



# ANNUAL REPORT 2023



## ANNUAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING OPENING LITURGY

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

**And also with you.**

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

**Receive our prayer, O God.**

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

**Receive our prayer, O God.**

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

**Receive our prayer, O God.**

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

**Receive our prayer, O God.**

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

**Receive our prayer, O God.**

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

**Receive our prayer, O God.**

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

**Receive our prayer, O God.**

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

**Amen.**

### Son of God, Eternal Savior

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

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

you our head, who, thro'ed in glo - ry, for your own will ey - er plead;  
yours the gold and yours the sil - ver, yours the wealth of land and sea;  
By your pa - tent years of toil - ing, by your si - lent hours of pain,  
by your pray - ing, by your will - ing that your peo - ple should be one.

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

Evangelical Lutheran Worship, 655  
Text: Somerset C. Lowry  
Music: N. BABELONE, Oude en Nieuwe Hollandse Boerenliedjes en Contradanssen, 1710;  
arr. Julius Röttinger  
Text and music are in the public domain. May be reproduced without restriction.

## A MESSAGE FROM PRESIDING BISHOP ELIZABETH EATON



Dear friends in Christ,

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

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

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

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

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

*Elizabeth A. Eaton*

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

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



January 3, 2024

New Year's Greetings to you who are part of the Body of Christ in the Montana/N. Wyoming Synod, ELCA! Welcome to 2024!

As I reviewed my annual report letters from the previous four years, I noticed a common theme – Change! Transition! Adapt! I'm guessing some of you are getting tired of all the talk about change and calls to adapt, and would just appreciate some stability right now. Others of you may be hoping and praying for more change or at least certain kinds of change to come to your lives, your congregation, your community, this nation and even the world. I know I am praying for a transformation from relentless violence and polarization to persistent peace and collaboration across all of human society.

And yet change is upon us whether we want it or not. We can't escape change because to live is to go through change, many changes in fact. So as much as we may wish for stability, our lives as individuals, church and world are changing.

One thing we often forget, though, is that we do have some choice in how things change and that God is constantly active in the change, working toward the new life given in Jesus Christ no matter how much we resist in our bondage to sin. We can choose how we approach change – in faith rather than fear – and we can choose to follow the lead of God's Spirit of Love rather than the hate-filled voices of anger that want to keep us fighting with one another.

In our gospel lesson from John for the second Sunday of Epiphany, Jesus says to Philip, "Follow me" and Philip says to Nathanael, "Come and See." What if during 2024, we as followers of Christ deliberately practiced these two phrases? What if we intentionally sought out ways of coming to see what God is up to in our churches and communities? What if we purposely sought out old and new ways to follow Jesus in our lives of faith and works of love?

What would you and your congregation do first and then next? And what are ways that we as the Synod equip each other in the ministry of the gospel as we "walk the way together" across Montana and Northern Wyoming?

One guide might be the "Vision, Calling and Values" Statement for the Synod which I introduced at the 2023 Synod Assembly. Here they are again:

Montana/N. Wyoming Synod: Vision, Calling, Values  
"...to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ... (Eph 4:12)  
(Please see the video Bible study on this text on the Montana Synod website [www.montanasynd.org](http://www.montanasynd.org))

**Vision**

A Montana/N Wyoming Synod who is continuously building up and equipping one another for the ministry of the Gospel of Jesus Christ in people's lives, their communities, the synod, the wider church and God's world.

**Calling**

Equipping the followers of Christ of the Montana/N Wyoming Synod for ministry of:

- 1) Building Up the Body of Christ; AND
- 2) Living Christ's Love into the World

**Values**

- 1. Proclaiming the Good News of Jesus Christ's Grace and Love for All
- 2. Engaging in God's Justice for the World, especially the "least of these" (Mt 25)
- 3. "Walking Humbly with God" in all we do and say (Micah 6:8)
- 4. Pursuing "Unity in Harmony with Diversity" across church and community
- 5. Promoting Relationships and Collaboration across the synod and wider church


How can we as individuals, congregations and a synod put these into practice in various ways in our particular contexts? How can we support one another in this work of equipping through sharing our time, prayers, energy, and resources?

Over the next 12 months there will be changes coming to the synod including opportunities to participate in equipping one another for ministry. One example is the Montana Synod Assembly, held May 31-June 1, 2024 in Billings, during which we will explore together the theme "Equipping for Doing Justice." Other changes will include the arrival of a new Director for Evangelical Mission, some upgrades to the LPA program, and more resources for discerning as a congregation where God may be calling you to go in the future as well as what it looks like to do a Holy Closure of a congregation in a healthy, legacy-leaving way.

As we consider what God has in mind for us in 2024, I want to take this opportunity to say "Thank You!" for the ongoing generosity many of you have shown through your mission support and other gifts you have been willing and able to share. These gifts are deeply appreciated! As you are exploring your own financial realities for the coming year, I invite you to consider increasing your support as you are able in the service of the Christ's ministry across the synod.

May God bless you with the faith, hope, and love of Christ during 2024!

In Christ's Love,

  
Rev. Laurie Jungling  
Bishop, Montana/N. Wyoming Synod



Peace Lutheran Church  
1301 Avenue D  
Billings, MT 59102  
406.252.5504  
peaceoffice1301@gmail.com

January 2024

People of Peace,

Believe it or not, another year has come and gone. As I look back over the last year of our life together as people of God, I do so with joy and sorrow. There have been monumental highs and rather deep lows as well.

First the joys- the Peace Lutheran Food Pantry started the year in a financially shaky position. However, through a strong response of both individual donations and support from other congregations in Billings, the Food Pantry is as strong as ever. This in the face of over 2000 visitors in 2023. (See the Mission and Service Report for more details!)

We again had almost as many baptisms as funerals- maybe this isn't the best metric to use, but it's such a joy to bring children into faith through worship and service. And don't forget that Vanessa is doing amazing things with Peace Pals and Peace Youth. Check out her report and the great graphs she used to visualize participation in youth events. Who could forget the excellent Christmas Program put on by the kids?

Congregational fellowship seems to be recovering after the heights of COVID. Saturday evenings, there is a group of folks who sit and visit before worship begins. Our coffee hour after worship on Sundays has seen more participants since we moved that back to the fellowship hall. Our Lutefisk Dinner, Consecration Brunch, and Peace in the Park meals were all energetic and joyful occasions.

There are so many other good things that have happened- too many to name here. As you read through this booklet, see how many positives you can find!

A congregation of the **Evangelical Lutheran Church in America**

Along with the joys, there have been moments of difficulty and sorrow as well. We lost a handful of well-loved congregation members to death- and all at around the same time! The funerals were beautiful services filled with reflection and hope for the resurrection, but even with that joy, the sting of death and the holes in our lives left by the deceased can be painful.

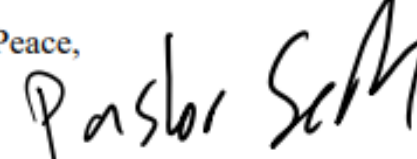
A major concern of the council at this moment is the budget deficit we drew in 2023. Many of the expenses we incurred were expected, with replacement of 4 air conditioners, updates to some of our electrical infrastructure, and modernizing the church office with new carpet, desk, and furnishings. Even with those expenses, there is worry that we need to be more fiscally conservative in the new year. This anxiety may flare up in the annual meeting, and if it does, I trust we will work together to find responsible paths forward.

Finally, another difficult spot at the moment is the vacancy in our main office. With Dean departing early in 2023 and Sue resigning after 10 months as Office Manager, there is some uncertainty as to how best to fill the vacancy. This is especially challenging, given Deans long tenure in the position and the belovedness with which this congregation approached Sue.

In both joy and sorrow, we have God's promise to be with us: "do not fear, for I am with you; do not be afraid, for I am your God; I will strengthen you; I will help you; I will uphold you with my victorious right hand." (Isaiah 41:10) If there's one thing that characterizes Peace, it is trust in God's promises. Not just in 2023, but over the course of the life of this congregation, time and time again we have fallen into the infinite grace of God and trusted not only in our faith, but in the faithfulness of God to God's promises.

I can only expect more of the same in 2024. There will ups. There will be downs. God will lead us through it all.

Thanks be to God!

