



**Annual Congregational
Meeting**

February 2, 2025

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Agenda 3

Letter from Presiding Bishop of the ELCA..... 4

Letter from the Bishop of the Oregon Synod 4

Minutes of Congregational Meeting

 Minutes of Annual Meeting on January 28, 2024 5

 Minutes of Special Meeting on April 7, 2024 8

 Minutes of Special Meeting on June 30, 2024..... 9

Pastor’s Report..... 10

Statistical Report..... 12

President’s Report 13

Report from Worship & Music Committee..... 13

Report from the Property Management Committee 14

Report on Constitutional Revision 14

Report from St. John’s Committee 14

Report from the Youth Drop-In Center..... 15

Report from Angel Project 17

Report from Bethel Bees..... 18

Report from Bethel Players..... 18

Report from Fun Committee..... 18

Report from Women’s Prayer Group..... 20

MACG Report 20

Jazz Concert Report 21

Report from Bethel Players in Training..... 21

Financial Reports

 2024 Financial Report: General Budget..... 22

 2025 Budget Notes 25

 2024 Financial Report: Designated General Budget and Setasides..... 26

 2024 Financial Report: Designated Non-Budget 27

 2024 Financial Report: Grants and Memorials..... 27

 2024 Financial Report: Endowment Fund 28

 2024 Financial Report: Financial Audit Report 28

Council Resolution to Rectify the 2024 Budget Deficit..... 28

Proposed Budget

 2025 Proposed Budget.....See right hand column on pp. 22-24

Proposed Bethel Sabbatical Policy..... 29

Council Resolution to Approve the Sabbatical Policy 30

Church Council Membership Summary 31

MEETING AGENDA

Opening Devotions and Blessing of the Meal Pastor Leon LaCross
Table Talks During Potluck Meal Pastor Leon LaCross
Call to Order and Quorum Check..... Jim Van Dyke
Logistics Related to Zoom and Voting Jim Van Dyke

Approval of Minutes

- Minutes of the Annual Congregational Meeting on January 28, 2024
- Minutes of Special Congregational Meeting on April 7, 2024
- Minutes of Special Congregational Meeting on June 30, 2024

Ministry Reports

Pastor’s Report..... Pastor Leon LaCross
Statistical Report..... Pastor Leon LaCross
Presidents’ Report James Van Dyke
Worship & Music..... Pastor Leon LaCross
Property Management..... Scott Burris & Tana Bishop
Constitutional Review Ronda Bard
St. John’s Committee Andrew Van Dyke
Drop-In Center Ronda Bard
Angel Project..... Joann Noll
Bethel Bees Joann Noll
Bethel Players Karen Andersen
Fun Committee Tana Bishop
Women’s Prayer Group Julieann Edman
MACG Ronda Bard
Jazz Concert..... Karen Andersen
Bethel Players-in-Training..... Tana Bishop

Financial Reports for 2024 Karen Andersen

NEW BUSINESS

Council Resolution to Rectify the 2024 Budget Deficit

Approval of the 2025 Proposed Budget

Review of Proposed Bethel Sabbatical Policy

Council Resolution to Approve the Sabbatical Policy

Election of Church Council Members

So many thanks!..... Jim Van Dyke

Door Prizes Awarded..... Pastor Leon LaCross

Closing Prayer Pastor Leon LaCross

Letter from the Presiding Bishop of the ELCA

January 1, 2025



Dear friends in Christ,

All around us, we see signs of God’s love and goodness. A person who has stepped away from church for many years steps back into a congregation, feeling the call of the Holy Spirit. Young adults feeling isolated in a digital-first world start gathering in person in a small group, enjoying the warmth of a hug and a new friend asking about their week. A mother plants a garden, and it yields fruits and vegetables, giving her nutritious food for her kids and extra produce to sell at the local market. Everywhere we look, we see signs of Christ’s love. In Psalm 93, we read: “More majestic than the thunders of mighty waters, more majestic than the waves of the sea, majestic on high is the Lord! Your decrees are very sure; holiness befits your house, O Lord, forevermore” (4-5).

God’s love is a majestic thing, and it moves us to share it in word and deed. The ministries of our congregations, our synods and the ELCA churchwide organization are all working together to share God’s love with people in our neighborhoods, across our country and around the world.

I am so grateful for you, dear church. Your generosity to each of these three expressions of the church — your congregation, your synod and the churchwide organization — has bolstered the church’s ability to share the message of God’s love to people who are longing for it. Through your financial resources, your time volunteering and accompanying others, and your voices, you’ve helped carry this message of God’s majestic love. Thank you, dear church. As we look ahead to the coming year, I encourage you to stand steadfast in God’s promises, sure of God’s love and goodness.

The Rev. Elizabeth A. Eaton

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Elizabeth A. Eaton".

Presiding Bishop
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

Letter from the Bishop of the Oregon Synod ELCA

January 1st, 2025



Dear Beloved of the Oregon Synod,

Blessings as you gather in the name of the Incarnate One! My prayers are with you as you seek to continue to walk the Way of Jesus in these compelling and complex times. As you prepare for all the discernment and decisions ahead in your 2025 congregational meeting, God bless you and hold you. With courage and delight, may we be for others the Body of Christ and living reminders that we are never alone, but live always awash in God’s grace.

Please save the date and prepare for our upcoming Synod Assembly which will be held May 30th- June 1st, in person, at the Holiday Inn on the Columbia Riverfront in Portland, Oregon.

You might have noticed that our themes the last few years have focused on friendship. The theme for this year is "Anam Cara: Soul Friends in the Spirit of Jesus." Anam Cara is a Gaelic phrase that describes a sacred relationship that encourages spiritual growth. At the 2025 assembly we will explore and seek to strengthen our friendships with one another, the Earth, and all of our neighbors, churched and unchurched.

What a time to abide in God's sacred friendship/"koinonia"! Our theme verse for the year speaks to Anam Cara from John 15:13; *Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one's life for one's friend.*

As in years past, there are a couple of things to consider as you prepare for Synod Assembly 2024:

1. **Voting members.** Please elect your voting members to attend the event and ensure your budget provides funds to send these members to the assembly.
2. **Additional voting members.** If possible, we encourage you to elect "additional voting members" as described in the constitution and rules of the assembly (see our website). Additional members may include up to 2 people who identify LGBTQIA+, up to 2 people for whom English is not their first language AND up to 2 Youth/Young Adult voting members).

With your continuing prayers, financial support and deepening relationships, our synod is becoming a shimmering fabric of relationship, capable of befriending one another, our planet, ourselves, our history, our theological tradition and our diverse neighbors with kindness and grace. In so doing, we can become more than we dare dream or imagine, transformed by the renewing of our lives and minds.

I look forward to sharing this work with you throughout this new year. Let us dare to love one another and walk the Way of Christ's courageous love together, as ongoing and sacred encounter.

Yours in hope,



Bishop Laurie Larson Caesar Oregon Synod, ELCA

Minutes of the Annual Congregational Meeting of January 28, 2024

Special thanks to Ryan Burghard for hosting Zoom access to this meeting.

Potluck lunch: During lunch, Pastor Leon LaCross invited each table group to answer **key questions about life at Bethel:**

1. What were your top three moments at Bethel in 2023?
2. What are some ways Bethel has become stronger in 2023?
3. Thinking about Bethel in 2024, what does Bethel look like, smell like, taste like, feel like?
4. What is exciting you in ministry for 2024?

Call to order at 11:40 am by President Ryan Olson

Quorum check: Member sign-in showed 30 voting members were present including three on Zoom.

Membership in the January 2024 statistical report is 76 baptized members including approximately 73 voting members. The required quorum for congregation meetings is an attendance of 20% of the voting members. Today's attendance of 30 represents 30/73 or 41% of the voting members. Thus, a quorum was achieved.

Opening: Pastor Leon led a group discussion of Table Talk responses with notes recorded by Chris Siems. This debrief ended about 12:12 pm.

Voting: Ryan Olson led a **quick review of Zoom voting**, noting that acclamation votes were anticipated.

Minutes: Jim Van Dyke moved to accept the secretary's minutes of the Annual Congregational Meeting of 29 January 2023, and Kim Bucholz seconded. Voice vote: passed unanimously.

MINISTRY REPORTS

Pastor's Report: so many events! Bethel is small but mighty, managing two plays despite bad weather and COVID. Confirmation: five young folks confirmed. Pastor Leon's 2024 goals include more organizing with MACG and intergenerational education on topics such as death and dying, meaning of Lent, and civic responsibility ahead of election. See the complete written report in the meeting booklet.

Statistical Report: see the complete report in the meeting booklet. After three removals by transfer, two removals by death, and two additions by baptism, the membership total at the end of 2023 was 76 baptized members.

