

There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called to the one hope of your calling.

Ephesians 4:4



Easter Lutheran Church Annual Report

Published April 2024



EASTER LUTHERAN CHURCH ANNUAL REPORT

- Section 1. Reports from Vision Board Secretary
- Section 2. Financial Reports for Fiscal Year ending June 2023
- Section 3. Proposed Resolution 1: Gratitude
- Section 4. Proposed Resolution 2: Operations Budget for Fiscal Year ending June 2025
- Section 5. Reports from Easter Ministry Areas
- Section 6. Proposed Resolution 3: Nominations
- Section 7. Recognition of Service



SECTION 1: REPORTS FROM VISION BOARD SECRETARY

Annual Meeting Minutes April 30, 2023

The 2023 Annual Meeting of the Congregation was held on April 30, 2023 at Easter on the Hill with Cathie Ford, President of the congregation, presiding. Congregation members attended in person and via Zoom.

I. Convene

- A. Meeting was called to order by Cathie Ford at 4:08 PM.
- B. Secretary Tim Czaja verified that the required quorum was met.
- C. Cathie reviewed the agenda and shared remarks.
- D. Pastor Megan led us with a prayer and devotion: Taking a breath.

II. Report of the Secretary

- A. Tim presented minutes of the April 25, 2022 Annual Meeting (as published in the April 7, 2023 Annual Report), and asked for corrections/comments. None offered.
- B. Tim presented minutes of the January 23, 2023 Special Congregational Meeting to call Pastor Erik Sevig as Community Care Pastor and to call Pastor Kevin Bergeson as Faith Formation Pastor (as published in the April 7, 2023 Annual Report), and asked for corrections/comments. None offered.

MOTION 1 made, seconded and unanimously approved:

Accept April 25, 2022 Annual Meeting minutes and January 23, 2023 Special Congregational Meeting minutes, as published in the April 7, 2023 Annual Report.

III. Report from the Physical Development Task Force (PDFT) on Easter's one site ministry.

- A. Cathie explained the process for questions/comments.
- B. Pastor Megan summarized Easter's two site ministry logistics over the past three years.
- C. Cathie summarized PDFT efforts during 2017-202, and current PDFT efforts.
- D. Gary Ehret discussed history of Easter's Master Plan beginning in 1998, updates to the Master Plan, PDFT efforts, and current goals.
- E. Congregational comments and questions addressed by Cathie, Pastor Megan and Gary, including:
 1. Decision to not include a chapel
 2. Cost estimates
 3. Kitchen size/number
 4. Worship attendance numbers
 5. Acoustics

IV. Financial Report

- A. Treasurer John Rollie presented and discussed FY 2022 financial reports as published in the April 7, 2023 Annual Report.
- B. John presented and discussed Audit Review Report as made available at the April 30, 2022 Annual Meeting.
- C. John presented and discussed FY 2023 Operations Budgets (as published in the April 7, 2023 Annual Report), capital improvements and spending from reserves.

V. Financial Resolutions

- A. John read Resolution 1 – Gratitude for all God’s Gifts and the Ability to Share them Generously (as published in the April 7, 2023 Annual Report)

MOTION 2 made, seconded and unanimously approved:

Accept Resolution 1 – Gratitude for all God’s Gifts (as published in the April 7, 2023 Annual Report).

- B. John outlined Resolution 2 – General Operations (Ministry and Benevolence) and Building Operations Budgets for Fiscal Year 2024 (as published in the April 7, 2023 Annual Report).

MOTION 3 made, seconded and unanimously approved:

Accept Resolution 2 – Operations Budgets for FY 2024 (as published in the April 7, 2023 Annual Report).

VI. Ministry Reports, Congregation Statistics, and Preschool Annual Report.

MOTION 4 made, seconded and unanimously approved:

Accept Ministry Area Reports, Congregational Statistics, and Preschool Annual Report (as published in the April 7, 2023 Annual Report).

VII. Ministry Resolutions

- A. Resolution 3 – Leadership Nomination by Acclamation
 - 1. Cathie read the 2023 slate of candidates presented by the Nominating Committee (as published in the April 7, 2023 Annual Report).
 - 2. Cathie asked for additional nominations. None offered.

MOTION 5 made, seconded and unanimously approved:

Elect the following leaders by acclamation to serve at Easter Lutheran Church

Vision Board:

-Abby Andrus

-Tim Czaja

-Micah Olson

Financial Board:

-Derek Boeve
-Melissa Bauer
-Jen Schnaible

B. Resolution 4 – Land Acknowledgment Statement

1. Lynda Czarnetzki, member of Easter’s Justice & Equity Team, discussed Easter Lutheran Church’s Land Acknowledgment Statement as published in the April 7, 2023 Annual Report

MOTION 6 made and seconded:

Amend the Land Acknowledgment Statement as published in the April 7, 2023 Annual Report as follows (language to be added shown with underline, language to be deleted shown with strikethrough): 1) “... we gather and worship on Dakota homeland, which was first God’s land, near the sacred ...”; 2) “lasting emotional, social, and cultural ~~and physical~~ harm and we recognize...”

Cathie called for discussion on MOTION 6, and several members commented. Cathie called for a vote on MOTION 6; by voice vote, MOTION 6 failed.

MOTION 7 made and seconded:

Amend the Land Acknowledgment Statement as published in the April 7, 2023 Annual Report as follows (language to be added shown with underline): “... we gather and worship on Dakota homeland, which was first God’s land, near the sacred ...”

Cathie called for discussion on MOTION 7, and several members commented. Cathie called for a vote on MOTION 7; following a doubtful voice vote, Cathie called for a vote by show of hands. MOTION 7 failed (33 votes in favor of MOTION 7, 40 votes opposed to MOTION 7).

MOTION 8 made and seconded:

Accept the Land Acknowledgment Statement as published in the April 7, 2023 Annual Report.

Cathie called for further discussion on MOTION 8. Cathie called for a vote by show of hands on MOTION 8. MOTION 8 passed (2 votes opposed to MOTION 8, all other votes in favor of MOTION 8).

VIII. Recognitions

- A. Sara Bortscheller – Vision Board
B. Renee Bartels – Financial Board.

- IX. Other Business
Cathie called for other business to be heard. None offered.
- X. Closing Prayer
Pastor Megan closed the meeting with a prayer.
- XI. Meeting adjourned at 6:11 PM

Respectfully submitted,
Tim Czaja, Secretary
May 1, 2023



Special Congregational Meeting Minutes February 4, 2024

A Congregational Meeting was held on February 4, 2024 at Easter by the Lake with Cathie Ford, President of the congregation, presiding. Congregation members attended in person and via Zoom.

I. Convene

- Meeting was called to order at 4:00 PM.
- Secretary Tim Czaja verified that the required quorum was met, with 172 voting Easter members physically present (at a minimum, 35 members are required).

II. Welcome and Prayer

- Pastor Megan led us with a prayer.

III. Review agenda and purpose

- Cathie summarized the agenda and purpose for the Congregational Meeting.

IV. Background and Overview

- Pastor Megan reviewed background of the One Site project, including Easter's history, two site ministry logistics, and Physical Development Task Force (PDTF) efforts.
- Gary Ehret presented an overview of current One Site plans.

V. Congregational Meeting Purpose/Vote

- Pastor Megan explained that anticipated, near-term expenses relating to One Site project will exceed more than 20% of the annual budget. Under these circumstances, Easter's Constitution requires congregational approval of the anticipated expenses.

-The following statement of meeting purpose was displayed to all in attendance and was verbally recited by Cathie:

Whereas, additional expenditures in excess of 20% of the annual budget are necessary for HGA Architects and our Easter Design Committee to move forward with the schematic design development and plans and specifications phases of the One Easter project, as well as additional expenses related to pre-design/construction work (such as soil samples, permits, etc.); Whereas the primary project funding sources are connected to the capital appeal, sale of the hill site, and cash reserves; Whereas, the Vision Board supports the approval of these additional expenditures;

VI. Motion and Discussion

MOTION was made and seconded:

As recommended by the Vision Board, approve spending to continue the One Easter project through 30 April 2024 not to exceed \$500,000

-Cathie called for discussion or comments; none received.

VII. Vote and Results

-Each Member participating in the meeting by in person attendance was provided the opportunity to cast a “yes” or “no” vote to the MOTION by paper ballot.

-Each Member participating in the meeting by on-line attendance was provided the opportunity to cast a “yes” or “no” vote to the MOTION by a designated on-line/electronic process.

-Voting started at 4:41 PM and concluded at 4:51 PM.

-Votes were tallied by Vision Board members and provided to Cathie.

-Cathie reported the results to those in attendance:

YES = 218 (165 in person, 53 on-line)

NO = 18 (6 in person, 12 on-line)

-Cathie confirmed that the MOTION passed.

VIII. Closing

-Pastor Megan led a prayer.

-Motion made, second, and unanimously approved to adjourn the meeting at 4:59 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Tim Czaja, Secretary
February 5, 2024



SECTION 2: FINANCIAL REPORTS FOR FISCAL YEAR ENDING JUNE 2023

**Easter Lutheran Church
Balance Sheet
June 30, 2023**

	Operating <u>Fund</u>	Capital <u>Fund</u>	Easter <u>Foundation</u>	<u>Total</u>
Cash and Cash Equivalents	811,167	0	34,407	845,574
Investments	728,917	265,509	169,104	1,163,530
Fixed Assets	<u>0</u>	<u>10,006,737</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>10,006,737</u>
Total Assets	<u>\$ 1,540,084</u>	<u>\$ 10,272,246</u>	<u>\$ 203,512</u>	<u>\$ 12,015,842</u>
Accounts Payable	0	0	0	0
Designated Payable	41,359	0	0	41,359
Notes Payable	<u>0</u>	<u>1,805,073</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>1,805,073</u>
Total Liabilities	41,359	1,805,073	0	1,846,432
Unrestricted and Undesignated	1,344,328	8,467,173	62,436	9,873,938
Unrestricted and Designated	101,239	0	0	101,239
Restricted by Donor	<u>53,157</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>141,075</u>	<u>194,233</u>
Total Net Equity	1,498,725	8,467,173	203,512	10,169,409
Total Liabilities and Net Equity	<u>\$ 1,540,084</u>	<u>\$ 10,272,246</u>	<u>\$ 203,512</u>	<u>\$ 12,015,842</u>

**Easter Lutheran Church
Balance Sheet
June 30, 2022**

	Operating <u>Fund</u>	Capital <u>Fund</u>	Easter <u>Foundation</u>	<u>Total</u>
Cash and Cash Equivalents	1,269,594	0	27,510	1,297,104
Investments	221,056	265,509	162,262	648,827
Fixed Assets	<u>0</u>	<u>10,006,737</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>10,006,737</u>
Total Assets	<u>\$ 1,490,650</u>	<u>\$ 10,272,246</u>	<u>\$ 189,772</u>	<u>\$ 11,952,668</u>
Accounts Payable	0	0	0	0
Designated Payable	47,141	0	0	47,141
Notes Payable	<u>0</u>	<u>2,043,794</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>2,043,794</u>
Total Liabilities	47,141	2,043,794	0	2,090,935
Unrestricted and Undesignated	1,288,237	8,228,452	52,365	9,569,054
Unrestricted and Designated	103,143	0	0	103,143
Restricted by Donor	<u>52,130</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>137,406</u>	<u>189,536</u>
Total Net Equity	1,443,509	8,228,452	189,772	9,861,733
Total Liabilities and Net Equity	<u>\$ 1,490,650</u>	<u>\$ 10,272,246</u>	<u>\$ 189,772</u>	<u>\$ 11,952,668</u>

