



Pilgrim Lutheran Church

**820 Belknap Street
Superior, WI 54880**

Annual Report of the Congregation

**Sunday, January 26, 2025
10:30 am**

Contents

Contents	2
Annual Congregation Meeting Opening Liturgy	3
Agenda for January 26, 2025 Annual Meeting.....	4
Retiring Council Seats	4
Minutes of January 28, 2024 Annual Meeting.....	5
Church Statistics	7
Pastor's Report	8
Church Council Report	13
Other Reports	
Property Committee Report	14
St. Lucia Report.....	15
Stewardship Report	16
Outreach and Witness Report	17
Music Report	18
Archive Report	20
Education Report	21
Message from Bishop Martin	22
Rev. Elizabeth A Eaton, Presiding Bishop Report	24
Ministries Financial Reports	25
Treasurer's Report (2024 Summary & Proposed 2025 Budget).....	26

ANNUAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING

OPENING LITURGY

Confident in God's generosity and gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us praise God and give thanks ...

God, we praise you and give you thanks.

You are good, and your mercy endures forever.

You gave us a garden with good food to eat.

We praise you for food that nourishes us.

You rescued your people from slavery.

We praise you for freedom.

You gave us prophets to correct, rebuke and encourage us.

We bless you for your justice and mercy.

You gave us your Son, Jesus, to love, redeem and save us.

We praise you for his death and resurrection.

You gave us your Holy Spirit to be our Advocate and Comforter.

We bless you for the gifts of every tribe and nation.

Strengthen your church with every spiritual gift

and commission us again to be your servant people.

Multiply in us the fruit of the spirit:

love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control.

Send us in your love and mercy,

that the world may know you and praise you.

Now Thank We All Our God



1 Now thank we all our God with hearts and hands and voic - es,
2 Oh, may this boun - teous God through all our life be near us,
3 All praise and thanks to God the Fa - ther now be giv - en,



who won - drous things has done, in whom this world re - joic - es;
with ev - er joy - ful hearts and bless - ed peace to cheer us,
the Son, and Spir - it blest, who reign in high - est heav - en,



who, from our moth - ers' arms, has blest us on our way
and keep us all in grace, and guide us when per - plexed,
the one e - ter - nal God, whom earth and heav'n a - dore;



with count - less gifts of love, and still is ours to - day.
and free us from all harm in this world and the next.
for thus it was, is now, and shall be ev - er - more.

Evangelical Lutheran Worship, 840

Text: Martin Rinkhart, 1586-1649; tr. Cathering Winkworth, 1827-1878

Music: NUN DANKET ALLE GOTT, Johann Crüger, 1598-1662

Let us pray.

Gracious God, you are the giver of every good gift. Bless us with all that we need for ministry in your name, that we might be a blessing to others. In the name of the one who broke bread and fed the multitudes, Jesus Christ, our Lord.

Amen.

**Pilgrim Lutheran Church Annual Meeting Agenda
Sunday, January 26, 2025 at 10:30 a.m.**

1. Call to Order
2. Opening Prayer
3. Roll Call
4. Approval of January 28, 2024 Annual Meeting Minutes
5. Pastor's Report
6. Council Report
7. Financial Report – 2024 Summation & Proposed 2025 Budget
8. Introduction of Candidates – Election of Council Members
9. Call for Election Results
10. Delegates for Synod Assembly to be announced
11. Any Further Business to Come to the Congregation
12. Closing Prayer
13. Adjournment

~ ~ ~ ~ ~

Retiring

With appreciation for all their efforts on behalf of PLC:

Mary Johnson-Garary

Courtney Dietsche

~ ~ ~ ~ ~

Pilgrim Lutheran Church Annual Meeting January 28, 2024

Called to order at 10:41.

Opening prayer by Pastor Tanner.

Roll Call: Curt Hanson, Ted Nelson, Greg Elonen, Elaine Arnovich, Tyler Austreng, Lucy Johnson, Tad Matheson, Mary Matheson, Rachel Austreng, Julia Blaisdell, Gary Blaisdell, Robert E. Patterson, Craig Peterson, Courtney Dietsche, Ken Kochsiek, Julia Kochsiek, Anna Hansen, Greg Peterson, Jamie Peterson, Presley Peterson, Richard Garay, Sue Connolly, Theresa Lull, Dan Breneman, Mary K. J. Garay, Colleen Elonen, Don Miller, Nancy Craker, Charlotte Nelson, Bill Maki, Jean D. Miller, Paul Goesling, Colleen Goesling, Susan Winner, Larry Winner, Jan Cummings, Sue Kochsiek, Julie McLaren, Tim McLaren, Jennifer Carey-Dudderar, Lorelei Holland, Noah Holland, Joan Altman, Jeffrey P. Gronski, Eileen Ward, Jeanne Johnson, Cedric Johnson, Joyce Klick, Roger Breitzmann, Sandy Breitzmann, Dan Breneman

Approval of January 29, 2023 minutes. Tyler Austreng made a motion to approve, Tad Matheson seconded. The motion passed.