President's Report: Ryan Olson noted that 2023 was our Year of Return with new standards and new footing post-pandemic. Council began the process of updating our congregational constitution. Drop-In began again, with a successful restart of our Summer Day Camp. The church van was restored and just passed DE—many thanks to Scott Burris and Tana Bishop. Let's find reasons to drive it! See the complete report in the meeting booklet.

Worship & Music: Bethel loves music! Ryan Burghard noted that we welcome piano recitals presented by students of FOB Jamie Vandenberg and Bethel musician Shlomo Farber. Worship planning by Shlomo and Pastor Leon LaCross goes well. See the complete report in the booklet.

Property Management Report: Ryan Olson noted plumbing work and successful cleanout of the new grease trap. Scott reported that the parsonage needs exterior paint. FOB Jamie Vandenberg has submitted a bid for repair and painting of the basement walls and will submit a bid for painting the parsonage. Karen Anderson has scheduled gutter cleaning for the coming week. Additional info in the printed report.

Drop-In Report: Ronda Bard noted the 2023 successful restart of the Drop-In Center's Summer Program under the direction of Heather Anderson. The search for a 2024 director and staff is underway. Financial support includes a grant of \$4,000 from the Youth Guidance Association and \$17,000 raised by the Bethel Players during two 2023 performances—many thanks! See booklet report for more details.

Angel Project Report: Archangel Joann Noll shared news of a vibrant and successful 2023 Angel Project with 9 families and 3 seniors presented gifts and groceries and 120 bags of toiletries, socks, hats, and gloves distributed to people facing housing crises. This adds up to 150+ people touched by this outreach effort. Many thanks to Bethelites and FOBs, including folks in Daybreak Cohousing and Nash's network of friends. Please continue to support the Angels by donating your recyclable cans and bottles in the coded blue bags. Thanks!

Bethel Bees Report: Bethel continues to prepare and serve a monthly Community Meal at Renaissance Commons in Kenton. Our homecooked meals are well received by residents, who enjoy this chance to meet their neighbors and build a stronger community. The Bees also support Bethel's Summer BBQs and help prepare food for the Drop-In Summer Program's breakfasts and lunches. The Bees are open to expanded efforts, including possible weekend meals, special events meals, and even a Transgiving Meal next November.

Bethel Players Report: Karen Anderson noted challenges and successes for our TWO 2023 productions-- *Star Trip: the Wrath of Kazrool* in February and *The Godfather* in November. Despite losing a weekend of performances to icy weather and a second weekend to COVID, this fortieth year of Bethel Players raised \$10,000 for Bethel from ticket sales and \$17,000 for Drop-In via table money donations. See report for more!

Fun Committee Report: Tana Bishop summarized a year of Fun Events by sharing a Warren Hansen quotation: "Let's not forget to have fun!" See the report for specific examples.

MACG Report: Ronda Bard summarized the reorganization of Metropolitan Alliance for Common Good after losses of staff, income, and actions during the pandemic challenges. A major action has been MACG co-hosting a six-week training, *Wrestling with the Truth of Colonization*, and building relationships with three indigenous communities in the Portland region. See the report to join an upcoming *Wrestling* training in April 2024.

Financial Reports: Treasurer Karen Anderson reviewed the detailed financial reports available in the Annual Meeting booklet. Major news was that the 2023 financials ended in the black!

NEW BUSINESS

2024 General Budget Review: Treasurer Karen Anderson followed the Financial Report by guiding us through the proposed budget, approved by Council for the upcoming year. Council proposes a budgeted deficit of \$7,400. Recall that the 2023 adopted budget included a deficit of \$9,000, and finances for that year ended in the black.

Approval of the 2024 Budget:

Ryan Burghard moved to adopt the proposed 2024 budget. Don Worthington seconded the motion. After additional discussion, the motion passed by unanimous voice vote.

Drop-In Fundraiser: Tana Bishop presented a new fundraising opportunity for the Drop-In Center. Bethel would collect donations of soft goods, household items, and books, then deliver the donations to Value Village on April 13, 2024, to earn 20 cents per pound. Proposal accepted by acclamation. Tana volunteered to organize this fundraiser and began by distributing garbage sacks for the collection of clothes, bedding, etc.

Council Membership: See the booklet for a table of current council members and their eligibility status. On behalf of the Nominating Committee, Council nominated a slate including these candidates:

- Robin Moody (new membership)
- Tana Bishop (new membership)
- Karen Anderson (reelection)
- Ronda Bard (reelection)
- James Van Dyke (reelection)

Tana Bishop withdrew her name from the list of nominations. There were no nominations from the floor. Andrew Van Dyke moved to accept the remaining slate of four candidates as Council members. Kim Bucholz seconded the motion, which passed by voice vote with one abstention.

St Johns Fund: On behalf of Council, Pastor Leon LaCross announced membership of the St Johns Fund Oversight Committee:

- Ryan Burghard
- Joann Noll
- Jared Burdick
- Andrew Van Dyke
- Lisa Siems
- Tana Bishop
- Pr. Leon LaCross

Door Prizes: Pr. Leon distributed door prizes, including items he had crocheted, to general delight and hilarity.

Closing: Pr. Leon LaCross led the gathering in prayer.

Adjournment

Respectfully submitted,

Ronda Bard

Council Secretary

Minutes of the Special Congregational Meeting on April 7, 2024

Bethel Lutheran Church
Special Congregation Meeting
April 7, 2024

Call to order by Jim Van Dyke approximately 10:55 AM.

Note: the meeting time had been publicized in various media as 11:15 AM. Some people who joined the meeting in person and online in time for the 11:15 gathering were astonished to find themselves joining just ahead of the voting and having missed the discussion.

Present online: Jackie Calder, Holly Redfern, Marlo Edman, JulieAnn Edman, Jackie Calder, Don Worthington, Linda Worthington, Scott Burris, PJ Bentley, Mary Bentley.

Present in person: Ronda Bard, Karen Anderson, Miles Bard, Dorian Bentley, Lisa Siems, Ryan Burghard, Miriam Burghard-Moody, Stephanie Burdick, Jared Burdick, Ryan Olson, Kim Bucholz, Tana Bishop, Brady Burdick, Collin Burdick, Chris Siems, Pr. Leon LaCross

Total participants: 10 online and 16 in person for 26 total voting members. With 77 current members, this total meets the constitutional quorum requirement of 20% or 15 members.

Note: This meeting included participation and first time voting for four 2023 confirmands!

From the minutes of the March 2024 Bethel Council Meeting:

- Council reviewed the estimate from Jamie Vandenberg on behalf of Build & Paint Portland for repair, sealing, and painting of the basement walls in the Fellowship Hall and in the front stairwell for \$6,906.40.
- Note: that figure includes a ten percent discount for getting the work done before May 2024 as well as a hidden discount of Jamie foregoing her usual contract commission as a gift to Bethel.
- MOTION: Karen Anderson moved that Council call a congregational meeting for April 7 to authorize spending up to \$7500 from the Bethel Players ticket sale reserves for the proposed basement repair, sealing, carpentry, and painting proposed by Build & Paint. Seconded by Miles Bard. Passed by unanimously by a show of hands.

That motion is the single item of business for this special congregational meeting.

Discussion began before the motion was read and continued until the question was called and after the vote. Jamie Vandenberg was present to summarize the work estimate and to answer questions. The estimate is attached.

One topic addressed during the discussion: prevention of future damage of water seeping through the basement walls. Major prevention efforts underway include 1) Jamie's earlier personal replacement of downspout articulated drains and splash plates to ensure gutters drain away from the basement and 2) Council's commitment to pay for gutter cleaning at least twice yearly.

Note: An additional precaution, discussed after the affirmative vote to approve the estimate, is the possibility of basement wall damage recurring during the next rainy season, despite the proposed repairs. One way to address that concern is reconnection of the downspouts to the sewer system. Ronda Bard and Jim Van Dyke agreed to place that action as a point of business on the agenda of the April Council meeting.

VOTING: The motion was approved by voice vote, with one nay vote offered. Note: online votes were collected visually by raised hands and audibly by stated Yes votes. For two members participating online who did not show up on the screen in the sanctuary, their Yes votes were verified by phone call.

Meeting was adjourned at 11:21 am.

Respectfully submitted,
Ronda Bard
Council Secretary

Minutes of the Special Congregational Meeting of June 30, 2024

Call to order by Jim Van Dyke at 11:15 AM

QUORUM: With 77 current members, a quorum of 20% is 15 members. Attendance was 20 voting members, including four members participating via Zoom. The member sign-in sheet is included in these minutes.

ORIGINAL Motion from Council (NOTE: see amended motion below);

We ask the congregation for permission to spend up to \$12,000 to install a washer and dryer in the main floor restroom and to do necessary electrical work, including replacement of our two electrical panels, to support that installation. Funding would come primarily from fundraising and a matching gift and secondarily from memorial and grant funds. The construction work will be arranged for minimal disruption to Drop-In and parish staffing.