**Easter Lutheran Church
Statement of Activity
For the Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 2023**

	<u>Operating Fund</u>	<u>Capital Fund</u>	<u>Easter Foundation</u>	<u>Total</u>
Revenue:				
Contributions				
Member Giving General	1,703,927	440,514		2,144,441
Member Giving Restricted	28,780			28,780
Other Contributions	67,894		3,145	71,039
Building Use Fees	29,715			29,715
Miscellaneous Income	99,820	3,085	13,745	116,650
Total Revenue	\$ 1,930,137	\$ 443,598	\$ 16,890	\$ 2,390,625
Expenses:				
Benevolence from Easter	169,649			169,649
Benevolence from designated gifts	18,712			18,712
Worship	13,826			13,826
Children, Youth & Family	46,180			46,180
Global Mission/Witness	41,729			41,729
Local Mission/Social Justice	17,862			17,862
Stewardship	5,521			5,521
Leadership Development	2,135			2,135
Fellowship/Community Life	16,296			16,296
Other Ministries	712			712
Payroll & Benefits	1,219,761			1,219,761
Transportation	7,993			7,993
Administration	67,822			67,822
Communication	1,248			1,248
Maintenance/Utilities	184,717			184,717
Insurance	24,208			24,208
Property/Equipment	25,297			25,297
Miscellaneous	11,254			11,254
Scholarships			3,150	3,150
Mortgage Interest		56,083		56,083
Capital Improvements	-	148,794	-	148,794
Total Expenses	\$ 1,874,921	\$ 204,877	\$ 3,150	\$ 2,082,949
Change in Net Equity	\$ 55,216	\$ 238,721	\$ 13,740	\$ 307,677
Net Equity, Beginning of Year	1,443,510	8,228,452	189,771	9,861,733
Net Equity, End of Year	<u>\$ 1,498,726</u>	<u>\$ 8,467,173</u>	<u>\$ 203,511</u>	<u>\$ 10,169,410</u>

NOTE: Change in Net Equity for Capital Fund (\$238,721) represents principal portion of total mortgage payments made in FY23.

Easter Lutheran Church
Statement of Activity
For the Fiscal Years Ending June 30, 2023 and June 30, 2022

	Operating Fund <u>FY23</u>	Operating Fund <u>FY22</u>	Capital Fund <u>FY23</u>	Capital Fund <u>FY22</u>	Easter Foundation <u>FY23</u>	Easter Foundation <u>FY22</u>
Revenue:						
Contributions						
Member Giving General	1,703,927	1,585,327	440,514	554,351		
Member Giving Restricted	28,780	115,666				
Other Contributions	67,894	60,750			3,145	16,620
Building Use Fees	29,715	30,405				
Miscellaneous Income	<u>99,820</u>	<u>89,939</u>	<u>3,085</u>	<u>732</u>	<u>13,745</u>	<u>(19,578)</u>
Total Revenue	\$ 1,930,137	\$1,882,088	\$ 443,598	\$ 555,083	\$ 16,890	\$ (2,958)
Expenses:						
Benevolence	169,649	159,563				
Benevolence from designated gifts	18,712	11,986				
Worship	13,826	11,518				
Children, Youth & Family	46,180	38,928				
Global Mission/Witness	41,729	35,093				
Local Mission/Social Justice	17,862	22,578				
Stewardship	5,521	4,699				
Leadership Development	2,135	1,301				
Fellowship/Community Life	16,296	13,184				
Other Ministries	712	1,051				
Payroll & Benefits	1,219,761	1,180,677				
Transportation	7,993	6,123				
Administration	67,822	47,959				
Communication	1,248	1,315				
Maintenance/Utilities	184,717	154,333				
Insurance	24,208	22,035				
Property/Equipment	25,297	27,361				
Miscellaneous	11,254	95,567				
Scholarships					3,150	2,700
Mortgage Interest			56,083	65,395		
Capital Improvements	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>148,794</u>	<u>105,113</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>20,000</u>
Total Expenses	\$ 1,874,921	\$1,835,271	\$ 204,877	\$ 170,508	\$ 3,150	\$ 22,700
Change in Net Equity	\$ 55,216	\$ 46,817	\$ 238,721	\$ 384,575	\$ 13,740	\$ (25,658)
Net Equity, Beginning of Year	1,443,510	1,396,693	8,228,452	7,843,877	189,771	215,429
Net Equity, End of Year	<u>\$ 1,498,726</u>	<u>\$1,443,510</u>	<u>\$8,467,173</u>	<u>\$8,228,452</u>	<u>\$ 203,511</u>	<u>\$ 189,771</u>

**Easter Lutheran Church
FY23 Benevolence Giving Report**

Recipients	General Fund Tithe	Restricted Giving	Total Giving
ELCA Benevolence - SPAS	\$70,000		\$70,000
Lutheran Social Service	\$8,000		\$8,000
Camp Wapogasset	\$4,000		\$4,000
Hunger			
Open Door (ERC) Food Shelf	25,000	3,246	\$28,246
Other		235	\$235
<i>Subtotal Hunger</i>	<i>\$25,000</i>	<i>\$3,481</i>	<i>\$28,481</i>
Youth and Family Outreach			
360 Communities	8,000	4,550	\$12,550
Reaching Up Ministries	5,313	5,782	\$11,095 *
Treehouse	6,600	3,124	\$9,724 *
Easter Preschool	2,000	155	\$2,155
Other			\$0
<i>Subtotal Youth and Family Outreach</i>	<i>\$21,913</i>	<i>\$13,611</i>	<i>\$35,524</i>
Housing/Homeless Ministries			
C.A.T.C.H.	1,750	762	\$2,512
Dakota Woodlands	1,000	100	\$1,100
The Link	2,000		\$2,000
MICAH	1,000		\$1,000
Other	5,000		\$5,000
<i>Subtotal Housing/Homeless</i>	<i>\$10,750</i>	<i>\$862</i>	<i>\$11,612</i>
Justice and Equity			
Other	5,000	\$2,083	\$7,083
<i>Subtotal Justice and Equity</i>	<i>\$5,000</i>	<i>\$2,083</i>	<i>\$7,083</i>
Global Partnerships			
Nyanzwa Congregation Tanzania	1,000		\$1,000 **
Tanzania Secondary Student Scholarships	6,371	901	\$7,271
Tanzania - Other Community Projects	1,750	3,210	\$4,960
ILAG El Salvador del Mundo	500		\$500 ***
ILAG Maya Itza	500		\$500 ***
Guatemala - Other Community Projects	6,865	1,325	\$8,190
ELCA Young Adult in Global Misison Sponsorship	4,000		\$4,000
Lutheran Disaster Response/World Relief	4,000	5,786	\$9,786
<i>Subtotal Global Partnerships</i>	<i>\$24,986</i>	<i>\$11,222</i>	<i>\$36,207</i>
Youth Mission Trip Sponsorships		\$9,343	\$9,343
Easter Foundation - Mission Trip Scholarships		\$1,050	\$1,050
Total Benevolence Giving FY23	\$169,649	\$41,651	\$211,300

* Easter Lutheran Church provides space for these partners (plus Loaves and Fishes) free of charge or for a nominal fee

** The Outreach Advisory Team directed the St. Paul Area Synod to remit the following additional support from Easter's BKB accounts: \$4317.99 and \$1536.72 for Nyanzwa scholarships

*** Support shared with Gloria Dei Lutheran Church

Easter Lutheran Church
Footnotes to Financial Statements
For the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 2023

Note 1. Summary of Significant Accounting Policies

Basis of Statement Presentation/Reporting Entity: The Church uses a modified cash basis for accounting purposes. The Church is exempt from income taxes under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code.

Fund Accounting: For accounting purposes Church assets are segregated into funds according to their uses. These funds are described as follows:

General Operating Fund: This fund accounts for the resources available to carry out the Church's operations.

Capital Fund: This fund accounts for resources used for purchases of real property and related improvements, and for expenses for capital fundraising campaigns. In addition, significant equipment purchases are funded through operating contributions and transferred to the capital fund at year-end.

Easter Foundation: This fund accounts for resources designated for scholarships and endowments.

Investments: Investments are stated at fair market value. The church has investments with the Mission Investment Fund of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America at varying interest rates and terms and in the ELCA Pooled Trust Fund, as well as CDARS and Insured Cash Sweep investment accounts through Minnwest Bank.

Fixed Assets: Fixed assets are recorded at cost. Depreciation expense is not reflected in the financial statements.

Retirement Benefits: The Church has a defined contribution retirement plan for eligible employees.

Contributions and donations: The Church records contributions when it has been determined that there is a legal right to the contribution and the amount is subject to reasonable estimation. Therefore, annual promises to give are not recorded until the cash/asset is received. Church contributions are credited to "one fund" from which the Church can allocate appropriate amounts to pay general and building/capital obligations.

Church policy is that contributions of investments are liquidated at the time of the gift and recorded at cash value. The exception to this policy may be contributions made to the Easter Foundation.

The services of volunteers have not been reflected in the statements as donated services since there is no objective measurement basis. Nevertheless, volunteers have given significant amounts of time to the Church.

Note 2. Long-Term Debt

A summary of the long-term debt as of June 30, 2023, is as follows:

Note payable to Mission Investment Fund of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, due in monthly installments of \$24,567 through February 1, 2031, including interest at 2.9% (fixed until March 2026 and then subject to adjustment based on current market rate), secured by first mortgage.

FY2024	294,804
FY2025	294,804
FY2026	TBD (will change based on adjusted interest rate)
FY2027	TBD (will change based on adjusted interest rate)
FY2028	TBD (will change based on adjusted interest rate)

Note 3. Fixed Assets

The Capital Fund fixed assets on June 30, 2023, consisted of the following:

Land	1,082,663
Building	8,330,337
Furniture and equipment	<u>593,737</u>
	\$ 10,006,737

Note 4. Equipment Leases

The Church leases office equipment (1 copier/printer at Hill location and 1 copier/printer at Lake location). The lease began in April 2023 and is for a term of 5 years. A summary of the lease obligations is as follows:

FY2024	18,180
FY2025	18,180
FY2026	18,180
FY2027	18,180
FY2028	<u>18,180</u>
	\$ 90,900

Note 5. Net Equity

Unrestricted and designated:

Operating Fund	
Memorials	24,859
Staff Continuing Education	199
Designated Benevolence	20,667
Designated - Projects/Improvements	<u>55,514</u>
Total	\$101,239

Restricted by donor:

Temporarily	
General Operations	53,157
Foundation Fund	<u>18,552</u>
Total	\$ 71,709

Permanently – Foundation Fund

Kristi A. Lockrem Scholarship Fund	19,840
Johnson Family College Scholarship	26,268
Mission Trips	18,547
Heritage Fund	50,593
Campership	2,000
Staff Endowment	1,500
Scholarships	2,700
Facilities Endowment	<u>1,075</u>
Total	\$122,523

Total Designated or Restricted by Donor \$ 295,471

**Easter Lutheran Church
Audit Review Committee's Report
For the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 2023**

Easter Lutheran Church's (the "Church") Audit Review Committee met on October 29, 2024 to review the financial statements of the Church as of June 30, 2023 and 2022, and related statements of activity for the years then ended. Our review primarily consisted of analytical procedures applied to the Church financial data and inquiries of Church personnel. Our review does not constitute an audit of these financial statements, nor did we attempt to assess these financial statements for conformity with Generally Accepted Accounting Principles. Accordingly, we do not express an opinion on these financial statements.

