

ANNUAL REPORT 2025



Evangelical
Lutheran Church
in America



A MESSAGE FROM PRESIDING BISHOP YEHIEL CURRY

Dear friends in Christ,

As Lutherans, we are set free to love our neighbors and seek justice. In Colossians 2, we read: "As you therefore have received Christ Jesus the Lord, continue to walk in him, rooted and built up in him and established in the faith, just as you were taught, abounding in thanksgiving" (6-7).

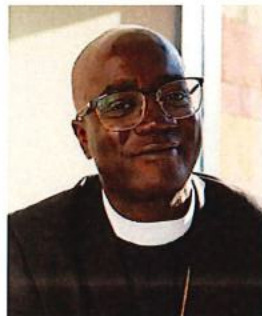
I am abounding in thankfulness for you, church. You are an integral part of this mission as we envision a world experiencing the difference God's grace and love in Christ make for all people and creation. The ministries of congregations including yours, our synods and the ELCA churchwide organization are all working together today and every day so more people may know the way of Jesus and discover community, justice and love. From providing food to people experiencing hunger, to helping train the next generation of leaders that will lead this church, your support is at work here at home and around the world.

Your generosity to each of the three expressions of the church — your congregation, your synod and the churchwide organization — has made it possible for us to do this work

together. Your financial resources, your time volunteering and accompanying others, and your voices are so valued.

As we look ahead to the coming year, I encourage you to continue to walk in Christ, remembering you are rooted and established in faith, and free to love and serve your neighbors. Thank you, church, for the ways you connect with and support our siblings across the ELCA and in our communities.

In Christ,



A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read "Yehiel Curry". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large loop at the end.

The Rev. Yehiel Curry
Presiding Bishop
Evangelical Lutheran
Church in America

“As you therefore have received Christ Jesus the Lord, continue to walk in him, rooted and built up in him and established in the faith, just as you were taught, abounding in thanksgiving.”

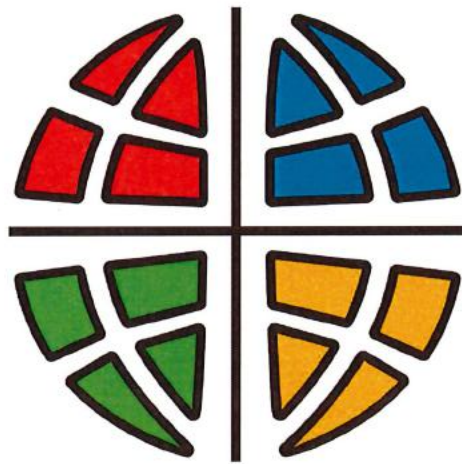
—Colossians 2:6-7

2026 ANNUAL REPORT

(Reports for 2025)

ST. PAUL EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

232 West Minnesota Street, Le Center, MN 56057
Heath Queen, Pastor



Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

Presented for

THE ANNUAL MEETING OF THE CONGREGATION

January 18, 2026 10:00 a.m.

(Please bring this booklet with you to the Annual Meeting)

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ST PAUL
EVANGELICAL
LUTHERAN
CHURCH



United in Purpose

In last year's year-end Pastor's letter, Pastor Heath shared:

"Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; and there are varieties of services, but the same Lord; and there are varieties of activities, but it is the same God who activates all of them in everyone."

1 Corinthians 12:4-6, NRSV

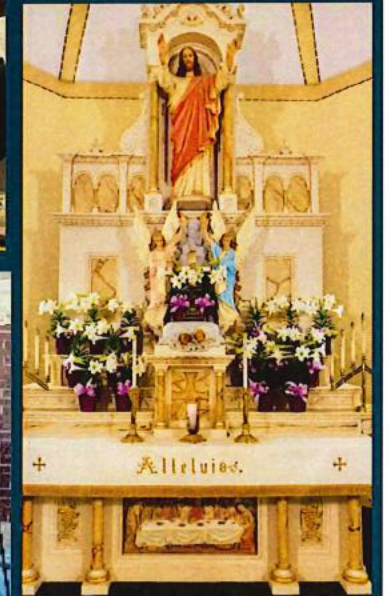
In his first year among us, Pastor Heath reminded us that the words of 1st Corinthians show how God's Spirit is alive in the many gifts shared throughout our community. This past year has been a beautiful testimony to that truth. From worship and music, service and fellowship, to outreach and care, we have seen how each person's unique offering strengthens the whole body.

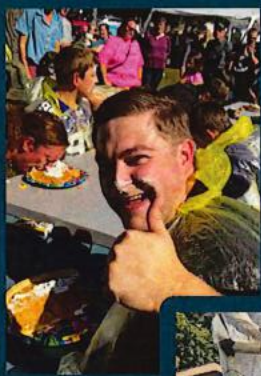
We celebrate that our congregation continues to thrive—not only because of the variety of gifts present, but because of the Spirit that unites us in purpose. Pastor Heath's joy in joining this vibrant community has been matched by our joy in welcoming him as our Pastor, and together we look forward to the many ways God will continue to work through us in the years ahead.



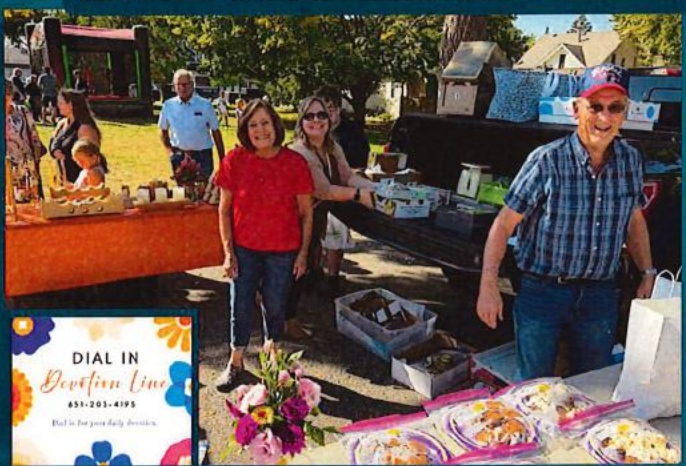
Join us for Bible Study
Wednesday September 10th and 24th we will meet from 10:30am - 11:30am - Join us in the Gathering space for a meaningful journey through the book **FREE OF CHARGE**, *Giving and Forgiving in a Culture Stripped of Grace*

Moments to Remember





Joy in Gathering



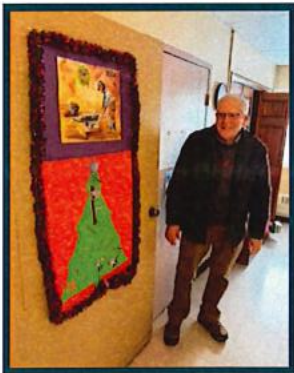
Worship



- Five confirmands publicly affirmed their baptisms.
- Numerous Midweek Lent and Holy Week services were offered.
- Special worship events engaged the wider community, including the Thanksgiving Ecumenical service, and Blue Christmas, a Service of Remembrance and Hope. We also held space for sorrow as school shootings and tragedy reached our hearts, lighting candles and lifting prayers during worship led by Pastor Heath.
- Sunday volunteers—readers, ushers, musicians, altar guild, acolytes, coffee hosts, and teachers—shaped worship with love and care

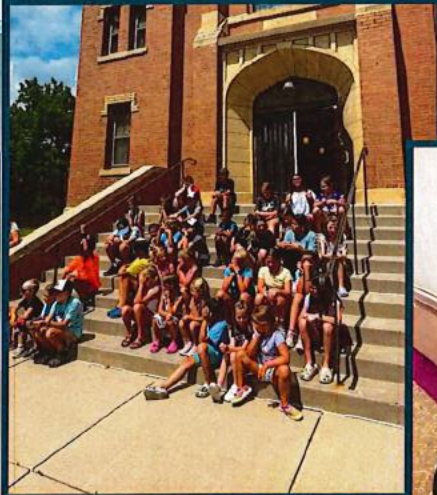
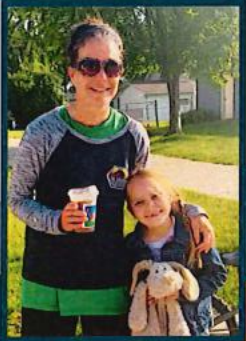
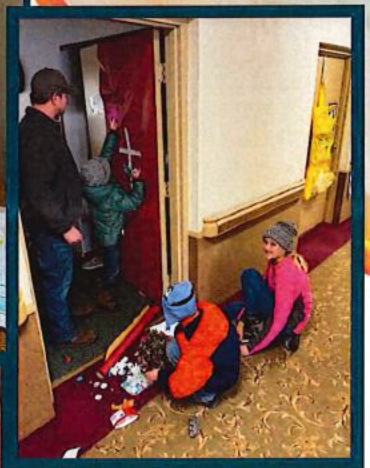
Connect and Serve

- Bible Study, Heart to Heart Team, Prayer Chain, Pen-Pal Program, + Worship Streaming resumed
- Ash Wednesday Soup Supper, Coffee Hour, and Adult VBS offering a host of opportunities
- Close to 70 children engaged in Christian Education throughout the year, along with the continuation of the Faith Forward Program
- Vacation Bible School Day Camp, Confirmation Camp, and a 'Socktober' campaign in memory of Kailey Mach, where we collected 200+ pair of socks and donated them to Partners in Housing, Mankato
- Fellowship Events, including Movie Nights, Oktoberfest, a Birthday Party for Jesus, Trivia Night, Book Club, and much more!



The kingdom belongs to such as these

Mark 10:14



Make a Joyful Noise

Music continues to be a vital part of our worship life, and we are deeply grateful for all who share their gifts with the congregation. Toward the end of the year, Tara Larson stepped down from her role as Choir Director. We give thanks for the leadership and dedication she offered during her time in that position, and for the ways she helped nurture the choir's ministry among us. We are also grateful to Lori Gieseke, who has so graciously stepped forward to lead the choir during January and February of the new year while we search for a new director. Her willingness to share her gifts ensures that the choir's joyful witness continues without pause, and we give thanks for her faithful service.

We are blessed with many musicians who enrich our worship in different ways—our Sunday organist, Robyn Menk, who has faithfully served for over 45 years. Robyn is a lifelong member whose love for music has shaped generations. Her entire family carries extraordinary gifts of song and instrument, and though they could share their talents anywhere, they choose to come “home” on holidays to lift our worship. Under Robyn's guiding presence, they blend their voices and instruments into harmonies that sound like a choir of angels, offering us music that is both breathtaking and deeply rooted in love. Robyn's devotion, her insistence on excellence, and her nurturing of her family's God-given gifts have blessed this congregation beyond measure.