Peace,  
  
Pastor Seth

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**PEACE LUTHERAN CHURCH ANNUAL MEETING 2023  
AGENDA**

1. Opening Devotion
2. Approval of Agenda
3. Approval of Annual Meeting 2022 Minutes
4. Treasurer's Report
5. Elections
6. Staff, Council, and Committee Reports
7. Old Business
8. New Business
  - i. Building Fund Motion
9. 2024 Budget Approval
10. Closing Prayer and Hymn
11. Next Annual Meeting
  - i. January 26, 2025, After Worship



1301 Avenue D  
 Billings, Montana 59102  
 406.252.5504  
[peaceoffice1301@gmail.com](mailto:peaceoffice1301@gmail.com)

Pastor Seth Rumage 1929 Custer Ave 59102 406-298-2672  
 Office Manager Sue Vigesaa 1621 Judd Circle, 59102 406-861-1140  
 Youth Director Vanessa Steiger 1605 Avenue E, Unit 6 59102 406-698-5576

**Church Council 2023**

PASTOR: Seth Rumage  
 PRESIDENT: Jeff Murray VICE PRESIDENT: Julie Draeger  
 SECRETARY: Wendy Goodheart

**COMMITTEES**

Abundant Life.....Clarice Beery, Bob Peterson  
 Congregational Life.....Molly Johnson, Jeff Murray  
 Executive.....Julie Draeger, Wendy Goodheart, Jeff Murray, Seth Rumage  
 Education/Youth.....Lisa Donovan, Jody Pierce  
 Finance.....Steve Frank  
 Mission & Service.....Ann Barsness  
 Mutual Ministry.....Bob Peterson  
 Personnel.....Bob Bakko, Lisa Donovan  
 Property.....Jeff Murray  
 Scholarship.....Wendy Goodheart  
 Worship.....Ann Barsness, Julie Draeger, Wendy Goodheart

Name	Address	Phone	Term up	# Terms
Bob Bakko	4147 Wells Place, 59106	406-860-2233	2024	1
Ann Barsness	1433 Ave E, 59102	406-839-0760	2023	1
Clarice Beery	2801 Radious Circle, 59102	406-839-0720	2024	1
Donovan, Lisa	2410 Green Valley Dr., 59102	406-690-4669	2024	1
Draeger, Julie	2540 Woody Dr., 59102	406-471-3932	2024	2
Goodheart, Wendy	1312 Twin Lakes Dr., 59105	406-670-5471	2023	1
Johnson, Molly	940 Bluegrass Dr. E., 59106	406-860-6495	2024	1
Murray, Jeff	2814 Oakland Dr. #33, 59102	406-656-9166	2023	1
Peterson, Bob	1921 Wyndham Park Dr., 59102	406-855-9895	2023	1
Pierce, Jody	3611 Donna Dr., 59102	406-245-9936	2023	1

**Email Addresses**

Bob Bakko: [dr.bobbakko@cpcc@gmail.com](mailto:dr.bobbakko@cpcc@gmail.com)  
 Clarice Beery: No email, use text  
 Julie Draeger: [julie.draeger@icloud.com](mailto:julie.draeger@icloud.com)  
 Molly Johnson: [m64johnson@gmail.com](mailto:m64johnson@gmail.com)  
 Bob Peterson: [bobsyl@bresnan.net](mailto:bobsyl@bresnan.net)  
 Seth Rumage: [PastorRumage@gmail.com](mailto:PastorRumage@gmail.com)  
 Sue Vigesaa: [susan.vigesaa@gmail.com](mailto:susan.vigesaa@gmail.com)  
 Ann Barsness: [aandbarsness@outlook.com](mailto:aandbarsness@outlook.com)  
 Lisa Donovan: [lisadonovan14@hotmail.com](mailto:lisadonovan14@hotmail.com)  
 Wendy Goodheart: [bellairwendy@yahoo.com](mailto:bellairwendy@yahoo.com)  
 Jeff Murray: [jeffreymurray@yahoo.com](mailto:jeffreymurray@yahoo.com)  
 Jody Pierce: [bjppierce@hotmail.com](mailto:bjppierce@hotmail.com)  
 Vanessa Steiger: [peacelcyouth@gmail.com](mailto:peacelcyouth@gmail.com)

**OTHER BOARDS AND COMMITTEES**

		Term up
St John's Ministries	Rhonda Sappington	2023
	Holli Miller	2024
Christikon	Mike Brown	2023
	Lois Gorseth	2024
	Katrina Rumage	2025
Lutheran Center	Pastor Seth	2024
	Rhonda Heidner	2024
Shepherd Cluster	Joan Brown	2024
	Deb Sider	2024
Endowment Trustee	Dean Welliever	2024
	Bernie Mason	2024
	Rhonda Heidner	2024
	Dave Draeger	2025
	Melissa Sider	2025
Synod Assembly	Clarice Beery	2023
	Connie Hausauer	2023
Mutual Ministry Committee	Mike Brown	2025
	Holli Miller	2025
	Chuck Sider	2025
	Bob Peterson	2025
	Sharon Schatzke	2025
Nominating Committee	Dewey Anderson	2023
	Steve Frank	2023
	Rhonda Sappington	2023

PEACE LUTHERAN CHURCH ANNUAL MEETING  
In Person & Via Zoom  
January 29, 2023

**Attendance:** List of people attending the 2022 Annual Meeting available at the church office. A quorum of 58 people was reached.

**Call to Order:** Council President Wendy Goodheart called the meeting to order at 11:28 am.

**Devotions:** Hymn – Spirit of God, Descend Upon My Heart

**Approval of the Agenda:**

Wendy Goodheart presented the agenda for the 2022 Annual Meeting and asked that the agenda be amended by moving the Hymn from the Closing Prayer and Hymn to Devotions at the beginning of Annual Meeting. A motion was made by Molly Johnson, seconded by Rhonda Sappington, to approve the agenda as amended. Motion carried.

**Approval of the 2021 Annual Meeting Minutes:**

The minutes of the 2021 Annual Meeting, held January 23, 2022, are included in the annual report, pgs. 11-12. A motion was made by Melissa Sider, seconded by Danny Quanbeck, to approve the 2021 Annual Meeting minutes as presented. Motion carried.

Included in the annual report, pg.13, are the minutes from the Special Congregational Meeting held April 3, 2022, in person and via Zoom, to extend a Pastoral Call. A motion was made by Melissa Sider, seconded by Lisa Donovan, to approve the Special Congregational Meeting minutes from April 3, 2022, for extending a Pastoral Call to Pastor Seth Ramage. Motion carried.

**Treasurer's Report:**

Steve Frank presented the 2022 financials, pgs. 36-37, reporting total Unrestricted Offering Revenues of \$269,150.66, with total Expenses of \$251,779.73 for a Net Income of \$18,360.53 for the 2022 year. The budget overage in the category Congregational Life is because of the moving expenses to Montana from Idaho paid for Pastor Seth and his family. The budget overage in Abundant Life is from a 3-year renewal for our Peace Web Site versus a yearly renewal, saving us a considerable amount. With no further discussion, a motion was made by Bob Peterson, seconded by Rhonda Sappington, to approve the Treasurer's 2022 Yearly report submitted by Steve Frank. Motion carried.

**Elections:** The Nominating Committee presented the following ballot -

**Council:**

There are 6 two-year positions being nominated to serve on the council; Bob Bakko, Clarice Beery, Lisa Donovan, Julie Draeger, Molly Johnson and Sue Vigesaa have agreed to serve a two-year term on the council. Ann Barsness has agreed to serve a one-year term on the council. There were no additional nominations from the floor.

**Board & Committees:** The following names are presented as Committee Members:

St. John's Ministries) 2-Year Term; Holli Miller  
Christikon) 3-Year Term; Katrina Ramage  
Luther's Lodge) 2-Year Term; Pastor Seth Ramage, Rhonda Heidner  
Endowment Committee) 3-Year Term; Dave Draeger, Melissa Sider  
Shepherd Cluster) 2-Year Term; Joan Brown, Deb Sider  
Synod Assembly) 1-Year Term; Connie Hausauer, Clarice Beery  
Nominating Committee) 3 nominees from the floor, Dewey Anderson, Steve Frank, Rhonda Sappington and 2 outgoing council members (none of whom served on the 2022 nominating committee)  
Mutual Ministry Committee); Mike Brown, Holli Miller, Bob Peterson, Sharon Schatzke, Chuck Sider

A motion was made by Lone Bloom, seconded by Rhonda Heidner, to accept the voting ballot as presented.

Motion carried.

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Peace Lutheran Church 2023 Annual Report

**Staff, Council, and Committee Reports:**

\*President Wendy Goodheart expressed how great it is to be back together in person as a congregation, celebrating our church community at Peace Lutheran.

\*Bernie Mason presented data on how busy our Food Pantry has become in the last two-three months. Cash donations are always wonderful, greatly appreciated and food items as well. Also needed are grocery bags to be used by people taking food home.

\*Holli Miller asked everyone to look at the Congregational Life Committee board outside of the sanctuary which details the monthly serving committees. Please indicate any changes you might need to make on the board and contact me or anyone on the Congregational Life Committee for more information.

\*Pastor Seth Ramage highlighted some of the information contained in his written report, pgs. 14-15 of the Annual Report. Pastor Seth and his family came to Peace Lutheran in May of 2022, the Beginning of Something Beautiful. The new council will have a retreat in early 2023 that focuses specifically on short-, medium- and long-term planning in our ministry and on finances. We will be talking all year long about stewardship, financial giving, time, energy. This congregation is really great at moving this way already. Let's just fine tune some things, and find ways to do what we are doing, even better. We are working in the office to gather updated information from our members that will help us make corrections on our membership list and a new church directory. Pastor Seth highlighted information on financial resources assistance available through the ELCA to help Peace move forward with some much-needed building maintenance. We could also look at additions/changes to the church proper that could improve our ministry in our community and to each other. I am so excited to be casting a vision for Peace Lutheran.

