



Annual Report for 2023

Final (02-22-2024)

*Congregational Meeting
February 25, 2024*

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Celebrate. Share. Renew.

Annual Report Compiled by
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TABLE OF CONTENTS

OPENING DEVOTION	1
AGENDA FOR 2024 ANNUAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING.....	2
MINUTES OF UNITY LUTHERAN CHURCH ANNUAL	3
CONGREGATIONAL MEETING FEBRUARY 26, 2023.....	3
PASTORS 'REFLECTIONS	8
JOHN HORNER-IBLER.....	8
SHERRIE LORBECK	10
MURIEL OTTO	12
CONGREGATIONAL PRESIDENT'S REFLECTIONS	13
SACRAMENTAL AND MEMBER INFORMATION FOR 2023	14
REFLECTIONS OF COMMITTEE CHAIRS.....	18
CHRISTIAN EDUCATION	19
COMMUNICATION & TECHNOLOGY.....	21
FINANCE	22
INVITE	24
PROPERTY	25
SERVANT MINISTRIES.....	27
STEWARDSHIP TEAM	29
WORSHIP & MUSIC	30
YOUTH COMMITTEE REPORT.....	31
REFLECTIONS OF UNITY STAFF.....	32
DIRECTOR OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION	32
DIRECTOR OF ADULT PROGRAMS.....	33
DIRECTOR OF MUSIC MINISTRIES.....	34
MEMBER CARE	35
DIRECTOR OF COMMUNICATIONS.....	36
FINANCIAL REPORTS	37
FUND BALANCES	37
REVENUES AND EXPENSES.....	38
GIVING AND SPENDING CHART.....	39
2023 BENEVOLENCE SUMMARY	40
PROPOSED 2024 BUDGET	42

Opening Devotion

Annual Meeting of the Congregation February 25, 2024

Opening Litany –

One: We're in Mark's gospel this year. Let's go through some of what we know:

Many: It's the first gospel written, 10 maybe 20 years before some of the others!

One: It's the shortest gospel, only 16 chapters

Many: The pace? Fast! Mark slings the word "immediately" around like a salt shaker at a sweet corn festival.

One: Mark covers the birth of Jesus in zero verses. Jesus' temptation takes one verse.

Many: His resurrection appearances in zero verses! Talk about keeping it simple!

One: But there is a method to Mark's speediness. From the very first verse he tell us who Jesus is.

Many: The Son of God!

One: And it takes until chapter 15 verse 39 before a human being actually says that.

Many: The centurion at the foot of the cross, the most unlikely of witnesses says what the cross most teaches us: surely Jesus is from God.

One: Because in the cross we encounter unconditional love.

Many: And if we know that much, then we know enough to be a Good News people.

One: And if we are a Good News people, then we know how to respond when Jesus summons us saying, "Will you come and follow me?"

Many: We shout, "YES!" And we sing...

Song – *"Will You Come and Follow Me?" (ELW 798 Verse 5)*

Lord your summons echoes true when you but call my name.

Let me turn and follow you and never be the same.

In your company I'll go, where your love and footsteps show.

Thus I'll move and live and grow in you and you in me!

Prayer

Agenda for 2024 Annual Congregational Meeting

Call to Order
Opening Devotion

Colleen King, President
John Horner-Ibler

Quorum Needed for 2024 Meeting ~ 189

1. Approval of Minutes

2023 Annual MeetingFebruary 26, 2023
2023 Election Meeting.....June 4-5, 2023

2. Approval of the Pastors' Reports

Pastor John Horner-Ibler
Pastor Sherrie Lorbeck
Pastor Muriel Otto
2023 Statistics

3. Approval of the Congregation Council's Reports

Congregation President.....Colleen King
Adult ProgramsSusie Sprecher
Christian Education.....Davida Kroepfl
Communications & TechnologyEd Dominski
Finance.....Phil Roemaat
Group OpportunitiesTiffany Reay
InviteAnna Jansson
Property.....David Koenen
Servant MinistriesJackie Herington
Stewardship.....Trisha Smith
TreasurerAdrienne Krueger
Worship & Music.....Steve Johnson
YouthEric Borkenhagen
Recording Secretary.....Leslie O'Connell

4. Approval of Program Staff Reports

Director of Christian Education.....Michelle Aprahamian
Director of Youth MinistryMatt Griepentrog
Director of Music MinistryLynn Key
Member CareJim Ahlquist

5. 2023 Financial Reports

6. 2024 Budget Approval

7. Elections

Nominating Committee (need 3 to serve this Spring)
Delegates to Synod Assembly (need 5 – at least 2 male, 2 female)
Friday, May 17 – Saturday, May 18, 2024 at Italian Community Center, Milwaukee

8. Old Business

9. New Business

10. Adjournment.....Council President

11. Closing Prayer.....Pastor

Minutes of UNITY Lutheran Church Annual Congregational Meeting February 26, 2023

The Annual Meeting of the Congregation was held in person at both campuses and via Zoom.