Financial Report: Don Miller explained some aspects of the report, including the financial difference between part-time pastors and a full-time pastor. Our insurance cost decreased due to having a new provider. Our utility cost improved with the new boiler. We needed to transfer money from the Thrivent fund to cover expenses. Colleen Elonen clarified that for the 2024 budget, the anticipated giving amount was not increased much. There was a question about whether the money taken from the Thrivent fund was principle or interest, and Don and Colleen said it was interest only. Tad Matheson made a motion to accept the financial report, Sue Connolly seconded. The motion passed.

Property Report: The church is in good shape in general, but there are some roof issues. The council and Pastor Tanner are working on a grant application with the City of Superior to possibly get funds for the roof projects as well as some other smaller projects. The cost for fixing the roof is \$50,000 to patch it or \$100,000 to replace needed areas.

New council candidates Jeff Gronski and Sandy Breitzmann were approved.

Continued:

**Pilgrim Lutheran Church Annual Meeting
January 28, 2024**

New Business: Two people are needed to attend the upcoming conference assembly on February 8. Colleen Elonen and Dan Breneman volunteered to go. At the synod assembly in June, candidates will be put forward for the bishop election. Jenny Carey-Dudderar volunteered to attend. The delegates were approved.

Closing prayer by Pastor Tanner.
Meeting adjourned at 11:11.

Church Statistics for 2024

<u>Membership as of December 31</u>	<u>2021</u>	<u>2022</u>	<u>2023</u>	<u>2024</u>
Baptized	605	603	590	581
Confirmed	443	439	433	424

2024 membership includes:

- the receiving of 15 members: Baptism – 0; Transfer – 15; From other source - 0
- the removal of 13 members: Death – 8; Transfer – 5; For other reasons -0
- and the Confirmation of 0 baptized members

<u>Worship</u> <i>(all figures rounded off)</i>	<u>2021</u>	<u>2022</u>	<u>2023</u>	<u>2024</u>
Average Sunday in-house attendance	35	37	43	67
<i>(No Worship on Sunday, February 25th(was at Concordia)</i>				
Average Sunday online attendance	NA	128	121	36
				<i>(2024 -Missing Jan. & April)</i>
Extra Services				24
	Maundy Thursday			97
	Good Friday			119
	Lessons & Carols			158
	Christmas Eve (4:00 & 10:00 p.m.)			

Pastoral Acts

Weddings	0
Baptisms	<i>2 (not becoming a member)</i>
Funerals	<i>14 (8 members, 6 non-members – includes those having a service at the funeral home, only a graveside service, or no service at all)</i>

Death has taken the following from our Pilgrim church family:

Rosie Perala, Charlie Klick, Dorothy Benson, Kenneth Beyer, Bruce Kronlund, Larry “Scott” Swanson, Mary Jo Olson, Gloria, Carmen and Mark Seyler, August “Gus” Garay, Marjory Johnson, Mary Hinaus, Barbara Jean Johnson

(Note: Discrepancies in death and funeral statistics may be due to a death in one year and the funeral in another, the funeral of a non-member held at Pilgrim, a member dying but not having the funeral at Pilgrim, or a member dying but having no service.)

“Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is your sting? O grave, where is your victory? Thanks be to God who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ!” *(I Corinthians 15: 54 & 57)*

Church Staff in 2024

Pastor – Rev. Tanner Howard
 Office Manager – Judy Hagen
 Choir Director – Curtis Hanson
 Organist/Pianist – Lorelei Holland
 Custodian – Anna Johnson

2024 Annual Report - Pastor Tanner Howard (pages 8-12)

“I thank God every time I think of you. In my prayers for you I pray with joy, because of your partnership in sharing the Gospel every day.” ~ Philippians 1:3-6

Saints and Siblings in Christ,

I’ve said it before and you’ll hear it again: Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you for an amazing first year of ministry together. Thank you for trying new things. Thank you for your support of ministries new and old. Thank you for your financial generosity, for sharing your time in service, for sharing your gifts and skills. Thank you for all of the ways that you have given towards new and old, innovative and long-standing ministries this year – every time this congregation said ‘yes!’ to an idea that came forward, you helped us to move more fully into the call God has for our community. Thank you for moving with the work of the Spirit this year.

When I arrived at Pilgrim, just over a year ago, you had carefully assembled paperwork that laid out four areas of ministry that you wanted your pastor (me) to focus on: Youth Ministry, Elder Ministry, Community Engagement, and College Ministry. Each of these areas has seen engagement in 2024 – though some more than others. One year in they remain good metrics by which I can report to the council and congregation each month, so below you will find a report of activities from 2024 and goals for 2025 based around these four areas.