The vigorous discussion that followed addressed these issues:

- Sources of possible secondary funding:
 - Memorial funds including those collected in memory of Carolyn “Stretch” Beck and June Hassebroek
 - Past undesignated grants from the Oregon Synod
 - Food ministry grants from the ELCA Domestic Hunger program
 - St Johns Committee funding
- Fundraising efforts and amounts
 - Over \$6000 raised or pledged so far
 - Ongoing fundraising via a Go Fund Me campaign supporting the Good Clean Fun fundraising celebrating the 50th wedding anniversary of Scott Burris and Tana Bishop
 - Additional fundraising via direct donations to Bethel in honor of Good Clean Fun and the wedding anniversary
- Inclusion of all members of the Property Management (Facilities) Team in the decision-making process, including Lutheran Plumber Kim Bucholz and Lutheran Electrician Ryan Olson.
- Commitment to a fully permitted project with attention to an updated plumbing schematic, allotted water supply usage, venting of dryer, floor drain for washer.
- The importance of replacing our outdated, unsafe, and non-reparable electrical panels on the main floor and the basement.

- Other projects that might be looming for our aging building.
- Limiting usage of the non-commercial-grade washer and dryer to church related events.

During the discussion, the Council members participating in the meeting accepted several friendly amendments as shown below.

AMENDED MOTION addressed in congregational vote:

We ask the congregation for permission to spend up to \$12,000 to install a washer and dryer in the main floor restroom and to do necessary electrical work, including replacement of our two electrical panels, to support that installation. Funding would come primarily from fundraising and a matching gift and secondarily from memorial and grant funds. Congregational approval depends upon proper permitting regarding water usage and allotment. Bethel plumber-in-residence Kim Bucholz and electrician-in-residence Ryan Olson will work with the property management team and confer with the engineers and contractors. The construction work will be arranged for minimal disruption to Drop-In and parish staffing.

The amended motion was APPROVED by voice vote. Two nay votes and one abstention were noted.

Tana and Scott invited everyone to attend their wedding anniversary celebration on July 13 and to wear white.

Pastor Leon LaCross offered a closing prayer.

President Jim Van Dyke adjourned the meeting at 11:56 AM.

Respectfully submitted,
Ronda Bard
Council Secretary

Pastor's Report

Dear Beloved Bethelites,

It's been another remarkable year here at Bethel. I continue to find myself in awe of how much we've been able to do here at Bethel. As we mark another year in ministry together, I again reflect on Bethel's mission statement: Bethel Lutheran Church is a community whose mission is to worship together, to proclaim the good news of grace, and to show hospitality to all people. We will grow in faith through sharing, learning, nurturing, and supporting one another, and doing Christ's work in the world.

We have worshipped together each week in person and online, even having a bonus combined Good Friday worship service with our friends at Portsmouth Trinity Lutheran church. We've proclaimed the good news of God's grace through our outward facing ministries like the Bethel Bees, Youth Drop-In Center and summer barbeque series. We continue to show hospitality to all people through the events and organizations we host: Cash Oregon (the free tax preparers), a local Girl Scout troop, and our spiritual directors, Northwest Tempo Jazz concerts, the Holiday Makers' Market and the Parsonage Estate Sale, and annual Rummage Sale/Block Party. We've grown in faith through sharing our milestone moments like baptism. We've learned together what we're capable of as a congregation through major efforts like adding laundry facilities and upgrading our electrical panels. We've nurtured each other as new people have taken leadership roles within Bethel, and we've supported each other in faith through prayer like the reemerging Women's Prayer Group. Through doing all these things and more, we continue to do Christ's work in the world.

Last year I set some goals for myself as pastor, and some went better than others. I'm sharing my time and talents with the synod as a member of the synod council and as the dean of the Mount Tabor/PLUM cluster. I attempted some intergenerational ministry activities, and it felt like the timing wasn't right, so I'll try again at another time. I intentionally spent time within MACG, doing one-to-ones with some of its leaders and participating in *Wrestling with the Truth of Colonization*, an anti-racism educational series that invited participants to reckon with colonization and racism and how to partner with our Indigenous neighbors. I attempted to connect with other churches in North Portland, however due to some homophobia it was clear I was not welcomed within the established group. However, I have also been participating in the clergy meetups that Queer Enough ministries have been hosting, which has fed that need for me as well.

As I continue to learn and grow as your pastor, I've attended various conferences and workshops to keep on top of the changing mission field we find ourselves in. I attended the ELCA Chaplain's gathering at the ELCA Churchwide office in Chicago, IL in April and met with other bivocational pastors/chaplains and discussed our unique ministry contexts. It turns out I'm not as unique and special as I had thought. In September, I attended my third and final First Call Theological Education gathering in Seabeck, WA. Again, it was great to connect with other newly minted pastors in Region 1 and share our experiences. Synodically I attended our annual Synod Assembly online in May, and the Bishop's Convocation in October where we worked on the business of the synod and gained perspective of what the future might be holding for us. I've also signed up to attend the Byberg Preaching Workshop in Seaside, OR and haven't yet attended, but I look forward to finding ways to improve my proclamation of scripture.

Speaking of the future, the new administration in DC brings some unknowns in how we might be called to ministry in new ways. Since we have a mission statement to guide us, we can always fall back on that to help spur us to action and know who we are and whose we are as our community changes - or doesn't change. It's on all of us to discern where the Spirit might be leading us to love and care for our neighbors - both near and far.

Amidst my own caution as to what the future of our country and the world might look like with all that is going on, I'm also excited for the future of Bethel. My hope is for us as a community to have frank conversations about what that might be for us. During Advent I asked the question of where you think Bethel is in our Church development chart. I'm heartened to see that no one thought that we were ready to close the doors and call it "Mission Complete". However, we will need to continue to work if we want to get Bethel to a buzzing, thriving community. This takes imagination, creativity, faith and persistence. I'm interested to see where we might be headed and where God might be leading us and how we can muster the courage to say "yes" in uncertain times.

Some of my future goals for this year include using more of my allotted time off and flexibility to maintain a healthier work/life balance. I want to encourage more community involvement at Bethel through hosting events and partnering with other community organizations. I also want to begin discernment for my sabbatical coming up in the next few years.

I'm looking forward to another year serving with Bethel as we continue to love God, each other, our neighbors and ourselves. I know there will be bumps and surprises along the way, and I'm confident that we'll continue in our mission together.

Yours in Christ,

Pastor Leon LaCross

Statistical Report for 2024

Worship Statistics 2023	adults	children	total
Christmas Eve	29	5	34
Easter Sunday	33	4	37
Average Weekly Worship	14	3	17
Average Zoom participation	7		7

Ministerial Acts 2024	
Installation	0
Baptisms, adults	0
Baptisms, children	1
Confirmation	0
Weddings	0
Funerals, members	0
Funerals, non-members	0
Membership Adjustments 2024	
Added by transfer	0
Removed by transfer	0
Added by affirmation	0
Added by baptism	1
Removed by death	0
Moved from Inactive Status	0
Removed by inactive status	0
Net Statistical Adjustment	0
Total Baptized Membership as of 12.31.2023	76
Total Baptized Membership as of 12.31.2024	77

NOTES for Statistical Report:

- The report was compiled by Admin Assistant Kerry Czuba in consultation with Pastor Leon LaCross.
- Average weekly attendance does not include Christmas Eve participants, per ELCA directions.
- The Total Baptized Membership includes adults and children.
- In 2022, the membership rolls were updated in a collaboration between Karen Anderson and Kerry Czuba. The Total Baptized Membership reported for 12.31.2022 was 79.
- Records for all transfers, baptisms, confirmations, deaths are on file on the office computer. All baptisms, confirmations, and deaths for 2024 have been duly recorded in the parish registry.
- For 2024, ELCA has requested documentation of total number of people actively participating in the life of the congregation. This count includes children, and non-members who participate in worship, bible study, choir, youth events, Christian education, and volunteers for service opportunities. We conservatively estimate the number of active Friends of Bethel (FOB) to be 50.

Council President's Report

To our members and friends,

Paraphrasing a favorite holiday movie, "No person is a failure who has friends". And so it is with Bethel Lutheran Church. Without the internal and external community support, where would Bethel be?

The successes are numerous. The play, Drop-In Center, Bethel Bees, and the Angel Project to name a few. Thanks to Scott, Tana, Jacob Bard, and the contractors of course, who led the completion of the church laundry facilities. Also, kudos to Tana, Scott, and Ryan Olson for clearing out and repairing the parsonage--- which has new renters as of December.

We need to examine how to grow the Bethel community more, internally this coming year. Getting people in the pews, and how to make the visit safer. Enter the St. Johns Church committee, who are examining ways to make the area around the church safer and more vital for community use.

