration includes partners from Mt. Olivet, Edina Community Lutheran Church, MCCC, St. Olaf, Christ the King, Immanuel, St. Barnabas, Zion, and Westwood, as well as RCFL, Fairview Health Commons, and HNA! Special thanks to Tyrone as well for all his support in prep and clean-up.

We're thankful and excited for how we can keep sharing and building on God's generosity, abundance, and connection together in the future.

With gratitude,

Lonna Field (on behalf of the planning team with Sally Ankerfelt, Sarah Stadie, and Pastor Jen)

## Property Ministry Report

This year found us maintaining more than advancing. Many projects are hoped for and planned, but are too far off due to finances. We are slowed by creeping issues that come up like Furnace, bugs, snow removal, etc. These issues are not surprising, but the cost always seems to be "unexpected", so it feels like a burden to the budget, even though it is apportioned.

Done:

We straightened and set the pews in the Sanctuary along with liturgical art pieces in the Chancel.

We cleared and restriped the parking lot behind Milda's, with more paint to be applied in the spring.

We are all set for the carpet in the Sanctuary Chancel area, if funds can be found.

We painted and smoothed the Sanctuary floor, it also is ready for carpet if funds can be found.

Planned:

We have a plan in place to provide better air flow through the Sanctuary, but that has not started yet.

We are looking at inexpensive sound dampening options for the chancel.

We are still working on improving the doorbell situation for the front door. I will continue to work on this even after my Property minister obligations end later this month.

Hoped for:

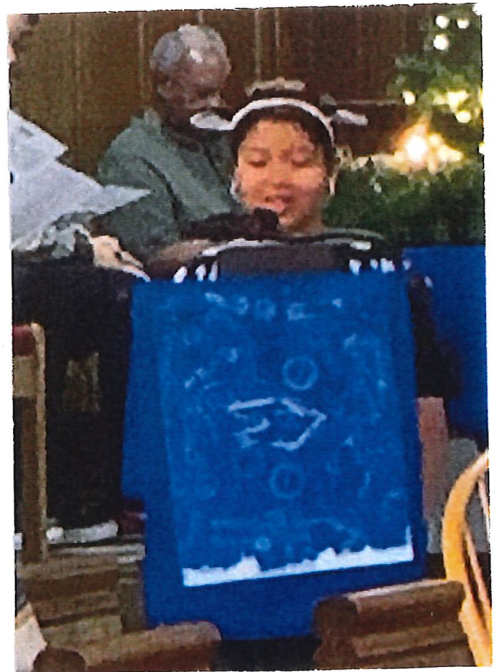
It would be cool to set up a group of volunteers to make sure the steps are shoveled and salted before Church on Sundays so that responsibility doesn't always fall to one or two people.

It would be nice to have a better plan for outdoor summer services in terms of seating and direction. It's not too bad now, but could be even better with some more ideas and plans.

Funding for floor repair, expanded keyless entry options, furnace upgrades, shingle inspection, landscaping and kitchen upgrades.

In Christ,  
Dave Schrnhorst









## Stewardship Ministry Report

### Beth Heinly-Munk

To be a steward is to be someone who cares for something..... looks after it. Right up my ally. In fact, for those who know me well, they may say I can go too deep and then feel sad when my care hasn't made the impact I was hoping for or reciprocated in the way I had hoped. It's a bit self – centered isn't?

For most humans, we want to care for others and in my experience the best way to do so is to know others build and sustain relationships. When I mustered up the courage to physically return to church, I realized there were people I didn't know or admittedly, I knew but could not remember their name. I started doing little songs and poems in my head to try hard to remember people's names. Anyone remember the name game where you would make an obscure rhyme out of people's name?

Beth, Beth- bo- Beth- bo-nana- nana- fana- bo Beth?

Didn't work.

Then I thought, "I wonder if people would wear a name tag?" It worked! I think most of us love them. They are in the back of the church where you can create, wear, and leave for the next visit. For some it's a straightforward, **NAME** and for others it's a mini masterpiece. The happiest part of these name tags for me is to see the children wearing them. They just seem to light up as we adults now recognize them by name. It's the best!

In August, I came to you with challenging financial news. Our financial status was tenuous, and we all needed to pitch in to meet budget for that month. I guess it's a lesson that church's do have a business side and need money to keep the doors open. Closed doors don't work well when trying to care for others. We made it through! Our theme was a quote from William Shakespeare's A Midsummer Night's Dream, "Though she be but little she is fierce." We fiercely responded with special gifts from people in and outside of the congregation. This year's individual giving surpassed last years. Amazing!