We also give thanks for Chris and Taylor Engel, whose guitar, violin, and song bring a heartfelt warmth to our services. Their style defies easy labels, carrying a folksy spirit that feels both familiar and fresh, inviting us into praise with joy and tenderness. We are grateful not only for their gifts, but also for the care and rehearsal they devote to each offering, which makes their music a true ministry among us.

The choir continues to be a joyful witness to God's presence. Though only a little over a year into its ministry, the choir represents a dream long held by many in our congregation. Its formation has brought energy and enthusiasm, and even amid the natural bumps of beginning something new, the spirit of its members shines through. Their voices encourage us in worship and hold the promise of inspiring others to join, so that this ministry may continue to grow and flourish.

A special thank you to Pat Onken, who graciously stepped in as organist while Robyn was away this past summer. Pat is a true professional with a huge heart, and her perfectionism shines through in the joy she brings to every note. We were deeply blessed that she said “yes” when called, and her dedication enriched our worship in ways words can hardly capture. What a gift she is to our congregation!



ST. PAUL EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

232 West Minnesota Street
Le Center, Minnesota
Pastor Heath Queen

Pastor's Phone	(Residence: 14813 Hillside Lane, Burnsville MN 55306)	740 412-1559
Church Office Phone		507 357-2212
Church Office e-mail address	stpauluj@frontiernet.net	
Church's Website:	www.stpaul-lc.org	

OUR STAFF

Church Office Manager Treasurer	Tammy Anderson	651 334-1773
Custodian	Julie Scott	507-995-1260
Bible Discovery Coordinator	Melissa Engel	
Memorial Secretary	Tammy Anderson	651 337-1773
Organists	Robyn Menk	507-995-1812

ORGANIZATIONS OF THE CONGREGATION

Women of the ELCA (ELCW): Officers

2025 Altar Guild:

Chair.....*Position Remains Open*
Treasurer.....Denise Helland
Recorder.....*Position Remains Open*

Treasurer..... Tammy Anderson

*Note: This group remains inactive

Annual Meeting Agenda

ST. PAUL EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

January 18, 2026 10:00 A.M. - Le Center, Minnesota

- I. OPENING DEVOTIONS
 - A. Prayer
 - B. Silent Prayer for Families of Members who have joined the Church Triumphant
- II. ADOPTION OF AGENDA
- III. REPORTS
 - A. Secretary's Report: Minutes of the 2024 Annual Meeting,
 - B. Treasurer's Report
 - C. Pastor's Report
 - D. Committee Reports
 - 1. Youth & Education
 - 2. Evangelism & Worship
 - 3. Property & Management
 - 4. Stewardship
 - 5. Other Reports
- IV. ELECTIONS
 - A. Election of Church Council
 - 1. Jessica Whipps
 - 2. Patty Tiede
 - 3. Travis Christensen
 - B. Delegates & Alternates to S.E. Minnesota Synod Assembly on Saturday, May 2nd, in Mankato.
 - 1. Delegates
 - 2. Alternates
 - C. Nominating Committee: 1. 2. 3.
 - D. Endowment Committee: 1. Wayne Krohn 2. Les Hartwig
- V. UNFINISHED BUSINESS
- VI. NEW BUSINESS
 - 1. Strategic Goals Outline
- VII. APPROVAL OF 2026 BUDGET
- VIII. ADJOURNMENT
- IX. CLOSING PRAYER

**St Paul Lutheran Annual Congregational Meeting Minutes
January 19, 2025**

Council President Travis Christensen called the 2025 Annual Congregational Meeting to order.

Pastor Heath Queen offered an Opening Prayer.

Adoption of Agenda: President Travis reviewed the meeting agenda. There was a motion made for the approval of application of the Mittman family for membership to St Paul Lutheran. A motion was made by Jessica Whipps for membership approval of the Mittman family. A second was made by Kit Schley. Motion carried. A motion was made by Kelly Mittman to accept the agenda. Jessica Whipps seconded. Motion carried.

Reports: A review of submitted reports was conducted.

1. Secretary's Report: Minutes for the January 21, 2024 Annual Meeting were presented. Kevin Engel made a motion to accept the Secretary's minutes as printed on page 2. Bonnie Hartwig seconded the motion. Motion carried.

2. Treasurer's Report: Wendy Claffey made a motion to accept the Treasurer's Report as written. Wesley Bednar seconded the motion. Motion carried 3.

Pastor's Report: Ellen Erkel made a motion to accept Pastor Heath Queen's report as printed on pages 4 and 5. Lori Collins seconded the motion. Motion carried. 4. Committee Reports: Church statistics are found on page 6.

Committee reports are found on pages 14-23. A motion was made by Kevin Engel to accept the committee reports. Brian Gieseke seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Elections:

1. **Election of Church Council:** Travis presented Karyl Engel and Wesley Bednar as nominees for church council. Travis called for further nominations two more times. Kit Schley made a motion to accept Wesley Bednar and Karyl Engel as the new Church Council members. Kelly Mittman seconded the motion. Motion carried.

2. **Delegates & Alternates for S.E. MN Convention 2025 May 30-31, 2025,** Mankato MN Julie Scott and Jane Sapp volunteered to be the Delegates. No Alternates came forward, A motion was not needed as these were volunteer positions.

3. **Nominating Committee:** There were no volunteers or nominations from the floor, this was tabled and referred to the council to find members to fill this committee

4. **Endowment Committee:** There were no openings for the committee at this time. Unfinished Business: There was no unfinished business to be discussed. New Business: There was no new business to be discussed.

Approval of the 2025 Budget: After review of the 2025 budget, President Travis asked for a motion to accept the 2025 Budget, Wendy Claffey made a motion to accept the 2025 budget. Bonnie Hartwig seconded the motion. Motion carried.

President Travis wanted to share a deep felt thank you to all the volunteers who help keep our church active and vital.

Adjournment: A motion to close the 2025 Annual Congregational meeting was made by Jessica Whipps and seconded by Julie Scott. Motion carried.

The meeting closed with the Lord's Prayer

Respectfully Submitted, Karyl Engel, Council Secretary



Dear friends,

As I have been reflecting on our ministry at St. Paul over the past year, I've been thinking a lot about Moses. If you have a few minutes, I would challenge you to stop reading this letter and go read from Deuteronomy 34. After spending many years leading God's people through the wilderness and after their release from slavery in Egypt, this story captures the moment when Moses reaches the end of his life. In the story, Moses goes up to a mountaintop and God finally shows him the promised land in the distance. He points out to Moses the land into which God had been leading the people and the land for which Moses had labored diligently to bring the Israelites. Except, as Moses sees this land, the land that is often described as "flowing with milk and honey," the text tells us of something surprising. It says:

"The Lord said to him, "This is the land of which I swore to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, saying, 'I will give it to your descendants.' I have let you see it with your eyes, but you shall not cross over there."
Deuteronomy 34:4 (NRSVue)

What do you mean that Moses will not enter the promised land? He worked so hard for this! Moses faced Pharaoh and claimed freedom for God's people. He led them across the Red Sea. He dealt with their constant grumbling. He followed God and received the law. He remained faithful, and yet, in the very next verse of Deuteronomy and just as the people are about to see the fulfillment of all they had been waiting for, we are told that Moses died. How is that fair? We think, "shouldn't God have let Moses experience the fruit of his labor, at least for a short time?"

The truth is, we modern Christians live in a culture that is driven by immediacy. We long for immediate results, gratification, and success. We don't like to wait, and we don't like the parts of Scripture that call us to "labor" in the Lord, especially when there is no guarantee that we will be rewarded with a harvest. For so many of us, we see this story of Moses and think, "what a shame! All that work, and for nothing?" You see, we like to measure our success or failure today by its immediate results. We are constantly chasing the present and in doing so, we can't fathom how Moses could possibly have accepted this fate!

Yet, the story of God's people doesn't end with Moses on the mountain. Rather, this was just the beginning. What started through the labor of Moses continued after he was no longer in the picture. God's people, through hardship and success, grew and multiplied. The best testimony to the fruit that was borne through the labor of Moses are the 61 books of the Bible that come after Deuteronomy. What began with Moses leading God's people to freedom blossomed, and the people continued into God's promised future. Moses might not have been able to see the fruit or the results, but he was nevertheless involved and responsible for all that would come. Without the faithfulness of Moses, who knows where we would be!

All of this resonates with me, as I reflect on the labors and faithfulness of our congregation in 2025! You worked hard last year! We continued our labor of love to make this place a welcoming community that draws our neighbors in. We worked hard to pass on our faith to our children in creative ways. We worked hard to keep our facility in good condition and to ensure

that it is inviting for all who gather here. We worked hard to reach out to our Le Center community with free coffee and events like Oktoberfest. We worked hard to care for our church members who are unable to be with us in person. Yet, amid our work in 2025, it is sometimes hard to see the full results or fruit of that labor in the present moment. Sometimes, like Moses, we work and labor faithfully for the Gospel, not knowing whether we will get to see the blessings that follow. Sometimes, we will only recognize or experience the fruit of our labor, long into the future. Sometimes, it will only be realized by those who come after us. Nevertheless, we are called to invest in this place, and we certainly did that well in 2025.

Here are just a few items that I would like to highlight from the year:

- **Administration & Technology:** This year, we onboarded a new Church Management System (CMS) to better track membership data and giving. This new tool, called CH Meetings, will allow greater access for our members and will help make things easier for us in the office to keep track of our growing family! Additionally, I developed and presented a new “annual review” process that will take place yearly between council and church staff to help us stay accountable for the ministry that we share. Council approved this process, and we will begin implementing that in April-May of 2026.
- **Goal Setting:** Throughout the year, council and members had discussions/retreats focused on looking at the future of our congregation. We gathered comments on the needs and challenges that we face. We talked about what we are doing well and where we need to improve. As a result, we are now moving forward with presenting the congregation with a set of overarching goals to guide our work over the next 2-3 years.
- **Faith Forward:** We continued our family ministry programming last year, hosting many “family ministry nights” geared towards bringing families together to share/pass-on their faith. In 2025, we also added a “Nursing Home Door Decorating” event to help families practice the art of service as a unique way to share and express our faith!
- **Life Milestones:** I was privileged with the opportunity to conduct 5 baptisms, 1 wedding ceremony, 1 new home blessing, and 11 funerals. I also enjoyed providing pastoral care and home visits to many who are on our homebound list. As for membership, we welcomed 11 individuals into our congregation in 2025! Thanks be to God!
- **Adult Education:** We generally hosted Bible study twice a month on Wednesday mornings. In the spring, we finished our series on Dietrich Bonhoeffer and began a new series on “forgiveness” and “grace” in the fall season.
- **Worship:** We were blessed to be able to use a special liturgy, written by St. Olaf College, for our “midweek Lent” services. The theme for our season of Lent was structured around the title “Broken and Beloved: Stories of God’s Steadfast Love.” In the fall, we continued hosting our Oktoberfest “Polka” service and during Advent, our Blue Christmas Service. We also continued our monthly worship services at Central Healthcare and Carriage House in Le Center. One fun note from this year was that, for the first time in a while, we held a beautiful wedding ceremony in our sanctuary space!
- **Adult VBS:** Our summer programming for adults continued with multiple fun events that brought us together. We hosted a trivia night at Next Chapter Winery, a couple of book

group discussions, and even two Sunday morning “adult forums” on special topics! Unfortunately, our “holy hike” was rained out, but will be rescheduled in 2026!