**Old Business:**

None

**New Business:**

1. Peace Lutheran Gun Safety Policy, pgs. 23-24 – This has already been approved by the Council.  
2. Peace Lutheran Gift Acceptance Policy, pgs. 25-29 – This is a relatively new policy developed by Pastor Seth, Steve Frank and Jeff Murray. This policy is designed for the purpose of outlining what types of property may be considered as gifts for supporting God's church above and beyond mission support and how decisions are made for their use. A discussion on definition of gifts, the dollar value of said gifts, the title amount Peace Lutheran will make on these gifts (30% of substantial gifts will go toward the mission of the church), and where that title amount goes, provided valuable information on the intent of the new Gift Policy. We also discussed what would be needed to change a continuing resolution if that was necessary, however, nothing in the Gift Policy contradict the Peace Lutheran Church constitution. With no further discussion needed, a motion was made by Muriel Overstreet, seconded by Holli Miller, to accept the Peace Lutheran Gift Acceptance Policy. Motion carried.

**Approval of Budget:**

Steve Frank presented the proposed budget for 2023, pgs. 34-35. Of note is the Church Maintenance line increase, which is because of air condition unit upgrades needed. It was noted that Lawn Care and Snow Removal is budgeted under Service Agreements. A motion was made by Melissa Sider, seconded by Bryan Peterson, to combine the Office Manager Insurance Offset budget line item with the Office Manager Pension budget line item, titling the new budget line item as Office Manager Pension & Medical and combining the funds to reflect the line item changes. After some discussion for clarification, motion carried. A motion was made by Julie Draeger, seconded by Melissa Sider, to increase the 2023 raise for the Youth Director from 3% to 5%, making the Youth Director Salary on the 2023 budget \$28,131.00 and the Youth Director Pension & Medical on the budget \$8,526.00. Motion carried. A motion was made by Julie Draeger, seconded by Melissa Sider, to change the Auto/Pastoral line item on the budget to Auto/Staff. Motion carried. The idea to hire a Van Driver for the church van was brought up and after some discussion on why a driver is needed, a motion was made by Sylvia Peterson, seconded by Melissa Sider, to have the Abundant Life Committee research the need for this action, bringing their findings to the council for discussion, after which the item would be brought to the congregation. Motion carried. With no further budget discussion being brought forward, a motion was made by Tony Pecarina, seconded by Rhonda Sappington, to approve the 2023 budget as amended. Motion carried.

**Closing Prayer:**

The meeting was closed with the prayer printed on page 2 of the 2022 Annual Report, led by Council President, Wendy Goodheart.

**Motion to Adjourn:**

A motion was made by Tony Pecarina, seconded by Lisa Donovan, to adjourn the Peace Lutheran Church 2022 Annual Meeting at 12:37 pm. Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted, Linda Strosky, Council Secretary

Peace Lutheran Church 2023 Annual Report

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## COUNCIL PRESIDENT'S REPORT

In 2023, Peace Lutheran Church celebrated a year of achievements centered on rejoicing, renewing, and reaching out. The food pantry played a crucial role in renewing the commitment to local service, addressing hunger and insecurity. Vibrant youth programs (Refuel, etc.) successfully reached out to younger members, fostering spiritual growth and community engagement. Additionally, the annual Lutefish dinner brought the community together, adding a festive touch to the year's accomplishments. The church's dedication to these efforts showcased resilience, unity, and impactful contributions, making 2023 a memorable year for Peace Lutheran.

Submitted by Jeff Murray, Council President

## PASTOR'S REPORT

**Pastoral Duties 2023**

Worships- 110  
Pastoral Visits- 127  
Adult Education- 56  
Meetings- 128  
Text Studies- 31  
Community Events- 28  
Baptisms- 5  
Funerals- 6  
Weddings- 0

**Baptisms in 2023**

Aubrey Anne McGough  
Richard Martin Hereim<sup>1</sup>  
Olen Louis Suek  
Inno Frederick Suek  
Zoey Faith Quanbeck  
<sup>1</sup> indicates baptism was held at site other than Peace

**Funerals in 2023**

Mykel Stockton<sup>1</sup>  
Richard Hereim<sup>1</sup>  
Khyl Thomson  
Stanley Martin  
LeRoy Gross  
Marge Peterson  
<sup>1</sup> indicates funeral was held at site other than Peace

**Building Deeper Relationships**

The last twelve months have been marked by building deeper relationships. I have gotten to know Peace and its people on more intimate levels, and you have learned more about me and my family. I've invested time in connecting with my colleagues here in Billings, as well as pastors, LPAs, and lay leadership throughout the Montana Synod. I've also had many chances to meet ministry partners in the area, both organizations that are faith-aligned and those that are more secular.

Pastoral ministry is at its core about fostering strong relationships in congregation, community, and world. I have been honored to be welcomed into this congregation, into your homes and lives, and into stronger relationships with many others who are working diligently to participate in the Kingdom God is building on earth.

**Council Retreat, Formation of New Committees**

The Peace Lutheran Congregational Council held a retreat at St. John's United on May 12 & 13 of 2023. We spent time worshipping and reflecting together on what holds us together as people of faith. We discussed trends at Peace regarding membership and giving, and compared those trends with nation-wide church, nonprofit, and volunteer organization trends. (Good news- comparatively, Peace is doing very well!) Though we did not make any commitments or decide on any action items at the retreat, we shared hopes and vision for what the future may hold for Peace Lutheran Church. Overall, this was a good experience for the council, as we got to know each other better and shared our hope for the future.

Also in early 2023, we instituted a Personnel Committee and Mutual Ministry Committee. Both these committees have helped and will continue to help the council and myself grow in areas of staff development, supervision skills, and building a culture of communication and wellbeing for staff and volunteers serving the congregation.

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Peace Lutheran Church 2023 Annual Report

**Bible/Book Studies and Adult Education**

Through the Autumn of 2023, we held a forum on Sundays after worship in which we highlighted many of the ministries we support financially and with volunteers. This forum led to excellent conversations between congregation members and our ministry partners about what the needs of our communities and world are, and how we can continue to support the ministries to whom we are connected.

Also through the year, Peace held its Thursday Morning Bible Study. In the first part of the year, we focused on the biblical books of 1 & 2 Peter, the three letters of John, as well as Jude. After the Summer break, we read through C.S. Lewis' work *The Screwtape Letters*. The conversations around these studies were powerful and enjoyable. I do not think I am alone when I say these studies were very meaningful to me, and I feel closer to the people I have worked through these readings with. Starting in January of 2024, the Thursday morning group will begin a survey of the Hebrew Bible Prophets, using the book *The Message of the Prophets* by J. Daniel Hays. Join us at 9:00 am on Thursdays in the Fellowship Hall! Bring your Bible, curiosity, and a willingness to learn!

**Staffing**

On the top of many minds at this moment is the turnover we have had in the position of Office Manager. After nearly 20 years, Dean Jensen retired at the beginning of 2023. Sue Vigesaa stepped in to that role in February, and resigned her position at the end of the year. We are grateful for both Dean and Sue, in their diligent service to this congregation. Currently, the council is considering what the needs of that role are, and how we can fill the position of Office Manager to help whoever we hire next to have a long, happy, successful time in their occupancy of that appointment. Vanessa and I continue to carry the joys and responsibilities of our jobs here at Peace. We are thankful for the congregation's support of our work, and look forward to continuing to serve Peace with an eye toward how we can grow our ministry areas in 2024.

**Ministries**

The committees overseeing various ministries at Peace will have their chance to share in their own words how they have contributed to the mission of Peace Lutheran Church. A few areas I would like to highlight include the resumption of hosting Family Promise families in our building, the continued growth and community support of our Food Pantry, and Vanessa's work developing the Youth Program. These are only a few of our many ministries, which all do amazing work in guiding the congregation in following its mission to the world and the Body of Christ. There are too many individual people to mention here, so I'll simply share a word of thanks to everyone at Peace. Whether you volunteer on five committees and spend 10 hours a week at the church, whether schedule restraints mean you can only attend worship and give financially to the congregation, whether your strictures mean you aren't able to participate financially or as a volunteer, every person who darkens the doorstep of Peace Lutheran church has a vital role in this place. Thank you for the ways you support the ministries of Peace. Your love, sacrifice, offerings of time and talent, and presence are a God-given gift to this community of faith.

**Conclusion**

I cannot put to words how much I love and enjoy serving Peace Lutheran and you all. Thank you for the opportunity to grow with you. I cannot wait to see how God continues to call us to be the Body of Christ to each other and the world.

Peace,

*Pastor Seth*

Peace Lutheran Church 2023 Annual Report

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## ABUNDANT LIFE COMMITTEE

The Abundant Life Committee is a combination of stewardship and evangelism. The committee leads the congregation in witnessing ways of sharing our time, talents, finances, and gifts for the glory of God.

We had Temple Talks by the church committees for Lent. The hope we had for this was to get more people involved in the committees, along with raising awareness of what people are doing in the church. The committee also organized helping with one of the St. John's summer concerts.

For Stewardship, we had a single front-and-back sheet for church members to sign up for sharing their time, talents, and finances. Then to finish off the stewardship drive, we had the Director of Evangelical Mission from the Synod, along with the Synod Treasurer, speak at the consecration brunch.

Our committee members also visited a few church members.

Things we are working on for the next year: Getting the bus to pick up people for worship. Organizing to visit more church members, along with taking them communion.

Committee members-- Bob Peterson, Mike Brown, Pastor Seth, Rhonda Sappington, Danny Quanbeck, Sue Vigasaa.