There is always something happening at Bethel. Keep your eyes, ears, and heart open for new possibilities / opportunities in the Bethel community. I would like to add a special thanks to the council Vice President Don Worthington for his listening and counsel. And that feeling extends to the entire council and Pastor Leon.

Jim Van Dyke

Bethel Council President

Report from the Worship & Music Committee

2024 has been a festive and prayerful year at Bethel. Shlomo has completed his second full year as our Music Director and continues to share his musical talents with our community. We have continued to incorporate different styles of music into our worship services, including classical, jazz, contemporary, and even some popular music into our rotation. This year in particular we have had the opportunity to witness Shlomo's vocal talents as he's made it a point to sing along with his musical selections. We also appreciate Shlomo's willingness to use both our (newish) piano and our organ from time to time. During Shlomo's absences we've had the pleasure of hearing from our rotating crew of musicians: Jamie Vandenburg, Jamie Peterson, and Colin Shepherd amongst other guest musicians.

We continue to be responsive to the liturgical seasons, especially in our festive seasons of Christmas and Holy Week. We welcomed our friends and neighbors from Portsmouth Trinity Lutheran Church for a Good Friday worship service this year. We even had the privilege to host another baptism too! Pr. Leon continues to create a warm and inviting worship space for contemplation and connection with the divine. A special thanks to those who helped put up and take down Christmas decorations this year!

Our monthly free jazz concerts with Northwest Tempo have also been a highlight at Bethel. We have been pulling in new friends of Bethel who have become fans and continue to spread the word. Average attendance has been 15-20 people, about half of whom are not members of Bethel. Our best attended concert was of course Cookiepalooza 2024 with the sharing of cookies and baked treats for the festive season. We've continued to host recitals for those learning the piano, and those perfecting their craft as we hosted friend of Bethel Mari Baker's senior recital. We've also opened our space up as a rehearsal space for a band Shlomo plays with. We hope to coordinate a free concert from this this year.

The Worship and Music committee is always open for new members! If you'd like to help plan worship or have a say in how it is planned, please let Pr. Leon know! Also, we love hosting recitals, so if you know someone who needs an event space, please reach out as well.

Pr. Leon LaCross for the Worship & Music Committee

Report from the Property Management Committee

I feel like there is no property report that is complete without calling out our main property person at Bethel, Nash Abadu. Nash has kept the inside property well taken care of, along with the exterior yard and flowers at the church and gardens at both the church and the parsonage. THANK YOU NASH!!!!

From Jared regarding handrails: Several wall to handrail supports in the basement to players closet stairway were coming undone with visible wall damage. The supports and backing plates were dismantled and new robust wall anchors were added, the backing plate and supports were re-installed and wall holes patched. The rest of the supports were checked to make sure fasteners were tight on remaining connections. Also replaced driver for the lights on the parsonage stove hood :)

Scott Burris & Tana Bishop
Property Management Committee

Report on Constitutional Revision

In summer 2023, the Council's Constitution Review Team (Ronda Bard, Ryan Burghard, and Don Worthington) met to review the last approved congregational consultation (labeled 2010 in records), the 2014 revised constitution, and the recently updated ELCA 2022 model constitution. We created a detailed tabular comparison of the three versions. Ronda also made a search of the minutes of past annual meetings to identify any actions relating to the constitution (these actions are summarized in a table on the last pages of the draft constitution distributed for this annual meeting).

A major frustration for the congregation is the situation related to the 2014 version, which was submitted to the Synod Office for review that never happened. On 29 January 2018, at the third annual meeting without synodical input, congregational president P.J. Bentley proposed that the 2014 version be the operative until further revision was accomplished.

The penultimate draft constitution shared today brings us sooooo close to achieving our goals. Council continues to work with Greg Shea, Synod Vice President and the person assigned to oversee constitutional revision, to present a final draft of our revised constitution for initial congregational approval at a special meeting to be called in spring 2025. We are sharing this current draft in print and electronically so that everyone has a chance to review changes approved by your Council in 2024.

Ronda Bard
Member Constitution Review Team

Report from St. John's Committee

In 2024, Bethel Lutheran Church was given a substantial donation from a church that closed in our area. This money was given to the church in the spirit of outreach, and our committee has done our best to determine the best ways to invest that money in such a way that meets those expectations.

We have considered methods of promoting our church, church events, and community events. And, we decided to purchase the signs that you have surely seen in front of the church. These have been used to promote services and the play, and they will surely be helpful when we begin the summer Drop-In program and other future events.

We have considered the safety and security of the building and our space. As a result, we have begun the process of updating and improving the lighting around the church building. And, we are happy to announce that we - and the church council - have accepted an electrician's bid to begin work as soon as possible.

Finally, we have considered the overall use of space at Bethel. And, our focus has turned to the parking lot. Most recently, we have held discussions with Depave (a local non-profit) and the City of Portland about opportunities to repurpose some of the parking lot space for eco-friendly, and community friendly, purposes.

In working on the potential changes to the parking lot, we have come to realize that funds from outside sources (mainly grants) will play a larger part in our future endeavors as a committee. So, we have decided to rename our committee. And, we have decided to open the committee up for new members.

If you would like to join the Outreach Committee, please contact one of our current members: Pastor Leon, Tana, Lisa, Ryan B., Jared, Joann, and Andrew.

Submitted by Andrew Van Dyke

Report from the Youth Drop-In Center

Good News First! The Drop-In Board is delighted to report that we have offered the position of Director of the 2025 Summer Day Camp Program to an excellent applicant who brings years of experience mentoring young campers at Outdoor School and other educational programs. We hope to make the happy announcement that she has accepted our offer when we gather for the Annual Meeting. Praying hard...

Reminder: How Does the Center Operate? The Drop-In Center partners with families of elementary school aged children in the neighborhood of Bethel Lutheran Church (our sponsor and mission partner) to operate a six-week Summer Day Camp focused on academic support, good nutrition, fellowship, and fun.

While housed in Bethel Lutheran Church, this program does not include religious education in any form, although we do teach and model universal values of kindness, honesty, fairness and inclusivity. We welcome children from families of all religious backgrounds, or no such background, and we work to celebrate children and families within a strong Drop-In Center community.

Fees are offered on a sliding scale, recognizing that many of our families have annual household incomes under \$30,000. In cases of dire need, full scholarships are offered; no child is turned away because of a lack of funds.

Most of the children we serve attend Beach Elementary, Chief Joseph Elementary, and Holy Redeemer schools, and live primarily in North and Northeast Portland.

Special Thanks to Bethel! Did you catch the key relationship mentioned in the section just above? Drop-In could not operate without the support and mission partnership of Bethel Congregation, Bethel Players, and a wide network of Bethel members and friends. Thank you! Thanks for the \$17,000 raised using blue-envelope donations at the 2024 play performances. Thanks for reasonable rental rate and shared insurance and transportation expenses. Thanks especially for your prayers, hard work, great attitude, and cash and in-kind donations.

Challenges and Problems Solved for 2024 Summer Program: The Center, staff and Board of the Drop-In Center built upon the successful revival of the Summer Program in 2023 to expand enrollment and activities for the 2024 Summer Day Camp. The Board hired Marie Houk, who had served as Assistant Director in 2023, as Director and worked with her to recruit and hire an Assistant Director, two Counselors, and two Volunteer Counselors. As in 2023, staffing included two alumni of the Summer Program, and Board members were

invited to write letters of recommendation supporting scholarship applications submitted by a staff member who graduated from Jefferson High School in June 2024.

Family enrollment packets were available online on March 1, well ahead of Portland Public Schools Spring Break and the Portland tradition of applying for summer camps during Break. Applications continued into early July with a final enrollment of 20 children.

The 2024 Summer Day Camp took on an international flavor in honor of the Summer Olympics held in Paris. Staff and students explored geography, food, and culture related to countries spread across five continents, thanks to staff and Drop-In supporters who had experience in each country. Swimming and trips to the Kenton Library were a big part of each week's activities, with additional field trips to OMSI, a Sauvie Island berry farm, The Oregon Zoo, Wonderland Arcade, and Oaks Park.

On the last week of camp, the kids performed in a talent show, which was followed by a family and community barbecue. The children made their own outdoor stage, including a street art backdrop. This event served as both a celebration for the kids and families as well as good community outreach for Bethel and the Drop-In Center.

For the last day's giant birthday party, the children received packs stuffed with school supplies, including pencils, colored pencils, pens, crayons, markers, scissors, glue sticks, folders, notebook paper, and more.