Appreciated!

We continue to need to care financially for Redeemer. You'll see donation envelopes now in the pews as a reminder. This is new for us. We were never a church that focused much on outright asks and specific reminders. It may seem small to some, and some may not even have noticed these envelopes, but it was a difficult decision for me to make. I asked myself if it was too bold? I hope not.

In December I hosted a stewardship Sunday lunch. We had over 35 people attend. There were frank discussions about our upcoming budget and financial needs for 2024. People asked courageous questions, not all that had an exact answer. Financial Commitment forms were completed. Thank you!

Caring for the church and others was also shown in important and heartfelt ways. It's always tricky to list specific people because I know I will miss someone and something!

But here are some examples:



Maggie and Sarah helped folks submit their information into the church directory system, Mary and Luvene lead folks through cooking, serving, and cleaning at the Soul food dinner, we hosted a vaccine clinic with Fairview, the Block Party was hosted by the church involving many, many volunteers. Tyrone and fam were a force to be reckoned with!

Mary and Maggie organized funeral meals. Pastor Jen and church members were present at Open Streets Glenwood, summer picnics, folks made calls and wrote cards to shut ins, gardening was completed, people picked up refuse on the way in and out of church, we caught Josh shoveling snow to keep us safe.

Linnae and Abraham read the Christmas stories, a children's Playground was set up in the back of the church, the nursery was re-established, Sharon lead children's services.

Our musicians inspired us each Sunday and hosted a successful fundraiser for the Glenwood house, Jackie donated picnic tables, Jane organized Christmas flower donations, physically purchasing, and set them up.

Roger made beautiful vestment boards for the sanctuary. Roger and Sharon prepared over 50 feasts of communion. Roudmaline, Ruby, Jaxdyn and Faora along with others adorned the church for Christmas. Dennis kindly greets us on Sunday mornings. Dave set up systems so folks can access services. Joanie, Amanda, Mary and Jane have filled in the admin role in the church office over the past several months. Sally collected and dispersed diapers. People donated diapers.

We hosted a Christmas store lead by Lonna and Sally.

Kelly secured a comfy couch for Pastor Jen.

The list could go on and on and on!

**I know I have missed so many other events, actions and those who served, loved, and cared for the church and all God's children, young and old. You'll have to forgive me.**

Lastly, I want to acknowledge the blessing it has been to serve on council with Mary, Jane, Dave, Carolyn, Stuart, Roger, and Pastor Jen. It has been truly humbling to be a part of a council who every step of the way walked intentionally, sometimes imperfectly to serve this church they and you love. All volunteers devoting time, energy as well as careful, difficult discernment and prayer for our church and those who call it theirs.