In Christ,  
Danny Quanbeck

## 2023 ALTAR GUILD FINANCIAL REPORT

<b>Balance from Dec. 31, 2022 Report</b>	<b>\$4937.38</b>
<b>Income</b>	
<u>Memorial donations from 1/2023 – 11/2023</u>	
Donna Bangert	500.00
<b>Expenses &amp; Disbursements</b>	
Altar Guild Candles	25.62
<b>Ending Balance</b>	
Report balanced to 11/30/23 Statement	<b>\$5411.76</b>
<b>Breakdown of ending balance</b>	
Altar Guild Funds	\$ 1966.44
Memorial Funds	3445.32
Total	\$ 5411.76

Future Disbursements include \$2500 from the Memorial fund for the new piano and the purchase of a new Christmas tree for the sanctuary will be taken from the Altar Guild funds.

Submitted by Molly Johnson

## CONGREGATIONAL LIFE COMMITTEE

### 1 John 1:3

*That which we have seen and heard we proclaim also to you, so that you too may have fellowship with us; and indeed, our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ.*

The Congregational Life Committee has the responsibility of planning and providing events for fellowship among the members of our congregation and in our community. These opportunities hope to nourish and strengthen the fellowship with God and Jesus. Over the past year these events included the following:

Annual meeting potluck	Coffee hour fellowship
Fat Tuesday pancake dinner	Lenten soup suppers
Easter continental breakfast	Graduation reception
Peace in the Park Barbeque	Rally Day participation
Lutefisk Dinner	Consecration Sunday Brunch
Caroling	Helping as needed with Refuel Meal

The committee's duties also included developing and supporting the monthly serving committees, stocking the kitchen with needed supplies (thank you to Ione Bloom for her time in this area) and updating member information for a church directory (thank you to Melissa Sider and Rhonda Sappington).

New this year was the development of the Young Parent/Family Group. This group offers bi-monthly gatherings for young families to enjoy a meal, have fellowship and establish relationships with each other. Childcare is provided. A special thank you to Katrina Ramage for planning and organizing this wonderful group.

Overall, it was a busy, blessed year for the Congregational Life Committee. Thank you to the members: Molly Johnson, Debbie Sider, Jeff Murray, Melissa Sider, Joan Brown, Ione Bloom, and Pastor Seth.

The committee would like to thank the members of Peace for participating in and supporting congregational fellowship.

Blessings,  
Holly Miller, Committee Chair

## ENDOWMENT COMMITTEE

The Endowment Committee uses the prior year's income to form decisions. The Endowment realized \$5160.04 in income for 2022. 2256.04 was net income from Dividends and Interest in the Investment Account and 2904.00 in Interest from a gifted Contract for Deed. Here is a list of how we disbursed funds last year:

Peace Lutheran Church General Fund	\$500
Peace Lutheran Youth Scholarship	\$500
Brekke/Bummer Chrisikon Staff Endowment Fund	\$500
CASA	\$500
Family Promise	\$500
Meals on Wheels	\$500
Lutheran World Relief	\$500
Rocky Boy Lutheran	\$500
Reinvested in Endowment Trust	\$1002.66

Thank You to Bernie Mason and Rhonda Heidner for serving. Their terms expire at the Annual Meeting.  
Dean Welliever, Chair

## MISSION & SERVICE COMMITTEE

As part of the **Reaching Out** portion of Peace's Mission Statement, the Mission and Service Committee identifies and provides opportunities for Peace members to serve others, doing **God's Work with Our Hands**. The Bible says: *"And do not forget to do good and to share with others, for with such sacrifices God is pleased."* Hebrews 13:16. Thank you to all members for your continued willingness to demonstrate your faith in this way.

The congregation of Peace Lutheran Church did a wonderful job of serving our brothers and sisters in Christ. 2023 Reaching Out included:

**Food Pantry:** Supplied and distributed 29,356 pounds of food with 1626 volunteer hours. The Pantry saw 2063 visitors and served a total of 6034 in need.

**All Congregation Days of Service:** During two days of service and for a total of 65 volunteer hours:

Donated supplies (bread donated by Franz Bakeries) and made 780 sandwiches for distribution by the Salvation Army.

**Family Promise:** Family Promise was finally able to transition to host sites at the end of 2023. Until the transition to host sites occurred, the Peace congregation continued to supply meals during our support weeks and monetary donations. We were also host participants with onsite support for our last support dates of October 2023. Family promise was also supported with a \$134.00 donation through the Rally Sunday dunking booth.

**Promoted monetary donations** locally, nationally and globally through Souper Bowl of Caring (\$503.00), Lenten offerings, Buck A Chick (\$551.54) and shipment of quilts. Lenten offerings supported the following causes:

Lutheran World Relief-	\$625.00
Family Service-	\$780.00
Meals on Wheels-	\$849.50
Christikon-	\$566.00
Amani for Africa-	\$275.00
Luther Lodge-	\$436.00

**Family Service Backpacks:** Assembled school backpacks for distribution for a total of 39 volunteer hours.

**Adopt a Teacher:** Peace congregational members were able to assist teachers in setting up their classrooms at Highlands Elementary School. Six hours of time were donated by congregational members.

**Thanksgiving Dinner Boxes:** Donated meal items, assembled and delivered Thanksgiving Dinner boxes to 16 families. Due to the generosity of the congregation, grocery and gas gift cards were included for each dinner box recipient.

**In As Much Tree:** Our congregation generously adopted two families from Family Promise.

**Thank you** to the Peace members who spent approximately 1632 hours in service **Reaching Out**, doing **God's Work with Their Hands**. We pray that we continue to recognize those in need and to seek opportunities to serve in God's name. The Mission and Service Committee meets on a day to be determined of odd numbered months at 12:30PM at the church. New members and ideas are always welcome. Committee members for 2023 were: Pastor Ramage, Paula Jackson, Ann and Erl Barsness, Linda and Paul Strosky, Nancy Taylor, Rich Robbins, Barb and Rick Olson, and Bryan Peterson.

Submitted by Bryan Peterson, Former Committee Chair

## PEACE QUILTERS

The quilters of Peace usually met 3 times a month through 2023, including most of the summer months. One hundred quilts were sewn and sent to Lutheran World Relief in May. Four graduating seniors were given quilts as a graduation gift and two special quilts were sewn, quilted and donated to the Christikon spring auction. More quilts have been assembled since the shipping in May which will be ready for shipping in May 2024. There are usually 7 – 12 women who gather at 9:00 – 12:00 Wednesday mornings to assemble the quilts and enjoy a coffee break mid-morning. More willing hands are always welcome.

## PROPERTY COMMITTEE

The Property Committee took care of many aging, failing, and maintenance issues this year. We worked with various companies to get reduced costs as much as possible. The asterisked (\*) items signify reduced costs from the company. Gutters\* were replaced on the sanctuary as well as the full alley of the church to direct water further away from the building to avoid seeping in the basement. The youth room, office, and two class rooms downstairs were painted\*, new blinds were hung. We replaced the office desk\* which was broken in several places as well as recarpeted\* the office. The worship computers\* were replaced with a single computer to streamline streaming and clicking through the PowerPoints. As our office copier was no longer feeding paper well, it was replaced with a newer one which will save the church approximately \$700/year in its operation. We upgraded the wireless\* in the office and improved internet speed\*. New air conditioning units\* were installed as there was one that completely failed and the other three were near failure. The old food pantry room was fixed where the hole for a utility line was leaking around the concrete\*, mold remediation and re-Sheetrocking and painting was completed. The new food pantry room was fixed where there was additional seepage around the window\*. Sound system upgrades were completed (though bumpy) as the amp was beginning to fail\*. We purchased and painted a new shed\* to store our Nativity and other outdoor items. The worship service availability in the nursery was restored. We added a light to the stairs going to the basement, replaced the outdoor light for the lot, and had the electricians verify and fix other electrical issues in the church. While it was an expensive year for maintaining and replacing property items, we worked to ensure the safety, security, and longevity of our building and grounds. Thank you for your support.

Respectfully submitted,  
Tony Pecarina – Property Committee Chair (retired)

## WORSHIP COMMITTEE

The Worship Committee serves the congregation of Peace Lutheran Church in Billings, Montana and its visitors through word, sacraments, and song. The congregation worshipped every Saturday and Sunday in person, via Facebook, the Peace Website, and Channel 7 TV. We were led by Pastor Seth Ramage, guest preachers Retired Pastor Kim Wilker, Youth Director, and lay leaders. Youth Director Vanessa Steiger, and Office Managers Sue Vigessa and Dean Jenson also deserve a huge thank you for their part in making worship available online and ministering through slide show visuals. All are a blessing to our congregation and will always be the reason that worship continued with this year with reverence to our Lord.

We used the Revised Common Lectionary for the entire year. Multiple Liturgies were celebrated for worship. Those included several from the ELW, Holden Evening Prayer, Country Gospel, and Third Rock from the Son. Lent gave an opportunity to hear short vignettes from our Committee Chairs. Youth Director Vanessa led worship once a quarter and her band of merry youth leading liturgy and portions of the service. Vanessa also provided the sermon for most of the Youth Weekends. A highlight was a live Christmas Program that Vanessa planned with the help of her committee, other volunteers, and the kids. Parts of the liturgy from Holden Evening were sung by the middle school girls. Keyboardist Sue Vigessa organized and rehearsed these budding worship assistants for preparation of the Christmas Program. The Holden Evening Service was every Wednesday during Advent. Pastor Seth, Katrina Ramage, Wendy Goodheart, Ann Barsness, Dave Draeger, Molly Johnson, and I led this beloved liturgy. Dave and I led Holden from January to May. The congregation worshipped with Compline Evening Service through May led by siblings John Goodheart and Wendy Goodheart. We planned to worship outside one weekend in August, but the heat won over (again). So we brought the service into the sanctuary. Praise the Lord for these services, leaders, and congregation for our worship.