Church personnel are responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the financial statements in accordance with the Church's basis of accounting, which is disclosed in the footnotes to these financial statements. Church personnel are also responsible for designing, implementing, and maintaining internal control relevant to the preparation and fair presentation of the financial statements.

Based on our review, we are not aware of any material modifications that should be made to the accompanying financial statements based on the Church's basis of accounting.

Easter Lutheran Church Audit Review Committee

Dean Czarnetzki, Chair
Brad Vergin
Lynda Czarnetzki



SECTION 3: PROPOSED RESOLUTION 1: GRATITUDE

GRATITUDE FOR ALL GOD’S GIFTS AND RECOMMITMENT TO GOD’S MISSION AT EASTER

As we follow the Spirit’s call, seeking always to live out our mission to grow in faith and carry on the work of Jesus Christ;

And trusting that God’s providence is always at work, trusting that “all things work together for good for those who love God, who are called according to his purpose.” (Romans 8:28), that “God will fully satisfy every need of yours according to his riches in glory in Christ Jesus” (Philippians 4:19), and resting confident in the promise that “You will be enriched in every way for your great generosity, which will produce thanksgiving to God through us; for the rendering of this ministry not only supplies the needs of the saints but also overflows with many thanksgivings to God.” (2 Corinthians 9:11-12)

Be it resolved that Easter Lutheran Church expresses gratitude to God through Jesus Christ for all God’s good gifts; and likewise, rededicates itself to sharing these many gifts generously for the good of our shared mission and the neighbors God calls us to love abundantly.

And, be it further resolved that Easter Lutheran Church remains committed to serving God’s mission in this congregation and community, especially as we give our time, ability, money, and facilities, so that we might love God and love our neighbor in words and actions as we share the gospel with the whole world.



**SECTION 4:
PROPOSED RESOLUTION 2:
OPERATIONS BUDGET FOR FY ENDING JUNE 2025**

**Easter Lutheran Church
Building Operations Budget Summary FY2025**

	FY25 Budget	FY24 Budget	FY23 Actuals
INCOME			
Capital Income			
Member Giving	\$ 124,900	\$ 455,100	\$ 440,514
Other Income	<u>\$ 7,200</u>	<u>\$ 2,220</u>	<u>\$ 3,085</u>
Total Capital Income Budget	<u>\$ 132,100</u>	<u>\$ 457,320</u>	<u>\$ 443,598</u>
EXPENSE			
Debt Management			
Mortgage Principal (not a GL expense)	\$ 58,700	\$ 239,704	\$ 238,721
Mortgage Interest	\$ 48,400	\$ 55,100	\$ 56,083
Construction/Renovation			
Capital Appeal Expense	\$ -	\$ 50,000	\$ -
Capital Improvement Plan Costs	<u>\$ 25,000</u>	<u>\$ 112,516</u>	<u>\$ 148,794</u>
Subtotal Other Capital Expenses	\$ 25,000	\$ 162,516	\$ 148,794
Total Capital Expense Budget	<u>\$ 132,100</u>	<u>\$ 457,320</u>	<u>\$ 443,598</u>
Net Difference	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -

**Easter Lutheran Church
General Operations Budget Summary FY2025**

	FY25 Budget	FY24 Budget	FY23 Actuals
INCOME			
General Income			
Member Giving	\$ 1,889,000	\$ 1,689,900	\$ 1,703,927
Miscellaneous Income	\$ 242,138	\$ 232,901	\$ 197,430
Designated Gifts	\$ 37,000	\$ 37,000	\$ 28,780
Total General Income Budget	\$ 2,168,138	\$ 1,959,801	\$ 1,930,137
EXPENSE			
Benevolence Expense			
Benevolence from Giving (10%)	\$ 195,200	\$ 168,990	\$ 169,649
Benevolence from appeals/designated gifts	\$ 24,000	\$ 24,000	\$ 18,712
Ministry Expense			
Worship	\$ 15,750	\$ 16,550	\$ 13,826
Children, Youth & Family	\$ 56,567	\$ 64,101	\$ 46,180
Global Mission/Witness	\$ 58,300	\$ 80,300	\$ 41,729
Social Justice/Service/Care	\$ 26,500	\$ 27,045	\$ 17,862
Stewardship	\$ 5,500	\$ 5,500	\$ 5,521
Leadership Development	\$ 2,000	\$ 2,000	\$ 2,135
Community Life	\$ 16,650	\$ 15,850	\$ 16,296
Other Ministries	\$ 3,000	\$ 3,000	\$ 712
Subtotal Ministry Expense	\$ 184,267	\$ 214,346	\$ 144,260
Staff Expense			
Staff Wages	\$ 1,048,398	\$ 1,071,367	\$ 972,742
Staff Benefits	\$ 276,900	\$ 291,400	\$ 247,018
Subtotal Staff Expense	\$ 1,325,298	\$ 1,362,767	\$ 1,219,761
Operations Expense			
Tranportation	\$ 8,500	\$ 8,200	\$ 7,993
Administration	\$ 51,870	\$ 54,450	\$ 67,822
Communication	\$ 1,350	\$ 1,350	\$ 1,248
Miscellaneous	\$ 14,000	\$ 14,000	\$ 11,254
Building Maintenance	\$ 154,000	\$ 151,000	\$ 184,717
Property Maintenance	\$ 17,650	\$ 16,000	\$ 25,297
Insurance	\$ 29,900	\$ 24,400	\$ 24,208
Subtotal Operations Expense	\$ 277,270	\$ 269,400	\$ 322,539
Total General Expense Budget	\$ 2,006,035	\$ 2,039,503	\$ 1,874,921
Net Difference	\$ 162,103	\$ (79,702)	\$ 55,216

Resolution 2 – General Operations (Ministry and Benevolence) and Building Operations Budgets for Fiscal Year 2025

Explanatory Information

This budget resolution comes for consideration and approval by the 2024 Easter Lutheran Church annual meeting.

Easter Lutheran Church regularly projects income and expenses for ministry on a fiscal year basis, July 1 – June 30;

Income

Easter Lutheran Church has conducted a generosity appeal for all member giving for the calendar year 2024 for a projected member income of \$1,889,000 allocated to the General Operations Budget and \$124,900 allocated to the Building Operations Budget for fiscal year 2025;

Easter Lutheran Church estimates other revenue from fees, programs, and other giving of \$242,138 and \$37,000 from Designated Gifts for a projected total General Operations income of \$2,168,138;

Easter Lutheran Church estimates revenue from other sources of \$7,200 for a projected total Building Operations income of \$132,100;

Expenses

Easter Lutheran Church has projected General Operations expenses based upon experience, ministry needs, program requirements and opportunities for growth in ministry of \$2,006,035;

Easter Lutheran Church has projected Building Operations expenses of \$132,100 for payment of mortgage obligations (principal and interest) and other building needs such as building maintenance and improvements;

Summary

As a result, the Vision and Financial Boards recommend this Fiscal Year 2025 budget for adoption;

Easter Lutheran Church hereby adopts the General Operations Budget of \$2,006,035 and Building Operations Budget of \$132,100 as supported by the accompanying budget summary detail.

Benevolence

Easter Lutheran Church is resolved to tithe the first 10% of General Operations Budget allocated giving (member and non-member/loose) to local and global ministry partners (including the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and the Saint Paul Area Synod).



SECTION 5. REPORTS FROM EASTER MINISTRY AREAS

- a. Ministry Area Reports:
 - Lead Pastor Report
 - Vision Board Report
 - Care and Support Ministry
 - Faith Formation
 - Foundation Committee
 - Worship
 - Contemporary
 - Traditional
 - Outreach Ministry
 - One Easter (One Site) Ministry
 - Easter Kids Ministry
 - Easter Youth Ministry
 - Adult Ministry
 - Facilities & Operations
 - Communications & Media Report
- b. Congregation Statistics: Worship and Membership
- c. Easter Preschool Annual Report



LEAD PASTOR REPORT

Submitted by: Pastor Megan Torgerson,
Lead Pastor

There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called to the one hope of your calling.
Ephesians 4:4

Over the past year, I've had the privilege of being part of a program called Contemplative Clergy Renewal at Holy Wisdom Monastery near Madison, WI. It has been a meaningful and perspective-changing year of classes, retreats, cohort sessions, and personal renewal. One of the ideas that has come out of this year of reflection is the idea that the *interruption is an invitation*.

This has become especially meaningful over the last year as it sometimes feels like ministry is constantly interrupted. Helping new pastors settle into ministry, getting a building project launched, setting a capital appeal in motion, hiring new staff members – when am I supposed to do ministry with all this interruption? That's when I remember: the interruption is an invitation. These new things aren't exceptions to ministry. They **are** ministry. New pastoral and staff leadership, planning for the building that will serve Easter's mission for years to come, inviting the whole community into financial generosity, and following the Spirit's lead at every turn – this is an invitation into God's mission with us.

We are all being invited into God's work in the world. The interruption to what we know might feel challenging and even be full of grief and anxiety, but it is also an invitation to consider what God has planned for us next. Together, as one community, we keep watching and listening for the many ways our one God interrupts our habits and expectations, inviting us into new and powerful ways to love, serve, share, accompany, and celebrate as God's beloved. Our capital appeal theme verse, Ephesians 4:4, continues to guide us, reminding us that even interruptions point us towards the **one hope** we have as **one people** united by our **one God**.

As I write this report, plans continue to form as capital appeal work and building designs continue to shape. Still, it is my pleasure to reflect on the good work that has been done as we keep looking ahead to where God leads us next.

One Easter One Mission capital appeal. Since late last summer, Easter staff and leaders have worked with GSB Fundraising and Consultants to bring the whole Easter community together in financial generosity. As of this day, we are halfway to our goal, and commitments continue to come in. No matter when you read this, you are invited to be a part of the appeal. I welcome you to contact the church office or go to easter.org/onesite to make your commitment.

But the bottom line hasn't been the only benefit of this work. I've seen Easter come together in an exciting, joyful way. Whether it was the exuberant day of inspiration bag deliveries, the powerful *Generosity Brings Joy Storybook*, the incredible One Easter speakers in worship, or the excitement of our One Easter Worship and Festival, I keep seeing smiles, hearing enthusiasm, and praising God for the good things happening at Easter. This capital appeal has brought us together and reminded us of the good we truly have here in this community.

Enormous thanks go to Dave Unmacht, the appeal chair, as well as Brian & Kari Eickhoff, Tom & Jane Freeberg, Bruce & Laurel Gaard, Joy & Bill Korte, and Barb Moon for serving on the capital appeal steering team. Thank you also to the multitude of volunteers who delivered bags, recruited

helpers, made plans, collected stories, and called us all together as one generous, caring, joy-filled community. I am filled with gratitude for every single one of you who has made a financial commitment to this building project which is many years in the making, and to Easter's annual ministry. Together, we are building the facility that will love our neighbors and preach the gospel for generations to come.

One Easter building project. This year saw a major, exciting transition in our building work. Our Physical Development Task Force, a continuation of a group formed in 2018, got Easter back on track in our one site work. I am incredibly grateful to Cathie Ford and Gary Ehret, the co-chairs of this group, along with Sara Anderson, Abby Andrus, Mitch Berger, Derek Boeve, Sheila Gullickson, Scott Lanners, Jim Mattson, Brenda Misukanis, and John Rollie who all served on the PDTF at some point in the process. Your hard work carried us far.