Expenses for the 2024 Summer Program:

\$1,272.07	Summer Program Administration
\$1,364.66	Food & Nutrition
\$4,344.77	Outings & Onsite Activities
\$28,949.75	Summer Program Staffing
\$2,687.35	Summer Program Taxes
\$139.20	Summer Program Transportation
\$38,757.80	TOTAL EXPENSES 2024 SUMMER PROGRAM

Quick Demographics: Total enrollment was 20 students. Reporting data for income, school enrollment, and race and ethnicity was optional for families and households at the time of enrollment. For the 14 reports of household income, five were below \$20,000 and another three were below \$50,000. Six households reported income greater than \$50,000, and six households chose not to share this information.

Ten households reported a single parent in place, three reported multigenerational adults, five reported two parents, and three chose not to share this information.

Six households identified as African American; five, as Caucasian; five, multiracial; one, other; and one, Hispanic. Two households chose not to share race and ethnicity.

Looking Ahead to Summer 2025: We are excited to offer another vibrant program enriched by swimming, indoor and outdoor games, field trips, art, STEM projects, crafts, reading, and fun math practice. Drop-In kids will make new friends, explore Portland, and learn and practice cooperative problem-solving and conflict resolution. We work hard to prevent summer slump so that our kids will arrive at school in August 2025 with a great attitude and ready recall of the skills and knowledge they took home in May.

Ronda Bard
Board Member

Report from the Angel Project

Our annual Angel Project included many smiles, angels, challenges, gifts, and creative opportunities in 2024—and extensive use of gift bags, tape and wrapping paper! We helped ten families and two seniors and prepared 120 hygiene bags for houseless neighbors.

I am grateful for those who stepped forward:

- Three individuals sponsored four families and two seniors, doing all the shopping.
- Cate and Shirley shopped for a family of seven, plus Cate shopped for items for four kids I couldn't get to. They wrapped everything they bought!!!
- 22 Bethel members and FOBs contributed in time, money, and work (including Emily, who packaged 1200 bandaids, and my daughter and grandsons, who filled 120 hygiene bags).
- A donation from Nash's friends provided more than 100 warm hats, 100 gloves, and many socks.
- We had six industrious elves wrapping gifts for more than two hours.
- Many families at Daybreak Cohousing, where I live, helped to partially sponsor two families with 18 gifts, including a bicycle.
- Lisa & Chris Siems donated cleaning and laundry products for 12 families and giant gift carrying bags.
- The Baker family donated paper products for 12 families.
- I had many offers of help and pick up of food items.
- Urban Gleaners provided some needed food items.

Challenges: The Head Angel needs assistance

- The shopping season was short as Thanksgiving was late this year. Some who formerly sponsored families are no longer able to sponsor.
- Terrance Moses (Friends of Ours) sent us three families. I will let Terrance know we will sponsor one family next year, especially as we want to focus on YDIC families who may need assistance. That number may grow from year to year. We sponsored five appreciative YDIC families this year.
- Much online and some in person shopping was needed for five "unsponsored" families. Making the most of Black Friday and Cyber Monday was quite a job. Keeping track of orders from five different businesses required a different spreadsheet than the one at hand. There is an offer of help for this from a Friend of Bethel.
- The head angel made deliveries to six families with some assistance. ***It's fun to deliver!*** We can use more volunteers next year.
- Assistance with grocery shopping for twelve families is needed and could be better planned to make the most of our funds.

The head angel worked without a budget! We started with about \$900 which was taken up in shopping for a family of seven and a few more gifts for other children. We also had a \$250 Visa card from Thrivent which helped with groceries. We were spending on faith alone! \$1100 in additional donations came in during late November and early December. I anticipate that we may have gone over budget about \$400, although Angels are still making contributions. **Your cans and bottles are an easy way to support the project all year around!**

Thinking about next year:

I welcome your ideas. One idea is to share specific items that need to be purchased through the Bethel Blast and Bethel Players. Ideally this would be a software program that would allow individuals to sign up to purchase an item that would then not allow duplicates. **Does this exist?**

Joann Noll

Archangel for the Bethel Angel Project

Report from Bethel Bees

The Bees have been busy in 2024. We have continued to provide monthly community dinners on Thursdays to Renaissance Commons, the subsidized apartment building in Kenton. The dinners are well-received, evident by our many repeat customers, especially kids! We are grateful for our partnership with Urban Gleaners. They are able to provide all of our desserts, many salad items, vegetables, bread and some protein. We are able to use our Lutheran food grant to fill in.

Bees have also volunteered for meal and serving slots for the Bethel play.

Active Bees include: Ronda Bard, Karen Anderson, Miles Bard, Timothy Collins, Joann Noll and Joann's Daybreak friends, Deana Camp and Carolyn Doak.

Arbor Lodge Shelter is now open. This location and Kenton's Women's Village can provide other opportunities to provide meals for our neighbors.

JoAnn Noll

Bethel Bee

Liaison to Renaissance Commons

Report from the Bethel Players

Off to Far-off Wisconsin for the Bethel Players' 41st production, "As the Butter Churns". With a plot as thick as curdled yogurt, villainous non-dairy milk proponents hypnotize local Guernsey and Holstein herds into non-production, the course of true love never runs smooth and who knew there is a Guinness Book of Records category for falling into comas in soap operas? Tune in tomorrow and stock up on our sponsor's famous Uncle Lars Jarred Lard.

This year saw three generations of two different families on stage (Laurie Ross, Tim Cooper and Ben Cooper; Susan Johnson, Max, Brian and Bridgette Baker). We love our FOBs!

Thank you to everyone who helped, named and unnamed. Especially Marlo Edman and Jared Burdick for sculpting a hospital bed out of an abandoned chaise lounge Karen found in a parking strip (as one does) and the ubiquitous Harbor Freight furniture dollies. Mary Rix for sponsoring delicious desserts. Holly Redfern chief sommelier, Scott Burriss and Tana Bishop, brewmasters. Svea Erickson and Ronda Bard, head kitchen wranglers, Nash Ababu for countless tasks. Kerry Czuba for box office and publicity help. All our cooks, servers and dishwashers!

Our authors, the Van Dyke syndicate, and talented songwriters. Jamie Vandenberg, musician extraordinaire. Our cast for exceptional costume and prop acquisition (and thank you Marvin Hanson), not to forget hours of rehearsal and moo-ving performances. Of course, our audiences, who in addition to the cost of tickets, contributed almost \$12,000 for the Youth Drop In Summer Program! And you all for prayers and support.

Report from the Fun Committee

Spring FUNdrive - April 13, 2024

The Bethel community rallied this spring for a fundraiser for the Drop-In Center. We cleaned out our closets and brought bags and boxes of books and household items to the church for collection, which we then took to Value Village and were paid by the pound.

Here's a recap:

- Clothing: 1633 lbs
- Miscellaneous: 544 lbs
- Books: 174 lbs
- Furniture: 1 pcs
- Other large items: 6 pcs
- Amount raised: \$341.31

Bethel BBQ Report - Summer 2024. This summer, we hosted three Bethel BBQs on Wednesdays from 5:30 to 7:30 PM: June 12th, July 10th, and August 14th. Bethel provided the main dishes, including sausages, veggie dogs, hot dogs, and hamburgers, while guests and friends of Bethel brought additional dishes to share.

Approximately 30 people attended each of the first two events, with a mix of neighbors and some parents from the Drop-In Center. The August BBQ doubled as a planning meeting for the Bethel Players, which brought attendance to around 40 people. Some evenings featured games for the kids and board games for everyone to enjoy.

This was our second summer hosting the BBQs. To promote the events, we distributed flyers to neighbors, announcing both the Drop-In Center Camp and the BBQ dates. For 2025, we should aim to share the dates early again to ensure strong community participation.

Bethel Campout - September 20-21, 2024. Twenty-nine of us enjoyed the warm autumn weather that blessed the 2024 Bethel Campout. Saturday night, Hannah Foglio directed the evening stage performance "Forgiveness of the 2024 Gen Alpha Family". The cast included Gabe, Mimi, Harper, Mila, Gigi, Eleanor, & Lily!

Campout attendees included:

- Linda & Don Worthington with granddaughter Eleanor
- Mettie Burris with Hannah & Harper
- Kyle with daughters Mila, Gigi, Shep
- Svea with Solveig & Ellis
- Ryan Robin with Gabe & Mimi
- PJ Dorian with Mary & Ruth
- Karen Anderson
- Tana & Scott
- Jared Steph Brady Collin Lily

Block Party/Rummage Sale: A Success Story! September 14, 2024

Our Block Party/Rummage Sale was a hit with our friends and neighbors. Those stopping were treated to great shopping, bouncy house, and free hotdogs! There was no better deal in town!

AND, yes – we cleared around \$600! Plus, Value Village paid \$171 for our leftovers! Thanks to everyone for making this happen and to those who came and volunteered for set up and take down. Additional thanks for helping get all the leftover things to Value Village!!

Tana Bishop, Chair
The Fun Committee



Report from the Women's Prayer Group

Fall of last year, 2024, we began a new vision of the Women's Prayer Group, meeting bi-weekly most of the time, at Carol Knight's house, not far from Bethel. We plan to restart meetings to start before Lent with the first meeting again held at Carol's house on Saturday, March 5th.