We continued to be blessed with other faithful worship leaders and members. Those who served as worship assistants, lectors, keyboardists, organists, musicians, ushers, communion assistants, power point assistants, and camera operators are ever faithful and always appreciated. Bells of Peace rang throughout the year and John Goodheart's band led us in Country Gospel and Third Rock on a regular basis. Members of his band included Pastor Seth, Molly Johnson, Paul Strosky, Wendy Goodheart, Justin Pierce, and Jacob Pierce. Also helping with Sunday Worship was Sue's family with a worship service she had planned. Bells of Peace Members included Linda Strosky, Sue Vigessa, Linda Popp, Debbie Hedrick, Rhonda Sappington, Wendy Goodheart, Lisa Donovan, Paula Jackson, Sherilyn Siegmund-Roach, and Geri Frasc. Sherilyn also played a solo on Advent Four Sunday on December 24. She played "O Come O Come Emmanuel". We thank each of these for their ability and want to provide such special gifts and their commitment, time, and service.

I will continue to be amazed with how this congregation steps up to the plate when asked. A new Keyboard was bought in November of 2023 and used for the first time on Christmas Weekend. We also continued to update and upgrade our Sound System in 2023. Thanks to all the donations and memorial funds for these needed items for worship.

On the final weekend of December 2023 this congregation said farewell to Sue Vigessa. Sue who led us in worship on the organ and keyboardist and the church office. We are sad to see her move on to a new job but grateful for her mission and service to our congregation. We pray that our hope and resilience with guide through 2024.

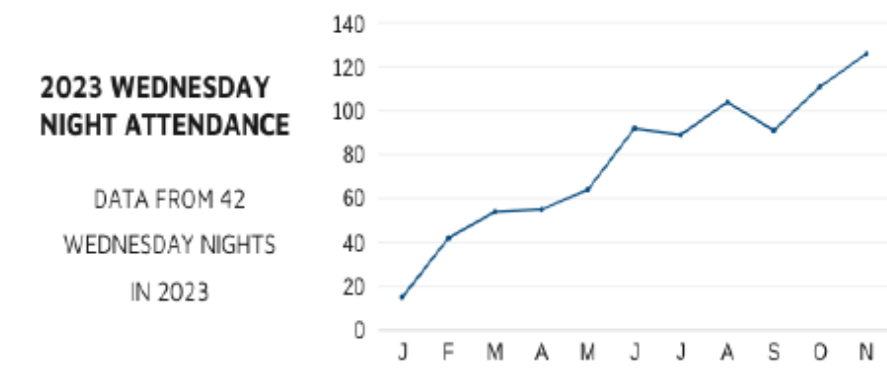
Peace, See you in worship,  
Julie Draeger, Worship Committee Chair

## YOUTH DIRECTOR REPORT- EDUCATION/YOUTH COMMITTEE

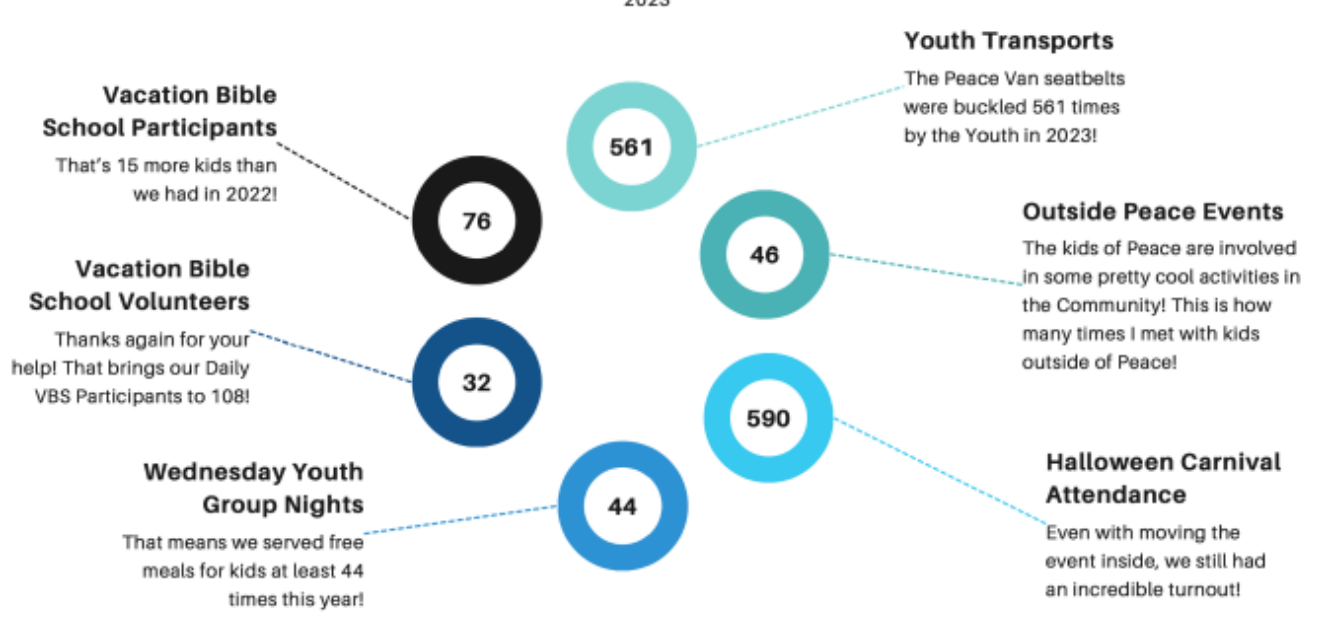
So much fun was had in the Youth Program in 2023. It seemed like every month, we were doing something awesome. Between Vacation Bible School, the Halloween Carnival, and Wednesday Night activities, we were pretty busy all year long.

Over the year, I've been keeping some statistics on a few things that I would like to share with you!

Wednesday Nights are definitely what we spend the most time on throughout the year. As long as I've been at Peace, Peace Pal kids were considered Elementary aged and Peace Youth Kids were considered Middle and High School aged kids. This year, we noticed the demographic of our Youth Program change. We don't have a ton of high school aged students. So, the Education/Youth Team and I decided to shake things up a bit. Beginning in June, we shifted the age range for Peace Pals to Kindergarten through 3rd Grade and Peace Youth to 4th-8th Grade. The younger kids still met from 5:30-6:30 PM while the older kids started to meet from 7:00-8:00 PM. As you can see, our attendance in 2023 had steady growth, but we saw the most growth begin in the summer months. Wednesday Nights have been well attended and continue to gain traction. I'm thankful for a Youth/Education team who constantly asks the question of, "What can we do better?"



### PEACE YOUTH BY THE NUMBERS



I'll be the first one to tell you that there is much more to the Youth Program than the numbers. But this year, the progression of the Youth Program has been fascinating and encouraging to see. When I was hired in 2014, it seemed like the Youth Program didn't really take off until 2017 or so. Then in 2020, it really took a hit. I kept telling people that it was going to take a lot of time to get things going again, and now it finally feels like we have some good momentum. I couldn't be more excited about where we are at and where we are going!

Lastly, I would like to thank all of you. The People of Peace, Pastor Seth, the Church Council, Worship Assistants and Accompanists, and the Youth/Education Committee. It takes a lot of moving pieces to make our youth programming work. I can't thank all of you enough for the ways that the People of Peace show up for our youth. Thank you to every person who has volunteered with the youth this year. The Youth Program at Peace would not be possible without you!

I love being a part of this community. Thank you for all that you are! You all make this an incredible place to be.

Bring it on, 2024!

Peace,

Vanessa Steiger, Youth Director

## BUILDING RESERVE FUND PROPOSAL

WHEREAS Peace Lutheran Church spent over \$36,000 in church maintenance costs in the 2023 calendar year;

And WHEREAS there has been on-and-off conversation throughout the years regarding the creation of a Building Reserve Fund within the financial structure of Peace Lutheran Church;

And WHEREAS it is broadly considered a best-practice within the not-for-profit community to hold designated property maintenance funds in reserve;

And WHEREAS Peace Lutheran Church currently holds over \$44,000 in its House of Peace Fund and over \$2,400 in its Building Fund;

Therefore LET IT BE RESOLVED that Peace Lutheran Church, at its annual meeting on January 28, 2024, redesignate the House of Peace Fund as its Building Reserve Fund;

And BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that Peace Lutheran Church, at its annual meeting on January 28, 2024, absorb the already existing Building Fund into this newly redesignated Building Reserve Fund;

And BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that Peace Lutheran Church transfer \$500 a month in perpetuity from its General Fund to this newly redesignated Building Reserve Fund;

And BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that Peace Lutheran Church allow members and givers to designate offerings toward the newly redesignated Building Reserve Fund, if they desire to do so;

And BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this newly redesignated Building Reserve Fund be used exclusively for planned property maintenance, emergency property costs, and for housing down payment assistance to Pastors under call to Peace, when invoices received for these expenses would create undue burden on the General Fund Budget.