Youth Ministry: When I started at Pilgrim in 2023, youth ministry was in a bit of a lull. No one can say that’s the case now. I am incredibly grateful to Rebecca Waterhouse for launching a new Sunday School program last spring. What started as a small group of kiddos has burgeoned to quite a crew of folks gathering for class, crafts, and conversation each Sunday. Colleen Elonen jumped into the fray this fall with her solid history of leading youth ministry here at Pilgrim, and the two of them (with help from Ava Walrath and Katie Howard) have crafted a wonderful program in the fall of 2024. In addition to weekly classes, students received bibles and helped to lead worship on Christmas Eve with their wonderful music.

Last fall we also restarted a confirmation class which has been an absolute joy for me each week. I currently have four 8th graders consistently coming, with a few others who are hoping to jump in this spring as schedules allow. We’ve looked at the Creed, parts of Matthew’s Gospel, and done some service projects together. This spring we’ll dig into some foundational stories from the Old Testament and look more at the catechism to help us inform our discussion around the ways that faith can be lived in our day to day lives.

One of the biggest additions to youth ministry here at Pilgrim involves a change to our space in the addition of the PrayGround. Located in the front right transept (the little nook next to the lectern) this space has become an immensely popular location for young folks and their families to worship from. The PrayGround serves several functions: 1) It is a special place for kids – they know that they are welcome in worship 2) Families know that we are committed

to providing space for them 3) It gets kids up front where all the action is – they can see and interact with me and other worship leaders 4) We can provide seasonal and daily specific books and materials for kids to engage with that further drives home the message of the day 5) Kids can see themselves as leaders of the church as they utilize the mini altar and vestments. A year ago this space was dark, dirty, and several of the built-ins were falling apart. Now it is a centerpiece of our worship space that visitors and members of other congregations look at and tell me “I wish our church had that.” I am especially grateful to the guys from the Carpenters Training Institute in Hermantown who came over and made this vision a reality, and to the family of Rosie Perala who designated memorial funds towards this project and its enduring impact on kids here at Pilgrim.

Moving into 2025, I am excited to continue to grow the programs that are going well, and also try new things with our High School Youth Ministry. Noah Holland has stepped forward to lead this group, and together with some funding from the Walk the Talk Campaign, I am hopeful that we’ll see some new life in this segment of our congregation.

Elder Ministry. Some of the most fun that I get to have week in and week out in this work is my conversations with the elders of this congregation. Whether it’s someone stopping by my office, a phone call, or a visit, I always find myself learning from your experiences. I am grateful for a small but mighty crew of folks who study the bible together every Thursday morning at 10:00 – their wit and wisdom often make it into my sermons on Sundays and I appreciate turning over these texts with them each week. The same is true for our Theology on Tap crowd where our delightfully intergenerational gathering provides wonderful opportunities for conversation and debate together about the ponderings of the day.

A great deal of my visitation this year has centered around emergency and end of life care, with most of that being for members of the congregation but a great deal of it including former members of the church or folks who have never been members but who have some sort of connection to us. A reminder that if you or a loved one enters the hospital and needs a visit, you need to contact the church office and let us know – the hospital will not call us for you. Know also that with a toddler in daycare and a spouse in healthcare, I strive to keep you all safe and will not schedule a visit if my household is sick; and I am grateful when you all choose to protect the members of our congregation by staying home and healing up rather than risking further spread when you’re under the weather.

Looking ahead, it is my hope to put together a Visitation Ministry Team in 2025. This group of folks from the congregation will work with me to see to the spiritual care of our members recovering from surgery, homebound, in care facilities, or otherwise in need of a little extra pastoral care. This may involve a weekly phone call to a couple of folks in the church, taking communion to someone who is homebound, or even helping organize meals for someone who’s recovering from surgery. At its most basic form, it’s being a good neighbor and caring for the people around us. This is work that is not reserved for the pastor, but is something we do together. So, if you are interested in being part of this team, please let me know!

Community. The Superior area is filled with good colleagues and wonderful community partners that we have worked with continuously this year. Our Superior Area Ministerium (SAM) meets monthly collegially and to plan events for our area faith community. 2024 saw us hosting a community Good Friday Service (here at Pilgrim), Easter Sunrise service (Wisconsin Point), and Thanksgiving Meal and Service (also here at Pilgrim). Last winter I took over as treasurer for the Ministerium and we've worked hard to increase involvement from all the congregations in Superior and our collective financial contributions toward the Good SAM Fund. We utilize this fund to pay for 1) Prescriptions 2) Utilities and 3) Gas cards for members of the community who are in need. If you or someone you know could use help with one of these things, please contact Pastor Sean Koos at Our Saviors and Concordia Lutheran churches or Pastor Dan Verdegan at Faith United Methodist Church to start the (very easy) intake process.