As before, Carol will provide copious snacks and coffee/tea for all. We will continue talking about what prayer means to us and how we use it as well as pray together for each other and those who request prayers. We do ask that those involved keep personal stories they've heard close to their own hearts and not share them at large.

If you, the people of Bethel and our friends would like us to pray for you, then either call/text JulieAnn, Carol, or Kerry to let us know. We will pass the prayer need on through the group.

JulieAnn Edman, co-leader
Women's Prayer Group

MACG Report: Metropolitan Alliance for Common Good

The [Metropolitan Alliance for Common Good](#) (MACG) is an alliance of faith, labor, health education, and community non-profit institutions dedicated to building a strong base of civic leaders—everyday people empowered to act for the common good.

MACG organizes at three levels:

- Training and developing effective civic leaders with the skills and confidence to advocate on behalf of issues important to their institutions.
- Building strong member institutions that apply the tools and practices of relational community organizing within their own internal structure and culture.
- Organizing these relational institutions to work for the common good through collective public action.

One of the MACG faith institutions is Bethel Lutheran! As a dues-paying member, we can send our leaders to free training institutes and regional workshops that empower us to organize for justice and social change within a broad alliance of everyday folks building relational power across religion, race, class, and neighborhood lines.

In January 2023, MACG hosted a regional online training, *Wrestling with the Truth of Colonization*, attended by over 100 leaders. The capacity to host this training, designed and led by staff of the Pacific Region of the Industrial Areas Foundation (IAF Pacific), was the result of a year of dedicated relationship building with two local Indigenous communities, Native American Youth and Family Center (NAYA), and Eloheh Center for Indigenous Justice. Based on strong interest among our member base, MACG hosted a second *Wrestling* training in Spring 2024 that included a Bethel cohort of Pastor Leon LaCross, Kerry Czuba, and Ronda Bard. In Fall 2024, the *Wrestling* planning team reorganized itself as the Indigenous Partnership Team, co-chaired in 2025 by Cheryl Lohrmann and Jane Keating, both members of Leaven Community.

Parallel to the actions and trainings associated with *Wrestling*, MACG hired Lead Organizer Sarah 'Strasbaugh on a half-time basis to nurture the process of reorganization and reengagement on an organization level. MACG hosted a leader retreat, sent six institutional leaders to the IAF Pacific regional training, and recruited new members for a strong Strategy Team. The Strategy Team has replaced the old multi-week format for Leadership Institutes to a series of one-day, focused Leadership Academies.

The Strategy Team has announced these plans for MACG in 2025:

- Sponsor a MACG-wide listening season (the first in six years!)
- Continue the Leadership Academies using an updated curriculum sourced from the IAF Pacific network
- Sponsor MACG orientations that give new and prospective members the big picture view of institutional organizing and a taste of the organizing cycle in action
- Meet with NAYA to collaborate on ways to support their 2025 Legislative Agenda and continue strengthening our partnership
- Offer advanced leadership training at the IAF Pacific Regional Training in May
- Convene a Spring Delegate Assembly to identify campaign issues that emerged from the listening season

Bethel's organizing work in MACG includes Pastor Leon's participation in the Institutional Leadership Caucus and Ronda Bard's participation in the Indigenous Partnership Team and the MACG Board of Directors. The broad-based organizing strategies taught by MACG also inform our developing partnership with Leaven Community and Salt & Light Congregation as we explore collaborative options for summer children's programs.

Report from Jazz at Bethel

A very successful year for Jazz at Bethel with Northwest Tempo!. Bethel has presented a free jazz concert the fourth Sunday of each month (except November and December when we present a mid-December concert and Christmas Cookiepalooza). Thanks to our publicity team (Kerry, Joann) and the neighborhood NextDoor app, we've had ever increasing attendance. At the December concert we had 33 attendees and there was dancing in the aisles. Better yet, a good portion of the audience are neighbors who had never been inside Bethel previously. Folks have been generous with the free will offering, so the concerts more than break even (we do pay the musicians). If you haven't attended yet, do put it on your calendar. Fourth Sundays, 4 PM (snacks and beverages provided for your noshing pleasure).

Karen Anderson
Jazz Concert Organizer

Report from the Bethel Players in Training

The BPIT's put on quite a show this year performing the ever popular "Lent, the Musical" on April 14th with actors Gabe Moody Burghard, Mimi Moody Burghard, Lily Burdick, Hannah Foglio, Harper Foglio, Ruth Bentley, Solveig Spencer and Ellis Spencer. The show was a big hit, and the message was clear with its profound message of joy and hope in the face of uncertainty. Lent reminds us to measure our lives with the only thing that truly matters... LOVE!

We also had a surprise performance at the Bethel Campout by the BPITS, jumping onto the Park Ranger stage at night with a play written and performed by the young campers. Their production of "Forgiveness of the 2024 Gen Alpha Family" was directed by Hannah Foglio and starred Gabe, Mimi, Lily, Harper, Mila, Gigi and Eleanor! Look for it on Broadway soon!

Tana Bishop
Director, Playwright, Head Wrangler for the BPITS.



2024 Financial Reports:

General Budget:

	Budgeted 2024	Actual 2024	2025 Proposed	2025 Notes
REVENUE				
4001 Envelope and Loose	92,000.00	86,387.08	93,725.00	
4005 Building Use	1,000.00	610.00	650.00	
4010 Endowment	0.00			
4015 Fundraising	0.00			
4020 Interest	2,400.00	2,745.28	2,500.00	
4025 Opening Balance	669.87	669.84	0.00	
4030 Parsonage Rental Income	25,000.00	19,405.45	36,000.00	
4035 Transfers From Designated	0.00			
4040 Transfers From Grants	0.00			
4045 Transfers From Memorials	0.00			
4050 YDIC	2,900.00	3,239.30	3,300.00	
Total Revenue	\$ 123,969.87	\$ 113,056.95	\$ 136,175.00	
Expense overrun		-\$ 17,254.24	\$ 11.52	
EXPENDITURES				
5100 Social Concerns				
5101 ELCA-Synod	2,500.00	2,500.00	3,000.00	1
5102 MACG	1,000.00	1,000.00	1,100.00	2
Total 5100 Social Concerns	\$ 3,500.00	\$ 3,500.00	\$ 4,100.00	
5200 Worship & Music				
5201 Bulletins	0.00			
5202 Altar Supplies	200.00	59.62	250.00	3
5203 Pulpit Supply	470.00	200.00	430.00	4
5204 Music	550.00	684.00	400.00	5
Total 5200 Worship & Music	\$ 1,220.00	\$ 943.62	\$ 1,080.00	
5400 Evangelism				
5403 Hospitality	450.00	254.25	350.00	6
5404 Publicity	0.00	0.00	100.00	7
Total 5400 Evangelism	\$ 450.00	\$ 254.25	\$ 450.00	

	Budgeted 2024	Actual 2024	2025 Proposed	2025 Notes
5500 Christian Education				
5501 Sunday School	0.00			
5502 Adult Education	0.00			
5503 Confirmation	0.00			
5504 VBS	0.00			
Total 5500 Education	\$ 0.00	\$ 0.00	\$ 0.00	
5600 Youth				
5601 Youth Expense	150.00		150.00	
Total 5600 Youth	\$ 150.00	\$ 0.00	\$ 150.00	
5700 Property & Management				
5701 Church Maintenance	1,000.00	1,195.31	1,925.00	8
5702 Organ-Piano	250.00		250.00	9
5703 Custodian Supplies	300.00	63.94	300.00	10
5704 Church Utilities				
5704.1 Water	4,300.00	4,551.80	4,900.00	11
5704.2 Gas	3,900.00	3,201.23	3,400.00	12
5704.3 Electric	4,200.00	3,842.29	4,500.00	13
5704.4 Phone/Internet	2,000.00	2,010.33	2,100.00	
5704.5 Garbage	1,150.00	1,446.45	1,300.00	14
Total 5704 Church Utilities	\$ 15,550.00	\$ 15,052.10	\$ 16,200.00	
5705 Vans		31.98		
5705.1 Insurance	350.00	350.04	350.00	
5705.2 Maintenance	100.00		100.00	
5705.3 Gas	100.00		100.00	
5705.4 Licensing & DEQ	200.00	263.00	0.00	
Total 5705 Vans	750.00	645.02	550.00	
5706 Capital Projects	1,200.00	1,200.00	1,200.00	15
5707 Elevator	500.00	499.92	750.00	16
5708 Lawn Care	\$ 0.00		\$ 0.00	
5709 Parsonage MIF Loan	0.00		0.00	
Total 5700 Property & Management	\$ 19,550.00	\$ 18,656.29	\$ 21,175.00	
5800 Administration				
5801 Office Supplies	1,200.00	845.22	1,000.00	
5802 Office Equipment	2,100.00	2,100.00	2,500.00	17
5803 Postage	150.00	28.90	75.00	18
5804 Conventions	400.00	783.78	800.00	19
5805 Corporation Tax	50.00	50.00	50.00	
5806 Property Tax	7,000.00	7,095.24	7,350.00	20
5807 Insurance	13,250.00	12,769.00	14,000.00	21