Members present at the two campuses and via Zoom: 217

- **Quorum achieved.**

Meeting called to order by Council President Mary Huss at 9:50 a.m.

Pr. John Horner-Ibler led the opening devotion based on Acts 1: 12-17, 21-26.

Approval of Minutes

- Annual Meeting on Feb. 27, 2022

Motion to approve Minutes: MSA (motioned, seconded, approved)

Pastors' Reports

- Pr. John Horner-Ibler
- Pr. Sherrie Lorbeck
- Pr. Muriel Otto
- 2022 Statistics

Congregation Council's Reports

- Congregational President – Mary Huss
- Adult Programs – Susie Sprecher
- Christian Education – Colleen King
- Communications & Technology – Ed Dominski
- Finance – Phil Roemaat
- Treasurer – Adrienne Krueger
- Group Opportunities – Melissa Graesser
- Invite – Open; written on behalf of Nicole Groehler, former chairperson
- Property – David Koenen
- Servant Ministries – Jackie Herington
- Stewardship – Open; written by John Horner-Ibler
- Worship & Music – Steve Johnson
- Youth – Eric Borkenhagen
- Recording Secretary – Leslie O'Connell

Program Staff Reports

- Director of Christian Education – Michelle Aprahamian
- Director of Youth Ministry & Media – Matt Griepentrog
- Director of Music Ministry – Janet Day
- Member Care – Debbie Riederer
- Director of Communications – Natalie Kamenick

Introduction of Council Members

Year in Review Video shown

2022 Financial Report – Adrienne Krueger and Phil Roemaat

- Income Statement – Year ended Dec. 31, 2022
- Revenue and Expenses – Year ended Dec. 31, 2022
- Six-year trend of Budget vs. Actual
- Giving and Spending Pie Chart – Year ended Dec. 31, 2022
- Allocation of Surplus (\$39,221)

Phil summarized that the congregation is in very good shape financially. Member giving increased in 2022, and he thanked the congregation for their generosity.

He identified three items that are not on the balance sheet: 1) The bridge loan for the Backyard and Parking Lot Projects is eliminated. 2) The COL mortgage is at a 3.65% interest rate and will be paid in full by the end of 2027. 3) The real estate of the CTK and COL properties is valued at approximately \$8.5 - \$9 million.

Adrienne summarized allocations of surplus funds: 10% to benevolence; salary bonuses for pastors and staff; and the remaining to contingency reserve.

Adrienne presented the proposed 2023 budget, which anticipates a 6% increase in revenue.

Adrienne also presented the ERC – Employee Retention Credit – the refundable tax credit that was created as part of the CARES Act - that UNITY pursued. She outlined the proposed allocations of the funds, including benevolence; Communications & Technology needs; Education funding; and Properties projects.

Comment: Fred Varin congratulated the team on pursuing the ERC funds and for the proposed usage.

Zoom Question: Will the roof work at the COL campus require a tear-off?

Answer: Yes.

Zoom Question: Why is the roof at the COL campus a lower priority than the COL windows replacement in the proposed allocation of ERC funds?

Answer: Pr. Sherrie answered by saying that the Properties team has evaluated each project and the windows are in dire need of replacement due to the significant wood rot that is affecting them. This is a project that was deferred some years ago.

Vote to approve the Pastors' reports and the Committee reports. MSA.

Vote to approve the 2023 Budget and the distribution of the surplus funds. MSA

Benevolence: Mary Huss introduced Jackie Herington to discuss Servant Ministries. Jackie commended the congregation for its compassionate and generous support of servant ministries in both time and money. In 2022, 11% of UNITY giving (\$130,000) was gifted in benevolence in addition to member-directed gifts, totaling \$225,000 given. Pr. Muriel also paid tribute to Jim and Kathy Batdorf, friends of UNITY, for their long and generous support of education scholarships for our Cordero de Dios community partner in El Salvador. She gave thanks for the life of Jim Batdorf who passed in 2022. She also expressed gratitude for memorial funds given in memory of JoAnn Tomm and Carole Bock.

Nominating Team for May-June 2023: Nancy Kerr, Melanie Varin, Barb Borkenhagen, Barb Patterson
Synod Assembly delegates will be: Susie Sprecher, Steve Brewer, Ann-Marie Bergman Ron Vermillion and Ellen Vermillion.

Old Business

Backyard Project: Jane Boorse summarized the final wrap-up report for the successful Backyard Project at CTK. She noted the upcoming connection to the Greenway Trail expansion and thanked Eagle Scouts for the projects that are part of the Backyard. She paid tribute to John Clark and Wayne Higgins, who passed on in 2022 – both of whom were valued members of the Backyard Project team. She introduced and thanked members of the Backyard team for their work.

Question: Will it be necessary for members who donated funds for the Backyard Project by EFT to conclude the funding?

Answer: Yes. Members are encouraged to look at EFT funding designations and adjust as appropriate.

New Business

Motion for adjournment. Mary Huss adjourned the meeting at approximately 10:50 a.m.