We highlighted many of our community partners throughout the year, including several during Lent. We worked with The Seafarers Center to collect needed items for sailors coming through the Twin Ports and welcomed Pastor Doug Paulsen to worship on a special Mariner's Sunday. We filled boxes with items for CASDA's emergency shelter program. We collected funds for the synod's Water Is Life initiative. We made bags for kids in the foster system. We stocked our needs shelf here at Pilgrim to help individuals and families who swing by the church. We collected food for the SOUPER Bowl of Caring competition with our ELCA partner churches (and we collected the most, thanks to you!). We donated food and warm clothing to folks at Ruth House. We hosted blood drives, music classes, and line dancing. We partnered with LiveWell Northern Wisconsin to hold a Mocktail Class then a Gluten Free Baking class. The Whalers held their pancake feed here and we're hosting a new Girl Scout Troop. It's been an altogether delightful year.

In addition, I have worked with the Northwest-APAC (Anti-Poverty Action Coalition), been trained by Vivent Health to administer Narcan, and worked a couple of elections as an election inspector for Superior.

Our Community School program is back in full swing and featured classes on quilting, estate planning, canning, and lefse making. We hosted a food stand at the Fourth of July parade and adopted a community rain garden on Barker's Island. We have an amazing crew of Traveling Tutors reading to students at Northern Lights Elementary School.

As I write this I am making a note that I should keep a running list of the things that we get up to as a congregation because looking back through my calendar and notes to make this list I am overwhelmed by all of the work that you have done together this year. Suffice it to say that at no point to I recall being bored.

Next year will bring more of the same and lots of new things. We will continue to build up partnerships and work on new ones. I am hopeful that you will continue to bring your ideas for our work together in service to our neighbors. Thank you for all that you do.

College Ministry. What a ride this has been! I have spent a lot of time this past year on campus. If you didn't know already, Yellowjacket Union has a Caribou Coffee and a delightful number of characters to chat with any given day. We have worked closely with several departments and offices to serve students this year, including hosting new international students for breakfast last fall to welcome them to campus, collecting items for the on-campus food pantry, and providing space for mental health care in our building. We worked with the music department to host the 300th Anniversary concert of Bach's Saint John's Passion last spring. The International Student Association has held cooking classes in the fellowship hall and hosted their annual Food Fair here as well. We were on campus for JacketFest and connected with over 250 students and shared plants and community resources with them.

We also launched United Campus Ministry last fall in partnership with Zion, Our Saviors, and Concordia Lutheran Churches and Faith UMC. This features weekly meals on Sunday nights provided by one of the congregations followed by worship for anyone interested at 6:30 in the chapel. It's difficult to quantify the success of this ministry. We have had weeks with many students and weeks with no students. We have tried many and various ways of advertising the program, but have found word of mouth – students telling students – to be the best way of letting folks know. Moving forward we've discussed the possibility of switching up the night that we gather – Sundays may just not be the best for this community. But it's clear that congregations involved in this ministry are committed to keeping it going and finding ways to connect with this crew of students however we can best serve them.

That said, one really wonderful outcome of this ministry has been the building of community between members of our congregations. The chance to gather once a week for great food and conversation across our congregational divides has been really amazing and I am looking forward to more folks from Pilgrim committing to making this a part of their week in the year to come.

Bits and Bobs. Of course, there have been many and various other things happening and we have a number goals for 2025 that I want to share with you all. A huge thank you to the members of our Formation Co-Op team who gathered, trained, and worked together this year. Even though we elected not to continue with the program, I think we got some good resources out of it and I am grateful for the continued work that we are doing as a congregation around youth ministry.

The Northwest Synod of Wisconsin elected a new bishop in 2024. Please read Bishop Martin Halom's report and continue to hold him and the synod staff in your prayers in the year to come.

We launched a new Archives Team who is tackling the vast and fascinating array of historical paraphernalia here at Pilgrim. Thank you all for doing this important work! We are excited for displays and opportunities to learn more about it this year.

Our Stewardship Team led us in a successful Walk the Talk Campaign last fall, ultimately bringing in well over the \$5000 goal to fund new and innovative ministries here at Pilgrim. Check out their report for more information about the Generous Together program that we will be working on as a congregation in 2025!

2025 is a special year for the global church as it marks the 1700th anniversary of the writing of the First Ecumenical Council which was held in Nicaea in 325. Part of that council's work was the writing of the Nicene Creed which we continue to use in worship today. Look for opportunities to mark this anniversary with other congregations throughout this year as we dig into this confession of faith together.

People of God, I am excited for small group ministries, adult education opportunities, and community meals. I'm looking forward to ever more community partnerships, synod-wide ministries, and engagement with the larger church in our worship and advocacy. The Spirit is moving here at Pilgrim, friends. I am eager to see where we are led in the year to come.