	Budgeted 2024	Actual 2024	2025 Proposed	2025 Notes
5808 Miscellaneous	0.00		0.00	
5809 Childcare	0.00		0.00	
5810 Bank Charges	450.00	268.14	275.00	22
5811 Computer & Virtual Worship				
5811.1 Antivirus	110.00	119.99	125.00	
5811.2 Hosting	210.00	245.88	250.00	
5811.3 Domain Registration	20.00	16.17	20.00	
5811.6 Software	775.00	911.64	1,000.00	23
5811.7 Equipment	200.00		200.00	
Total 5811 Computer & Virtual Worship	\$ 1,315.00	\$ 1,293.68	\$ 1,595.00	
5812 Staff Meetings	400.00		0.00	
5814 Unrelated Business Income Tax	1,200.00	985.00	0.00	24
Total 5800 Administration	\$ 27,515.00	\$ 26,218.96	\$ 27,645.00	
5900 Personnel				
5901 Pastor				
5901.1 Salary	9,948.04	9,948.24	34,000.00	25
5901.2 Continuing Ed	700.00	0.00	700.00	
5901.3 Pension	11,067.00	12,420.94	4,425.00	26
5901.4 Housing	22,194.96	22,194.96		25
5901.5 Professional Expense	750.00	331.48	750.00	
5901.6 Auto Expense	1,000.00	515.23	1,000.00	
5901.7 Medical	0.00	0.00	4,500.00	26
Total 5901 Pastor	\$ 45,660.00	\$ 45,410.85	\$ 45,375.00	
5902 Secretary	18,304.00	18,056.50	19,136.00	27
5903 Custodian	1,200.00	1,200.00	1,200.00	
5904 Music Director	11,760.00	11,832.00	12,120.00	28
5905 Choir Director	0.00			
5906 FICA-Medicare	2,299.90	2,049.83	2,207.48	
5907 Workers Comp	350.00	361.49	375.00	
5908 Unemployment	450.00	627.40	550.00	29
5910 Sabbatical	600.00	600.00	600.00	
5911 First Call Theological Education	600.00	600.00	0.00	
Total 5900 Personnel	\$ 81,223.90	\$ 80,738.07	\$ 81,563.48	
Total Expenditures	\$ 133,608.90	\$ 130,311.19	\$ 136,163.48	

2025 General Budget Notes

No.	Notes Corresponding to General Budget
1	Synod benevolence has been at \$2500 since 2023. Adding \$500 designated for LA Synod fire relief
2	MACG minimum dues increase to \$1200 7/1/25
3	2024 expenses were for baptismal candle and gluten free wafers. 2025 may need to buy a paschal candle which range from about \$150-\$200
4	2 occurrences. This amount does not include any mileage--hoping it's someone local. Only usage in 2024 was Julia Rankin
5	Licenses--for use of Augsburg materials and permission to stream. Last year we bought a more expensive license than was really needed
6	Coffee, kitchen supplies, Narcan kit
7	We have at least a dozen new large apartment/condo complexes within walking distance. Could we maybe try hand delivering some flyers to their lobbies (maybe quarterly?) \$100 to offset some of the paper/copying cost
8	3 gutter clean outs +\$600 for fire inspection, extinguisher service \$200 for misc supplies
9	We had one free piano tuning as part of the piano purchase. Jamie also had it tuned before her students' recital. Budgeting for one piano tuning and a bit in case the organ needs any attention.
10	Leaving at \$300. Summer YDIC bought some TP, etc. We also had some in kind gifts
11	June 2024/2025 rate increase was 8%
12	No rate increase until 11/25. Probably 7% then
13	Commercial rate increase 7.6% 1/1/25
14	As a commercial account we don't get automatic free green bin pickup. Adding in a little to cover some of that -- Nash says neighbors are amenable to letting us put material in their bins if they don't need a pick-up in any given week.
15	Set aside amount in anticipation of minor building repairs
16	Set aside for inspection, license, minor repairs. Increasing this year because we did repairs that emptied the reserve fund. Bearson says that because it's 20 years+ getting parts will be increasingly difficult and, at some point, impossible. Replacing right now would be 40K+. With luck we should have a few years to fundraise...
17	This amount covers the service charge (includes service and toner) and "pays back" a loan we made to ourselves to buy the current copier (see DGB line). Pacific Office Automation has warned us that at 10 years old they may not be able to get parts should anything major break. On replacement they suggest a lease (might be OK as they are local--we had a TERRIBLE experience with prior lease) that might actually cost less than current service contract (but we still need to pay ourselves back for the "loan").
18	Yay email!
19	Two delegates to online convention. Bishop's convo and lodging for Pastor.
20	3 % increase is allowed year to year, plus any new levies/bonds
21	Wouldn't be surprised to see at least a 10% increase due to industry wide losses due to fire, flood, wind and other climate related disasters

No.	Notes Corresponding to General Budget
22	Vanco and Paypal fees. Vanco is minimal (less than 1% so long as nobody uses credit cards), Paypal is 3% + a transaction fee. Venmo occasionally takes a small amount if the remitter clicks the goods/services button.
23	Subscriptions: MSOffice, QuickBooks, Quicken, Zoom, Adobe PDF
24	Parsonage loan payoff means we don't have to pay federal/state tax on income and the high cost of preparing the tax return
25	Salary amount to be allocated between salary and housing at pastor's discretion.
26	Medical is separate from pension this year
27	16 hours per week (incl. vacation/holiday). \$23 per hour, up from \$22 in 2024
28	40 Sundays + 2 extra (Christmas, Easter ??). 2 hrs per month plans/reports. 12 subs. \$27 per hour, up from \$26
29	Showing less because 2024 amount includes Summer YDIC which was paid back above in YDIC contribution.

Designated General Budget and Setasides 2024:

	Beginning Balance	Income	Expense	Ending Balance
Carryover from 2023	\$669.87	\$0.00	\$669.87	\$0.00
ELCA	\$0.00	\$2,500.00	\$2,500.00	\$0.00
MACG	\$0.00	\$1,000.00	\$1,000.00	\$0.00
Special Music	\$1,670.24	\$820.00	\$215.00	\$2,275.24
Church Maintenance	\$0.00	\$37.59	\$37.59	\$0.00
Van Insurance	\$35.68	\$700.08	\$553.00	\$182.76
Capital Projects	\$2,674.22	\$1,200.00	\$0.00	\$3,874.22
Elevator	\$1,256.73	\$499.92	\$409.00	\$1,347.65
Copier	-\$1,987.72	\$2,100.00	\$1,864.76	-\$1,752.48
Property Tax	\$0.00	\$7,095.24	\$7,095.24	\$0.00
Insurance	\$0.00	\$12,769.00	\$12,769.00	\$0.00
Childcare	\$612.29	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$612.29
Computers	\$97.00	\$0.00	\$97.00	\$0.00
Pastor Continuing Ed	\$0.00	\$699.96	\$699.96	\$0.00
Pastor Professional Expense	\$0.00	\$750.00	\$750.00	\$0.00
Pastor Auto Expense	\$0.00	\$999.93	\$999.93	\$0.00
Workers Comp	\$1,336.85	\$349.92	\$1,186.77	\$500.00
Unemployment	\$0.00	\$627.40	\$627.40	\$0.00
Sabbatical	\$7,382.19	\$600.00	\$0.00	\$7,982.19

Designated GB Total

\$15,021.87

Designated Non-Budget 2024:

	Beginning Balance	Income	Expense	Ending Balance
Breakfast	\$2,823.62	\$0.00	\$218.00	\$2,605.62
Parsonage	\$3,473.54	\$5,354.93	\$13,533.47	-\$4,705.00
Accessibilty	\$136.58	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$136.58
Youth Drop In Summer	\$28,806.13	\$27,014.37	\$34,926.91	\$20,893.59
Youth Drop In	\$10,240.74	\$2,745.23	\$3,174.71	\$9,811.26
Special Events	\$1,588.78	\$13,190.00	\$8,521.71	\$6,257.07
Bethel Players	\$18,686.94	\$9,245.97	\$10,722.53	\$17,210.38
Bethel Players Table Money	\$5,967.06	\$11,994.00	\$6,137.06	\$11,824.00
Block Party	\$116.95	\$1,260.39	\$417.36	\$959.98
Social Concern	\$1,217.67	\$300.00	\$35.52	\$1,482.15
Reserves	\$43,328.71	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$43,328.71
Angel Project	-\$61.63	\$2,159.84	\$2,682.15	-\$583.94
Kitchen	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Custodian Special	\$15,878.26	\$1,200.00	\$260.00	\$16,818.26
Jazz Service	\$0.00	\$5,828.00	\$4,528.10	\$1,299.90
Designated NonGB Total				\$127,338.56