We have now moved into design work, where we take our original large-scale plans and refine them into specific floorplans and details. We also continue to manage the finances that help us achieve our dreams. Thank you to Cathie Ford and Gary Ehret for continuing to guide this work, along with Mitch Berger, Rick Dahl, Rachelle Gill, Neil Groon, Rolf Lokensgard, Sheryl Johnson, and Jason Staebell for serving on the Design Team. Derek Boeve, Darci Dawson, Dean Hoffrogge, Scott Lanners, and John Rollie faithfully tend to the financial planning. Together, this ever-growing group of volunteers and staff faithfully share their time, talent, and insight to help Easter live into its reality as a united, community-centered congregation where all are welcome.

Currently, building plans continue to form. We've had incredible input from staff and volunteers to help us refine what our new facility will look like. Every time I envision the new space – offices that bring staff together, a sanctuary that celebrates both traditional and contemporary worship, classrooms that promote learning for everyone from preschool to OWLs, enough gathering space for Sunday morning coffee and funeral families, all enjoying the beauty of creation at Thomas Lake – I get excited all over again.

I recognize that this opportunity comes with loss. Celebrating something new means letting go of something we love. Even as we build a new facility, we prepare to leave the Hill site. It has meant so much to Easter's history. Not only is it where we have had baptisms, funerals, weddings, and holidays, but it is the original location where Easter began as a formal church. It won't be easy to say goodbye. Together, we will tell stories, share memories, pray, grieve, and make sure that what we love about Easter can continue in a new space as we entrust our Hill site to a new faith community.

For now, we anticipate having more time to do ministry out of the Hill site. While new construction at the Lake site may be completed by the end of 2025, we're negotiating sale options that keep us in the Hill as long as possible. I hope this eases the transition and gives us enough time to say goodbye to a building that has served us – and the gospel – incredibly well.

Fifty years of Easter. This year sees a string of dates which marked Easter's formal beginnings as a church fifty years ago. While Easter had been worshiping before 1974, this year saw milestones like the signing of the charter (January 20), its formal organization (April 21), and its filing as a nonprofit organization in Minnesota (June 12). While much of our capital appeal work has involved celebrating Easter's long and vibrant ministry, we also intend to find ways to mark this special anniversary in Easter's history. Stay tuned. I'm always interested in a good reason to get together, have fun, and be reminded of how much good God is up to among us.

New pastors. I'll admit: Pastor Erik and Pastor Kevin don't feel very new anymore! They've fit in very well, quickly getting right to work to learn more about our community, build and grow programs and relationships, and work alongside staff and volunteers. But the truth is that they've been here just over a year, and for a pastor, that's still new!

I remain so grateful for their ministry. I have been personally sustained and encouraged by their wisdom, faithfulness, insight, and good humor. Professionally, I've been grateful for their leadership, preaching, humility, and ability to dream. Every day, I give thanks for the call committee, synod, and work of the Holy Spirit that called us together as church and pastors. Thank you for continuing to grant them grace, get them engaged, offer them your talents and time, and build strong ministry together.

A strong, hard-working staff. Through any changes, challenges, and chaos, Easter's staff continues to demonstrate just how talented, passionate, kind, strong, and faith-centered they truly are. We have a full staff with the additions of Holly Beck and Clark Nordberg, and we are well-prepared to keep moving forward on our building project with Gary Ehret. For the rest of the staff, whether they've been with us for one year or thirty years, they continue to demonstrate that they are truly capable and rooted in Christ. It is an honor to serve this congregation alongside each of them.

I know there will be more interruptions. Things will change or be unexpected or go far better than hoped or require a new direction entirely. But these are all invitations to consider where God continues to guide us. Sometimes it's also a reminder to me that the Holy Spirit is usually about three steps ahead of where I'm ready to go. But when you're surrounded by God's goodness, something you can't avoid at a church as engaged, compassionate, and faithful as Easter, you can continue to trust that God is at work in all things. As we move into our future together, I look forward to marking all of the incredible things that God has made possible in our midst.

Thank you, Easter Lutheran Church, for being a place that continues to live your faith in powerful and bold ways. It's an honor to serve God with you.

Soli Deo Gloria,
Pastor Megan Torgerson



VISION BOARD REPORT

Submitted by: Catherine Ford,
Vision Board President

Dear Easter People,

Grace and peace to each of you in the name of Jesus Christ.

Excitement and energy continue to be the words I associate with Easter Lutheran Church this year. Just when I wonder if life at Easter can be more exciting and energized, I am shown that yes, it absolutely can be more! To intentionally be repetitive from last year's Vision Board report, wow, what a year!

This year our energy and focus have been centered on One Easter with the goal of a singular Easter Lutheran building at the Lake location. As the Physical Development Task Force and Schematic Design Committee provide regular reports, the Vision Board continues to have incredible enthusiasm, deliberate conversations, and commitment to see this project move forward. To add to this energy, 2024 marks our church's 50th anniversary, an incredible milestone. Excitement continues to build as the Vision Board, staff, and congregation all vision what the next fifty years of Easter Lutheran Church has in store.

As a result, this work has consumed the majority of our time at monthly meetings and our annual retreat. Frequently, the Vision Board is listening to reports from myself, Gary Ehret, and Pastor Megan to ensure they are up to date on progress and providing appropriate oversight at each step along the way.

I especially want to express my thanks to the Vision Board, pastors, staff, and volunteers who continue to provide meaningful opportunities and support to grow in faith and carry on the work of Jesus Christ. It has once again been a privilege to serve alongside such faithful, Easter-loving people on the board and on staff. Numerous times this year, I have had deep feelings of gratitude well up inside me which have been hard to express without overwhelming emotion. These people care so much about Easter Lutheran Church and go above and beyond because they want this place, this congregation, this programming to emulate the love of Jesus.

The Vision Board continues to prioritize listening. This year, this has included the numerous One Easter Engagement sessions to share information, but more importantly, to hear your joys and concerns about this project. The Vision Board has additional plans to provide opportunities to ask questions as we venture into the next phases of the project. We have heard overwhelming support for the concept plan and capital appeal, and this continues to build the momentum and excitement towards One Easter! The Vision Board is still earnest about transparency of knowledge and processes related to this work and strives to provide frequent communications (with lots of thanks to our Easter staff for their work in this space!). Additionally, we also continue listening sessions with Easter staff and community partners.

Throughout this past year, the Vision Board has also spent time reflecting on and in deep discussion about Easter's vision statements asking if these still reflect the work and mission of

Easter Lutheran Church. The short answer is yes! During this process, the Vision Board has worked to make these statements more concise and elevate the key words and phrases that reflect who we are as Easter and how we live out our mission to grow in faith and carry on the work of Jesus Christ.

So much continues to happen in the life of Easter Lutheran Church! It gives me great peace to know the spirit has been with us along this journey by opening the next doors, leading us down the right paths, and guiding us with every step. God is truly leading us into the next chapter of Easter Lutheran Church's future.

I'd like to end with the One Easter One Mission campaign prayer:

God of the promise, you call your people together into your one mission in Christ's name. Make us brave, grant us peace, challenge our expectations, and empower us to truly follow your Spirit's lead. You are our one God who calls us together as one people, and we thank you in Jesus' name. Amen.

In peace,

Cathie Ford



FAITH FORMATION

Submitted by: Pastor Kevin Bergeson,
Faith Formation Pastor

Dear People of Easter Lutheran Church,

As your called pastor for Faith Formation, I want to encourage you that everything related to Easter is forming faith in young people, young adults, adults, and elders—and the neighbors connected here at Easter. Faith Formation is a holistic, Holy Spirit-led, experiential adventure that is not limited to what happens on our campuses, also at your homes, workplaces, schools, soccer fields, and ice rinks, too. We have formal lessons we teach about being “saved by grace through faith” and Lutheran traditions and we have informal mentoring and experiences on what it looks like to be a follower of Jesus in 2024.

This all-encompassing perspective on faith formation is always grounded in what we are striving to accomplish as a community: to grow in faith and to carry on the work of Jesus Christ. Those two ideas are deeply woven together. In this past year, we have invited adults to grow in three key commitments: our understanding and relationship with God's Word in the Bible; prayer, our ongoing conversation with God; and Christian living, meaning, how does being a follower of Jesus provide us a lens to see our life and existence as a whole. How does being a follower of Jesus shape the way we love and serve our neighbor? How do we take a posture of learning and listening when our neighbor has something to teach us?

Significant accomplishments for the year:

- ✧ I've seen leadership from you in JAM, Confirmation, YOWIES (High School Youth Group), and adult education. Church is the people; the body of Christ is a relationship with God and each other. When people say yes to helping up front or behind the scenes in the wide variety of learning ministries, lives are changed. Thank you for your ministry. Thank you for praying. Thank you showing up and helping us as a community fulfill the baptismal promises that we make to every person baptized in this church. The energy of small group leaders and the many roles throughout the church are a powerful witness that the love of God is active!
- ✧ Easter Preschool celebrated its 30th year of ministry. What an accomplishment! Alicia Borman and her team have built something special.
- ✧ JAM (pre K-5th grade), grounded in the Jesus-centered *Orange* curriculum, continues to grow and evolve after the pandemic. Children are meeting Jesus through the good work of Rachelle Gill, Sara Currell, Mikayla Kvittem-Barr, and their team of volunteers. Vacation Bible School continues to be a powerful front door for Easter in connecting with families during the summer season. This is successful because of the long running summer staff program faithfully served by Summer Youth Interns, and in 2023 Katie Austin and Sophie Vigesaa led great youth ministry.
- ✧ Confirmation (gr 6-10), we celebrated in October 2023 with the 38 youth who affirmed their faith. Learning continues to offer a strong opportunity to grow in faith through middle school and high school years. Rotating between Old Testament, New Testaments and the Small Catechism, students are provided an expansive view of faith, church, and neighbor engagement. Deacon Hans Vigesaa creates fresh, engaging content each year and offers a compelling bridge to YOWIES. Middle school students are the key to Vacation Bible School and developing their gifts and skills of service.
- ✧ YOWIES (gr 9-12) provide dependable, grounding community with relevant content, summer service trips, and student leadership. Deacon Hans and the core groups of adult leaders provide a safe, faithful place for students to grow.

- ↳ The TIM (Teens in Ministry) Team program is to be celebrated! High school students are practicing leadership skills and modeling for their peers a relational faith. They led weekly pizza parties for Confirmation during Lent where none had existed before, and it worked!
- ↳ Adult ministry thrives under Jami Day. Her connections and ideas helped build many fresh options for pastor-led content this past year. Thank you to the various group leaders, including Tom Yelle at ManUp, Shari Couch at Table Talk, Kathy Bahrke at OWLs, Laurie Martinson at WOW, Pastor Jerry Friest, and the many other leaders of adult learning and Life Group opportunities.
- ↳ Praise God for the ordination of Pastor Amy Vigesaa at Easter.
- ↳ We bid Godspeed to Allison Butler's faithful ministry at Easter and said "merhaba" to Holly Beck as Program Ministry Administrative Support.
- ↳ We learned from the smaller number of weddings of the changing dynamics of marriage today and "church weddings."
- ↳ We learned from our funerals how to continue to walk with people through depression, grief, suicide, health issues of many varieties, and how to name God's presence there.
- ↳ We added "noisy" offering buckets for children, beautifully built by John DeSutter, to help teach generosity in worship.
- ↳ With many new faces around the table, we as your staff team are learning new ways to work together. Jennifer Peloquin anchors our team with history, prayer, and technical knowhow; Holly Beck supports multiple staff members and programs; Amy Peschong and Raina Andrusko create magic communicating information to so many. Debbie Finley glues details together along with Clark Nordberg and ten-key boss Darci Dawson. Rhonda Doran holds Easter to our highest ideals as Christian neighbors, and nothing gets done, trust me, without our amazing facilities team of Butch Stodolka, Kerry Wollin, John DeSutter, and Al Dulas. I am grateful for our two amazing lead musicians—Easter does not know how good it has it—Benjamin Kornelis and Kent Henriksen, and the worship coordinators...Steven Butler, Amy Young, Linda Emeott, Erin Murphy, and Kevin Gutknecht.
- ↳ Grateful for the teamwork and leadership of Lead Pastor Megan Torgerson and Outreach and Care Pastor Erik Sevig. Listen to a "Carry On" Podcast and you'll get the vibe of this team.