One final thank you, Saints and Siblings. Thank you for your support of me personally and my family. Whether it was cookies on my desk, a fist bump with Lorelai, or snacks in your purse for Piper – thank you. Katie and I are immensely grateful for this community of faith that has welcomed us with love and grace. As we welcome new ones into our family in 2025, we are thankful for a congregation that is a village of care where we already have so much support. Thank you for walking the walk of faith and being God's people in this place.

In Christ,
Pastor Tanner

2024 Pilgrim Lutheran Council Report

“.... Let’s see what sticks ...”

After months of meeting, planning, and successfully calling a new Pastor, one would think the time had arrived early this year to sit back, breath deep, and relax!

Well, think again. Pastor Tanner Howard wasted no time leading our congregation into new ministries and dusting-off old ones by simply advocating that we should try anything and,

“...see what sticks!”

If you were expecting a list of events and activities, I’m pleased to say there are too many to list here. If the activity level in and out of Pilgrim Lutheran Church throughout 2024 is any indication how effective our ministry was, I am encouraged and excited to witness our progress again in 2025. Besides welcoming Pastor Tanner, Katie, Lorelai, and “Piper” with immense appreciation this inaugural year, there are several other cast members continuing to play their part staging, maintaining, leading, ushering, and supporting this Pilgrim production week in and week out. From the congregation, Thank-you, Thank-you, Thank-you! Your time and talents keep this show on the road.

Perhaps the following annual report provides the detail covering progress made in 2024, but I want to reiterate an initiative we envisioned for Pilgrim’s ministry last year. Understanding our donation trends would not support a full-time Pastor, we initiated a three-year trial period by approving a deficit budget with the condition our savings accounts would off-set expenses each month. Our intent was to invest time and treasure until we discovered those ministries calling our congregation, and during that time we would develop a sustainable stewardship plan. Ultimately, within that three-year window, we are hopeful Pilgrim Lutheran will have discovered a strong belief in our ministries, gained confidence in our future, and operate on a balanced budget.

We are now one year into that three-year trial period and realizing a bright future for our congregation and the community we serve. Average attendance for weekly services nearly doubled, donations have increased to a level we are drawing less each month than originally projected, but more importantly Pilgrim is bustling! We have a PrayGround and subtle interruptions as children again take part in our service! We welcomed 16 new members in 2024. We had 120 participate in our Lessons and Carol Service, and the following week 160 attended Christmas Eve. These are only few of the many inspirational missions we provide by keeping Pilgrim Lutheran’s door open. Again, thank you to those showing up, serving, and making a difference. We really are making a difference and 2025 is going to be GREAT....!

Dan Breneman, council president

Annual Property Report for 2024

Our church building is in better shape this year because of a grant for non-profits from the City of Superior. We received \$83,494 to repair our leaking roof, new air conditioners in the pastor's office, secretaries' office and chapel area, updated our front door security and updated our lights to make them more energy efficient with better lighting. This was our big project of the year. Other smaller projects were:

- Took out a couple of pews to make more room for wheel chairs and walkers in the sanctuary.
- Had Belknap plumbing come in to help explain our heating system and to tune up the new boiler.
- Belknap also fixed the men's urinal upstairs.
- I replaced some parts in the toilet in the handicap bathroom.
- The new prayer ground up by the alter was completed.
- Worked with Tom Lisak, who helped us last fall, on patching the roof over the pray ground. This was permanently fixed with the city grant.
- Waxed floors in the sanctuary, kitchen and fellowship hall.
- We had a fall cleanup for the church to catch areas that needed additional attention.

That's my property committee report. If there are any other issues around the church that need attention please let me know.

Sincerely,
Tad Matheson
Property Committee Chair

St. Lucia Report 2024

Thank you to everyone who helped plan, promote, and volunteer at our traditional St. Lucia Vesper Tea. The tea followed a wonderful Lessons and Carol's performance by the Pilgrim and Friends Choir and Orchestra. Thank you, Curt Hansen, for leading this group. The girls and children who played the roles of St. Lucia and her attendants and the "junior ushers" did an awesome job. We enjoyed a great group effort.

The Vesper Tea served about 150 people, based on the tables that were set. This year we were prepared and had enough tables set up. We had plenty of food and leftovers were delivered to the Ruth House.

The offering for the event was \$736. Expenses for the tea were covered by donations from Pilgrim members and a \$250 grant from Thrivent. Thank you, thank you for these donations.

The committee is donating our attendees' generosity to local charities and upgrades for our dining room and kitchen.