Grants and Memorials 2024:

Grants 2024	Beginning Balance	Income	Expense	Ending Balance
Synod	\$1,216.38	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$1,216.38
Food Ministry	\$3,945.43	\$0.00	\$1,756.30	\$2,189.13
Bethel Players In Training	\$74.84	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$74.84
St John's	\$45,000.04	\$0.00	\$578.87	\$44,421.17
Grants Total				\$47,901.52

Memorrials 2024	Beginning Balance	Income	Expense	Ending Balance
June Hasebroek	\$1,100.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$1,100.00
Carolyn Beck	\$777.47	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$777.47
Undesignated	\$2,984.44	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$2,984.44
Tangvald	\$40,908.07	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$40,908.07
Memorials Total				\$45,769.98

Endowment Fund 2024

Endowment Funds 2024	1/1/2024	12/31/2024	Gain/Loss	Last Stat Date	
DWS Scudder Short Term Bond/Duration	\$5,777.34	\$6,076.24	\$298.90	12/31/2024	5.00%
DWS Scudder Growth and Income	\$30,289.73	\$36,347.97	\$6,058.24	12/31/2024	20.00%
Vanguard Wellington	\$41,135.64	\$47,220.50	\$6,084.86	12/31/2024	15.00%
Amundi (Pioneer)	\$14,992.04	\$18,377.83	\$3,385.79	12/31/2024	23.00%
Columbia Intermediate Bond Fund	\$9,098.30	\$9,302.59	\$204.29	12/31/2024	2.00%
Columbia Midcap Growth	\$28,604.51	\$35,387.53	\$6,783.02	12/31/2024	24.00%
Columbia Balanced Fund	\$25,938.93	\$29,732.93	\$3,794.00	12/31/2024	15.00%
Totals	\$155,836.49	\$182,445.59	\$26,609.10	12/31/2024	17.00%

Financial Audit Report 2024

22 January 2025

We looked at the checking accounts, Mission Investment Funds, Endowment funds and found all records present and accounted for.



Cari Catlow



Ryan Olson

Resolution from Council to Rectify 2024 Budget Deficit

Background: The budget approved for 2024 included a planned deficit of about \$8000. However, because of the loss of rental income from July through December 2024, the General Budget expenses exceeded Income by over \$17,250. Repair and utility costs have also left the parsonage reserve fund at a \$4705 deficit. Also in 2024, the endowment fund earned interest income of over \$26,000.

Resolution: The Church Council moves that funds of approximately \$21,300 be drawn from the 2024 Endowment Fund income to cover the General Budget deficit and to bring the parsonage reserve back to a zero balance. Council stipulates that the withdrawal would tap only 2024 interest income and would not withdraw any of the principal.

2025 Proposed Budget: See right hand column on pp. 22-24

Proposed Bethel Sabbatical Policy

PURPOSE

A sabbatical leave is an extended period, often one month, for study, spiritual growth, skill development, research, refreshment, and renewal for the purpose of enrichment for continued service in the same ministry setting.

The distinct benefits of a sabbatical are twofold:

- a. The mission of the congregation benefits from the rostered person who returns to ministry with new experiences and abilities, as well as being refreshed and renewed.
- b. The rostered person benefits from the personal and spiritual growth and renewal that comes from participation in an intentionally structured time away.

A sabbatical leave is not a time to do similar professional work in another setting nor is it an extended vacation. The word sabbatical has its roots in the biblical concept of Sabbath (“to rest” or “to cease”). It is a time to be refreshed in body, mind, and spirit and to deepen one’s relationship with God.

ELIGIBILITY

The rostered person must be serving in the ministry site for five years prior to the start of the approved sabbatical leave and may be eligible for a second sabbatical every five years thereafter.

Additionally, sabbatical duration can be negotiated with the Congregation Council, one additional year of service for one additional month of sabbatical leave, for a maximum of seven years of service for three months of sabbatical leave.

The rostered person covenants/promises not to pursue, seek, or accept another Call or position for a minimum of one year following the sabbatical.

COSTS OF THE SABBATICAL

The congregation continues to pay the full salary and benefits for the rostered person who is on sabbatical leave. Accrued continuing education dollars can be used for educational costs of the sabbatical.

Vacation time (normally a minimum of four weeks annually) is NOT included in the sabbatical leave. Continuing Education (normally a minimum of two weeks annually) is counted as part of the sabbatical in the year in which the sabbatical is granted (unless otherwise negotiated and approved by the congregation).

The cost of providing an ongoing ministry during the rostered person’s absence is the responsibility of the congregation. Other costs of the sabbatical are the responsibility of the rostered person. The rostered person is encouraged to seek grants (e.g. the Lilly Foundation), scholarships or other means to defray the cost of research, education or other study.

It is strongly recommended that the congregation place \$500-\$1000 per year into a Sabbatical Leave fund to be used to offset costs of providing ministry during the sabbatical.

PLANNING

Proposed sabbatical leave is to be planned in consultation with the rostered leader and the Congregation Council at least 18 months prior to the sabbatical and submitted to the Congregation Council for approval at least 12 months prior to the sabbatical.

MINISTRY IN THE CONGREGATION DURING THE SABBATICAL

It shall be the responsibility of the rostered person, in cooperation with the parish staff and Congregation Council, to arrange for worship leadership (supply preachers), pastoral care, education, and special services (e.g. weddings and funerals) coverage during the sabbatical.

Rostered leaders and congregations are encouraged to be creative and collaborative with other congregations and this synod in providing coverage. Lay leaders, seminary students, and supply pastors could share in the role of providing pastoral leadership.

Congregations should be encouraged not to scale back or change their worship practices during the sabbatical.

Congregations should be encouraged to see the sabbatical period as a time of growth, renewal, and reflection for the church as well as the rostered person.

WHAT'S INVOLVED IN PLANNING A SABBATICAL?

Rostered persons shall define the areas where they are most in need of renewal (e.g. spiritual, professional, mental, emotional, social) and the types of activities that would be most renewing to them (e.g. retreat, study, family time, travel, writing). The best sabbaticals usually are more open-ended than rigid, allowing for growth and surprising new directions that may emerge.

Upon return from sabbatical, a written report shall be submitted to the Congregation Council; it is recommended that a report be given to the dean of the conference and the bishop's office. The report may cover what was done, who was met, what was read; what impact the experience had personally, including family, vocationally and congregationally; what went well and what was problematic in the sabbatical preparation, experience, or follow-up; what has been discovered about one's self or one's ministry; plans for applying the knowledge and experiences in the person's ministry upon return. In addition to the written report, it is important for the sabbatical recipient to provide an opportunity for the congregation to report about their learning experiences during the sabbatical time.

Resolution from Council to Approve the Sabbatical Policy

The Church Council moves that Bethel Lutheran Church Congregation approves the sabbatical policy presented at the annual congregational meeting on February 2, 2025.

Church Council Membership Summary and Elections

Council Roster for 2024:

2024 Member	First term	Second term	Membership Status
Linda Worthington	Feb 2021 - Jan 2023	Feb 2023 - Jan 2025	Leaving council Jan 2025
Lisa Siems	Feb 2021-Jan 2023	Feb 2023 - Jan 2025	Leaving council Jan 2025
Jackie Calder	Feb 2021-Jan 2023	Feb 2023 - Jan 2025	Leaving council Jan 2025
Jim VanDyke	Feb 2022 - Jan 2024	Feb 2024 - Jan 2026	One year 2 nd term remaining
Karen Anderson	Feb 2022-Jan 2024	Feb 2024 - Jan 2026	One year 2 nd term remaining
Ronda Bard	Feb 2022-Jan 2024	Feb 2024 - Jan 2026	One year 2 nd term remaining
Don Worthington	Feb 2023-Jan 2025		Eligible for second term
Miles Bard	Feb 2023-Jan 2025		Resigned 11.21.24
Robin Moody	Feb 2024-Jan 2026		One year 1 st term remaining
Pr. Leon LaCross	Ongoing member		Constitutionally mandated

Nominating committee approved by Council November 2024: Pastor Leon LaCross, Jim Van Dyke, JulieAnn Edman. Nominations from the Council appointed Nomination Committee to be announced.

Constitutional notes on Council membership: Council members serve two-year terms and may serve two consecutive terms. Members must be re-elected to serve a second term. Elected Council membership can be as few as eight and as high as twelve. The 2024 Council ended the year with eight elected members plus the pastor for a total of nine members.