Pr. Sherrie concluded the meeting with a prayer.

Respectfully submitted, Leslie O'Connell, recording secretary

2023 Congregation Voting Meeting, June 3-4, 2023

- The UNITY Lutheran Church Annual Congregational Voting Meeting was held as a series of four short voting meetings following each of the weekend services on Sat., June 3 and Sun., June 4, 2023. Quorum was achieved due to the total number of participants across the services.
- **Nominating Committee** was comprised of UNITY members: Barb Borkenhagen, Mary Huss (outgoing Council president), Nancy Kerr, Colleen King (outgoing chair of Education team), Barb Patterson, Melanie Varin and Pr. John Horner-Ibler, Pr. Sherrie Lorbeck, and Pr. Muriel Otto.
- **The Nominating Committee presented its slate of candidates:**
 - President: Colleen King
 - Group Opportunities: Tiffany Reay
 - Invite: Anna Jansson
 - Stewardship: Trisha Smith
 - Treasurer: Adrienne Krueger (2nd term)
 - Worship & Music: Steve Johnson (2nd term)

Sat., June 3 Service

Cross of Life Campus, following 5 p.m. service:

- President Mary Huss called the meeting to order.
- Motion to open the meeting. Motioned, seconded, passed. (MSA)
- Mary presented the slate of candidates put forth by the Nominating Committee.
- Mary invited nominations from the floor three times. Hearing none, she asked for a voice vote. MSA
- Mary recognized and expressed gratitude for outgoing Council members: Mary Huss, president; Mark Miller, Stewardship; Nicole Groehler, Invite; and Melissa Graesser, Group Opportunities.
- Motion to close the meeting until the next service. MSA

Sun., June 4 Services

Cross of Life Campus, following 8:30 a.m. service:

- Education chairperson Colleen King called the meeting to order.
- Motion to open the meeting. MSA
- Colleen presented the slate of candidates put forth by the Nominating Committee.
- Colleen invited nominations from the floor three times. Hearing none, she asked for a voice vote. MSA
- Colleen recognized and expressed gratitude for outgoing Council members: Mary Huss, president; Mark Miller, Stewardship; Nicole Groehler, Invite; and Melissa Graesser, Group Opportunities.
- Motion to close the meeting until the next service. MSA

Christ the King Campus, following 9:30 a.m. service:

- President Mary Huss called the meeting to order.
- Motion to open the meeting. MSA
- Mary presented the slate of candidates put forth by the Nominating Committee.

- Mary invited nominations from the floor three times. Hearing none, she asked for a voice vote. MSA
- Mary recognized and expressed gratitude for outgoing Council members: Mary Huss, president; Mark Miller, Stewardship; Nicole Groehler, Invite; and Melissa Graesser, Group Opportunities.
- Motion to close the meeting until the next service. MSA

Cross of Life Campus, following 10:30 a.m. service:

- President Mary Huss called the meeting to order.
- Motion to open the meeting. MSA
- Mary presented the slate of candidates put forth by the Nominating Committee.
- Mary invited nominations from the floor three times. Hearing none, she asked for a voice vote. MSA
- Mary recognized and expressed gratitude for outgoing Council members: Mary Huss, president; Mark Miller, Stewardship; Nicole Groehler, Invite; and Melissa Graesser, Group Opportunities.
- Motion to close the meeting. MSA

Slate of candidates (above) approved as presented by the Nominating Committee.

- Total number of voting members in favor of the slate: 340.
- This exceeded the count of 186 members needed for quorum.

Respectfully submitted, Leslie O'Connell, recording secretary

Pastors 'Reflections

John Horner-Ibler

Pilate questioned Jesus again asking, "Have you nothing to say in your defense? You see how many charges they are bringing against you." But to Pilate's astonishment, Jesus made no further reply
~Mark 15:4-5

I dug out the first annual report I wrote for the Cross of Life part of UNITY. It stunned me to see that I wrote it almost 3 weeks before it was needed! *That* never happened again.

I was slightly saddened by the way I ended the report. Back then there was a basketball hoop right outside my office window. I invited people to stop by and shoot a few buckets with me. That happened on occasion but since I'd only been here for two months, two *winter* months I did not yet know that mosquitoes ruled Brookfield at that time! Five minutes in the parking lot equaled at least a dozen bites! That whole basketball ministry never quite worked out. Sigh.



Mostly though, I am now struck by what an engaged place this already was back then. There was already a much larger commitment to benevolence than in most churches. The First Communion program was huge in proportion to the membership (39 third graders in a membership of about 1,000). And, thankfully, of the twelve people on Council at that time, six are still members here....not bad, over a quarter century later.

I'm not as fluent on what was going on over at the Christ the King campus at that time. All I know is there was a good spirit in the CTK heart. We were only 4 years out from the discussion which led to our first joint Vacation Bible School. I was so struck by the all-in welcome CTK offered COL at that time. Nothing has ever really changed in that respect, for which all of us can be thankful.