- **Community Involvement:** I continued trying to be a visible presence in the community through serving at the Community Club fair booth, offering the invocation at TCU’s Veteran’s Day program, and through preaching at the annual Ecumenical Thanksgiving Service that was hosted by St. Mary’s Catholic Church.
- **Youth & Ed:** In the fall, we marked the return of our high school youth program, called “Pulse.” This is a growing edge for us, and we look forward to continuing to build on that. As of this report, we have approximately 26 confirmation students and 50+ Bible Discovery students enrolled this year. In May, 5 of our 9th graders were confirmed during worship and 13 kids attended summer camp at Shetek Lutheran Ministries in Slayton, MN. We also had Shetek counselors join us to put on our annual VBS program in August with over 30+ kids from the community in attendance.
- **Synod Relationships:** This past year, I was elected to serve our synod on the “Conference of Deans.” In this capacity, I have the privilege of helping to lead our Minnesota River conference of churches/pastors, covering Blue Earth, Waseca, Le Sueur, and Steele counties. Additionally, in May of this year, Jane Sapp and Julie Scott joined me at our Southeastern Minnesota Synod Assembly where we conducted the business of our larger church and re-elected Bishop Regina Hassanally for another 6-year term.
- **Continuing-Ed:** I continue to appreciate your support for my participation in continuing-education programs. I regularly spent time with other pastors learning and growing over at Gustavus Adolphus College in St. Peter (through their Continuous Growth Pathways program) and at our required Fall Theological pastors retreat in Onalaska, WI.

Yet again, I would remind us that the fruit of all this work will only be recognized in time, and maybe only by those who come after us. However, regardless of whether we experience the fruit, this work to which we have been called together is good and holy. Each of us has been given the gift of ministry to our people here in Le Center and together we are participating in God’s work in the world. Regardless of how things might feel in each moment, that work is never in vain!

Know that I am grateful for you and for all the members of this congregation. It is truly a privilege to serve you, and I look forward to this new year. As always, if you have any questions about this report, please don’t hesitate to reach out. I am always available to support you and to help you figure out how to plug into what God is up to at St. Paul. Peace to you all!

In Gratitude,



Pastor Heath Queen

STATISTICS OF CONGREGATION, 2025

by Tammy Anderson

Members & *inactive or non-members of St. Paul Lutheran who died during 2025:

	<u>Date of Death</u>	<u>Age</u>
Dennis Hruby	1/17/25	73
Gordon Ellanson	2/02/25	84
Ronald Mentjes	3/11/25	82
Robert Sapp	3/12/25	73
Cheryl Collins	4/11/25	76
Beth Barber	4/17/25	97
Mamie Knish	4/22/25	94
Robert Bohlen	6/02/25	90
Karen Bosacker	8/02/25	83
Myrna Scheffert	9/30/25	87
*Alice Ely	9/12/25	91
Harlan Meyer (*non-member)	11/23/25	98



WEDDINGS:

Jackson Gordon Mueller and Megan Elizabeth Rabenberg 9/20/25

BAPTISMS: John Paul Cesafsky, Grayson Leo Bock, Jack Harvey Stiehm, Dylan Tyler Crossley, and Theodore James Odenthal.

CONFIRMATION (Affirmation of Baptism): Gabriel Coryell, Taylor Engel, Jackson Kempenich, Owen Lloyd, and Brooklynn Schley.

THOSE WHO WERE TRANSFERRED to other congregations during 2025: Robert & Linda Joseph

NEW MEMBERS RECEIVED: Richard & Kelly Mittman and family, Paul & Patti Schuett, John & Joyce Bornholdt, Jackson and Megan Mueller, Blake Bock, Brady Steinborn, and Mitchell Blaschko.

Mission Statement of St. Paul Evangelical Lutheran Church

Adopted March 1999

As people called by God, we gather to worship and praise Him in a safe sanctuary where all people are invited to learn and grow in the word of God with unity and fellowship.

We support each other in faith and obedience to Christ. We love, care, and respect one another as God's people. We commit ourselves to serve and to tell others about Jesus. We pursue God's love and peace in every area of life.

The faithfulness of our gracious Lord provides sense to our days and hope for our future.

Congregational Report for Year Ending December 31, 2025

Submitted by: Tammy Anderson

1. Membership, end of 2024		496
2. Members received confirmed during 2024		
a. By Baptism (15yrs & younger)	4	
b. By Baptism (Adults 16 & Older)	1	
c. By Affirmation of Faith	0	
d. By Transfer	11	
e. From Other Source & Statistical Adjustment	0	
h. Total Members Received this Year		16
3. Members Removed during 2025		
a. By Death	11	
b. By Transfer	2	
*c. For Other Reasons & Statistical Adjustment		
d. Total Members Removed this Year		13
4. Membership, End of 2025	=	499

Comparison Report

	<u>2021</u>	<u>2022</u>	<u>2023</u>	<u>2024</u>	<u>2025</u>
Baptized Member	507	508	493	496	499
Confirmed Members	408	412	414	425	430
Avg. Sunday Attendace	*not calculated	83	75	98	94

Average Weekly Worship Attendance in 2021

*Not calculated due to the COVID-19 Pandemic and the number of weeks that in-person worship was suspended as a result.

	2024 Approved	2024 Actual	2025 Approved	2025 Actual	2026 Proposed	
Stewardship:						
Camp Ministry	\$ 1,400.00	\$ -	\$ 1,400.00	\$ 500.00	\$ 500.00	
SE Minnesota Synod	\$ 4,500.00	\$ 4,500.00	\$ 4,500.00	\$ 4,500.00	\$ 4,000.00	
MN River Conf Dues	\$ 160.00	\$ 160.00	\$ 160.00	\$ 160.00	\$ 160.00	
Other/Advertising Church & Svcs	\$ 650.00	\$ 148.49	\$ 500.00	\$ 545.00	\$ 500.00	
Offering Envelopes/Stewardship	\$ 900.00	\$ 465.57	\$ 900.00	\$ 501.06	\$ 900.00	
Lutheran Social Services	\$ 1,200.00	\$ 1,200.00	\$ 1,200.00	\$ 1,200.00	\$ 1,200.00	
TCU Post Prom Donation	\$ 100.00	\$ 100.00	\$ 100.00	\$ 100.00	\$ 100.00	
Lutheran Campus Ministry	\$ 250.00	\$ 250.00	\$ 250.00	\$ 250.00	\$ 250.00	
Le Center Food Shelf					\$ 250.00	
Sub Total	\$ 9,160.00	\$ 6,824.06	\$ 9,010.00	\$ 7,756.06	\$ 7,860.00	
Education & Youth:						
Sunday School Materials/Supplie	\$ 2,500.00	\$ 2,027.96	\$ 1,500.00	\$ 901.19	\$ 1,250.00	
Vacation Bible School	\$ 2,500.00	\$ 2,221.21	\$ 2,500.00	\$ 2,340.32	\$ 2,500.00	
Confirmation Materials	\$ 700.00	\$ 497.94	\$ 500.00	\$ 681.30	\$ 750.00	
Youth Activities	\$ 500.00	\$ 400.00				
Confirmation/Graduation Gifts	\$ 250.00	\$ 316.51	\$ 200.00	\$ 110.08	\$ 200.00	
Sub Total	\$ 6,450.00	\$ 5,463.62	\$ 4,700.00	\$ 4,032.89	\$ 4,700.00	
Evangelism & Worship:						
Guest Pastors	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 50.00	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 847.00	\$ 1,000.00	
Organists	\$ 8,500.00	\$ 8,050.00	\$ 9,000.00	\$ 7,400.00	\$ 9,000.00	
Office Staff Cont. Education	\$ 400.00	\$ 380.00	\$ 400.00	\$ 221.03	\$ 400.00	
Worship Supplies	\$ 3,000.00	\$ 3,558.12	\$ 3,000.00	\$ 3,158.70	\$ 3,000.00	
Office Supplies	\$ 2,800.00	\$ 2,883.72	\$ 2,800.00	\$ 2,081.18	\$ 2,800.00	
Choir Director/Piano Player	\$ 4,000.00	\$ 1,600.00	\$ 4,000.00	\$ 3,950.55	\$ 3,700.00	
Choir Music Orders				\$ 147.75	\$ 300.00	
Synod Conf/Conversions	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 775.00	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 1,038.08	\$ 1,000.00	
Fellowship	\$ 2,500.00	\$ 798.95	\$ 1,500.00	\$ 1,426.52	\$ 1,500.00	
Streaming/CCLI License					\$ 600.00	
Sub Total	\$ 23,200.00	\$ 18,095.79	\$ 22,700.00	\$ 20,270.81	\$ 23,300.00	
Property & Management						
Pastor Salary	\$ 33,899.06	\$ 33,899.04	\$ 38,006.40	\$ 38,006.40	\$ 40,750.70	
Pastor Housing Equity/Allow*	\$ 30,000.00	\$ 30,000.00	\$ 30,000.00	\$ 30,000.00	\$ 30,000.00	
Pastor Social Security Offset	\$ 4,888.32	\$ 4,888.32	\$ 5,202.49	\$ 5,202.49	\$ 5,412.43	
Pastor Maj. Medical & Pension	\$ 13,228.44	\$ 9,878.44	\$ 10,000.00	\$ 8,317.32	\$ 9,000.00	
Pastor Travel Allowance	\$ 750.00	\$ 348.95	\$ 750.00	\$ 636.93	\$ 750.00	
Pastor Cont. Education	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 500.00	\$ 800.00	\$ 800.00	\$ 800.00	
Parsonage Maint/Replacement	\$ 1,500.00	\$ 14,097.97	\$ 1,500.00	\$ 1,200.00	\$ 1,500.00	
Office Manager Salary	\$ 34,894.08	\$ 38,946.78	\$ 36,987.72	\$ 39,816.10	\$ 38,097.35	
Office Manager Medical/Pension	\$ 16,193.92	\$ 16,193.88	\$ 17,003.30	\$ 17,003.28	\$ 17,513.40	
Church Share SS Expenses	\$ 3,675.00	\$ 3,965.00	\$ 4,116.24	\$ 4,266.40	\$ 5,367.82	
Postage	\$ 3,000.00	\$ 2,847.69	\$ 3,000.00	\$ 3,595.50	\$ 2,750.00	
Repairs & Maintenance	\$ 5,000.00	\$ 1,986.96	\$ 6,000.00	\$ 3,996.37	\$ 5,000.00	
Snow Removal	\$ 750.00	\$ 844.00	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 1,640.00	\$ 1,000.00	
Yard Maintenance	\$ 800.00	\$ 1,140.68	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 680.57	\$ 1,000.00	
Custodian Contract	\$ 12,377.77	\$ 12,377.76	\$ 12,400.00	\$ 12,400.00	\$ 12,400.00	
Office Machine Expense	\$ 5,000.00	\$ 6,239.50	\$ 5,000.00	\$ 6,531.16	\$ 5,000.00	
Elevator Maintenance	\$ 1,400.00	\$ 1,009.05	\$ 1,300.00	\$ 1,116.55	\$ 1,300.00	
Janitorial Supplies + Misc	\$ 1,100.00	\$ 927.36	\$ 1,200.00	\$ 1,428.34	\$ 1,200.00	
Bldg Ins & Workers Comp	\$ 16,200.00	\$ 16,113.18	\$ 16,200.00	\$ 17,484.02	\$ 18,600.00	
Parsonage Utilities	\$ 500.00		\$ -			
Church Utilities	\$ 15,000.00	\$ 20,081.68	\$ 19,000.00	\$ 13,117.74	\$ 18,000.00	
Misc Expenses	\$ 3,000.00	\$ 1,294.69	\$ 2,000.00	\$ 2,408.57	\$ 1,750.00	
Church Communication App			\$ 400.00	\$ 480.00	\$ 480.00	
Parsonage Property Taxes					\$ 5,708.00	
Loan Interest Pmts FNB		\$ 209.01				
Sub Total:	\$ 204,156.59	\$ 217,789.94	\$ 212,866.15	\$ 210,127.74	\$ 223,379.70	
Grand Total:	\$ 242,966.59	\$ 248,173.41	\$ 249,276.15	\$ 242,187.50	\$ 259,239.70	