Submitted by Susan Winner
Member of the PLCP Vesper Tea Committee
January 2025

2024 Stewardship Committee Summary

Pilgrim Evangelical Lutheran Church, Superior, WI

Committee members: Dan Breneman, Colleen Elonen, Paul Goesling, Molly Warring, Noah Holland, and Pastor Tanner

An effort to determine how Pilgrim remains a viable ministry in Superior, WI resulted in the council revisiting conversations about how we, as a congregation, approach stewardship. Stewardship is driven by each of us finding ways to be generous with our time and talents to benefit others. With no budget established for the 2024 fiscal year, a fall Walk the Talk fundraising campaign focused on supporting new and expanded ministry programs at Pilgrim. A \$5,000 goal was set for the end of 2024. Thanks to the incredible generosity of this congregation, the campaign received \$5,785.00 in contributions and has already launched programs focused on Sunday School classes, Confirmation, Youth Group activities, and a UWS/United Campus Ministry, as well as supporting other new and expanded ministry opportunities in the congregation. Thank you!

Members interested in current trends supporting faith-based organizations, or to learn more about developing sustainable stewardship opportunities for Pilgrim Lutheran, you are encouraged to read J. Clif Christopher's, "Not Your Parents Offering Plate". With this guidance focused on 1) a strong belief in the mission(s), 2) a high regard for leaders, and, 3) confidence in the organization's fiscal stability, Pilgrim is embarking on a year-long stewardship program, "Generous Together" guided by the ELCA Northeast Minnesota synod. Our objective is to first investigate what stewardship opportunities best fit Pilgrim's congregation and then initiate effective ministries in our community. Within two years, our overall stewardship goal is to establish support for Pilgrim's ministry in our community, cover all our operating expenses, and realize a balanced budget.

Thank you for your ongoing support of the many ministries here at Pilgrim!

Submitted by Dan Breneman

Outreach and Witness Report 2024

Throughout 2024, PLCP and Outreach teamed up many times to provide fun and learning events and funding opportunities to support local charities.

One of our big events this past spring was a Pastie Sale to raise funds in support for a refugee family who was in the process of relocating to Superior. Through the Welcome Corps program, the ELCA churches in Superior worked to support this refugee and her family from Afghanistan, to bring them to the Superior/Duluth community.

Pilgrim's Quarterly Quilters held a class on making draw string bags and worked with the kids at Vacation Bible school to make fleece tied blankets. Those blankets and other goodies were added to the bags and donated to local foster care program to give out to kids in need in our community.

Pilgrim's Community School program hosted many different events throughout the year. We held classes from estate planning and funeral preparation to classes on lefse making, and lots of things in between! It was fun to interact with new people in the community, as well as members of Pilgrim, while learning new things.

We continued to support Ruth House ministries throughout the year. Pilgrim people gave donations of hygiene supplies, warm clothes, hats, mittens, and socks, as well as cash donations, to help support their local warming house and drop in shelter. We routinely give extra food and supplies in donation for their food shelf.

We are so thankful we have such wonderful members of our congregation who are willing to organize and participate in these events and service projects. We look forward to a blessed 2025!

Submitted by Colleen Elonen

Pilgrim Lutheran Church Music Report 2024

Reported by Lorelei Holland, Music Coordinator

Service Formats Simplified

At the beginning of the year, we had three different styles of services (traditional Organ, Praise and Worship Team, and then regular service). Having that much variety in format every month was difficult to plan around and became confusing. We simplified our approach by having the same format every service, but using more contemporary music for the liturgy and hymns the first Sunday of each month.

Community Choirs

Pilgrim hosted two community Choirs in 2024, one during the Good Friday Ecumenical Service and one during the Thanksgiving Ecumenical Service. Everyone that participated had a wonderful time and enjoyed singing with people from other churches. I plan to continue leading community choirs whenever Pilgrim hosts an Ecumenical service.

Bell Choir

September was an exciting month as we were able to bring back the Bell Choir! Pilgrim has all the equipment to support a 5-octave Bell Choir (that's a lot of bells). We transformed half the transept into a performance space, and we are hoping to expand to take over the whole transept in 2025. A few bells are in need of some maintenance, but otherwise they look to be in good shape. The Bell Choir was able to perform a few hymns already by the end of the year. There is a learning curve with this group, so my lofty goal of performing once a month might get simplified to performing at major holiday services (Easter, Christmas, etc.) or when we have a song prepared.

Praise and Worship Team

Our Praise and Worship team has become more consistent this year. We have five steady members who are very talented and work well together. We are always willing to welcome new volunteers into the group, especially if they just want to make music with some great musicians.

Pilgrim Choir

Under the organized leadership of Curt, the Pilgrim Choir had a great year in 2024 that ended with a beautiful Lessons and Carols Service. The music for that service was more technical than it had been in the past, so participants started rehearsals earlier, which left less time for Pilgrim's Choir to rehearse. However, with their hard work on Tuesday nights, the Choir was able to consistently make an appearance during regular services throughout their season.

Continued:

Pilgrim Lutheran Church Music Report 2024

Reported by Lorelei Holland, Music Coordinator

Goals and Thoughts for 2025

I would like the Bell Choir to expand the full transept, which will push the Choir back up to the balcony. In addition, there are times I play the organ during a service which means there is nothing going on in the live stream feed. I would like us to consider getting a camera for the live feed up on the balcony.