The rest of my report spelled out priorities for COL's immediate future. That immediate future has long since been lived but I can sense in how I wrote it that it was an unsettled time for a congregation that had been through a few too many transitions.

It should be of some significance that I don't feel a need to write this report with that same awareness of unsettled feelings. There is no doubt 2024 will be unsettled at times. I mean, what will UNITY do when my office is actually clean? Or Muriel's? (which as I write is possibly worse than mine, mostly due to the launch of the Mission of Healing trip in 3 days).

The thing is, we are UNITY and the process of becoming one congregation on two campuses has pretty much prepared us for anything....

- As has the process of sending 2-3 dozen people a year to the once difficult, now evolving communities of El Salvador.
- As has the experience of so many of our members in traveling with our youth group.
- As has the moment where parents and confirmation students stared at each other for 5 awkward seconds at the start of thousands of small group periods before launching successfully into actual interaction.

There is, across UNITY, the confidence that we can do this, whatever "this" happens to be. If it's broke, it can be fixed....if we are honest, then we will also trust....if we err, there will be grace....if we open the doors to all,

then the one who needs it most will feel welcome....if we let ourselves feel joy first then pain can be faced knowing it will not last. This is who Jesus' Spirit allows us to be, is it not? The theology of that early 1997 report was built around the verse at the start of this one. Since we're in Mark's gospel this year in our worship services, it seems right to re-visit Mark here in early 2024. The question is simple. Why did Jesus remain silent?

The answer is probably just as clear as the question. Pilate and Jesus both knew the score. Pilate could do the just thing or the convenient thing. It didn't matter if Jesus *spoke*. Pilate had to *act*. This is the very essence of moral decision-making. Words matter but actions matter more. And Pilate failed. He went the convenient route.

Those two verses are how Mark wants us to experience the Good News. His is the first gospel written and it can be a little bumpy at times. Some of the stories include extraneous details and Mark's Greek is probably the worst of the four evangelists. But those few blemishes are erased by the pace and intensity with which the story is told. Like Pilate, by the end, we know the score. Will we do the right thing? Will we do it now?

Of all the things I could write about reflecting on 2023 or looking ahead to 2024, I'd mention just these two:

- Few things make congregational leadership transitions harder than the loss of leadership continuity. The longer the transition, the bigger the blow to the community. UNITY will be hugely blessed in 2024 by having Muriel most of the year and Sherrie all of the year and into the future. That continuity of relationships and congregational priorities will not solve everything, but wow, it will keep the place together in ways that are difficult to even describe unless you see how hard it is without it.
- Many people...maybe all of us at some point...feel lonely or judged or inadequate or overwhelmed. These are the members and visitors who walk through our doors every week. Over the years, when I've talked about being open to all, some have taken that to mean in matters of race or gender identity or income level and that's all true. But mostly I've just meant that first list of things. Because regardless of all the others we come here one by one...wanting to be loved, wanting to be welcomed, wanting a purpose, wanting Good News. UNITY: Just always be open, hey? Be open to each other and random travelers on the way. Trust Jesus' is in the midst of it all...open hands and feet, wounded like us: healing for all.

The conclusion of this report is inevitable. It isn't "done," my usual sermon word. Nope, one of the things you'll learn about Mark's gospel this year is that he has the shortest of Easter narratives and doesn't even mention the actual appearance of the risen Christ.

Instead, Mark ends with the women leaving the tomb "in terror" and saying nothing to anyone. Most of all in the original Greek, Mark ends it with a conjunction! Who ends the greatest story ever told with the word "for" used as a conjunction? "For" used as link to all that will come next?

Mark does. Because as with his whole gospel, Mark seeks our response. We know the women eventually also felt joy and got over their fear. Clearly they told *someone*!

And that's the point. Jesus was silent because Pilate had to act. The women at the end are silent, so that we understand, we have to speak. This is the best of the Good News. Jesus loves you and heals the world. As for you and I, well what are we waiting...*for*?

So they went out and fled from the tomb, for terror and amazement had seized them, and they said nothing to anyone, they were afraid, for... ~a literal rendering of Mark 16:8

Sherrie Lorbeck



Looking back on 2023, I'm mindful of how much there is to give thanks to God for!

First of all, I am so incredibly grateful for your gift to me of a sabbatical "away" for a time of learning, reflection and renewal. A chance to connect with others and focus on God's leading for this time at hand. I can't even begin to share my appreciation of John and Muriel and the rest of the staff for all of the load they carried to allow me time to be away and for all the ways you stepped up to help as well!

There's so much I'd love to share with you, but more so than what I did, I would love for you to experience that same gift, even if it was over the course of a smaller time frame, but one where you might experience that blessing of sabbath too. Watch for more on that in the weeks to come, but for now, thank you. Thank you for your prayers, your

continued support and concern for all of us as your UNITY staff, and for your warm welcome as I dive back into ministry with you!