MEMORIALS OF ST PAUL LUTHERAN CHURCH

Breakdown of Memorial Donations Received in 2025

Cheryl Collins	\$ 1,155.00	<i>In addition to this memorial for Cheryl, a laptop was gifted to the congregation to support the live streaming of worship services.</i>
Beth Barber	\$ 20.00	
Ron Mentjes	\$ 370.00	
Bob Sapp	\$ 1,060.00	
Bob Bohlen	\$ 25.00	
Mamie Knish	\$ 1,000.00	
Christine Menk	\$ 20.00	
Karen Bosacker	\$ 100.00	
Nona Osa	\$ 125.00	
<i>Total</i>	<u>\$ 3,875.00</u>	

BALANCE OF SPECIFIED & UNSPECIFIED FUNDS AS OF 12-31-25

NOT SPECIFIED	\$ 816.00	
BUD SHIPPMAN	\$ 755.62	
AXEL BOETTCHER	\$ 345.00	
HYMNALS/MUSIC	\$ 188.40	
CERTIFICATE	\$ 11,195.76	<i>*renews May 2027</i>
SS WINDOWS	\$ 625.00	
YOUTH & MINISTRY	\$ 2,042.36	
SUNDAY SCHOOL	\$ 1,780.09	
LAVERNA PICKA	\$ 840.00	
YOUTH & ED	\$ 1,457.00	
STAINED GLASS	\$ 250.00	
MARILYN EHLERS	\$ 5,911.00	
MARILYN REDDEMANN	\$ 1,500.00	
GATHERING SPACE	\$ 1,675.00	
PROPERTY & MAINT.	\$ 500.00	
CHOIR	\$ 320.00	
CAMP	\$ 400.00	
HEART TO HEART	\$ 570.00	

BALANCE IN ACCTS 12-31-25

CHECKING	\$ 20,533.87
*CERTIFICATE	\$ 11,295.76

\$ **31,829.63** *Held at First State Bank*

**Note this amount was incorrectly stated in last year's report.*

**Submitted by,
Tammy Anderson, Memorial Secretary**

Music Fund

Beginning Balance 1/1/25		\$6,568.55
Income:		
Interest	8.10	
Interest	8.20	
Interest	8.30	
Interest	8.31	
	<u>Subtotal</u>	32.91
Expenses:	0.00	
Ending Balance 12/31/25		\$6,601.46

Property & Maintenance Fund

Beginning Balance 1/1/25		\$2,846.43
Income:		
Interest	5.26	
Interest	5.33	
Interest	5.4	
Interest	5.41	
	<u>Subtotal</u>	21.40
Expenses:	0.00	
Ending Balance: 12/31/25		\$2,867.83

Coffee Hour Fund

Beginning Balance 1/1/25		\$1,079.51
Income:		
Deposit	157.00	
Deposit	307.00	
Deposit	274.00	
Deposit	142.00	
Deposit	161.00	
Deposit	54.00	
Deposit	145.00	
Deposit	175.00	
Deposit	76.00	
Deposit	51.00	
Interest	6.92	
	<u>Subtotal</u>	1,548.92
Expenses:		
	414.01	
	136.88	
	89.88	
	154.58	
	<u>Subtotal</u>	795.35
Ending Balance 12/31/25		\$1,833.08

Mission Investment Fund of ELCA

Beginning Balance 1/1/24 \$ 2,378.27

Income:

Interest	18.27
Subtotal	18.27

Expense:

Ending Balance 11/31/24 \$ 2,396.54

*Year-end statement not available at the printing of this report

Youth Opportunity Fund

Beginning Balance 1/1/25 \$ 17,797.45

Income:

Advent Calendars	1105.00	(For 2024)
Pioneer Power	292.00	
Pioneer Power	605.00	
Petty Cash Reimb	1200.00	
Pioneer Power	1596.00	
Pioneer Power	1939.00	
Pioneer Power	4713.00	
Pork Burger Sales	833.00	
Pork Burger Sales	547.00	
Oktoberfest Profits	3439.60	
Advent Calendars	364.00	(For 2025)
Subtotal	16,633.60	

Expense:

Stacy Sycks (Advent Calendars)	843.32	(Advent Calendars 2024)
Melissa Engel (Movie Night)	202.27	
LS County (Food Lic.)	55.00	(Pork Burger Booth Food Lic)
Petty Cash for Booth	1,200.00	
The Lunch Box (Fun Night)	975.00	(Year-End Family Fun Night Bible Discovery)
The Rolling Cones	492.00	(Year-End Family Fun Night Bible Discovery)
O'Keefe Meats	2,023.70	(Processing of Pork Burgers)
Pioneer Power (10% for 2024)	\$600.00	
Harware Hank (Ppower Supplies)	\$153.81	
St Paul Lutheran (Sam's Club)	449.06	
Mankato Moon Dogs	500.00	(Family Faith Night at the Ball Park)
CVLI Lic (Movie Streaming)	332.14	For 2025
Gillette Pepsi Co	857.00	
St Paul Lutheran Reimb for 24' Lic	332.00	
Shetek Lutheran Ministries	3,155.00	(Confirmation Camp)
Gustavus Adolphus	145.31	(breakfast for VBS Staff)
KCHK	100.00	(Advertisement for Oktoberfest)
Stacy Sycks (Advent Calendars)	364.00	(Advent Calendars 2025)
Subtotal	12,779.61	

Ending Balance: 12/31/25 \$21,651.44

ST. PAUL LUTHERAN – 2025 ELCA ENDOWMENT FUND INVESTMENTS

	<u>11/30/2023 *</u>	<u>11/30/2024 *</u>	<u>11/30/2025 *</u>
<u>ACCOUNT # E271839 - ST. PAUL LUTHERAN</u>	\$ 320,916.95	\$ 332,822.25	\$ 377,950.56
<u>CHURCH ENDOWMENT FUND</u>			
IN JAN, 2013, THE ENDOWMENT COMMITTEE DESIGNATED 3% OF THIS ACCOUNT TO BE RETURNED FOR DISPERSAL AT YEARS END. DUE TO STOCK MARKET VOLITILITY, SINCE 2021 WE HAVE ONLY TAKEN WITHDRAWALS WHEN NEEDED. 2021 VALUES WERE HIGH, 2022 VALUES WERE LOW, 2023 VALUES UP, 2024 VALUES HIGH UNTIL DEC DROP.			
<u>ACCOUNT # E271840 - ST. PAUL LUTHERAN</u>	\$ 370,164.47	\$ 435,943.94	\$ 495,055.10
ARE LEFT IN THIS ACCOUNT AS PER DONOR'S REQUEST.			
<u>ACCOUNT # E271841 – ST. PAUL LUTHERAN</u>	\$ 386,629.13	\$ 455,334.25	\$ 517,074.43
<u>CHURCH BOWLER (WILL) BUILDING ENDOWMENT</u>			
EARNINGS ARE LEFT IN THE ACCOUNT AS PER DONOR'S REQUEST.			
<u>ACCOUNT # E272033 - ST PAUL LUTHERAN</u>	\$ 34,943.28	\$ 41,152.78	\$ 46,732.82
<u>CHURCH WAGNER ENDOWMENT</u>			
DEPOSIT OF \$22,276.13 ON 07/11/14 – UNDESIGNATED FUND.			

THE INVESTMENT FEE IS 1/12TH OF 1% OF EACH ACCOUNT BALANCE EACH MONTH OR APPROXIMATELY 1% PER YEAR.

* YEAR-END STATEMENTS ARE NOT AVAILABLE UNTIL LATER IN JANUARY.

From 2015 to the present, the Endowment Fund has provided \$ 143,766.48 toward church projects. What a blessing!

IF YOU HAVE A DESIGNATED USE FOR YOUR GIFT, PLEASE MAKE THAT KNOWN.

CONSIDER A CHARITABLE GIFT ANNUITY

- CHARITABLE GIFT ANNUITIES ARE IRREVOCABLE GIFTS OF CASH, STOCK OR PROPERTY.
- INTEREST OR USE OF THE CHARITABLE GIFT GOES TO THE DONOR DURING DONOR'S LIFETIME
- UPON DEATH (OR BEFORE IF STIPULATED) PROCEEDS TRANSFER TO THE CHURCH.
- THE DONOR RECEIVES AN INCOME TAX DEDUCTION.
- SINGLE LIFE OR DUAL SURVIVOR OPTIONS ARE AVAILABLE.
- IF SO DESIRED, THE USE OF THE GIFT CAN BE DESIGNATED BY THE DONOR.

HELP YOURSELF TO AN INCOME TAX DEDUCTION; A LIFETIME INCOME ONLY PARTIALLY TAXED; THE PRINCIPAL CANNOT BE ENCUMBERED; IN THE FUTURE YOU HELP YOUR CHURCH FINANCIALLY.