As the Praise and Worship Team has come together more consistently this year and I have gotten to know the members more, I would like to consider purchasing an electronic drum set. This would expand the team's sound and range of songs we could do without being too loud in our resonant sanctuary.

As with many ensembles, growing in consistent and dedicated members is always a continuing goal. Changing our mentality and stigma around participating in music groups is one of the first steps to take to achieve this goal. I would like us to deter from the idea that someone has to be musically gifted or possess the ability to read music is a requirement to participate in a music group at Pilgrim. Rather, I would like us to work towards the mentality that singing in Choir or playing in Bell Choir or with the Praise and Worship team is a way for us to glorify and worship God together as a community of believers.

Pilgrim Lutheran Church Annual Archive Committee 2024

1. Established - November 12, 2024

1st Meeting with Colleen Goesling, Anna Hansen, Nancy Clark, Betty Henry, Jeff Gronski and Jean and Don Miller. Assisted by Pastor Tanner.

- Goal 1 - To establish purpose of Archive Committee. Met: (To collect, preserve and share the historical documents and pictures of the church).
- Goal 2 - To identify a space(s) where materials can be stored, worked on and available. Met: (Identified the old children's chapel on the 3rd floor as 1 site as well as business and financial archives to be kept in the vault).
- Goal 3 – To collect and bring archives from various areas in the church to these central locations. In process: This will be continuing process but did find archines in various nooks and crannies throughout the church.

2. 2nd Meeting – December 3, 2024

In attendance: Anna Hansen, Nancy Clark, Betty Henry, Sheila Soland, Don and Jean Miller. Assisted by Pastor Tanner.

- Goal 1 – To clean 3rd floor Archive Room. Partially met: Initial cleaning completed.
- Goal 2 – To find shelving and filing cabinets to store and organize archives. Partially met: Some items donated by church and some from committee members.
- Goal 3 – To begin labeling of various Archives. Partially met: Initial labeling completed.
- Goal 4 – Develop a video presentation to share with attendees at St. Lucia Tea December 15. Met: Collected various photos from previous teas.
Given to Jeff Gronski to compile for power point presentation at tea.
Photos collected from December 15 tea and Jeff set up power point presentation for Sunday, December 22 at church.

3. Next meeting, January 8, 2025

- Goal 1 – Continue cleaning Archive Room
- Goal 2 – Continue organizing & labeling of Archives.
- Goal 3 – Establish next project to share with Congregation.

Submitted by Jean Miller

Education coordinator report 2024

I have had the pleasure of leading Sunday School classes at Pilgrim since January 2024.

Since that time, Sunday School has been offered to the children and grandchildren of Pilgrim families. At first classes were held for 30 minutes directly after Sunday services, but were then changed in September to a 10:15 am dismissal (after the sign of peace is exchanged between members) from church services to better serve both the children and their parents/grandparents. During this time, students ranged from ages 2 to 10, and attendance varied from 0 to 12. Most classes involve 5-7 children in attendance, but it varies. Greatly.

The weekly lessons, activities and songs correspond with the Gospel message for the week. Our teachers (Colleen Elonen, Katie Howard and Rebecca Waterhouse) invoke the SPARK ELCA Sunday School curriculum and students were given SPARK bibles to read and reinforce the all-important stories of Jesus. In addition to the readings, the children learn sign language to recall the fruits of the spirit, the armor of God, and finally, the Christmas Carol “Angels we have heard on high”. Seven children felt the nudge of the Holy Spirit as they shared this beautiful worship song in front of the congregation on Christmas Eve.

Teachers pray, study, and are ready to teach each Sunday to whomever attends. “Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. - 1 Peter 3:15

As an educator, I feel strongly about the ministry of presence (being there) and building meaningful relationships with the children. On top of that, consistency in scheduling, and engaging the children to help them understand what Jesus said, did, and achieved, gives this ministry the best foundation.

Other children’s ministries I’ve witnessed and found much value for our children in 2024:

Pastor Tanner delivers a Children’s Message during each Sunday Service. Not only does that give the children another angle of the Gospel that day, it makes the Pastor approachable. The message is usually topped off with something small given to the children to remember what is important.

Children’s bulletins that focus on the Gospel each Sunday are made available to all families as they enter the sanctuary. Bags with colored pencils to encourage completing the puzzles or pictures therein are also accessible. And, the new playground allows children to feel included in the congregation while giving parents the ability to remain present during the service, fostering a welcoming and family-friendly environment for all ages.

Thank you to Judy Hagen, who kindly finds me space and time to print coloring pages and lessons for the children, to Pastor Tanner for the Sunday School ministry opportunity, and to all those wonderful members who behind the scenes generously support the future at Pilgrim, our children.