There is so much for which I give thanks for as I think of all of you and this year now past, but here are just a few of the highlights:

I'm thankful for the way you LOVE "your" children. You recognize that our young people are the church TODAY, and not just the future. You know the importance of investing in them.

You welcome them with thanksgiving and joy. You listen to them and invite them to serve and lead along side you. This is what helps to form a faith foundation in their lives. Your presence in worship, your participation in all that we do and the way you teach them in the classroom, by their side on a construction work site to serve in building up people's homes on summer trips, are just a few examples.

You also have recognized the importance of supporting a paid nursery, to make sure there was a place for children to play or rest or be changed. Gail Anklam has been that friendly smile greeting children in the COL nursery for 35 years. The person who has probably rocked more babies and changed more diapers than any of us. The person who has literally watched most of our children grow up as they graduated from the nursery to head off to Sunday School, eventually go through Confirmation and High School. Some of "Miss Gail's kids" have now returned with their own babies in their arms. Gail has also been the support that your pastors have depended on over those years, John, Maria Pederson, Muriel, Jennifer Carlson and myself. We would not have been able to do what we do had it not been for Gail! I am so very thankful for the immense love that she has shared not only with my kids but with all of the kids who have come to her door. With the recent death of her husband, Gail is moving to be near her daughter and family, so her last Sunday with us will be March 10. We will so miss her every Sunday, but help us in thanking her that weekend.

You as a congregation recognize that having a place to gather allows us to do more together than without a space to call home, but we also have to take good care of it.

We have been entrusted with a lot of square footage and acres of grounds to care for and utilize to their fullest potential. Our buildings have lovingly been used and are at the point where they need a little more attention, updates and repairs. UNITY members have tackled SO much this year saving tens of thousands of dollars from being incurred. While the property budget is by far the largest of our ministry teams, it is also "bare bones", covering fixed expenses like mechanical, electrical, heating and cooling, snowplowing and salt, insurance, etc.,. We do our best to plan for incremental replacement of major items like furnaces and tree removal for all the dead Ash trees and try to keep other property expenses as low as possible. This doesn't though include any funds for updating spaces that are showing their age, but again, this is where people share their time in order to do what we can.

If it was not for the hard-working and dedicated team of volunteers, I have no doubt our Property budget would be twice what it is or more if we had to pay for all the things that our members so generously do like replace roofs, mow the lawn, shovel the snow, fix items needing repair, and help to keep things clean and inviting! Thank you!

Lastly, you know that UNITY remains home for you, at least, hopefully one of your “homes”, in terms of a place where you are connected and are known and invited into living out what God calls us to, regardless of what has changed in your life.

Whether you find yourself at a different stage, or you’ve moved, or you’ve found that online worship is a better fit or if it’s been a while and you recognize it’s what you’ve been missing, or whether nothing has changed all that much, but you remain grateful for the friends you’ve come to know and all the memories and experiences you’ve been blessed by in your time here.

It’s so good to have Pastor Jim Ahlquist back with us part time in his “retirement”. One of his many gifts lies within his ability to connect with and provide pastoral care in moments when they most need. It’s a godsend that he literally was able to jump back in and pick up where he left off with people.

I’m so thankful for Debbie Riederer and her ministry with people both in her role of Pastoral Care and even before that when she was a part of the Admin staff. Her compassion, warmth, ability to listen and walk with people during difficult times in life were tremendous gifts.

Please, please don’t ever hesitate to reach out him, or any one of our staff if there is anything going on in your life that you would like us to pray about or that you need to talk about or don’t know what to do about! We are always here and it’s why we make sure our cell phones and direct emails are printed in the bulletin!

Thank you for all that you do to invite others to experience that too! We continue to have more and more visitors at each campus, to the point where it can be hard to greet them all! Thank you for the way you reach out in conversation and invite them into all that UNITY offers!

I could go on as could each of you as you think about that question posed from our Call Team, “what does UNITY mean to you?”. For me, I am filled with deep gratitude for each of you and for this place and the opportunity I have had to serve with John, Muriel and all of you!

As I look ahead to the year now upon us, we will have some hard good byes to have to say, but they won’t have to be final good byes and remember, when UNITY has become one of your “homes”, the people and the place forever make a lasting imprint on our hearts and we know that no matter where we end up taking residence, it remains always and forever a home where we are welcomed with open arms.

May that be what we extend to all those who come through our doors this coming year and to everyone we are connected to through our partners in ministry. Most of all, may we remember it’s the way that God responds to us every time we draw near! Thanks be to God!