CALL THE CHURCH OFFICE 357-2212 IF YOU WOULD LIKE MORE INFORMATION.....

**CONTACT: THARAN LEOPOLD, REGIONAL GIFT PLANNER, ELCA FOUNDATION, SE MN REG
2135 16TH ST. NW, FARIBAULT, MN 55021 (507) 838-1980 CELL OR (783) 380-6555 OFFICE
WEBSITE: www.elca.org/foundation E-MAIL: Tharan.leopold@elca.org**

**IMPROVE YOUR INCOME – TAX DEDUCTION – DESIGNATE YOUR GIFT'S USE
BENEFITS THE DONOR - BENEFITS THE CONGREGATION**

DONATING GIFTS SUCH AS AN IRA, APPRECIATED STOCK, MUTUAL FUNDS OR OTHER SECURITIES MAY RESULT IN TAX SAVINGS ON CAPITAL GAINS AS WELL AS A CHARITABLE DEDUCTION. WITH CERTAIN INVESTMENTS YOUR DECENDANTS PAY TAXES WHERE YOU OR YOUR CHURCH MAY NOT.

RMD (REQUIRED MINIMUM DISPERSEMENTS FROM YOUR IRA) AT AGE 73 (OR AGE 72 IF YOU WERE BORN BEFORE JULY 1, 1949) ARE SOMETHING TO CHECK INTO. PAY TO YOURSELF – PAY TAX - OR - MAKE A CHURCH DONATION - TAX FREE (EVEN IF YOU CAN'T ITEMIZE) - ASK YOUR FINANCIAL PLANNER - A METHOD TO STILL GET A TAX DEDUCTION FOR YOUR CHURCH CONTRIBUTIONS.

2025 ENDOWMENT FUND COMMITTEE: Chad Anderson, Kevin Engel, Bonnie Hartwig, Gary Johnson, Ken Schmidt (permanent member)

01-02-2026

ST. PAUL LUTHERAN CHURCH
2025 ENDOWMENT FUND FINANCIAL REPORT

MONEY ON HAND

	<u>BALANCE</u> <u>12-31-2024</u>	<u>2025 ACTIVITY</u>	<u>BALANCE</u> <u>12-31-2025</u>
<u>CD #41254 (3%) 6 Year Mission Investment Fund</u>	\$ 6,000.00		\$ 6,000.00
FACE VALUE OF THIS CD STAYS AT \$6000.00			
ORIGINATED FROM PASSBOOK SAVINGS 01/27/1988			
THE INTEREST IS DEPOSITED INTO S/A #9780			
<u>Passbook FSB S/A #9780</u>	\$ 1,586.73		
Insty Prints 05/16 – Endowment Brochures		- \$ 297.13	
2025 Interest from MIF CD #75477 (5Yr - 4.909%)		+ \$ 295.65	
2025 Interest from FSB S/A #9780		+ \$ 3.03	
<u>Passbook FSB S/A #9780</u>			\$ 1,588.08
TOTAL	<u>\$ 7,586.73</u>		<u>\$ 7,588.08.</u>

ANNUITY BENEFIT REPORT

	<u>12/31/24</u>	<u>12/31/25</u>
<u>AAL (THRIVENT) CERTIFICATE #03781154</u>	\$ 72,578.27	
THIS CERTIFICATE WAS CREATED (\$300) BY THE TRUST		
FUND COMMITTEE AS AN INVESTMENT TOOL (10-25-1993)		
\$ 490 WAS TRANSFERRED IN FROM CERT. #03826813 ON 7/9/03	+ 2,992.34	(2025 4.1 % interest)
\$21,110 TRANSFERED IN FROM CD 3/27/09 FROM 2007 KIEWATT GIFT		
\$28,879 TRANSFERED IN FROM CD 11/5/09 FROM 2007 KIEWATTGIFT		
THE PRINCIPAL IS INVESTED AND TO BE KEPT IN TACK. THIS FUND HAS		
NO DESIGNATION AND THE INTEREST MAY BE SPENT. IT IS PRESENTLY		
EARNING THE 3.5% MINIMUM GUARANTEED RATE		\$ 75,570.61
<u>AAL (THRIVENT) CERTIFICATE #03826813</u>	\$ 44,897.07	
THIS CERTIFICATE WAS DONATED (\$300) BY A CHURCH		
MEMBER AS AN INVESTMENT TOOL (6-30-1994)		
AAL (BOWLER) LIFE INSURANCE CERTIFICATE #07257616		
(DEATH 5/7/03) PROCEEDS (\$ 25,088.41) WERE DEPOSITED ON 6/11/03.		
IT IS PRESENTLY EARNING THE 3.5% MINIMUM GUARANTEED RATE. + 1,851.07		(2025 4.1 % interest)
THE PRINCIPAL HAS A DESIGNATION FOR 25 YEARS (July 2028) AND THE		
ANNUAL INTEREST MAY BE SPENT AFTER THE 1 ST TEN YEARS (July 2013).		\$ 46,748.14

2025 ENDOWMENT FUND COMMITTEE: Chad Anderson, Kevin Engel, Bonnie Hartwig, Gary Johnson, Ken Schmidt
(permanent member)

01-02-2026

CRADLE ROLL

by Tammy Anderson



Children are included on the Cradle Roll beginning at baptism and remain there until they either enroll in Bible Discovery or transfer to another congregation. As of December 31, 2025, St. Paul Lutheran's Cradle Roll lists 22 children. When a child reaches Kindergarten age and begins Bible Discovery Classes, their name is removed from the Cradle Roll.

<u>NAME</u>	<u>BIRTHDAY</u>	<u>DATE OF BAPTISM</u>
Lenny Rose Fogarty	1/26/21	3/21/21
Winry Mae Streed	8/11/20	5/22/21
Parker Robert Heilman	10/23/20	6/05/21
Madison Lucille Kopet	11/30/21	3/03/22
Sadie Marie Paulsen	6/23/21	8/08/21
Evelyn Anne Nichols	6/06/21	9/19/21
Alissa Lee Lloyd	7/02/22	9/11/22
Charlie John Paulsen	10/26/22	4/02/23
Scotty Jay Fogarty	5/19/23	8/13/23
Ella Louise Queen	8/02/23	4/07/24
Eleanor Rae Nichols	7/27/23	11/24/24
Griffin Jack Nichols	7/27/23	11/24/24
Raegn Charlie Lamply	8/27/24	12/22/24
JohnPaul Jay Cesafsky	4/23/25	6/01/25
Grayson Leo Bock	4/27/25	6/22/25
Jack Harvey Stiehm	5/17/2025	8/03/25
Theodore James Odenthal	6/14/25	10/26/25

Youth and Education Committee Annual Report 2025

Members: Wes Bednar, Melissa Engel, Stacy Sycks, Nicole Fonseca and Missy Shippman

We are very blessed to report that 2025 was a great year for St Paul's Youth. We may have made slight changes to the ongoing events, but, all in all, the usual platforms continued to run great and so we continued on in those ways. Volunteers continue to step up and our numbers continue to remain strong.

The newest programming addition to the year was that of the PULSE group. Pastor Heath is working hard to engage those High Schoolers after Confirmation by creating this group for grades 9-12. The group started in the Fall and is meeting once a month. Although it's still gaining steam, we look forward to watching this grow and allowing these age groups to continue exploring their Faith.

Our youngest age groups, PreK – Grade 6 continue to meet on Wednesday nights during the traditional school year. Melissa Engel continues to offer such sincere leadership into the classes by organizing lessons, teachers, activities, you name it! Lori Gieseke so graciously offers her leadership and musical talents by bringing the week's lesson full circle at a group closing. And many parent volunteers offer their worthy time to lead classes each week. The halls are busy; the rooms are full; and the kids are anxiously learning God's good works. An item to note: Melissa is well beyond her term as Coordinator and will be stepping away after this year. We will have some big shoes to fill and would love to hear from anyone willing to take the torch. We as a committee are ready to help facilitate this transition to help make it as smooth and straightforward as possible. We're also open to anyone bringing new ideas to the table. This will be our biggest challenge in the year ahead.

Confirmation classes, grades 7-9, continue to plug away wonderfully – a well-oiled machine! The last Spring class saw five confirmands. There are approximately 25 students total, with the next Confirmand group looking to include 7-8 students. Tricia Christensen, Lisa Simon, Jessica Whipps, Jane Sapp, Barb Krohn and Pastor Heath graciously mentor this group – which is truly a deep level of commitment and we're very thankful for their leadership.

Confirmation Camp this year was held at Shetek Ministries. The 7th grade group enjoyed three nights of outdoor activities, canoeing, tenting, and fellowship opportunities with Pastor Heath and the Shetek Counselors. Although this has gone well, we might explore additional options for future years.

Vacation Bible School also utilized Shetek Counselors to lead our summer program. All went great, but we do see opportunity to revamp here as well. We will be brainstorming on what that looks like next Summer and again we're open to any new insight anyone has to offer.

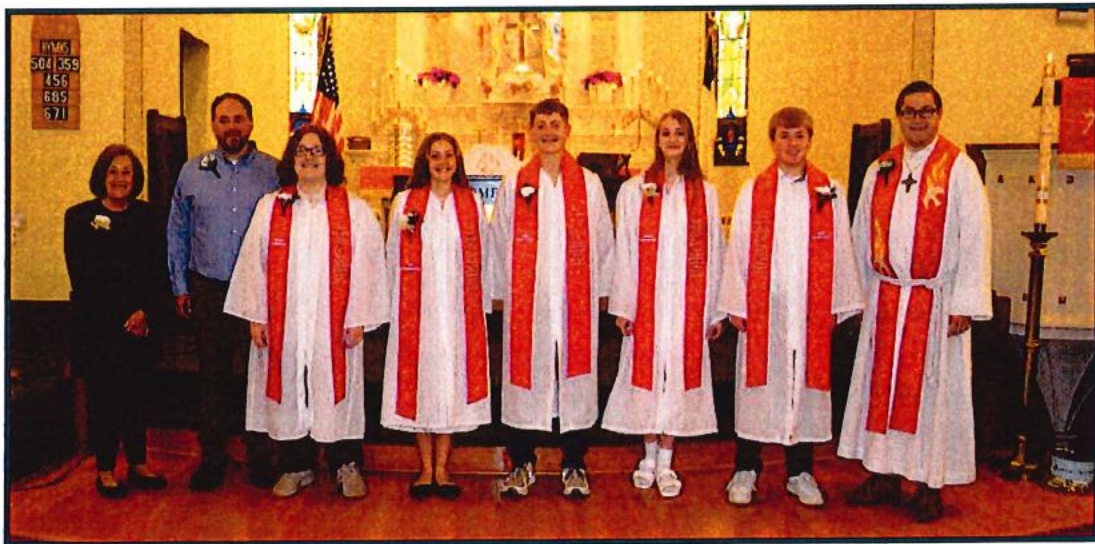
Our main fundraisers were the tried and true: Pioneer Power Pork Burger Stand and the annual Oktoberfest event. Pioneer Power was led by Chris and Melissa Engel and Stacy Sycks and much of the food and manpower were donated, including an anonymous donation of the pork patties, to make for another great year.