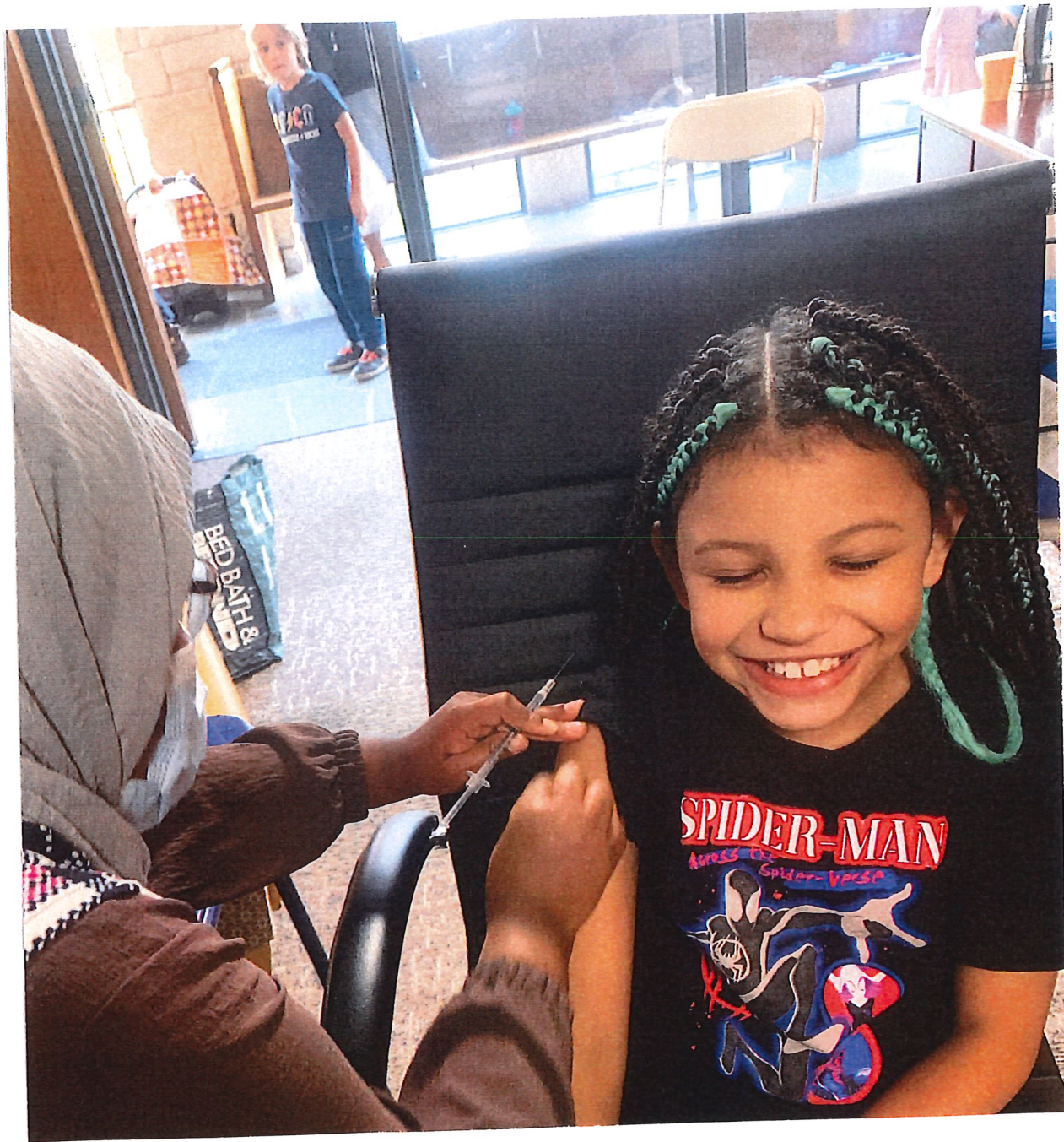
This year of 2024, you will continue to hear of financial need but even more about other ways to show care, stewardship, and love. My goals are to form a team and to do an inventory of what brings you joy that you could share with Redeemer. I'll be looking for people to lead others in their shared joy, to share your light.

"For there is always light.

If only we were brave enough to see it.

If only we're brave enough to be it." - *Amanda Gorman*

Grace, peace, and love to you my fellow beloved children of God.



## **2023 Finance and Treasurer Report**

- 2023 was the first full year with Redeemer not having a bookkeeper on campus, a situation that required unprecedented coordination and teamwork. Those requirements involved working with Jitasa, the service providing offsite bookkeeping. It has, at times, taken effort to adapt to Jitasa's system of bookkeeping but those issues have been addressed through exchanged emails and zoom calls. And I strongly assure the congregation that any issue involving Jitasa is merely our learning the system they utilize and each party being clear of expectations and needs.
  
- In the month of August, Pastor Jen withheld her pay to make sure other staff were paid. In hindsight, this dire financial situation was the result of expenses related to the Block Party, a sizeable consultation fee, a cycle of payroll and regular payment on our capital campaign loan through Bremer. That nearly \$15,000 financial challenge was too much for Redeemer's treasury. Subsequent study of Redeemer's financial situation revealed more insight(s).
  1. Redeemer has never, in my 20-year membership, 8 years as Treasurer, never had a reliable safety net or sum of money to fall back upon. Any unexpected financial hit reveals this extreme vulnerability. I urge the financial team in 2024 and into the future to intentionally seek to begin and maintain a particular savings fund.
  2. While our church partners are invaluable to us and our respective ministries support and cooperate in many ways, the monetary commitment has seen a marked decrease. Several reasons for this decrease. There are multiple entities in competition for such resources, even within the northside. I'm aware that another pastor within the north side has alerted that congregation to a financial situation similar to our own. In short, some church partners share our financial reality.
  3. The Bremer Loan, as scheduled, was refinanced this year. This loan, a compilation of our capital campaign and other structural improvements, now totals \$263,000. Every month that loan requires a \$2621 payment. Current markets dictated a new interest rate of 8.47%, up from the previous 5.7%. There is a penalty for transferring this loan or making early payments before 5 years.
  4. In August LitMn moved from Redeemer's second level to facilities elsewhere. The monthly \$1750 monthly rent we received is missed.