Muriel Otto

Each night our family reflection questions are: 1) something we are grateful for; 2) something we are troubled by; 3) something we are praying for. They still seem like a solid combination of questions. The “grateful for” helps us savor the good stuff; the “troubled by” helps us be honest about the hard stuff; the “praying for” invites God into all of it. So each year I use those same prompts for the annual report. Here’s this year’s version:



Grateful For:

An increased and energized volunteer pool. Council set this as a major focus for 2023, rebuilding their teams and worship volunteers, and made HUGE progress. It is such a great feeling to walk into to the building for worship and see a full slate of volunteers in the bulletin! We added back the worship coordinator role (SO helpful), the 3rd communion station at 8:30, 7 new Sunday School teachers, and many people stepping into new roles on our 11 council teams supported by the new All Team Tuesdays. We are still a little short (Sunday School could use a few more, especially Saturday night, Group Opportunities and Invite Teams, Servant Ministries needs second advocates for Cross and Hephatha, a few worship categories), but overall we are back to a robust level of involvement in many areas. A cool sign of health and ownership from all of you.

Partners that make life better for so many people in so many ways. Way more than I can fit here, but take a moment to look at Jackie’s report and the benevolence summary on page 40. One of the coolest parts of this job is the chance to see live the people and places who are blessed by your generosity, and I only see a fraction. Just wow. Run your finger down those numbers.... pray for the people they represent... gives thanks for the staff who work on the front-lines... and ask God to send you where you can see them and be inspired for yourself. Grateful for dollars that follow relationships.

A Call Team that inspires confidence and hope. It has been a joy getting to know this group. Council got 17 applications (and those 17 merit their own “grateful for”!) and used that large pool to pick as diverse a group as possible, in terms of how they know this place. Council did SUCH a good job, as it turns out, that almost none of them knew each other when they began! In the last two months they have gelled in a beautiful way. They are genuine, wise, faith-full, super motivated, and have a really great sense of humor. We are in good hands.

Jesus Karaoke! Usually as pastors we try to support group endeavors rather than push our own agenda. In that sense, last Spring’s Jesus Karaoke production was a bit self-indulgent, a dream I’ve cherished for many years. To see so many of you jump in to turn the dream into a reality touched me deeply. And it was SO much fun! To both those of you who performed up front, and those of you who cheered us on (or at least refrained from throwing tomatoes)- thank you!

Pastor Sherrie. We generally make a point of lifting up member efforts instead of staff. But in a year when we prepare for double departures from the pastoral team, this merits a special mention. Sherrie is the kind of pastor I want to be when I grow up. As the first female pastor I ever had, she more than anyone has taught me what it looks like to do this job well, with great attention to detail, attentiveness to people dynamics, total full hearted-ness, and a deep trust in God. She is the right person to lead UNITY into the future, and I am grateful for the work we will get to do together this next year.

Troubled By: Honestly, for once, not a thing. When I think of leaving in September, I know it will be hard to say goodbye. You are a part of me. Over the last 10 years you’ve walked me into adulthood, parenthood, pastor-hood. I love you, and I believe deeply in you and what you are doing. But I am not troubled. Something about this timing feels right. Even though my family has no idea what will come next, I have this sense of peace and certainty coming to me from somewhere beyond me. That feels like God, and if God is involved, I know that whatever comes next will be right- for you and for me both.

Praying For: For UNITY to flourish. For future “grateful for”s to be abundant. For future “troubled by”s to be things we don’t have to face alone. For next steps to be revealed in God’s timing. And for the Bucks to get it together on defense. Amen!

Congregational President's Reflections

Colleen King



The people of UNITY are truly amazing. 2023 was a year of significant growth and change which has led us to so much opportunity (and some challenges) for 2024 and beyond. Our Staff and Council are remarkable, with talents that are genuine gifts from above. Please take the time to read the reflections from the Pastors and Council Members to see all the ways that each spoke of the UNITY wheel continues to make our community *the* place to be.

After years being so connected and part of the Christian Education team, this year I had the pleasure of making pizzas for Servanthood Blitz, which was held on Martin Luther King Jr. Day. I was inspired by the number of kids, confirmation students, parents, staff, and other

volunteers who chipped in to make this annual event something even more special than ever.

- The kids were amazing, working like crazy to give back to our community partners.
- The confirmation students showed their growth and leadership – our future is in good hands!
- The adult volunteers included parents of littles, parents of bigs, parents of young adults who are off and adulting in their own lives, grown-ups who are invested in our church and of course our staff
- Michelle Aprahamian and Davida Kroepfl made it all happen and coordinated with Pastor Muriel and Servant Ministries team members to get everything to our community partners.

It was **fun**. It was **loud**. It was a little **messy** (cookie decorating and nursery toy cleaning). It was **rewarding**. It was **nourishing** (carrots, grapes, pizza, cookies). It was a true capsule **reflection of UNITY**.

We have challenges ahead to find our new Pastors. I know that they will never fill either John's or Muriel's shoes but have faith that they will lead us with their gifts to our next phase, with Sherrie holding the ties to our foundations while continuing to be a great & connected leader for us all. Our Call Committee is already well underway with their work. They are an immensely talented team with great perspective and experience. Please continue to support and pray for them as they work so hard in the call process.

We also need to find the next right person to lead our Youth Ministry Programs. Matt Griepentrog's transition to Director of Adult Programs and Bookkeeper has allowed him to shine and share even more of his talents to make UNITY a better place. We have fantastic volunteers working with our youth to keep this essential program strong. Please share this opportunity with anyone in your network so that we can fill this key role for our church.