The weather was in our favor and we did well. Oktoberfest was also a beautiful day filled with polka music, brats, beer, youth activities, wine pull, generous raffle and pie eating contests that had many people smiling. The Farmer's Market was a great hit again. This was led by Travis and Tricia Christensen, Chris and Melissa Engel and Barb and Wayne Krohn. These are both Congregation-wide events and we thank everyone for embracing these with us.

We think some of our funnest and rewarding moments are those when we gather as families. Pastor Heath hosting Faith Forward nights, Summer and Christmas movie nights, Bingo, Youth Sundays – all continue to showcase how fellowship really is a big part of our Faith, as it brings all generations together to learn from and enjoy each other's company.

Thank you, truly, for embracing our Youth in such welcoming ways. This report doesn't nearly encompass all the wonderful ways we're able to connect, so we encourage you to just continue to see us – see the full halls each Wednesday night, or the cheerful young smiles at Coffee Hour, or the families across the table while enjoying a burger or brat. That's how we feel we're seeing God's Work in its finest form.

Respectfully submitted by
Stacy Sycks, Chair



2025 Confirmands: Confirmation Coordinator, Barb Krohn, Mentor, Chris Engel, Jackson Kempenich, Taylor Engel, Gabriel Coryell, Brooklynn Schley, Owen Lloyd, and Pastor Heath Queen

Evangelism and Worship Committee 2025 Annual Report

Committee members: Lori Collins, Karyl Engel, Connie Johnson, Patty Tiede, and Denise Traxler

Many things to be grateful for in regard to ways we've worshipped together and how we share our faith with others in this past year. Here is a summary of the things this committee was part of:

- Live streaming is now up and running, grateful to those who are now volunteering to make this happen each Sunday.
- We were blessing with beautiful music from our choir, grateful for the members and Tara Larson's work with them, praying a new director can be found so this "joyful noise" can continue.
- Food and fellowship events included Ash Wednesday soup supper, Confirmation Sunday coffee hour, outdoor service (moved inside due to weather) with donuts and drinks.
- Assisted Pastor Heath in finalizing funeral guidelines in regard to a meal held in the church's social hall following the service.
- Initiated church attendance cards that are being used by the ushers as reminders to count attendance and note special duties that may be needed during the service (thanks Tammy!)

Thank you to the following:

- Everyone who help make each worship happy (altar guild, organists, musicians, choir, acolytes, ushers, readers, attendees, Julie, Tammy, and of course, Pastor Heath)
- Coffee Hour volunteers for the food and drink they provide so we can gather together in fellowship.
- Robyn and Carl Menk for repairing the organ when needed.

May 2026 be a year of faithful worship and innovative evangelism.

Respectfully Submitted by
Lori Collins
Evangelism and Worship Chair

Stewardship 2025 Annual Report

Theme: ***God Our Help: Remembering Ages Past. Hoping for Years to Come.***

This year's stewardship theme invited us to pause and reflect on God's faithfulness through the generations, while also looking ahead with trust in what God will continue to do among us. At Synod Assembly last spring, we were reminded of two simple but profound truths: to remember what God has already done, and to prepare for what God will do next.

As people of faith, we live in the promise of death and resurrection. That promise gives us confidence to look back with gratitude—seeing how God has shepherded the church through times of peace and war, abundance and scarcity—and to look forward with hope, knowing that God's Spirit will continue to guide us.

Here at St. Paul Lutheran, our fall stewardship campaign was another opportunity to live into that story. Together, we gave thanks for the blessings of the past year and considered how our time, talents, and financial gifts can be used to strengthen the ministries of our congregation in the year ahead. Members had the chance to hear about the many programs and ministries that make up our life together as a family of faith, to pray and reflect, and to ask how God is calling each of us to support the mission of St. Paul Lutheran.

We are grateful for the generosity of this community. Your gifts—whether through service, music, teaching, outreach, or financial support—are all part of the larger witness we share. They remind us that stewardship is not simply about meeting a budget but about living faithfully into God's call to proclaim the Gospel, care for one another, and serve the world. This year, 38 pledges were recorded, with a total giving pledge of \$119,000. Thank you for your faithful generosity, which makes our shared ministry possible and strengthens the mission of St. Paul Lutheran.

As we remember ages past and hope for years to come, we celebrate that God is indeed our help, and we look forward to the ways God will continue to work through us in the year ahead.

Blessings to you, our church family!

Stewardship Committee: Wendy Claffey, Chair, Travis Christensen, Gary Johnson, and Jill Steinborn.

St. Paul Evangelical Lutheran Church 2025 Property and Management Year End Report

Committee Members: Charlie Mach, Chair, Gary Johnson, Wayne Krohn, Rick Brockway, and Jordan Nichols.

Our committee is busy and committed on a daily basis to keeping our church and parsonage repaired and taking pride in our grounds now and for future generations to enjoy.

The following replacements and repairs were completed in 2025.

- Radiator in art room leaking
- Wet wall in Gathering Space bathroom repaired, and painted
- Radiator replaced in art room
- Burned out motor in one of the Boiler units replaced
- Wall repair by pulpit repaired and painted, all lower sanctuary walls repainted/updated
- Ceiling tiles replaced
- All carpeting professionally cleaned
- Replaced batteries in all smoke detectors
- Installed two new smoke detectors
- Gutter guards installed on South side of garage
- Cut down tree on east side of parking lot
- Cut down tree in backyard of parsonage
- Ground out stumps of both trees/ clean up
- Sprayed weeds, trimmed shrubs and put down new mulch

Many of these projects were paid for by generous donations and Endowment funds made available to us.

There are constant day to day small repairs completed as needed.

I want to thank all these diligent committee members for their tireless work in taking pride in our church and parsonage. Also, Mark Wolff for snow removal of the steps and sidewalks. And, to Tammy, our office manager, and Julie, our janitor, for all their diligence, hard work, over and above! Special thanks to Pastor Heath for helping with repairs as well! You are all so appreciated! You all keep our church running smoothly and looking beautiful.

Respectfully Submitted,
Charlie Mach, Chair

The HEART-TO-HEART TEAM 2025 ANNUAL REPORT

The Heart-to-Heart Team's mission is the same, but it is more personal, richer, and broader with communion being offered during the visits. One member said, "the visits are wonderful but receiving communion more often is the best."

The ice cream social was a fun gathering of old and new friends. L.T. Stated, "the pie and ice cream was pretty good too". We were blessed with zippy music from Shiela McCabe and a wild fun MC. Following the social we had a couple "coffee clatches" by request. As I'm writing this a Christmas celebration (party) with communion is being planned for our h-to-h family.

All these activities take "people" so if you're willing to help let us know.

Another activity that is taking place is the Pen Pal Program with the confirmation classes. There are 24 confirmation students, so we have 24 pen pals in our congregation

We are thankful for the Holy Spirit Grant that we received from the Synod, for the memorials that we have received, and other donations given to us. We also appreciate the Thrivent grants that we continue to receive We are truly blessed.

As we close out our sixth year, I am so thankful to God for guiding our team and knowing He will guide for years to come.

Keep praying for our team,
Marilyn Boettcher 507 995 6394

Team members

Lori Collins (2026 Chair). Tammy Anderson, Deb Blaschko, Shirley Gernscheid, Connie Johnson, Ellen Erkel, Karyl Engel, Michelle Liebhard, Marilyn Boettcher, Pastor Heath

LOOK AT YOUR HANDS.....

Blessed be the works of your hands.
Blessed be these hands that have touched life.
Blessed be these hands that have nurtured creativity.
Blessed be these hands that have held pain.
Blessed be these hands that have embraced with passion.
Blessed be these hands that have tended gardens.
Blessed be these hands that have closed in anger.
Blessed be these hands that have planted new seeds.
Blessed be these hands that have harvested ripe fields.
Blessed be these hands that have cleaned, washed, mopped, scrubbed.
Blessed be these hands that have become knotted with age.
Blessed be these hands that are wrinkled and scarred from doing justice .
Blessed be these hands that have reached out and been received .
Blessed be these hands that hold the promise of the future.
BLESSED BE THE WORKS OF YOUR HANDS.

-author unknown





THRIVENT
FINANCIAL®

2025 ANNUAL THRIVENT REPORT

You might be wondering—what exactly is a Thrivent Action Grant? Simply put, it's \$250 of seed money that Thrivent members can use to meet a need in the community. Once your application is approved, you have 120 days to put that grant into action—whether it's leading a fundraiser, organizing a service project, or hosting an educational activity at church, school, or in the wider community.

It's a simple way to turn a good idea into something that makes a real difference.

Did you know that if you're a Thrivent member, you can apply for special grants each year?

Benefit members can apply for two \$250 grants, and associate members can apply for one. That's money available to every Thrivent member to help support ministry and community projects.

Think of these grants as seed money—sometimes they'll cover the whole cost, and other times they'll help supplement what's needed. The possibilities are wide open: fundraisers, service projects, education activities, outreach events... if it helps strengthen our church or community, chances are it will be approved.

And don't be afraid to try! Even if one idea doesn't get approved, you can always reapply with another. It's a simple process, and many of our members have had great success. In fact, St. Paul Lutheran has been blessed by Thrivent grants for years, and this past year we saw the greatest benefit yet.

So if you're planning an event, a special worship service, or a community outreach project and could use some financial help to get started, connect with a Thrivent member to apply for a grant. If you're not sure who to ask, reach out to Denise Helland, our Thrivent representative, and she'll be glad to help.

And here's the bigger picture: through Thrivent Choice®, members have directed more than \$585 million to churches and nonprofits nationwide. That's generosity in action—and we're grateful to be part of it.

In 2025 we here at St Paul Lutheran received over \$2,400 in 'Action Grants'.

Thrivent Choice Dollars: Thrivent Choice Dollars are a way for Thrivent members to give back. Each year, eligible members receive funds from Thrivent's charitable outreach program, and the best part is—you get to decide where those dollars go. You can direct them to a church, school, or nonprofit that matters to you.

It's Thrivent's way of supporting important causes while letting members be part of the decision-making. Over the years, these Choice Dollars have made a big impact in communities across the country—and right here at St. Paul Lutheran too. This year alone we have received \$2400.00 in choice dollars.

For more information contact Denise Helland, our congregational representative.

Altar Guild Report

Submitted by: Tammy Anderson

Since its creation in 1964, the Altar Guild has faithfully cared for the altar and its appointments, helping to create the sacred atmosphere in which we gather for worship. These symbols of our Christian faith remind us of God's presence and prepare us to receive the gifts of Word and Sacrament.