Big goals you're excited about for next year:

- ◇ Supporting Rachelle, Hans, Rhonda, and Jami in integrating more connections, resources and realizing some of their short- and long-term engagement and teaching goals.
- ◇ Helping each person at Easter find one connection outside of Sunday worship in the life of the Easter community.
- ◇ Exploring vocation with you—God has a call on everyone's life—how do we discover and act on that call here at Easter?
- ◇ Supporting and realizing the next chapter of the One Easter One Mission Campaign
- ◇ Resuming our visits to Guatemala partners

One way you've seen the Holy Spirit active in your ministry this year:

What a privilege it is to see the mentorship of generations in faith! High school students modeling faith for middle school students. Middle school students modeling faith for elementary students. Thank you for your support and prayers to see this happen!

I am proud to serve as one of your pastors.

In Christ, Pastor Kevin Bergeson



CARE AND SUPPORT MINISTRY

Submitted by: Pastor Erik Sevig,
Community Care Pastor

Significant accomplishments for the year:

- ◇ Dozens of pastoral care visits to the hospitalized and shut-ins, combined with dozens more by Easter Care Companions.
- ◇ Welcomed “Riley the Therapy Dog” as a new, volunteer greeter at the Lake on Sunday mornings.
- ◇ Continued hosting worship twice a month at both Eagan Pointe and Lexington Pointe Senior Living.
- ◇ **“Easter Cares Sunday”** on November 26, where we celebrated Easter’s many Care Ministries and volunteers. Prayer Team, Prayer Blanket Makers, Quilters, Caring Card Writers, Care Companions, Support Groups, Breathing Space, and Growing Through Loss Volunteers.
- ◇ **“Christmas Quiet Service”** on December 3: hosted by Easter Care Companions
- ◇ Care Companion Leaders trained 7 new Easter Care Companions using “Befriender Ministry” resources

Big goals you’re excited about for next year:

- ◇ Train, install, and assign the newest Easter Care Companions
- ◇ Update the Care and Support section of Easter’s website
- ◇ Continue establishing a tradition of celebrating “Easter Cares Sunday” in November each year
- ◇ Continue establishing a tradition of hosting the “Christmas Quiet” service during Advent each year

One way you’ve seen the Holy Spirit active in your ministry this year:

- ◇ Being installed as Community Care Pastor on the same day as Faith Formation Pastor Kevin Bergeson.
- ◇ In the forming and growing of relationships with so many new friends in Christ – members and staff of Easter along with colleagues in the Saint Paul Area Synod.
- ◇ Finally, as people from the surrounding community are called together at Easter, gathered into a community of faith, together become the Body of Christ, and CARE for each other with the very love of God we first received from Him on account of His Son, Jesus Christ our Savior and Lord.



WORSHIP - TRADITIONAL

Submitted by: Ben Kornelis,
Director of Traditional Music

The traditional music program at Easter continues to strive to enrich worship and contribute to the faith life of its participants. Although delayed by Covid well into “AdveChristmaPiphany,” the Easter Choir and Jubilate Ringers were able to present the annual Advent Choral Service, “Bright Is the Dawning,” on January 14. The spring choral service, “All the Days of My Life,” will be on May 12, with the Mill City String Quartet assisting. The Easter Choir, ably assisted by accompanist Mindy Eschedor, participates in worship most Sundays and the Jubilate Ringers at least six times throughout the year. The number of available ringers was insufficient for the Exultate Ringers to rehearse and participate in worship this year, but hopefully enough ringers will be available in the fall.

Sacha Pankratz, assisted by accompanist Tristi Wilson, continue to guide Easter’s young singers in the Choristers, helping them to develop their singing technique, exposing them to choral music, and giving them the opportunity to be active participants in worship. The Choristers generally participate 2-3 times in fall/winter, including singing at the “Jingle Jam,” and 2-3 times in winter/spring. As they did last year, the Choristers will also participate in the spring choral service on May 12, 2024.

We continue to enjoy the pipe organ purchased in 2020. It requires less frequent tunings than in the first year after it was moved to Easter. It does have some age-related maintenance issues (soldered connections of a type no longer used that are beginning to dry and flake apart) that will require attention in the near future.



WORSHIP - CONTEMPORARY

Submitted by: Kent Henriksen,
Director of Contemporary Music

Significant accomplishments for the year:

- ✝ Livestream worship at the Lake started in December 2022. Thank you to **Randy Dufault** for installing the system and making this possible! This summer, Randy was able to add to the system and livestream outdoor worship. We now stream our 9 am worship service each week, and the online worship community continues to grow.
- ✝ A big thank you to **Sheryl Johnson** who redesigned and installed the artwork on the Great Room doors in March of 2023. They look amazing and bring much needed color and warmth to the worship space.
- ✝ Worship at the Lake happens because of a group of approximately 38 music and tech volunteers. These include singers, guitar players, bass players, keyboard players, drummers, software presentation volunteers, livestream volunteers, and sound volunteers. We are so grateful that they give their time and talent to bring worship to so many.
- ✝ 2 new projectors were installed in the Great Room in September of 2023. The brightness of the new projectors makes it much easier to follow along with worship than the previous generation of projectors. These projectors were purchased by the roofing company after some rain damage occurred to each projector during the roof install.
- ✝ We worship twice a week at Easter by the Lake at 9:00 and 10:30 am. During the summer we move worship outside for one service a week at 9:00 am.

Big goals you're excited about for next year:

- ◇ There is lots of excitement around planning for a new sanctuary. I am looking forward to being a part of that planning process!
- ◇ I'm always looking to add tech and music volunteers to the Lake worship team.

One way you've seen the Holy Spirit active in your ministry this year:

I feel lots of gratitude for the amazing volunteers I get to work with each week. Not only are they a dedicated and talented bunch, but the Holy Spirit is present in the way they care for one another and minister to the people in our congregation and community.



EASTER FOUNDATION REPORT

Submitted by: Darci Dawson,
Finance Director

The mission of Easter Lutheran Church is to grow in faith and carry on the work of Jesus Christ. The Easter Lutheran Church Foundation encourages good stewardship and seeks ways to educate and offer opportunity for dialogue about ways to invest in the future of Easter Church. You can give to the Foundation now or through gifts made in your will, trust, retirement plan, or life insurance policy. Gifts to the Foundation are invested, allowing them to grow over time. When you give to the Easter Foundation, you ensure that future generations are growing in faith and carrying on the work of Jesus Christ.

Significant accomplishments for the year:

- ◇ Awarded Johnson Family Scholarship of \$1,250 to Ms. Brooklyn Adams. Brooklyn graduated from Eastview High School and will be attending the University of Colorado to study ecology and evolutionary biology.
- ◇ Awarded Kristi Lockrem Scholarship of \$850 to Mr. Samuel Mathews. Samuel graduated from Eastview High School and will be attending the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire to study education and kinesiology.
- ◇ Awarded \$1050 in mission trip scholarships to attendees who otherwise would not have been able to participate in these life changing trips.
- ◇ The Foundation Team is privileged to have the opportunity to support broader Easter Church goals. It has provided funds for the baptismal font and electronic signage projects in the most recent past. Even though no similar initiatives were presented to the Foundation Team in 2023, it stands ready to respond should something be brought forth.

Big goals you're excited about for next year:

- ◇ The Foundation Team hopes to work with staff and/or church leadership to identify another significant churchwide special project that can be funded by the Foundation's Heritage Fund.
- ◇ The Foundation Team would like to continue to make the Easter congregation more aware of its purpose and framework and to help congregation members understand how they can invest in the mission and vision of the church during their lifetimes and beyond through the Easter Foundation.

A very huge **THANK YOU** to Foundation Team members: Colleen Byrne, Allan Johnson, and Vickie Foster!



OUTREACH REPORT

Submitted by: Rhonda Doran,
Director of Outreach

Easter's mission is to grow in faith and carry on the work of Jesus Christ. We actively strive to blur the lines between church and community, so that it is widely known that Easter exists to bless the world with God's love. Easter's Outreach Ministry and partnerships provide diverse opportunities for Easter people to answer God's call to love our neighbors and live into our shared vision and mission while impacting the lives of people close to home and around the world.

LOCAL PARTNERSHIPS

We are grateful for our continued long-term relationships with in-house outreach partners Loaves and Fishes, Homework Help by Reaching Up, and TreeHouse. Easter by the Lake is a lively hub of activity throughout the week. On a typical weeknight, Loaves and Fishes serves around 200 fresh, healthy meals to our local community. Guests have the option of picking up a meal to go or coming inside to dine in the Community Room. In addition to receiving nutritious food from Loaves and Fishes and The Open Door, students from five ISD 196 schools receive academic support at Easter every Monday through Thursday during the school year through Homework Help. Additionally, teens from throughout the South Metro gather for TreeHouse programming each Tuesday and Thursday evening, participating in large group activities and small group listening sessions with caring adults who believe that when we love teens and help them know their God-given value, it unleashes untold potential in their lives and our communities.

True to our community-centered model of outreach, Easter partners with organizations that care about the health and physical well-being of our community. Monthly we host a Red Cross Blood Drive, and a Fare for All sale, a low-cost option for lean meats and fresh produce, including a representative from Dakota County Career Services who provides on-site support to guests seeking new or different employment opportunities. Annually we host a MHealth Fairview flu vaccination clinic. As a founding partner of The Open Door food pantry, we continue to directly support healthy food options for our neighbors throughout Dakota County – including the summer Mobile Lunch Box program that brings healthy lunches into the neighborhoods of school children across three school districts.

Given Easter's intentional presence in our community, it's not surprising that people in crisis reach out to us for help identifying potential resources. Our relationship with 360 Communities is invaluable in these circumstances. 360 Communities provides critical care and stabilization to families in crisis and is particularly skilled in walking alongside families facing eviction. Easter directs funds to 360 Communities that trained 360 staff can access to stabilize families who are facing homelessness. Despite investing in eviction prevention, we know that lack of stable shelter is the reality for some of our neighbors. Easter's partnerships with CATCH (Coalition for Affordable Transitional Community Housing), and others including Dakota Woodlands, The Link, and MICAH (Metropolitan Interfaith Coalition Against Homelessness) respond to our most vulnerable neighbors.

There's so much to celebrate when we intentionally meet and embrace our full community! Large community events like Spring Fling in May and Art Block in September provide the opportunity

to celebrate together with the full spectrum of people who call Easter home – not just on Sunday mornings, but throughout the week. These events focus on “The Nature of Community” and celebrate that we are “Better Together.” They complement other community events throughout the year such as God’s Work Our Hands Sunday, our annual Loaves & Fishes Thanksgiving meal, and the Holiday Gift Shop, a tradition that has evolved to provide gift cards to families connected to Easter through our partners. Families use the cards to personally select gifts for their loved ones.