- STEPS TAKEN TO ADDRESS REDEEMER'S FINANCIAL SITUATION

1. Deposits of weekly offering were routinely made immediately after collection on Sundays. We now deposit any sizable amount(s) throughout the week. This helps cover immediate expenses and alleviates possible overdraft fees.
2. Become overtly intentional about anticipated expenses. If we can control when certain expenses are acquired and paid, that would also assist us budgetarily.
3. Office admin has been replaced by volunteers. While this transition has saved a sizable amount, refilling that position with a tech savvy, relational/communications person would best serve our needs. It would also be a huge assist to Pastor Jen to concentrate on her pastoral mission.
4. Utilizing Thrivent Funds. We are continuously maintaining, adding to our list of eligible Thrivent dollars members, matching those funds with anticipated, eligible expenses.
5. Although not an income source priority, identify and utilize grant writers.
6. Re-evaluate current agreements with other partners within our building.
7. Redeemer has received inquiries about available space with our building. An existing ministry or council member could assess and respond to such opportunities as another income source.
8. Aggressively pursue any measure to save on expenses. Do we have redundant services or could we receive equal service for less expense?
9. Council will continue to fully support Pastor Jen as she pursues relationships with new and familiar church partners.
10. Be intentional in receiving full, predictable benefits of our rental property located at 1813/15 Glenwood Ave. We will be in conversation about assessing the purpose of the Glenwood property to decide our future plans for it.
11. Be bold in pursuing who and what we, the Evangelical Lutheran Church of the Redeemer is/are becoming by displaying trustful, imaginative, and eager leadership. We will strive for monthly reports, including forums for the congregation concerning its ongoing financial status.

During the month of August, when the financial situation fully revealed itself, there were direct reports to the congregation. The response was immediate and generous. That quality of Redeemer has never been in question. Your trust and support are remarkable and inspiring. I'm amazed by Pastor Jen's brave, resilient leadership. I am optimistic that 2024 will again prove our serving as a beacon of hope, not just to the community we serve but to each fellow Redeemer member as well.

God's grace and peace,

Stuart Munk church council Vice President/Chair of RLC Finance Committee

Jane Friendshuh, Treasurer



## Proposed 2024 Budget Redeemer Lutheran Church

Income	
Member Contributions	\$164,500
Associate Contributions	\$22,668
Memorials	\$500
<b>Total Tithes &amp; Offerings</b>	<b>\$187,668</b>
Edina Community Lutheran Church (ECLC)	\$5,000.00
Immanuel (Eden Prairie)	\$8,000.00
Westwood (St. Louis Park)	\$9,000.00
Faith (Waconia)	\$2,000.00
Zion (Buffalo)	\$4,000.00
Christ the King (New Brighton)	\$1,000.00
<b>Total Church Partnerships</b>	<b>\$29,000</b>
MAS + Churchwide Support	\$9,000
Grants	\$14,000
<b>Total Grants</b>	<b>\$23,000</b>
Kenya Fund	\$7,200
In-kind Gifts	\$3,634
<b>Total Additional Income</b>	<b>\$10,834</b>
Building Rental	\$37,200
Glenwood House Rent	\$32,000
Miscellaneous - IRS Employee Retention Credit	\$25,000
<b>Total Building + Glenwood Rental Income</b>	<b>\$94,200</b>
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>\$344,702</b>

<b>Net Revenue</b>	<b>\$1,445</b>
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Expenditures	
Salary, Benefits (medical, housing, social sec.)	\$203,239
Additional Benefits (Continued Education, Synod Conferences, Travel)	\$7,700
<b>Total Payroll &amp; Benefits</b>	<b>\$210,939</b>
Payroll Processing	\$660
Other Administrative Services	\$7,466
<b>Total Administrative Services</b>	<b>\$8,126</b>
Gas	\$14,332
Electricity	\$5,932
Water	\$3,052
Rubbish	\$2,880
<b>Total Utilities (Church + Glenwood)</b>	<b>\$26,196</b>
Minneapolis Area Synod	\$3,000
<b>Total Benevolence</b>	<b>\$3,000</b>
Kenya Fund Disbursements	\$7,200
<b>Total Restricted Expenses</b>	<b>\$7,200</b>
Property & Liability Insurance	\$10,767
Repairs & Maintenance	\$15,257
Licenses	\$8,200
Property Tax & Assessments	\$7,300
Miscellaneous Property	\$6,500
<b>Total Building Property Expenses</b>	<b>\$48,024</b>