The Guild is made up of four small teams who rotate throughout the year to prepare the altar for Sunday worship. This includes setting up communion and tending to other simple but important tasks that ensure our worship life runs smoothly. In 2025, members included: Ellen Erkel, Connie Johnson, Sue Knish, Jane Sapp, Sue Schmidt, Julie Scott, Denise Traxler, DeNell Cesafsky, and Tammy Anderson.

We are grateful for the support of memorial contributions, as well as the many gifts of flowers, donations, and time that have helped make our worship space beautiful this past year. A heartfelt thank you to all Altar Guild members for their dedication and care.

Looking ahead, we welcome new helping hands to join this meaningful ministry. Men and women alike are invited to be part of the Guild—whether by assisting with communion, helping prepare the altar, or simply offering your presence in service. If you feel called to join, please reach out to one of the members you see assisting on Sunday mornings, or contact Tammy or Pastor Heath in the church office.

Altar Guild Checking Balance: \$2695.01

Altar Guild Memorial Savings Account Balance: \$2066.33

Altar Guild Flower Report

We are grateful to everyone who donated flowers or supported our Easter Lily and Christmas Poinsettia fundraiser this past year. To keep costs manageable, poinsettias were offered at the same price the church paid, and lilies were marked up only \$1. Your generosity helped beautify our worship space during these holy seasons.

Flowers on the altar are a meaningful way to honor or remember loved ones, celebrate birthdays or anniversaries, or mark other special occasions. Flowers from weddings or funerals may also be placed in the sanctuary, and potted plants are welcome. For altar arrangements, flowers should be provided in matching sets. Seasonal garden flowers can also be arranged for the altar or chancel area. (Please note that artificial flowers are not permitted on the altar.)

If you would like to provide flowers, please contact the church office at 357-2212 to make arrangements.

Flowers remind us of the beauty and joy of God's creation, and they continue to enrich the spirit of our worship together.

Gathering Space Annual Report - 2025

Committee Members: Marilyn Boettcher, Lisa Simon, Cari Pfarr, Barb Krohn

Our Gathering Space continues to be a warm space for fellowship and meetings.

We would like to thank everyone for following the Gathering Space Guidelines to keep our Space a place for meetings and fellowship, and safe from repairs and replacements.

A copy of the guidelines may be obtained from Tammy in the office.

Proceeds from our wonderful coffee hours help us purchase coffee, and other supplies for the Gathering Space and kitchen in our lower level.

Respectfully Submitted,
Barb Krohn, Chair

St. Paul Evangelical Lutheran Church 2025 Annual Report-Constitution Committee

Committee Members: Wendy Claffey, Connie Harmeyer, Barb Krohn, Chair.

There were no revisions handed down by the Churchwide Assembly this past year for required or non-required provisions.

While there were no changes to report, it is important to remember that the Constitution serves as the guiding framework for our life together at St. Paul Evangelical Lutheran Church. It outlines the structure, responsibilities, and practices that help us remain faithful to our mission and connected to the wider church.

For those who may be newer to our congregation, the Constitution is essentially our “rulebook” for how we operate as a church community. If you would like to review a copy for your own understanding, please feel free to request one from the church office.

Respectfully Submitted,
Barb Krohn, Chair

Banner Committee 2025 Annual Report

Some ministries happen quietly, behind the scenes, and this is one of them. Unless you've wandered into the sanctuary at just the right moment, you may never see the work being done—often with Chad or myself perched high on a ladder (yes, sometimes even in the pulpit, on top of the ladder!).

For more than 20 years, we've been tending to this ministry faithfully. It's not flashy, and it doesn't call attention to itself, but it matters. One of these years, we may decide we're too old to keep climbing ladders—but for now, we're still at it, grateful to serve in this way.

In 2025, the Banner Committee was faithfully carried out by Chad and Tammy Anderson. This quiet but meaningful ministry ensures that the banners in our sanctuary reflect the rhythm of the church year, marking seasons and celebrations with beauty and care.

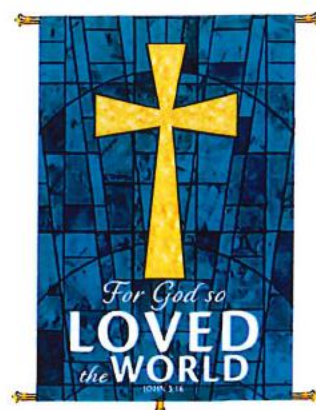
Many of our banners were lovingly handcrafted by members years ago, and we remain grateful for the time and creativity that went into making them. Their artistry continues to bless our worship space today. Beyond the seasonal banners, we also rotate other designs during the summer months so that the congregation can enjoy the full variety of these works of art.

If you have an interest in helping with this ministry—or perhaps even in designing a new banner—we would be delighted to welcome you into the committee.

Banner Committee Financial Report

Ending Balance in Savings Account 2025
\$644.19

Submitted by:
Tammy & Chad Anderson
Banner Committee



ST. PAUL LUTHERAN ELCW YEAR-END TREASURER'S REPORT

12-1-2024 TO 11-30-2025

Denise Helland, Treasurer

BALANCE FORWARD 11-30-2024	2,501.18
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INCOME

Checking Account Interest	1.19	
Mission Investment Fund Interest	41.32	<u>42.51</u>
	<i>Subtotal</i>	2,543.69

DISBURSEMENTS

Augsburg Fortress (Large Print Christ in Our Home)	171.80	<u>171.80</u>
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CHECKBOOK BALANCE 11-30-2025	<u>\$2,371.89</u>
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*ELCW also has \$1,015.94 Invested in Mission Investment Fund

2025 CHURCH COUNCIL & COMMITTEES

Jessica Whipps, Vice President
Wesley Bednar, Secretary
Charlie Mach
Travis Christensen
Wendy Claffey

Patty Ann Tiede, Vice President
Karyl Engel
Nicole Fonseca
Rick Brockway
Tammy Anderson, Office Mgr. | Treas.

Evangelism & Worship

Committee Chair, Lori Collins, 45930 Shanaska Creek Road, St. Peter (2021, 22, 23, 24, 25)
*Karyl Engel, 415 N. State Avenue, Le Center (2020, 2021, 22, 23, 24, 25)
Denise Traxler, 420 W. Sharon Street, Le Center (2020, 2021, 2022, 23, 24, 25)
*Patty Tiede, 35418 221st Avenue, Le Center (2024, 25)

Stewardship

* Travis Christensen, Committee Chair 745 E. Meadowview Lane, Le Center (2025)
*Wendy Claffey, 75 West Lanesburgh, Le Center (Advisor to the committee)
Gary Johnson, 610 N. Waterville Avenue, Le Center (2021, 22, 23, 24, 25)
Jill Steinborn, 202 Diamond Drive, Madison Lake (2020, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25)

Property & Management

*Committee Chair, Charlie Mach, 20004 360th St., Montgomery (2021, 22, 23, 24, 25)
Gary Johnson, 610 N Waterville Avenue, Le Center (2022, 23, 24, 25)
Wayne Krohn, 39577 251 Avenue, Le Center (2023, 24, 25)
Jordan Nichols, 201 East Tyrone St, Le Center (2022, 23, 24, 25)
Rick Brockway, 16313 400th Street, Montgomery (2025)

Youth & Education

Committee Chair, Stacy Sycks, 23347 Dodd Road, Le Center (2023, 24, 25)
*Wesley Bednar, 345 E Horizon Drive, Le Center (2023, 24, 25)
Melissa Engel, 401 North State Ave., Le Center (2020, 2021, 22, 23, 24, 25)
*Nicole Fonseca, 33941 211th Avenue, Le Center (2024, 25)
Missy Shippman, 21026 380th Street, Le Center (2024, 25)

Bible Discovery (Youth Education) Coordinator through Spring of 2026

Melissa Engel, 401 North State Ave., Le Center (2020, 2021, 22, 23, 24, 25)

* Denotes Council Member

Constitution Committee

Barb Krohn (2022, 23, 24, 25)
Bob Sapp (2023, 24, 25)
Connie Harmeyer (2023, 24, 25)
Wendy Claffey (2023, 24, 25)

Endowment Fund

Ken Schmidt, Chair (Permanent Member)
Kevin Engel
Bonnie Hartwig
Gary Johnson
Chad Anderson
*Wayne Krohn
*Les Hartwig

*Non-Voting Year

Delegates to the SE MN Synod Convention (May 30th & 31st - Mankato)

Julie Scott and Jane Sapp, Wendy Claffey as alternate

NEWLY ELECTED OFFICERS OF
ST. PAUL EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

(Please write in proper names during/following the Annual Meeting)

Chair of Church Council _____

Vice-Chair of Church Council _____

Secretary of Church Council _____

CHURCH COUNCIL MEMBERS *(year term expires)*

2027

1. Nicole Fonseca
2. Rick Brockway
3. Wendy Claffey
4. Charlie Mach

2027

1. Karyl Engel
2. Wesley Bednar

2029

1. Jessica Whipps
2. Patty Tiede
3. Travis Christensen

2025 COMMITTEES:

EVANGELISM & WORSHIP:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

PROPERTY & MANAGEMENT:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

YOUTH & EDUCATION:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

STEWARDSHIP

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

NOMINATING

- 1.
- 2.

ENDOWMENT FUND:

1. Ken Schmidt (Lifetime)
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.
- 7.
- 8.

DELEGATES TO SYNOD CONVENTION:

- 1.
- 2.

ALTERNATE:

- 1.

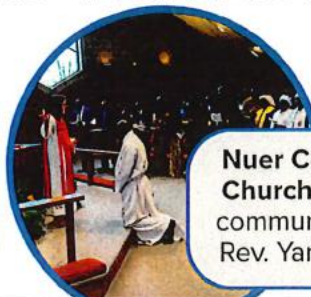
CONSTITUTION COMMITTEE: (5 Year Term)

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

Southeastern Minnesota Synod, ELCA 2025 Ministry Report



We gathered at **Council as Leaders** to think collaboratively and further equip ourselves for ministry as lay and rostered leaders.



Nuer Community Lutheran Church, a new worshipping community, was established! Rev. Yang Tut was ordained.



We had four new entrants to the **Candidacy** process! 13 were in process as '25 concluded. 19 attended the annual **Candidacy Retreat** at Good Earth Village.



A variety of **Power and Boundaries educational workshops** were offered to equip church council members, faith formation professionals, and rostered ministers for leadership.

"See what love the Father has given us, that we should be called children of God, and that is what we are."
—1 John 3:1 (emphasis added)

Through Christ, we have been made children of God! What good news! It is out of this identity, the truest proclamation of who we are, that we live as followers of Jesus in this world.