GLOBAL PARTNERSHIPS

Our new pastors have been busy learning about and developing renewed relationships with our partner congregations in Tanzania and Guatemala over the past year.

For more than 30 years, the people of the Saint Paul Area Synod, ELCA, and the Iringa Diocese of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Tanzania have been walking beside one another as companions on a journey of faith, exploring God’s mission together. “Bega Kwa Bega” is the phrase we use to describe this companionship. Meaning ‘shoulder to shoulder,’ it describes the way in which we accompany one another in a spirit of mutuality, inclusivity, and vulnerability.

Pastor Erik traveled to Tanzania in early 2024 to walk alongside our partners there. During January and February, he explored the ministry of the Iringa Diocese through excursions to diocese owned and operated schools, healthcare facilities, and parishes, including Easter’s partner parish in Nyanzwa. While spending time in Nyanzwa, Pastor Erik was able to listen to the hopes and dreams of our growing partner parish. Soon after returning, he shared his learnings with Easter’s Outreach Advisory Team. The Team was able to respond in support of a roof project for the newest preaching point in Mpilipili. Pastor Erik shared highlights of his travels with the wider congregation through a sermon and two information sessions.

The *God Who Sees* book study provided an opportunity to learn about the issue of migration from the personal perspective of Karen Gonzalez, a pastor who migrated to the US from Guatemala. Representatives from the Iglesia Luterana Agustina de Guatemala (ILAG) were able to join us for conversation around this important topic via Zoom, and a larger Synod-wide event in February provided the opportunity to learn more about the impact of migration on our ILAG partners directly from Pastor Karen Castillo and Diego Gil. We look forward to continuing this important conversation in the coming year. Additionally, we are excited to announce that for the first time in six years, an Easter delegation will travel for an in-person visit with our companion congregations in Guatemala City and Maya Itza, Guatemala. Pastor Kevin will lead this group visit in late January-early February 2025.

We sponsored Easter member Abbie Doran to live and serve for a year through the ELCA’s Young Adults in Global Mission (YAGM) program. Abbie was placed in Jerusalem and the West Bank (JWB), she lived with a Palestinian host family just outside of Bethlehem and volunteered at the Evangelical Lutheran School of Beit Sahour. ELCA Global Mission suspended the JWB YAGM cohort after the events of October 7, 2023. Abbie then joined the Central Europe YAGM cohort and is currently completing her year of service in Nyíregyháza, Hungary. In March 2024, Abbie was able to join Easter’s ManUp group via Zoom to share about her personal experience in the West Bank. Easter staff member Holly Beck, who previously served as a JWB YAGM in the 2022-23 cohort, co-presented with Abbie.

Easter continued to partner with Lutheran World Relief and Lutheran Disaster Response to provide immediate assistance when natural and political disasters impacted our global neighbors. Through your generous donations, Easter was able to direct funds to these relief organizations for on-the-ground supplies and support in Turkey, Syria, Maui, and Gaza this year.

JUSTICE & EQUITY

At our annual meeting in April 2021, Easter's congregation adopted a resolution proclaiming our Christian belief and committing to working for racial justice by examining our congregational practices, organizing education opportunities, promoting equity among all people, opposing racism in all its forms, and building relationships of trust and solidarity in our community. This work continues under the leadership of Easter's Racial Equity Team and in partnership with the Center for Leadership and Neighborhood Engagement (CLNE). We welcomed guest preacher Pastor Kelly Chatman, a nationally respected teacher and speaker on multi-cultural leadership and community engagement.

At our annual meeting in April 2023, Easter's congregation adopted a Land Acknowledgement Statement. Believing this is holy work that requires more than acknowledgement, Easter continues to lean into opportunities to move beyond the land acknowledgement toward active participation in examining our practices, educating ourselves, promoting equity, and building relationships. Some of the ways we participated in this work included a Native Stories project for all JAM (Jesus and Me) students, a Why Treaties Matter exhibit, an exhibition and presentation by Native artist Kent Estey, collaborative learning with other faith communities, and Native guest preacher Dr. Kelly Sherman Conroy.

RIVERSIDE INNOVATION HUB – AUGSBURG UNIVERSITY CHRISTENSEN CENTER FOR VOCATION

Alongside congregational teams from 12 other faith communities, a team of Easter people began a two-year intentional learning journey, Thriving Congregations, in September 2023. Through this two-year learning cycle, participants are introduced to the theology, theory, skills, and values necessary to lead a faith community into deeper and more meaningful engagement with neighbors and neighborhoods. Exploration and training include the practices of accompaniment, interpretation, discernment, and proclamation as they relate to being a vital neighbor.

DREAMS FOR NEXT YEAR

Some of the things we look forward to:

- ◇ offering more group opportunities for travel – including multigenerational visits to our partner congregations in Guatemala and an adult tour of the South following the Civil Rights Movement;
- ◇ the dedication of commissioned Native art by Dakota Hoska in conjunction with our land acknowledgment;
- ◇ completion of the accompaniment and discernment phases of the Riverside Innovation Hub vital neighbor intentional learning process;
- ◇ continued growth of the Fairbault TreeHouse planted by Easter member Amy Young.

SEEING THE HOLY SPIRIT AT WORK

We see the Spirit at work when we see the faces of everyone gathered in the Great Room at Spring Fling. We see the full beauty of this beloved community – Easter people of all ages, volunteers and participants of so many partner ministries, preschool families, and community members who know Easter as a good neighbor that strives to care well for all people – gathered in celebration of the breadth and impact of our shared calling to love God and love others. We see the Spirit when we share a meal together in Fellowship Hall at Art Block and read the messages left on the Nature of Community tree outside Fireside Commons – “When I walk through Easter’s doors, I know I belong and it is home.”; “When others reach out to welcome me it feels like I belong.”; “We are from a Muslim background and our faith aligns with Easter Preschool style. Thank you for making my kids welcome to the community!”; “Being in this community brings me JOY!”. And we hear the Spirit’s voice as we work to become better listeners committed to hearing and sharing stories of hope and despair from all God’s people.



ONE EASTER (ONE SITE) MINISTRY

Submitted by: Gary Ehert,
Admiral of Building Logistics

Significant accomplishments for the year:

A Physical Development Task Force #1 (PDTF) was organized and met for the first time in late January 2023. The task force had the following 10 members: Sara Anderson, Abby Andrus, Derek Boeve, Gary Ehret, Cathie Ford, Sheila Gullickson, Jim Mattson, Brenda Misukanis, John Rollie, and Pastor Megan Torgerson.

The primary objective of the task force was to utilize the information assembled in the 2018 Master plan, evaluate, build on that information, and update the plan to move the ONE EASTER project forward with a plan, schedule, and budget. The task force was also asked to identify and hire, on behalf of Easter, a Capital Appeal Consultant to evaluate the ability to conduct a building appeal and to estimate our capacity as a congregation to raise funds to support a building project.

In August of 2023, the task force completed an updated comprehensive plan, a preliminary project development schedule, and worked with leadership to identify a preliminary project budget range. Also in August, the Capital Appeal Consultant, after completing a financial feasibility study recommended an appeal goal of \$6 million. A project finance team (subcommittee of task force) assembled a project financing plan based on four sources of funding: capital appeal results, borrowing, sale of the Hill property, and use of reserves.

A slightly modified task force (PDTF #2) was initiated in September of 2023. Mitch Berger was added to the original task force as an additional member.

The primary objective of this task force was to utilize the work of PDTF #1, to modify the plan to conform to the established budget total project cost (TPC) of not to exceed \$17 Million. This budget was based on the recommendation of the project finance team.

In January 2024, an updated project concept plan, budget and schedule were presented to the Vision Board. The Vision Board recommended this plan, budget, and schedule to the congregation. The congregation received this information at a congregational meeting on February 4, 2024. The congregation voted to proceed to the next level of design (schematic design), authorized funds, and a new building design committee was initiated.

Big goals to be excited about for this coming year:

A new building design committee has been initiated and met for the first time on February 5, 2024. The design committee has the following 10 members: Mitch Berger, Rick Dahl, Gary Ehret, Cathie Ford, Rachelle Gill, Neil Groon, Sheryl Johnson, Rolf Lokensgard, Jason Staebell, and Pastor Megan Torgerson.

The primary objective of the design committee is to work with the Architect HGA and Contractor (Langer Construction) team to design the new building project and get the building under construction in the fall of 2024.

One way we have seen the Holy Spirit active in this ministry this past year:

Beginning with the work completed in the 2018 Master Plan, the PDTF #1 and PDTF #2 task forces worked diligently to advance the project. Advancing a major building project through the many complexities was a significant challenge. The Holy Spirit was invited to guide our committee during each meeting to help us question, listen, discern, and decide as we progressed through each phase of the planning effort.



KIDS MINISTRY

Submitted by: Rachelle Gill,
Kids Ministry Director

Significant accomplishments for the year:

Celebrations IN worship:

- ✝ Third graders are presented Bibles, a baptismal promise, during worship. Parents are given the Bibles in advance to share with family and friends so as to personalize each Bible for the kids
- ✝ First Communion
- ✝ Preschoolers and their families learning ways to pray
- ✝ 5th grade journey from JAM (Jesus and Me) to Confirmation

JAM's small group leaders, resource coordinators and Kids Ministry parent teams are amazing! They enthusiastically return every year. The retention rate is close to 80%.

The entire Kids Ministry Staff continues to serve Easter families in new ways. This year we added:

- ✝ Check in procedure at the Lake
- ✝ Provided JAM small group leaders and assistants monthly appreciation acknowledgements
- ✝ Developed monthly family take home pages
- ✝ Created JAM group pictures for all JAM families to learn each other's names

Easter Summer Staff hosted a neighborhood party inviting Easter families to meet, play, and create relationships among themselves. Many met for the first time.

Jingle JAM continues to be successful, allowing families to come to a fun crazy event and create family memories.

The support of VBS (Vacation Bible School) volunteers has grown. Adults are eager to serve and contribute their time and talents.

Big goals you're excited about for next year:

We will continue to grow our ministries together by providing meaningful faith-based events and programs for the community. I am also excited to plan and support – One Easter One Mission.

One way you've seen the Holy Spirit active in your ministry this year:

The Holy Spirit is in the hearts of many young families, grandparents, and care providers. JAM 'n Play (Open Gym time for age 5 and under) continues to grow from 2-3 families a week two years ago to over 20 families this year. We enjoy hearing a Bible Story and playing together!

Thank you to the many people that make this ministry so fun!

To: Mikayla Kvittrem Barr and Sara Currell (Kids Ministry Coordinators) working together in ministry is truly a privilege, thank you for your hard and dedicated work!

THANK YOU to over 120 people who serve as JAM/VBS Small Group Leaders and assistants, resource room coordinators, Kids Ministry Parent Team! Each of you contributes in serving all families, *to grow in faith and carry on the work of Jesus Christ!* Thank YOU!



YOUTH MINISTRY

Submitted by: Deacon Hans Vigesaa,
Youth Ministry Director

Significant accomplishments for the year:

Our high school youth group, YOWIE, continues to be a place where I feel young people are seen, heard, challenged, find community, and find fellow sojourners in faith. We continue to see new people walk through those Youth Room doors looking to have questions answered, looking to find accompaniment, looking, and hopefully finding a place where they can ask questions of faith and worship through their doubt. It is a highlight of my week. And we continue to see new faces, both youth and adults, joining this journey.

I am so thankful for the adults who say yes to being with kids and walking with them in their faith journey from those who consistently come to YOWIE to those who are a part of mission trips and retreats.