Thank you for the opportunity to serve as President of the Council. UNITY is such an important piece of me and my family's life – I appreciate the chance to work so closely with others who feel the same. If you have any interest in joining Council or one of the committees, please speak to one of the Pastors or someone on Council. It's a great way to get involved and spend time with some incredible people! Thank you for your time, talents, resources, and prayers.

Sacramental and Member Information for 2023

Baptisms

Jan 8 - Abel John Wills
Jan 14 - Liam James Sternberg
Jan 14 - Theodore Joseph Paradis
Jan 28 - Lincoln Reid Moser
Jan 29 - Edward Otto Bjorklund
Mar 12 - Parker Levi McGinty
Mar 19 - Jack Kenneth Gelder
Mar 19 - Cecelia Marie Brownell
Mar 26 - Christine Louise Morrison
June 10 - Evelyn Marie Griepentrog
June 25 - Kollyns Aubree Smith
July 2 - Leo Wilhelm Brucker
July 2 - Ila Eleanor Groth
July 9 - Beckett Clarence Koch
Caden Terrill Koch
July 23 - Addelyn Grace Nitschke
Aug 20 - Emilia Marie Vasquez
Oct 7 - Gavin Timothy Running
Oct 8 - Jack Mathias Olson
Oct 22 - Robert John "Beau" Komassa

First Communion

May 20-21
Anden Nellis
Maxwell Fogltanz
Jameson Krueger
William Register
James Lorbeck
Betty Bredemus
Blake Duerr
Owen Zimmer
Addison Kahle
Charlotte Quinnell
Sebastian Dandridge
Lillian Bell
Nathan Bublit
Logan Graesser
Austin Alft
Austin Filliped
Aubrey McDonald
Graham Kamenick
Malia Soderstrom
Caleb Miller
June 11
Jackson Hanson
Oliver Welch
June 25
Isaac Peterson
Jasmine Peterson

**Confirmation
September 16 & 17**

Max Adams
Ananya Ebenezer
Miley Gill
Brady Lettenberger
Jax Lettenberger
Cullen Murphy
Adrik Nellis
Drew Olsson
Annaliese Schaefer
Noah Weitzer
Evelyn Groneck
Alexander Hahn
Audrey Heideman
Brooklyn Hoffe
Samantha James
Kaleigh Jolliff
Kiley Keup
Kendall Klick
Lauren Koremenos
Arianna McCumber
Anna O'Rourke
Evan Prescott
Madeline Rader
Clyde Reay
Colin Rupe
Rudy Schneider

Celebration of Christian Marriage

Hanna Muche and Adam Heussner
Nancy Kerr and John Oberhausen
Jake Johns and Nikolina Jeramic
Molly Maas and Justin Landis
Collin Dowling and Sophia Dreyer -(1st pavilion wedding)
Kristin Bryden and Evan Kluck
Olivia Wettstein and Rolando Garcia
Ross Pelzel and Brylon Denmon
Kevin Clark and Julie Lemke
Caitlin Kelley and Michael Lampkin

**Deaths & Funerals for UNITY Members &
relatives/friends of the UNITY Family
who have died in the past year:**

Richard "Dick" Kumbier
Chris Elliott
Jerid Kirt
Mavis Hoesly
Bernadette Young
Ned Consigny
Joyce Potter
Mary Meister

Hellos (New households welcomed)

Fall 2023

Ann-Marie Bergman
Mary & Jim Johnsen
Becky & Brian Krier (Autumn & Tatum)
Chad & Emily McFadden (Miles & Gloria)
Sarah & Mike Ocampo
Dan & Tara Sanicola (Julie)
Jason & Melanie Stuber (Hunter & Hayden)
Andy & Megan VanHoorn (Eliza & Augie)
Steve Hinkens

Good-byes

Transferred to other churches or moved

Yasmine Horvath
Tindaro & Linda Caputo
Keith Janke
Ed & Ann Krueger
Fay Marquardt
Kay Hoffmann - changed to Associate
Keith & Heidi Swartz

Worship and Membership Numbers

Vitality of a congregation can be found in lives touched and care given. Numbers don't always convey the best of what is truly alive in us, but here are a few numbers which give us a snapshot into our lives together.

The number of people affiliated with UNITY is the hardest number to nail down because comings and goings are always in flux, but 2,277 people is our current estimate. That number include 1,891 confirmed members. Remember our quorum for annual meetings is set in our constitution as 10% of our confirmed membership for the previous year, so our quorum for meetings in 2024 will be 10% of the 1891 number or 189 people.

On the contribution side we have what we'd consider over 500 active households of which 460 made a financial gift of some sort to UNITY during 2023

When we last reported in-person worship attendance in 2019 it stood at 532 people per week. During 2023 we were able to get back to accurate record-keeping in worship, Sunday school and on-line. Our weekly in-person attendance (the sum of worship and Sunday School attendance) for 2023 came in at 412 people, or roughly 77% of the pre-COVID number.