Submitted to Peace Lutheran Church Council by Pastor Seth Ramage on December 19, 2023, and again with revisions on January 16, 2024. Council Voted unanimously to present this to the Congregation's Annual Meeting on January 28, 2024.

**2023 CONGREGATIONAL STATISTICS**

**Members Received**  
 Jacquelin Chastain

**Baptisms**  
 Aubrey Anne McGough  
 Olen Louis Suek  
 Inno Frederick Suek  
 Zoey Faith Quanbeck

**Members Removed**  
*By Death*  
 Randall Christensen  
 Khyll Thomson  
 Stanley Martin  
 LeRoy Gross  
 Marge Peterson

*By Transfer*  
 John & Robin Felton  
 Ed & Cammy Lien  
 Larry & Kay Rossow  
 Tom & Sandy Schillinger

**2023 STATISTICAL SUMMARY**

<b>I. Membership</b> as of 12/31/2022	<b>V. Pastoral Acts</b>	
Baptized Members 431	Baptisms (children) 4	
Confirmed Members 363	Confirmation (youth) 0	
	Funerals 6	
<b>II. Additions</b>	First Communion 0	
By baptism of children 4	Weddings 0	
By baptism of adults 0		
By confirmation of youths 0	<b>VI. Services</b>	
By confirmation of adults 0	Sunday services 52	
By transfer/reinstatements 1	Saturday services 49	
	Special services 23	
<b>III. Losses</b>	Communion services 101	
Release of Membership 8		
Deaths 5	<b>VII. Average Attendance at Weekly Worship</b> 97	
<b>IV. Current Membership</b> as of 12/31/2023	<b>VIII. Net Gain/Loss in Membership</b>	
Baptized Members 215	Baptized Gain of 4	
Confirmed Members 194	Confirmed Gain of 1	
Voting Members 155	Statistical Adjustment Loss of 208	

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
January	128	138	142	135	142	n/a	81	98
February	158	135	162	111	141	n/a	70	88
March	204	210	190	168	101	n/a	77	89
April	125	226	170	203	n/a	97	117	124
May	126	140	127	136	n/a	86	116	102
June	131	128	117	132	n/a	116	83	80
July	125	133	108	117	n/a	52	80	91
August	150	120	119	103	n/a	70	86	91
September	144	126	137	132	n/a	73	98	97
October	153	145	136	126	n/a	70	92	96
November	155	134	135	141	n/a	77	89	90
December	231	183	205	202		112	108	122
<b>Average</b>	<b>153</b>	<b>151</b>	<b>145</b>	<b>142</b>	<b>128</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>91</b>	<b>97</b>

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
January	128	138	142	135	142	n/a	81	98
February	158	135	162	111	141	n/a	70	88
March	204	210	190	168	101	n/a	77	89
April	125	226	170	203	n/a	97	117	124
May	126	140	127	136	n/a	86	116	102
June	131	128	117	132	n/a	116	83	80
July	125	133	108	117	n/a	52	80	91
August	150	120	119	103	n/a	70	86	91
September	144	126	137	132	n/a	73	98	97
October	153	145	136	126	n/a	70	92	96
November	155	134	135	141	n/a	77	89	90
December	231	183	205	202		112	108	122
<b>Average</b>	<b>153</b>	<b>151</b>	<b>145</b>	<b>142</b>	<b>128</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>91</b>	<b>97</b>

<b>Beginning Balance-Sale of House</b>		<b>\$91,409.09</b>
12/31/2014	Christikon Gift	-\$4,570.00
12/31/2014	St John's Lutheran Home Gift	-\$4,571.00
2/16/2016	White Heating & A/C - 4 Lennox Furnaces	-\$11,690.00
3/28/2016	Mountain West Concrete Inc.	-\$2,702.34
7/29/2016	Powder Coating Plus Northwest (Hand Rails & Light Poles)	-\$300.00
10/13/2016	Bernie Hedrick (Sidewalk Expenses)	-\$200.26
11/9/2016	R&T Customer Furniture Inc (Kitchen Countertops/Back Splash - Net of Designated)	-\$879.60
11/22/2016	McCabe Electric (Front Sidewalk Light Poles)	-\$245.50
12/14/2016	Yellowstone Electric Co. (Kitchen Wiring)	-\$1,771.74
12/31/2016	Pastor Will (Purchase of Home)	-\$7,723.68
3/6/2017	Pastor Will (Purchase of Home Reimbursement)	\$7,723.68
12/11/2018	Rimrock Lighting (New Lights)	-\$14,042.50
1/14/2019	Alter Guild Donation	\$1,095.00
3/17/2019	Rebate Income (Light Reimbursement)	\$2,409.00
1/14/2020	Light Reimbursement Payment from 2019 Net Income Funds	\$7,000.00
2/20/2020	Light Reimbursement Payment from Capital Campaign Surplus	\$2,222.00
5/28/2020	Light Reimbursement Payment from Capital Campaign Surplus	\$1,316.50
4/21/2022	Ministerial Housing Allowance	-\$20,000.00
<b>Ending Balance</b>		<b>\$44,478.65</b>

<b>12/31/2022</b>	<b>\$3,763.74</b>	
2/17/2023	(\$971.97)	Ck to Lynnrich (Gutters)
4/19/2023	(\$2,335.00)	Ck to Tony Pecarina (Office Remodel Supplies)
6/20/2023	(\$456.77)	Ck to Tony Pecarina (Remaining partial payment on shed)
7/25/2023	\$4,000.00	Offering Donation
10/22/2023	\$571.93	Brotherhood Mutual Insurance Reimbursement
11/26/2023	(\$1,818.60)	Ck to Yellowstone Electric Co.
11/28/2023	(\$2,181.40)	Ck to ServPro of Billings
12/17/2023	\$1,881.76	Brotherhood Mutual Insurance Reimbursement
<b>Balance</b>	<b>\$2,453.69</b>	

	11/30/2023	Add	Transfer	Minus	12/31/2023
Amani For Africa - Lent	0.00				0.00
Background Checks	0.00				0.00
Bells Of Peace	100.00				100.00
Benevolence	100.00				100.00
Billings Food Bank	0.00				0.00
Buck-A-Chick	0.00				0.00
Building Fund	571.93	1,881.76			2,453.69
CASA	0.00				0.00
Christikon - Lent	0.00				0.00
Christikon Camp Scholarships	0.00				0.00
Coffee & Donuts	488.89			-116.93	371.96
Consecration Brunch	318.00				318.00
Cookie Postage	305.59				305.59
Endowment Fund	0.00				0.00
Family Promise - Yellowstone	0.00				0.00
Family Promise - Internal	0.00	50.00			50.00
Family Service	200.00			-200.00	0.00
Folk Group	0.00				0.00
Food Pantry	7,632.54	6,420.00		-2,498.89	11,553.65
Funeral Fund	765.40				765.40
Good Samaritan Fund	1,211.83	2,200.00		-257.00	3,154.83
Hymn Madness	0.00				0.00
In As Much Tree (Family Promise)	172.26	10.00		-68.31	113.95
Kitchen Supplies Fund	-76.54	200.00			123.46
Lutheran Magazine	0.00				0.00
Lutefisk Dinner	2,163.83		-1,811.74	-352.09	0.00
Luke Fund (Women of Peace)	0.00				0.00
Luther's Lodge - Lent	0.00				0.00
Lutheran World Relief - Lent	0.00				0.00
Meals On Wheels - Lent	0.00				0.00
Memorials	0.00				0.00
Montana Rescue Mission	134.00			-134.00	0.00
Nursery	166.28				166.28
Palms	0.00				0.00
Quilt Shipping - Women of Peace	345.00	20.00		-345.00	20.00
Rocky Boy Lutheran Church	0.00				0.00
Saint Johns United	0.00				0.00
ScrewTape Letters Study Books	0.00				0.00
Service Day/Sandwich Meat	0.00				0.00
Souper Bowl Of Caring - Family Service	0.00				0.00
South Africa Companion Synod	0.00				0.00
Thanksgiving Baskets	1,432.42			-800.00	632.42
Tim Magee Memorial Fund - MOW	6,546.00				6,546.00
TV Ministry	35.01				35.01
Vacation Bible School	0.00				0.00
Van Fund	1,028.23				1,028.23
Youth Fund - Brawl of the Wild	877.90				877.90
Youth Fund - Loaves & Fish	557.24				557.24
Youth Fund - Halloween	244.64			-22.50	222.14
Youth Fund	6,087.13	560.00			6,647.13
Youth Fund-Scholarship	2,856.14				2,856.14
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>\$34,263.72</b>	<b>\$11,341.76</b>	<b>-\$1,811.74</b>	<b>-\$4,794.72</b>	<b>\$38,999.02</b>