Expenditures	
Speakers, Preachers, Materials, Licenses	\$1,200
Community Events	
Martin Luther King Jr. Weekend	\$250.00
Lenten Suppers	\$250.00
Summer Cookouts (9 weeks)	\$1,800.00
Block Party	\$1,200.00
Back to school Drive	\$250.00
Bibles	\$300.00
Soul Food Dinner	\$575.00
Christmas Store	\$250.00
<b>Formation + Community Engagement</b>	<b>\$6,075</b>
Worship, Music & Arts	\$1,000.00
Fellowship (thrivent)	\$500.00
Stewardship	\$250.00
Youth	\$250.00
Evangelism/Outreach	\$250.00
<b>Total Ministry Expenses</b>	<b>\$2,250</b>
Bremer Bank Loan	\$31,447
<b>Total Bank Loan</b>	<b>\$31,447</b>
<b>Total Expenditures</b>	<b>\$343,257</b>



## MOYO KWA MOYO (HEART TO HEART KENYA)

Moyo Kwa Moyo, Swahili for “Heart to Heart” is a project launched by Beatrice Munk, Beth Heinly-Munk and Stuart Munk. They serve as co-directors with husband and wife, Fame Wambua and Meshak Ole-Sabari. The project seeks to promote a nurturing life of hope and stability for orphans of Kenya, Beatrice’s birthplace. Currently the project houses and assists 8 children aged 8-16. Most of the children came to the project after their families asked us to take them or were found abandoned and in dire need.

Again, due to continuing concerns involving covid, we were unable to return to Kenya in 2023. When we do return Fame, Beatrice and Beth will again offer another Days for Girls gathering. Such gatherings have always been well-attended as the co-directors share information concerning “menstrual health management as a matter of human rights, and a critical component to achieving gender equity. The last such gathering held in a rural Kenyan setting, was attended by over 100 women and young girls. Kits were dispersed that contained soap, a washcloth, three underpants and reusable sanitary pads. The sanitary pads were made by the women of Mt Calvary Lutheran Church in Egan. Studies conducted in Kenya and other sub-Saharan countries have identified challenges girls face in managing their menstruation, including lack of access to menstrual products and lack of accurate information about menstruation. Due to the lack of hygiene products and knowledge, girls miss school due to increased anxiety and lack of concentration on schoolwork. Another grave reality now surrounds the ubiquitous boda bodas (motorcycle taxi) that service such remote, rural settings. Most rural Kenyans are subsistence farmer. Cars and bicycles are rare. Walks of 10-20 miles to the “local” shop are commonplace. The threat of abuse by boda boda drivers upon these vulnerable girls walking to the store for personal products is recognized, identified, and of epidemic proportions. The support, information and materials shared by the Moyo Kwa Moyo directors is an effort to empower this younger generation of women, to enable them to move beyond the ideology of hopelessness or mere submission to the inevitable tragedy or tragedies that await them. A supply of reusable sanitary pads holds great value to our young Kenyan sisters. A simple gesture that holds vital, monumental value.

Supporting Moyo Kwa Moyo can be as simple as sharing your aluminum cans with us. Every year we recycle those cans and send the money along to Kenya, benefited by the strong exchange rate. We have supported our Kenyan brothers and sisters for 20 years and have witnessed the impact. Children that were neglected and, in some cases, literally thrown away are now blossoming under the care and example of Fame and Meshak. We thank our church family for including Heart to Heart Kenya in its mission and, as always, remind you that our wish to be a beacon of hope reaches far beyond our neighborhood, to another, that prays for us daily. Asante sana! God’s universal peace and blessings,

Meshak, Fame, Beth, Beatrice and Stuart.

If you’d like to contribute your aluminum cans or support the project in any way, feel free to contact me.

Stuart- [munkhead1960@gmail.com](mailto:munkhead1960@gmail.com) 651-249-1753`

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



Evangelical  
Lutheran Church  
in America