As members of the Southeastern Minnesota Synod of the ELCA, we strive to *walk together proclaiming the gospel of Jesus Christ*. We live in this community of faith, across sixteen counties with 100,000 baptized members as the children of God. Because this is who we are, we celebrate all the ways God is at work in us and through us – not only in our own communities but throughout the synod and church - for the sake of the world.

Join me in celebrating all the ways God has been at work in our midst over the past year, and let's look ahead, together, with joyful anticipation for what God will yet do, in us and through us, for the sake of the good news of Jesus Christ.

In Christ,

Rev. Regina Hassanally
Bishop Regina Hassanally



Rev. Sarah Krolak was called to serve as pastor of **Connections Ministry/Shelter Church**, which is a Synod Authorized Outreach Ministry based in Mankato.



Synod members participated in the **Lutheran Church of Colombia's National Assembly** where Rev. John Rojas was elected as bishop.

We gathered under the theme "*Remember what God has done. Prepare for what God will do.*" at the **Synod Assembly**. Three resolutions were passed regarding *Support for the Least of These and the Ministries that Serve Them* and *Expanded Preaching and Teaching on the Stories of Women in the Bible and Use of Female Imagery of God and of God's Work in the World*. On the first ballot, Bishop Hassanally was elected to a second six-year term.

About 140 ministry leaders attended the **Fall Theological Retreat**, which includes fellowship, education, and retreat. Rev. Leila Ortiz led the presentations and discussion on pneumatological estuaries, with the theme of Baptism in Muddy Waters.



17 Rostered Ministers joined our synod!





Shetek Lutheran Ministries
14 Keeley Island Dr.
Slayton, MN 56172
(507)-763-3567
camp@shetek.org
www.shetek.org

Executive Director – Marv Nysetvold
Program Director – Lexie Blaschko

Greetings from your camp – Shetek Lutheran Ministries!

Our theme this summer was “God’s Word Comes Near” and campers learned about Trust, Compassion, Growth, Listening and Serving. Staff shared God’s love and campers were able to withdraw from screens, be in nature and grow in confidence by trying new things.

This summer we welcomed 693 campers, from elementary age to Grandparent/Grandchild camp. This is slightly less than 2024 when we had 718 campers on site. We also had 244 campers attend Day Camps in 8 congregations. We are grateful for our 22 summer staff who grew in their faith and leadership skills as they served our guests and campers. Many of our campers grew in their faith and learned more about God this summer. Here are some quotes.

“I learned more about trust and compassion, and how that relates to God.”

“Serving others is like serving Jesus

“Learning about God is fun”

“That God always forgives”

“God is always with us”

Our “Building on the Foundation” capital campaign will be done this year. We have exceeded our phase 1 goal of \$1,500,000 and our total so far in cash and pledges is about \$1,720,000. The new lodge is being used by a variety of different groups from scrapbooking groups, Scout groups, families and college students. The first new cabin is being built this fall and winter and will be ready for next summer.

Shetek continues to receive estate gifts periodically, which we are very thankful for. Over the last 17 years, these thoughtful gifts have totaled over \$1.1 million and have really benefitted the ministry at Shetek. If you’re interested in finding out more about how to support Shetek in this way, please let us know. We have access to a gift planner at no cost to our donors.

Some improvements in 2025 – first new cabin started, moved the entry drive into camp, removed the old pump house, sealed the old wells, most of the retreat center was re-shingled, the chapel was re-shingled, cabins #1 and #5 were re-shingled and we upgraded the hood suppression system in the kitchen.

I am thankful for our year round staff who continue to work as a team to serve our guests and campers and provide great Christian hospitality. Shetek welcomed Elizabeth Hoff in October to serve as our Retreat Coordinator. We were sad to see Jean Larson retire as Retreat Coordinator and Jane Wahl retire from our Housekeeping crew. They both did so much for our ministry of hospitality.

We are so grateful for the many campers and guests that came this year. Shetek continues to impact so many lives every year.

Thank you for your support and prayers!

Marv Nysetvold, Executive Director

Shetek’s Board of Directors in 2025 – Marnie Backer, Ashley Benson, Brad Bergerson, Pastor Ted Carnahan, Tyler Egge, Margaret Erickson, Pastor Austin Krohnke, Logan Gooch, Sarah Kirchner, Pastor Bailey Shufelt, Pastor Michael Stangeland, Tonya Tomasek.

Shetek’s staff in Dec. 2025 – Ellen Begin, Lexie Blaschko, Sandy Carlson, Tom Carlson, Katie Chapman, Nora Dahlhoff, Gaelyn Gernentz, Sharon Haugen, Elizabeth Hoff, Mike Kastner, Jean Larson, Marv Nysetvold, Sharon Staples, Jessica Van Dam, Jane Wahl.

• **ANNUAL REPORT FROM GUSTAVUS CHURCH RELATIONS — DECEMBER 2025** •

Greetings to you from your partners in ministry at Gustavus Adolphus College! The definition of community at Gustavus has always included the wider ELCA community. The network of institutions and relationships which holds our Lutheran congregations, synods, camps, colleges, seminaries, and social agencies together plays a vital role in nourishing and advancing our collective and important contribution to the world. We all make a greater impact because of this diverse network to which we belong.

Through the Gustavus Association of Congregations, the Office of Church Relations at Gustavus is connected to over 500 congregations from across the country. These relationships are an important source of Christian faith inspiration and ministry encouragement for the college. We have so very much to be grateful for and always look forward to our time together at the annual Gustavus Association of Congregations business meeting in April 2026.

As you gather for congregation annual meetings and synod assemblies, we would like you to know our gratitude for your ministry and hope you are inspired by the reminder of the many others who walk alongside you in mission. The Office of Church Relations at Gustavus exists because as a college we live from our Christian faith and desire to be in service to the wider community within which we are rooted. We seek to be a place you might consider as a ministry partner and resource for your congregation's educational goals and growth.

MARK YOUR 2026 CALENDARS AND JOIN US FOR THESE SPECIAL EVENTS:

- **Annual Gustavus Association of Congregations Business Meeting Luncheon — APRIL 18, 2026** The Annual Business Meeting of the Gustavus Adolphus College Association of Congregations will gather for a luncheon meeting and feature updates from the Gustavus President and Chair of the Board of Trustees as well as inspiration from Gustavus students. For more information: gustavus.edu/businessmeeting.
- **The Gustavus Academy for Faith, Science, and Ethics — JUNE 20-26, 2026**, an exciting resource for high school youth interested in exploring creative alliances between faith and science. The theme for the 2026 Academy is *"The Mississippi: Scared Waters, Life-Giving Stories"* For more information and to nominate a high school student: gustavus.edu/chaplain/academy.
- **Annual Nobel Conference® — OCTOBER 6-7, 2026** *"The Mighty Mississippi: Currents of Change"*
The Mississippi River is a dynamic intersection of geological forces, biological communities, human cultures, and ecological systems. On official maps, the Mississippi is merely the water that lies between two banks; however, as people Native to this place have known since time immemorial, "water is life". This conference invites us to challenge conventional definitions by considering the indissoluble connections between the land, the water, and the beings who live in these places. The Nobel Conference 62 will explore how the basin has evolved, how the introduction of new fish and plant species has altered the river's ecology, and how climate change, industry, river engineering projects, and other human uses pose challenges to the future health of the river and those who depend upon it. Indigenous perspectives will help us honor the river's complex ecological, social and metaphysical contexts. More details can be found at: gustavus.edu/events/nobelconference.
- **Christmas in Christ Chapel — DECEMBER 4 -6, 2026** This annual tradition in Christ Chapel celebrates and reflects upon the birth of Jesus Christ through worship that features music, dance, spoken word, and the visual arts. Ticket information and archived live stream services can found at: gustavus.edu/events/ccc.

For more information about these events and the many resources we offer congregations, please contact the Office of Church Relations or visit us on-line at: gustavus.edu/churchrelations. Thank you for your partnership and prayers!

Yours in Christ,
Rev. Dr. Grady St. Dennis
Executive Chaplain/Associate Vice President of Mission

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.

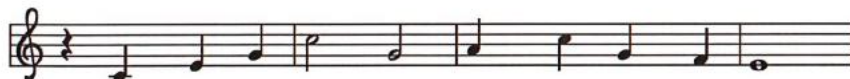
Guide us to be a healthy congregation that learns from its failures as well as its successes and offers wisdom to others.

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.

Founded on Faith



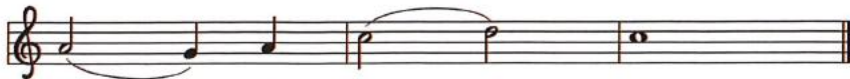
1 Found - ed on faith, the church— a - live by grace—
2 Your cross, O Christ, re - news our life each day.
3 E - quipped by prayer, we live the Spir - it's call.
4 Grow - ing in grace for God's cre - at - ed earth,
5 Found - ed on faith, called forth, em - pow'ed to serve,



pro - claims the gos - pel here and ev - 'ry place.
Bap - tized in you, we learn and teach and pray.
Em - pow'ed to serve with gifts, both great and small,
we yearn for jus - tice, peace, and hu - man worth;
we share God's end - less love with - out re - serve.



The word of God re - sounds through time and space:
Fed by your love, with thank - ful hearts, we say:
we bring the liv - ing hope of God to all.
a world re - stored; a faith - ful, car - ing church.
Then let us shout a - loud the liv - ing Word!



Al - le - lu - ia!

All Creation Sings, 1048

Text and music © 2017 Paul D. Weber, admin.

Augsburg Fortress. Reproduced by permission.

THROUGH YOUR GENEROSITY, GOD IS AT WORK ACROSS THE ELCA.

MISSION SUPPORT

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.

ELCA WORLD HUNGER

Part of our church's long tradition of meeting human needs, ELCA World Hunger testifies to our hope for and commitment to God's promise of a time when we will hunger and thirst no more. ELCA World Hunger walks alongside communities in more than 60 countries — including the United States — to create unique solutions to hunger and poverty.

LUTHERAN DISASTER RESPONSE

Lutheran Disaster Response shares God's hope, healing and renewal with people whose lives have been disrupted by disasters in the United States and around the world. When the dust settles and the headlines change, we stay to provide ongoing assistance to those in need.

WHERE NEEDED MOST

Where Needed Most supports the powerful ways we work together around the world — supporting leaders, inspiring young people, fueling ministries and championing global mission. Gifts to Where Needed Most support and sustain the people, congregations, synods and ministries working around the world to realize the hope-filled future God promises.



Evangelical
Lutheran Church
in America

Sign up to hear more stories of impact from the ELCA churchwide organization at [ELCA.org/subscribe](https://elca.org/subscribe).

Read about Mission Support and learn more at LivingLutheran.org/SOFIA.