In Him, Rebecca Waterhouse

A MESSAGE FROM BISHOP MARTIN

To the amazing disciples of the Northwest Synod of Wisconsin,

I remember with gratitude preparing for annual meetings when I was most recently a pastor at St. John's Lutheran in Bloomer. So many reports to collect, so many people to recruit, so many meetings to plan – it was a busy time indeed! But in doing all of that work, they all came together for two important purposes:

1. To share God's stories through your ministries.
2. To plan future God stories through your ministries!

When you really think about it, annual meetings are a time to celebrate what has already happened and a way to dream about what could be in the forthcoming months and years! And from my new perspective as your bishop, I love knowing that despite all of the great things we share in common, there are so many contextual things that are happening in your congregation alone. What a blessing as we come together as fellow ELCA Lutherans, yet all distinct and unique in what God is calling us to do!

As you may know, we also share in our ministry together as the Northwest Synod of WI. There are several things to celebrate that I want to share here.

1. We continue to financially support our synod youth and their related ministries, such as our bible camps and youth gatherings.
2. We raised over \$120k for our friends in Malawi to build additional solar powered wells, despite having a goal of \$40k! It was so fun to share that information with them in person when Deacon Laura and I visited a few months ago and got to see firsthand some wells that had been built and purchased from this synod in the past.
3. We support our young adults in campus ministry, along with other young adult opportunities, such as our upcoming young adult gathering in Puerto Rico this January. This is such an important part of life as they explore their faith and make it their own and we get to help nurture those conversations!
4. We are helping our first call pastors lean into their leadership and nurture their God-given gifts as they discover the joys and opportunities of their first call experiences. This includes helping them out financially as they seek to reduce their educational debt that they bring into that first call.

Finally, I want to thank you for electing me as your bishop. Thus far, I have felt the full support of this synod as I visit congregations from week to week. The days of the election itself, along with the installation in September, have both been two of the most meaningful and life changing experiences of my life and your support is a significant part of it I have fully enjoyed visiting each congregation and look forward to seeing yours over the course of my six year tenure. Yes, I realize it will take four years to get to them all, but the way the time has been flying, it won't be long!

Please know that your synod staff are here for you and want to accompany you on your journey of faith. We will continue to pray for us all in our lives together to make sure that our relationship with you is supported and upheld in prayer, in both the joys and struggles of ministry. We want our relationships to be intentional and strong so that you never feel isolated in this work. We are grateful for your partnership in the gospel!

Privileged to serve,
Bishop Martin



A MESSAGE FROM PRESIDING BISHOP ELIZABETH EATON



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

“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.”

—Psalm 93:4-5

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.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Elizabeth A. Eaton".

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

Pilgrim Lutheran Church Ministries Financial Reports for 2024

PLC People Financial Report

Previous Year-End Checking Acct. Balance December 31, 2023	\$ 3,430.62
PLCP Receipts	26,177.98
Sunday School Receipts	2,018.32
Walk the Talk Receipts	5,785.00
PLCP Disbursements	< 26,102.57 >
Sunday School Disbursements	< 848.19 >
Walk the Talk Disbursements	< 0.00 >
Current Year-End Checking Acct. Balance December 31, 2024	\$10,461.16

Balances for each fund:

PLCP - \$ 3,506.03
 Sunday School - \$ 1,170.13
 Walk the Talk - \$ 5,785.00

- The PLCP amounts reflect amounts shifted to regular checking account to pay bills and replaced from Thrivent by Don's request

Dale Maintenance Fund (used to be the Youth Ministry fund – renamed)

Previous Year-End Checking Acct. Balance December 31, 2023	\$ 5,663.21
Receipts	67,579.27
Disbursements	<69,827.15 >
Current Year-End Checking Acct. Balance December 31, 2023	\$ 3,415.33

- This account has been where the money from the city grants has been deposited and paid out of.

Pilgrim Lutheran Church Financial Results

General Fund Detail	2024	2024	2025			
	Budget	Actual	Budget			
Income Accounts	111084	135382	145000			
Misc. income	7500	14495	11500			
Rental Income	16080	13078	720			
Total Income	134664	162955	157220			
Expense Accounts						
Salaries and benefits	121227	152690	158360			
Insurance	7598	8505	8505			
Utilities	30685	26572	26572			
Worship and Music	8565	12458	11400			
Other	24570	20152	34524			
TOTAL Expenses	192645	220377	239361			
Total Net Income	-57,981.00	57,422.00	-82141			
Invested Funds		Balance			Balance	
		01/01/24			12/31/24	
Berglund Education Fund		3,808			-	(3,808)
Ray Paulson Fund		39,342			42,094	2,752
Housing Fund		75,898			55,084	(20,814)
Scholarship Fund		327			350	23
Rueban Johnson Building Fund		41,371			31,670	(9,701)
Trestor Youth Fund		19,083			-	(19,083)
Other Funds		40,929			41,493	564
						0
		220,758			170,691	(50,067)