2023 ELCA Montana Monthly Giving Report						
Annual Budgeted Goal = \$35,248.00						
	Required Monthly \$	Additional Designated	Total Giving	Total Paid To ELCA	Total Paid To FP	Remaining Balance
Jan-23	\$1,093.00	\$910.00	\$2,003.00	\$1,366.00	\$182.00	\$455.00
Feb-23	\$968.00	\$810.00	\$1,778.00	\$1,211.00	\$162.00	\$405.00
Mar-23	\$932.00	\$780.00	\$1,712.00	\$1,166.00	\$156.00	\$390.00
Apr-23	\$2,116.00	\$1,765.00	\$3,881.00	\$3,895.50	\$353.00	(\$367.50)
May-23	\$944.00	\$785.00	\$1,729.00	\$1,179.50	\$157.00	\$392.50
Jun-23	\$839.00	\$705.00	\$1,544.00	\$1,050.50	\$141.00	\$352.50
Jul-23	\$1,148.00	\$955.00	\$2,103.00	\$3,062.00	\$191.00	(\$1,150.00)
Aug-23	\$1,500.00	\$1,250.00	\$2,750.00	\$1,875.00	\$250.00	\$625.00
Sep-23	\$1,090.00	\$905.00	\$1,995.00	\$1,361.50	\$181.00	\$452.50
Oct-23	\$1,266.00	\$1,055.00	\$2,321.00	\$1,582.50	\$211.00	\$527.50
Nov-23	\$1,244.00	\$1,035.00	\$2,279.00	\$1,554.50	\$207.00	\$517.50
Dec-23	\$2,700.00	\$2,250.00	\$4,950.00	\$7,100.00	\$450.00	(\$2,600.00)
<b>Total YTD</b>	<b>\$15,840.00</b>	<b>\$13,205.00</b>	<b>\$29,045.00</b>	<b>\$26,404.00</b>	<b>\$2,641.00</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>
Budget Surplus =			(\$6,203.29)			
<b>Detail of Additional Designated \$:</b>						
Jan -	\$182.00 = Family Promise		Feb -	\$162.00 = Family Promise		
	\$182.00 = Peace Food Panty			\$162.00 = Peace Food Panty		
	\$182.00 = Christikon			\$162.00 = Christikon		
	\$182.00 = Lutheran World Relief			\$162.00 = Lutheran World Relief		
	\$91.00 = Freedom In Christ PM			\$81.00 = Freedom In Christ PM		
	\$91.00 = Friendship House Ministry			\$81.00 = Friendship House Ministry		
Mar -	\$156.00 = Family Promise		Apr -	\$353.00 = LDR - Maui, Hawaii (Fire)		
	\$156.00 = Peace Food Panty			\$353.00 = Peace Food Panty		
	\$156.00 = Christikon			\$353.00 = Christikon		
	\$156.00 = Lutheran World Relief			\$353.00 = Lutheran World Relief		
	\$78.00 = Freedom In Christ PM			\$176.50 = Freedom In Christ PM		
	\$78.00 = Friendship House Ministry			\$176.50 = Friendship House Ministry		
May -	\$157.00 = LDR - Maui, Hawaii (Fire)		Jun -	\$141.00 = LDR - Maui, Hawaii (Fire)		
	\$157.00 = Peace Food Panty			\$141.00 = Peace Food Panty		
	\$157.00 = Christikon			\$141.00 = Christikon		
	\$157.00 = Lutheran World Relief			\$141.00 = Lutheran World Relief		
	\$78.50 = Freedom In Christ PM			\$70.50 = Freedom In Christ PM		
	\$78.50 = Friendship House Ministry			\$70.50 = Friendship House Ministry		

Jul -	\$191.00 = Montana Rescue Mission	Aug -	\$250.00 = Montana Rescue Mission
	\$191.00 = Peace Food Panty		\$250.00 = Peace Food Panty
	\$191.00 = Christikon		\$250.00 = Christikon
	\$191.00 = Lutheran World Relief		\$250.00 = Lutheran World Relief
	\$95.50 = Freedom In Christ PM		\$125.00 = Freedom In Christ PM
	\$95.50 = Friendship House Ministry		\$125.00 = Friendship House Ministry
Sep -	\$181.00 = Montana Rescue Mission	Oct -	\$211.00 = Montana Rescue Mission
	\$181.00 = Peace Food Panty		\$211.00 = Peace Food Panty
	\$181.00 = Christikon		\$211.00 = Christikon
	\$181.00 = Lutheran World Relief		\$211.00 = Lutheran World Relief
	\$90.50 = Freedom In Christ PM		\$105.50 = Freedom In Christ PM
	\$90.50 = Friendship House Ministry		\$105.50 = Friendship House Ministry
Nov -	\$207.00 = Montana Rescue Mission	Dec -	\$450.00 = Montana Rescue Mission
	\$207.00 = Peace Food Panty		\$450.00 = Peace Food Panty
	\$207.00 = Christikon		\$450.00 = Christikon
	\$207.00 = Lutheran World Relief		\$450.00 = Lutheran World Relief
	\$103.50 = Freedom In Christ PM		\$225.00 = Freedom In Christ PM
	\$103.50 = Friendship House Ministry		\$225.00 = Friendship House Ministry

## MEETING NOTES

### GENERAL FUND BALANCES 2023 YEAR END

General Fund	\$198,301.69
Building Fund	\$3,763.74
Designated Offering Fund	-\$34,891.97
House of Peace Fund	\$44,478.65
Net Income or Decrease	-\$71,085.94
<b>Fund Total</b>	<b>\$140,566.17</b>

### Current Fund Deposits

Western Security Bank Checking	\$10,571.01
Western Security Bank Savings	\$116,475.14
Merrill-Lynch Savings	\$13,108.55
<b>Total Current Assets</b>	<b>\$140,154.70</b>

Payroll Taxes Payable	-\$411.47
<b>Total Current Liabilities</b>	<b>-\$411.47</b>

**Total Fund Balance \$140,566.17**

### Interest/Dividends Earned in 2023

Western Security Bank Savings	\$173.42
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$173.42</b>

The accounting procedures and funds balances of Peace Lutheran Church were reviewed. We find that the accounts are handled in a prudent manner and found to be correct.

### Review Committee

Signed Rod Miller Date 01/20/24  
 Signed Margaret Boboff Date 01/20/24

**Christikon — Serving on behalf of Peace Lutheran Church Billings, Montana**

Christikon was founded and continues to operate as an arm of ministry for the Church. As a member of Lutheran Bible Camp, Inc., your congregation shares in owning the camp.

What a great year for ministry up the Boulder!

Christikon was blessed beyond measure again this year—the numbers below reflect something of the Spirit at work in and through this place and people we love:

- 1...new Assistant Director. Taryn Hauglie started June 1 and got to "drink out of a firehose" all summer long. She brings a host of gifts to bear, including 12 years Youth Directing experience as well as being a former staffer and camper. As we move into fall her focus turns to connections with owner/area congregations, heading up our ACA Accreditation process, guest and staff recruiting, and "other duties as assigned" (basically everything else the Director doesn't want to do).
- 1...continuing Office Administrator. Kerry Ellertson is all kinds of awesome and remains the only reason the Director gets anything done.
- 10+...inches of rain that fell this summer (we average 5-6). June into early July was very wet, and then 3 weeks or so of warm and dry (which coincided perfectly with our backpack season), followed by a return to rain for the typically dry August and September months.
- 28...summer staff this year, hailing from Montana, Nebraska, Colorado, Minnesota, Iowa, South Dakota, California, Missouri, New Jersey, Wisconsin, Washington. 17 new, 11 returners.
- 1...camper health event during DD camp that resulted in helicopter evacuation from our meadow. Thankfully, due to the cool-headed actions of our staff and extensive medical training we undergo each season, she responded quickly and well to treatment and made a full recovery.
- 35,000+...miles Mark flew to preach, visit donors, new and existing user congregations, trainings and other camp-related events.
- \$22,000...amount spent on food for staff and summer guests.
- 3...Continuing Education Retreat leaders. Theologian Dr. Eric Meyer (Carroll College, Helena MT) helped us connect theology and ecology and consider our place as part of God's big, broad creation. Rev. Kent Gubrud (Christus Victor, Apple Valley MN) introduced us to the gifts and blessing of Spiritual Direction. Artist, teacher and former staffer Paul Waldum led a session on the

history and characters of the Boulder's history, including pictures and audio of his month living with miner and camp friend Charlie Rasnick in the mid-1970's.



- 73 (and counting)...years Christikon has served God's people faithfully and well; we consider ourselves an arm of ministry to congregations and the larger Church, both near and far.
- 4...number of volunteers from King of Glory/Billings who helped us design and build a new deck on the Boy's Dorm
- \$400,000...funds available to start phase two of the Capital Campaign. Like last year, we hope demand and worker shortages will lessen and allow us to find companies to bid the project and other projects in 2024.
- 18...number of trails groups that went out in three different sessions
- 1 of 3...camps in MT accredited by the American Camping Association (ACA accreditation indicates that a camp meets rigorous industry-wide standards for camp safety, administration, health care, site adequacy, programming, and staffing)

Christikon is blessed by its member congregations who also provide ongoing annual support for the camp's work. Together with gifts from individuals, this support enables ongoing facilities renewal and helps keep camper fees within reach of nearly everyone. In 2024, Peace contributed gifts of \$3,840 and \$450 towards the Brekke Bummer Staff Endowment Fund. Thank you!

And we're grateful for those from your congregation who share in offering leadership for Christikon's work: Lois Gorseth, Mike Brown, Katrina and Pastor Seth Ramage served as Corporation Delegates

We remain deeply grateful for the prayers, encouragement, support, and dedicated work of all involved in the Christikon life. Thank you for all the ways you support this ministry we love and share.