This past winter, we started a youth Bible study that meets on Sunday mornings. It is mostly lead and organized by students. It is uplifting to see them show up week after week to take a deeper dive into God's word.

Big goals you're excited about for next year:

One of our goals is a successful mission trip to Puerto Rico in the summer of 2024.

Continue to listen and develop the needs of youth and families to encourage them to find and share their giftedness.

Working with Pastor Kevin, as he now has a year under his belt, to push learning experiences, creativity, partnerships in ministry and learning.

Growing youth Bible study, middle school events, YOWIE, summer service, and learning experiences.

One way you've seen the Holy Spirit active in your ministry this year:

So many, first I see the Holy Spirit in the leaders and volunteers that create safe places for students to ask honest questions and feel loved and valued. Also, there has been an increase in adults who want to be a part of this ministry.

TIM Team, student leaders who are inviting and always ready to lead and share their faith and doubts.

Watching people get and remain excited about serving and learning about the people God loves.



ADULT MINISTRY

Submitted by: Jami Day
Adult Ministry director

Significant accomplishments for the year:

- ◇ The most significant accomplishment this programming year was the addition of Pastor Kevin Bergeson to our team. Under his direction, we hope our members will find a pathway to a genuine, faith-filled community through the many learning opportunities at Easter. This past year focusing on three pillars: Bible, prayer, and Christian living.
- ◇ With the expertise of Raina Andrusko, we developed and mailed an Adult Ministry brochure for both programming seasons. These brochures made a significant impact on increasing awareness and participation in our programs.
- ◇ Pastor Kevin also created the new Program Ministry Team including children, youth, adult, and outreach ministries. Our goal with this new team is to work more closely together to live out our mission; to grow in faith and carry on the work of Jesus Christ.

No and Other Unexpected Answers to Prayer

Led by Pastor Megan Torgerson, we discovered a way to pray that connects with this season of your life. She taught how prayer is a conversation, but it does not always feel that way, and how to learn to hear God's voice. We had over 17 participants for this study.

Bible Basics: Danger Do Not Open

Pastor Megan led this study designed to help people better understand how to read the Bible. Answering these questions: Have you been led to believe that the content of the Bible is dangerous? Or that reading the Bible is scary? She helped build confidence in participant's Bible fluency, and explored four ways to enter the Bible and learn the whole story of God's love for us. We had over 11 participants.

Faith Ablaze: Reforming Faith for a Worried World

Pastor Erik Sevig explored why protests, thoughtful questioning and grace lit the Protestant Reformation over 500 years ago and how it can help you love your neighbor in a complex world. This had 17 participants.

Civic Life and Faith

This study, of over 16 people, led by Pastor Kevin Bergeson focused on how we live in a time where it's easy to give up on people. He explored how faith and civic life connect with a clear Jesus focus; to love your neighbor.

What Does This Mean? Life Questions; Faith Answers

Pastor Erik shared how to find support and reassurance in Martin Luther's *Small Catechism* as we try to make sense of this hustle culture. This was attended by 8 participants between the 2 sessions.

Who Chose This Hymn???

Ben Kornelis, Worship Director of Traditional Music, took us through the process of just how hymns are chosen. Together, the group planned the music for an upcoming service, followed by a hymn sing. This in-person event was very popular with over 30 participants.

Introduction to Centering Prayer Workshop

Presenter John Keller, a retired ELCA pastor and a certified presenter of Centering Prayer led a one-day workshop. Eighteen participants learned about centering prayer as a receptive, deep method of silent prayer that prepares us to receive the gift of the experience of God's presence within us.

Lenten Lunch Break Centering Prayer Zoom with Pastor Kevin

This new ministry, led by Pastor Kevin, included a 20-minute Zoom prayer session during Lent. This faith practice had between 5-8 participants and was received favorably. We hope to continue developing this ministry into the next programming year with further studies.

24 Hours that Changed the World

During Lent on Wednesdays, Pastor Kevin led this Noon in person and 7pm Zoom study with 30 participants. Drawing on insights from history, archaeology, and geography, this study provided a deeper understanding of the most amazing day in history. This was a meaningful way for us to reflect on the life of Jesus during the Lenten season.

Wrestling With Doubt

On Mondays, from January to March 2024, Pastors Megan and Erik led this study. The study tackled some tough questions: Where is God when bad things happen? Does God hear our prayers? Is there a heaven? How can we know? There were over 40 participants each Monday.

Pastor/Parent Huddle

This new ministry was designed to create a space for JAM families to gather with the pastor while their kids are finishing JAM. On the first Sunday of the month from January-April at the Lake, one of the pastors led an object lesson for the parents to act out at home. This kicked off the theme for each month of JAM. They also received a monthly devotional and a candle, and they were encouraged to create a time to read the devotional together.

Yoga

Linda Emeott, a registered Yoga instructor, continued to lead gentle yoga. This group is becoming a growing community of women, many of whom go to yoga after the WOW Bible study.

Soul Sisters

Pastor Megan continued to lead this popular and vibrant study on relevant topics for women of all ages. Members found this study to be very fun and engaging, as well as a safe place to ask honest questions about their faith. Amy Young, Merri Guggisberg and Beth Dean are instrumental in helping to create a welcoming community of women.

OWLS (Older Wiser Lutherans) The Call: The Life and Message of the Apostle Paul

Pastor Erik facilitated this study following the journeys of Paul, beginning with his dramatic conversion as he spread the gospel through modern-day Greece and Turkey. Under the leadership of Kathy Bahrke, this once-a-month community of retired men and women has grown significantly and continues to be a welcoming space that fosters friendships and faith.

WOW (Women on Wednesdays)

This year-round morning women's Bible study meets weekly, facilitated by Laurie Martinson. They listen to the pastor's podcast together prior to studying the Grow Guide written by Pastor Kevin. Pastor Megan continues to facilitate monthly to give the participants more insight into the pastor-written guide. Under Laurie's valued leadership, this amazing community of women is continuing to grow and become a welcoming and safe place to learn.

Table Talk – Animate Bible

Pastor Kevin joins the Table Talk team along with Shari Couch, as they continue to facilitate this daytime once-a-month study, which has good participation. Since last year's *Animate Faith* was so well-received, we chose to continue the series with *Animate Bible* this year. This curriculum focuses on building conversation using videos—which blend live action with animation—to introduce a question, provide a thought-provoking perspective, and beckon discussions. This study has been very well-received and therefore we plan to incorporate *Animate Practices* in the next programming year.

ManUp Men's Ministry

Easter's Men's Ministry, ManUp, continues to thrive under the leadership of Tom Yelle and his team. The monthly ManUp Breakfast (prepared by Al Peterson) is very popular and includes meaningful speakers. The monthly Tap House gathering is well-attended and offers a welcoming place to enjoy a meal, grow in faith through Bible study, and enjoy fellowship. Plus the weekly Manup Hiking at Lebanon Hills is a popular way to get exercise and enjoy time together outside in nature.

The Christmas Tea

This annual gathering opportunity for women, orchestrated by Marti Guetzlaff and team, continues to be an extremely popular holiday celebration, selling out again this year. Once again, the tearoom was filled to the brim with beautifully decorated tables, lovely treats, tea, music, and laughter!

New Member Classes

My role expanded to include overseeing the development of new members along with my teammate Jennifer Peloquin. We utilize our church database to connect with prospective members via emails with a personal video invitation from our pastors. This programming year, we held classes in September and January, and will host another in April. These classes include all three pastors sharing the history and future of Easter, a fun history lesson on Martin Luther, and the importance of community in a world full of loneliness.

Big goal you're excited about for next year:

One big goal I am excited about for next year is to develop our new Program Ministry Team. I believe the unique synergy between the children, youth, adult, and outreach ministries will aid in creating more meaningful programming and service opportunities for our members.

One way you've seen the Holy Spirit active in your ministry this year:

One way I have seen the Holy Spirit active in our church ministry this year is through the development of our One Easter One Mission campaign. Specifically, hearing the heartwarming faith stories of some of our members, witnessing the overwhelming support for the Inspiration Bag deliveries, and participating in the One Easter Festival in February. In Adult Ministries, I have seen how the Holy Spirit has brought reconciliation to our staff. I have struggled with the loss of two pastors, now, for the first time I feel a sense of clarity and unity under the leadership of all three pastors.



FACILITIES AND OPERATIONS

Submitted by: Clark Nordberg,
Operations Director

Hello Easter Lutheran Congregation,

My name is Clark Nordberg, I am the new Operations Manager for Easter Lutheran Church. My job is to oversee facilities, daily building operations, and manage capital improvement projects/plans for both of Easter’s campuses. I started in June 2023 and look forward to making an impact with the Easter Staff for Easter Lutheran Church.

In 2023 Easter was able to check off some items on our long list of capital improvement needs. We also have several projects lined up for 2024. Please see the table below that will showcase completed/current and ongoing projects.

FY2023 Completed Projects	FY2024 Ongoing/Upcoming Projects
Lake Great Room Roof Repair	Lake One Easter Building Project Planning
Annual Roof Inspections	Lake Window Repair
Lake Outdoor Light fixture repair	Lake Elevator Phone Repair
Lake/Hill Exterior LED Lighting	Lake Great Room Flooring Replacement
Lake Great Room Projector Replacement	Re-seed the Lake Outdoor Worship Area
Lake Great Room Lighting Upgrades	
Boiler Pump Replacements	
Elevator System Compliance	
Lake Window Repair	

In terms of immediate facilities activities, we said goodbye to **Al Dulas** as our long-term part-time custodian who retired in December. Our team was able to absorb Al's duties in their daily work routine without having to add staff at this time. Thank you to **Butch Stodolka, Kerry Wollin and John DeSutter** for making this transition seamless! The Facilities Team's dedication and skills are a big part of what makes Easter so inviting when you visit.

We continue to monitor both immediate and upcoming facility needs, both small and large. We know that we continue to make progress on making our buildings inviting settings for us to celebrate worship. We look forward to the coming year’s activities as we plan to join as One Easter together!

I am grateful to be part of a team that cares about everyone at Easter Lutheran, please know that we in Facilities will continue to do our best to make your time spent in our Easter buildings the best that it can be.

Sincerely,
Clark Nordberg,
Operations Manager



COMMUNICATIONS & MEDIA REPORT

Submitted by Amy Peschong,
Communication Specialist

Significant accomplishments for the year:

Raina and I have had a very exciting year in Easter Media & Communications. We have made significant updates to the website, including the addition of an events page and calendar with all the happenings of the church. We photograph and video more events and use what we can in both print and social media promotion. Ministry brochures were created for Care Companions and Family Ministries.

Raina introduced an app to Easter Youth called Photo Circle which they have used extensively, and she is able to share with the broader Easter community. Raina designed and executed an informative Adult learning brochure, thus getting those opportunities out to more people. Amy gathered stories about Easter people to share on socials.

Some interesting stats from 2023:

- 👉 Facebook posts reached around 27,000 people, and post interactions went up 337% from the previous year. Be sure to react to posts to ensure you see everything from Easter in your feed.
- 👉 Instagram 749 reactions to our posts, thank you for checking us out!
- 👉 LEAFlet emails are opened by 50% of you.
- 👉 Live worship is seen by about 300 people each week.
- 👉 The Carry On Cast (podcast) had an average of 70 listens each week. Check it out! easter.org/podcast

Big goals you're excited about for next year:

We are so excited to continue planning for our move to the Lake location and become ONE EASTER. We are enjoying the planning process and are ready to see where it goes (and to be done duplicating efforts).