Blessings  
Mark Donald, pastor/director



**AERIES – A NEW ST. JOHN'S UNITED COMMUNITY**

Design work in advancing for future construction of luxury tower residences on the St. John's Billings campus. This new community, named Aeries, will be for adults 55 years of age plus. Residents within Aeries will enjoy panoramic views, maintenance-free living, and access to St. John's healthcare services. Priority membership deposits of \$1,000 are now being received to reserve placement or exercise right of refusal during the development phase of the project. For more information call (406) 655-5203.

**LUTHER'S LODGE RELOCATION PROJECT**

Luther's Lodge is a ministry that provides private home suites with shared living areas for out-of-town guests seeking medical care or treatment for themselves or their family members. First English Lutheran Church (FELC) and Luther's Lodge (LL) invited St. John's to guide an effort to secure resources and relocate LL within remodeled spaces of FELC. A capital funding campaign has been launched. When completed, this project will expand services, enhance amenities, and provide an improved location for LL within the Billings hospital corridor.

**EMPLOYEE AND RESIDENT RELOCATIONS**

Several St. John's employee departments on the Billings campus were strategically relocated into repurposed spaces. Business and Accounting, the St. John's Foundation, and the St. John's CEO moved into newly constructed office areas within Wing 3 of the Legacy building. A public walkway and social area named the upper centrum was also added. At Home, Forefront culinary and environmental services, and some of the Spiritual Care team moved into exit entrance office spaces. Human Resources, Nursing Administration, Marketing, and a Spiritual Care team member moved into Lillis Center office spaces. Long-term care residents that were living within portions of the Legacy building are now living within the more spacious St. John's cottages. All these relocations are in preparation for the next phase of demolition and redevelopment work on the St. John's Legacy building.

**AT HOME**

Since launching in 2019, SJU's At Home program continues to evolve and expand. At Home members receive a variety of services to support their lives, inclusive of continuing care coordination, an emergency response system, transportation, centerge assistance, vacation support, preventative maintenance, social opportunities, fitness and wellness programs, and access to SJU activities.

**TRANSITIONAL REHAB CENTER OPENS**

A portion of the original St. John's Legacy building (Wing 1) that once housed residents is now transformed into a thirty-six-room transitional rehab center for patients in need of short-term healthcare. This beautiful, modernized structure increases staff collaboration efficiencies, rehab equipment space, and quality of care management. Advanced technologies within have improved medical monitoring and capability of caring for medically complex patients.

**ST. JOHN'S UNITED FAMILY SERVICES**

Sustained in part by donations from individuals and congregations, SJU Family Services connects with children, families, and individuals through compassionate programs. The C.A.R.E.S. program, funded by a grant from Lutheran Services in America, empowers families to utilize their natural and community resource supports to reduce referrals to the foster care system. In 2023, the C.A.R.E.S. team worked actively with 53 families who reported improved family relationships. Since 2022, C.A.R.E.S. has received referrals for 132 households. In 2023, Family Services licensed clinical social workers met in-person or via telehealth for over 400 counseling sessions with individuals. Education and counseling services were provided without fee to 92 expectant parents and their support people. Seven infants were placed into adoptive homes. Contract adoption services were provided to 21 families and assistance was offered to 15 post-adoption cases, including four reunions. The Wendy's Wonderful Kids Adoption Recruiter, funded by a grant from the Dave Thomas Foundation for Adoption, helped 16 Montana youth in foster care build connections and pursue permanent placement. Three permanent home placements were completed.

**PHILANTHROPY**

Our thanks to generous financial donors and volunteers who continue to sustain SJU with love and support.

For volunteering, please contact our Director of Volunteer Services at (406) 655-7727.  
For financial donations, please contact our Foundation Gift Planner at (406) 655-7783.  
For on-line volunteer registration or donations, go to [www.stjohnsunited.org](http://www.stjohnsunited.org). Thank you!



**LUTHERAN WORLD RELIEF 2023 ANNUAL REPORT FOR CONGREGATIONS**

LEFT: Maria Tinda is a teacher in the Southern Highlands of Tanzania. Because of your love — and LWR School Kits — both attendance and relationships have improved at her school.

Arround the world, families are suffering. Violence. Natural disasters. Hunger and poverty. Amid it all, you have been a refuge, protecting and supporting our neighbors in this terrible, perfect storm.

Your compassion has made a life-changing impact. You alleviate suffering for families in crisis. You empower sustainable change for a better tomorrow. You surround and comfort those in distress with the warmth and love of your quilts and kits.

Your love goes where no one else goes. This is how you are changing lives.

Your love reached neighbors in 40 countries in 2023.



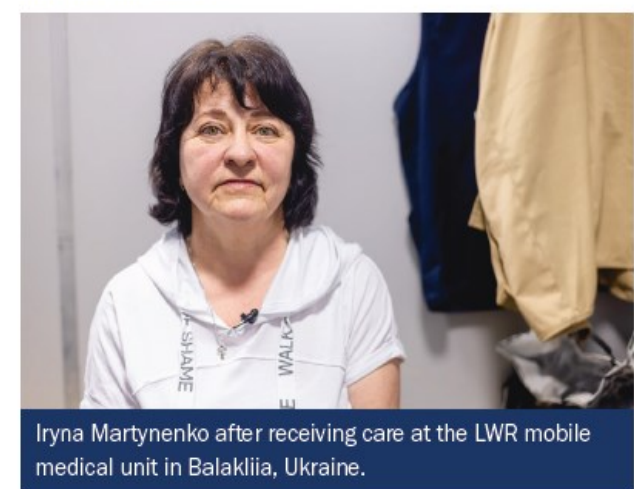
**IN TIMES OF CRISIS: UKRAINE**

**SITUATION:** In areas of Ukraine under Russian occupation, many health care systems have been decimated. Even once liberated, these communities are left with destroyed or damaged hospitals and little access to care since many doctors fled or were killed.

**IMPACT:** Your love is providing vital health care in Ukraine in places where there is none. Iryna Martynenko, 57, visited the LWR mobile medical unit in Balakliia, following the 2022 Russian occupation. As a caregiver, Iryna stayed behind to care for her disabled mother while many of her neighbors fled. Most doctors have either left or have been killed, so Iryna is grateful for the opportunity to be seen. She's even more grateful that because of you, the care is free. Her minimum wage job at the local library wouldn't have covered her medical expenses.

"I am happy, yes. I am very pleased that I have such an opportunity to see doctors," she says. "And just the right doctors. I am very, very grateful. I just don't know how to thank you."

For Oleksii Bordonov, the clinic's general manager, it's all in a day's work. "Our job is to come to the town and start providing medical services to people who need them," he says. "We will support these people and visit them under any circumstances."



Iryna Martynenko after receiving care at the LWR mobile medical unit in Balakliia, Ukraine.

View video report at [LWR.ORG/2023REPORT](http://LWR.ORG/2023REPORT)



Wandeba Scovia sorting and hand-raking coffee at a drying shade in Bufuma, Uganda.

**FOR THE LONG TERM: UGANDA**

**SITUATION:** Some of the best coffee in the world is grown in Uganda, but local, small-scale farmers often are the last to reap the benefits. This can lead to continued cycles of poverty for those struggling to make ends meet and provide for their families despite incredibly challenging work.

**IMPACT:** Your congregation not only provides support in times of crisis. You are also creating lasting and sustainable change. In Uganda, that support is empowering local coffee farmers, particularly women.

In Uganda, like many other countries in Africa, farming — particularly coffee farming — is mostly done by women. In the past, training and opportunity have focused on the landowners, who tend to be men. By focusing on women farmers, there has been an increase in the quality of the coffee and as a result, farmers bring in more income. Household dynamics are improving as well.

There is a reason behind wanting women to be involved just beyond quality, however. "When a woman gets more money in my country," says Uganda staff member Kenneth Barige, "they invest in better food, they invest in better products, they invest in education."

**QUILTS & KITS: TANZANIA**

**SITUATION:** In Tanzania, school supplies are a luxury. When students do not have supplies, not only are they ill equipped to learn when they are present, but there is also a greater tendency for them to be absent, which stunts and prevents their learning even more. Absenteeism can often cause tension between students and teachers as well.

**IMPACT:** Your congregation's love is passionately crafted into the thousands of quilts and kits delivered to those in need. From across the miles, your love surrounds our neighbors, including the young students in teacher Maria Tinda's primary school, located in the southern highlands of Tanzania.

This compassion is making a difference. Recently, each of the 161 students in Maria's school received an LWR School Kit, assembled with love by Lutheran congregations like yours from across the country. On the surface, the kit is simple — pens, pencils, paper, scissors, crayons, a ruler and an eraser — all in an easy-to-carry bag. But for the students, having such supplies has profound effects. Being equipped translates to better engagement and learning when they are in the classroom, and greater classroom attendance overall.

"Now the situation that the children have, they are happy when they are at school," says Maria. "It also blesses us and makes us do our job well. I am grateful. Students and their parents, they appreciate it and are very grateful."



A student in Tanzania who received an LWR School Kit.

**None of this is possible without you.**

We at Lutheran World Relief — and your neighbors in need around the world — are forever grateful.

View video report at [LWR.ORG/2023REPORT](http://LWR.ORG/2023REPORT)

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