We love sharing with Easter and our neighbors on social media. We will strive to create a consistent rhythm of social media as well as the spur of the moment fun to increase community engagement. Explore more ways to share information: QR codes on chairs, information in restrooms, poster stands to share announcements, poster frames for entry doors.

Create specific ministry brochures/handouts.

One way you've seen the Holy Spirit active in your ministry this year:

Everyday working together in the Hill office is a blessing. We share joy, tears, laughter, and emotions. The Holy Spirit shines through everyone and we pray you all see it in the work we share.

THANK YOU

Thank you to all the volunteers that run the live streaming equipment each Sunday! You make it possible for everyone to be a part of life at Easter!

If you have requests for Easter content you'd like to see, email Raina: randrusko@easter.org



CONGREGATIONAL STATISTICS WORSHIP & MEMBERSHIP

<u>Vital Statistics</u>	<u>2023</u>	<u>2022</u>	<u>2021</u>	<u>2020</u>	<u>2019</u>
Number of people joined	114	112	114	77	145
Baptisms	35	52	43	45	63
Confirmations	38	59	48	60	55
Deaths of members	14	11	9	7	8
Funerals	20	14	12	9	15
Communion services celebrated	86	68	**	**	207

<u>End of Year</u>	<u>2023</u>	<u>2022</u>	<u>2021</u>	<u>2020</u>	<u>2019</u>
Total confirmed membership	2274	2301	2515	2804	2824
Total baptized membership	3028	3149	3450	3805	3847
Total households	1640	1665	1671	1633	1767
Active households	1273	1337	1451	1516	1551

** Due to the pandemic and the changes between holding in-person and on-line worship services at Easter Lutheran Church, Communion services celebrated were not tracked in 2020 or 2021.



CONGREGATIONAL STATISTICS WORSHIP & MEMBERSHIP

Easter Lutheran Church Worship Attendance

2024 Hill Averages		Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Sunday	9:45am **	193	243	216	199	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!
	Livestream	289	225	236	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!
Total Hill (Average)		482	468	452	199	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
2024 Lake Averages		Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Sunday	9:00am	216	333	220	257	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!
Sunday	10:30am	137	125	133	152	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!
	Livestream	189	286	293	272	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!
Total Lake (Average)		541	744	646	681	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!

2024 Average Weekly Attendance	1,023	1,212	1,098	880	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Total Weekend Attendance	4,084	4,042	3,861	2,359	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Other Services	0	748	3,268	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Year-to-date Total Attendance	4,084	8,874	16,003	18,362	18,362	18,362	18,362	18,362	18,362	18,362	18,362	18,362	18,362	
2024 YTD Avg. Weekly Attendance	276	Easter Sunday Total				0				Christmas Eve Total				0
2024 Avg. Traditional Worship	482	468	452	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	
2024 Avg. Contemporary Worship	541	744	646	681	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!	

2023 Hill Averages		Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Wednesday	5:45pm	25	32	88	40	14	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Sunday	9:45am	168	193	198	256	210	188	150	189	179	196	223	179
	Livestream	233	216	210	233	173	168	153	134	156	151	165	187
Total Hill (Average)		426	441	496	529	397	356	303	323	335	347	388	366
2023 Lake Averages		Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Sunday	9:00am	195	201	202	241	157	183	169	183	211	250	272	220
Sunday	10:30am	115	102	130	136	118	0	0	0	100	116	128	109
	Livestream	214	289	282	250	193	207	217	171	193	192	196	232
Total Lake (Average)		524	592	614	627	468	390	386	354	504	558	596	561

2023 Average Weekly Attendance	950	1,033	1,110	1,156	865	746	689	677	839	905	984	927		
Total Weekend Attendance	4,040	4,129	4,437	4,681	3,336	2,978	3,384	2,697	2,931	4,516	3,925	3,714		
Other Services	0	352	0	3,537	0	0	0	0	0	445	128	2,697		
Year-to-date Total Attendance	4,040	8,521	12,958	21,176	24,512	27,490	30,874	33,571	36,502	41,463	45,516	51,927		
2023 YTD Avg. Weekly Attendance	845	Easter Sunday Total				3,007				Christmas Eve Total				2,697
2023 Avg. Traditional Worship	426	441	496	529	396	355	302	322	335	347	388	366		
2023 Avg. Contemporary Worship	524	592	614	626	468	389	386	354	503	558	596	560		

**Hill 9:45am includes senior living worship

Added to report on April 28, 2024

Easter Preschool Annual Report July 2022 to Jun 2023

Prepared September 2023



*Providing a quality educational
experience in a Christian context
and gentle living environment.*

Organization and Connections:

Easter Preschool has ten board members: nine elected on rotating three year terms and one ex-officio member who is a Pastor of Easter Lutheran Church. The Board members are elected by the Easter Lutheran Church Council upon nomination of the Preschool Board.

Board of Directors for 2022-2023:

Pastor Megan Torgerson (President), Pat Iverson (Vice President), Samantha Dryden (Secretary), Tom Ford (Treasurer), Kim Bishop, Lori Ford, Karen Jefferson, Kristin Ries, Michaela Menigo

Board Organization 2022-2023:

Financial Foundations & Facilities:
Tom Ford, Karen Jefferson, Pastor Megan Torgerson

Vision & Growth:

Kim Bishop, Lori Ford, Pat Iverson

Mental Health:

Samantha Dryden, Kristin Ries

Report of Director

Easter Preschool's strength is in its staff. Nancy Hensch, Theresa Glavan, Patty Goehring, Darla Landmark and Cindy Olson returned as classroom and Lunch Bunch teachers. The teachers are consistent but no two years at the preschool are ever the same. The teachers continue to educate themselves in best practices for early childhood. Research has proven time and again that learning through play is best. The environment is set and the children discover, problem-solve and collaborate. It's a joy to witness their growth.

Enrollment started lower than ever, grew in numbers but never filled to capacity. The budget reflects that. The budget also suffered from a number of snow and cold days pushing us to cancel many Lunch Bunch sessions. We even cancelled a Christmas family day for the first time ever.

A successful Art Block event kicked off the school year. Special thanks to Rhonda Doran, Director of Outreach, for partnering with the preschool. Free food, jumpers and art activities brought our communities together.

COVID protocols had classrooms wearing masks for 10 days if a classmate tested positive. Free test kits were made available to families through the Department of Human Services. Overall, the impact of COVID illnesses decreased over the year and protocols were easier to follow.

The use of our Brightwheel app continues to be an efficient tool for communication, billing, paperwork and attendance.

An additional 20 summer camp spots were offered during the afternoon of the June session.

With gratitude for another year of support and cheerleading from the Preschool Board and Staff,

Alicia Borman
Preschool Director

Preschool Report of the President (needs to be added)

Time and time again, I hear stories of how people became connected to Easter – and so many of them involve Easter Preschool. It is a joy to celebrate the relationship our church and the preschool share. Together, we serve our community and offer support and care to these beautiful young people and their families.

That care has been especially important through the past couple of years with all the changes and complications covid brought to our church, the preschool, and the lives of each of these children. The stability of the staff and the passionate leadership of Alicia Borman have been a powerful resource through these changing times. I am so grateful for each of them.

I also remain grateful to Megan Brewster and Tom Ford for all they've done to sustain the budget, find and utilize grant money, and make wise financial decisions for the future of the program. Due to covid, enrollment became much harder to predict; the sound financial advice and insight we received helped the preschool come through in a better-than-expected position and ready to continue to serve our community in this new season of life together.

I continue to give thanks to God for the work of Easter Preschool, for the families and children we get to love and care for, for the invaluable teachers, for the wisdom of the preschool board members, and for Alicia, as we serve our community together.

Respectfully,

Pastor Megan Torgerson

**EASTER PRESCHOOL
Financial Summary**

For Fiscal Year End June 30, 2023

Income

Stimulus Proceeds (MN Grant)	\$8,820
Tuition and Fees	\$194,705
Gifts and Grants	\$3,323
Other (Bank Interest)	\$1,292
Total Income	\$208,140

Expenses

Salaries and Benefits	\$182,221
Operations and Program	\$15,775
Rent and Other	\$26,320
Total Expenses	\$224,316

Assets:	\$115,762
Liabilities:	\$0
Equity:	\$115,762

For Fiscal Year End June 30, 2022

Income

PPP Loan/Stimulus Proceeds (MN Grants)	\$14,153
Tuition and Fees	\$195,322
Gifts and Grants	\$3,124
Other	\$13
Total Income	\$212,613

Expenses

Salaries and Benefits	\$176,290
Operations and Program	\$13,856
Rent and Other	\$34,770
Total Expenses	\$224,915

Assets:	\$131,938
Liabilities:	\$0
Equity:	\$131,938

EASTER PRESCHOOL GOALS

- To encourage the excitement of learning.
- To create opportunities for social and emotional development.
- To further enhance awareness of personal safety and physical well-being.
- To develop large and fine motor skills.
- To further enhance language development.
- To further develop cognitive skills.

The Easter Preschool Annual Meeting is scheduled for September of each year. The Board meets at least quarterly except in the summer. The Easter Preschool Manual is available from the director, Alicia Borman.

Included in the manual is a brief description of the policies and procedures of the Preschool, tuition costs, program times and other information about the operation of the Preschool.

Easter Preschool admits students of any race, color, national or ethnic origin in administration of its educational policies and admissions policies. Copies of the By-Laws and other papers of the organization are available upon request.

The registered office of Easter Preschool is:
4200 Pilot Knob Road, Eagan, MN 55122
651-452-3680 | easterpreschool.org
preschool@easter.org



SECTION 6: PROPOSED RESOLUTION 3: NOMINATIONS

RESOLUTION 3 – LEADERSHIP NOMINATION BY ACCLAMATION

Submitted March 19, 2024

Explanatory Information:

This Motion for Election by Acclamation comes from the Nominating Committee for consideration by the 2024 Easter Lutheran Church annual meeting.

The Constitution and Bylaws of Easter Lutheran Church outline the process for nominations for Vision Board, Financial Board, and the Foundation Committee, including the following provisions: that the Nominating Committee shall put forth names of voting members to the congregation, for approval at the Annual Meeting, for all vacant positions on the above teams; that the terms of service begin immediately upon election; that names of the candidates are announced to the congregation at least 21 days before the Annual Meeting; and that additional nominations may be made until 10 days prior to the meeting, at which time nominations are closed (precluding any nominations from the floor during the Annual Meeting).

All provisions of the constitutional process have been met and as a result, the motion to recommend the following candidates to the congregation was unanimously approved by the Nominating Committee and Vision Board.

Be it resolved, that the 2024 slate of candidates presented by the Nominating Committee be elected by acclamation to serve at Easter Lutheran Church.

Vision Board:

Jake Hamlin

Sue Friest

Michael Larson

Financial Board:

John Schmidt

Eric Harcourt

Thank you to 2024 Nominating Committee for your discernment! Sue Friest, Micah Olson, Rhonda Doran, Beth Dean, Royce McEwen, and Amy Peschong.



SECTION 7: RECOGNITION OF SERVICE

Vision Board
Catherine Ford

Financial Board
Jill Putnam

John Rollie (added to report on April 28, 2024)

Physical Development Task Force

The Physical Development Task Force served from January 2023 to February 2024. Thank you to the following Easter members who faithfully served during the tenure of the team:

**Sara Anderson, Abby Andrus, Derek Boeve,
Gary Ehret, Cathie Ford, Sheila Gullickson,
Jim Mattson, Brenda Misukanis, John
Rollie, Mitch Berger, and Pastor Megan
Torgerson**