That number should be seen in context of our on-line worshipping audience which might range from 151 to 196 to 256 people per week. If you add all the people who watch or listen to our weekly worship videos/podcasts it averages 151 clicks per week. Most metrics would suggest that one view equals as few as 1.3 viewers (196) or as many as 1.7 viewers (256). In reporting to the ELCA we use the 1.3 multiplier but to take into account duplicate viewers and people who both came to church and then perhaps listened again, we figure the 151 number is the number to go with locally. If you then add that to our 412 people it takes us to a number (563) that is actually above our 2019 attendance. It's hard to know what the ultimate answer on all that is, other than to say our on-line worship, podcasts, and studies are a significant audience and really do represent a third campus at UNITY.

Staffing Transitions 2023 and Moving Into 2024

Departures

Abby Hill, Online Worship Video Editor

Debbie Riederer, Member Care

Brittany Hastings, Custodial

Arrivals

Lynn Key, Director of Music, Admin.

Caitlin Dominski, VBS Support, Online Worship Video Editor

Matt Griepentrog, transitioned from Director of Youth to Bookkeeper and Director of Adult Programs

Denny Thompson, Director of Property

Madison Arredondo, CTK Sunday School Support

Raven Epding, Custodial

Jim Ahlquist, Member Care

Current and upcoming staff openings. (Down from 8 openings at this time last year)

Youth Director (full time)

Custodial (5-8 hours/week)

COL Sunday Nursery

CTK Sunday Nursery

Pastoral positions will be led through the Call Team and the Synod Staff.

Reflections of Committee Chairs

ADULT PROGRAMS

Susie Sprecher



First, a big thank you to Patricia Pelzel, Tracy Karrels, Jen Nowak, Matt Griepentrog and Pastor Sherrie for their time as a part of the Adult Programs Committee in 2023. The time and efforts of this group along with great brainstorming of ideas together has been fun and greatly appreciated!

Thank you to all who participated in the adult programs survey that Matt put together last fall. Your feedback and interests were appreciated and our group continues to reference this input as a part of our ongoing program planning. A few highlights from our adult programs last fall include Sunday forums highlighting the talents and expertise of members of our congregation as well as the opportunity to bring in representatives from a couple of our partners. We were blessed with members from our congregation who shared their expertise in areas such as photography and nutrition, thank you to Brad Wilkins and Tami Miller! In addition, we had presentations and discussions with representatives from Serenity Inns, Waukesha Food Pantry and Brookfield Recreation Department. The end of 2023 members could once again enjoy our UNITY online Advent calendar and also had the opportunity to join in Matt's Christmas story Bible Study series.

We continue to look for and welcome ideas from all of you to enhance and grow programs available to our congregation in 2024. We invite you to join our committee, share ideas and/or come and participate in program opportunities as we look to find new and fun ways for UNITY to grow in faith and worship together!

God bless,
Susie Sprecher

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

Davida Kroepfl

Proverbs 22:6: *Train Children in the right way, and when old, they will not stray.*

At UNITY, we have a strong and active Christian Education program. It is one of many aspects that attracts new members to our congregation. It is what attracted me over 10 years ago, and it is just as phenomenal today. Whether your child is a member or a visitor, a registered student in our program or a curious observer – we welcome all children to be a part of our program in any way that works for them and their family.



In addition to 4 weekly Sunday School classes (during all of the in-person services) for pre-school through 6th grade and the 2-year confirmation program for 7th and 8th grade, our program offers many ways for children to be involved and to give back. This program is so successful for many reasons – first, our pastors, staff and congregation unconditionally support the program, but also because of the many volunteers who make everything possible.

In 2023 we saw growth and consistency in Sunday School attendance at CTK! Due to increased attendance, we now have 2 classes at our 9:30 service, and we hired Madison Arredondo as a Sunday School Coordinator, who splits her time between both campuses, but spends most of her time at CTK.

At the close of 2023 we had 22 regular Sunday School teachers and 10 members on our Christian Education Team, who support our devoted Christian Education Director. Last year, we had around 17 regular teachers and need 30 to be fully staffed.

I am thankful to the Christian Education team who meet regularly to plan the year's activities. Each team member contributes ideas to plan awesome events. After larger events, we have taken detailed notes with feedback to ensure future events run even smoother. In addition to the planning and ideas this team has shared, they have also volunteered at many of the activities and several are Sunday School teachers as well.

Below are many of the ways our 2023 program offered opportunities for the youth in our congregation. While I consider it a huge blessing to have been a Sunday School teacher for several years, being involved in this new role of the Christian Education Team Chairperson has exposed me to so much more that UNITY offers.

I am proud of all that we accomplished in 2023 and excited for another spectacular year. I encourage anyone who is looking for a way to get involved, to check out some of these activities:

- Education –
 - Sunday School classes – we offer classes most weeks year-round at both campuses for pre-school through 6th grade. Each year kicks off with our annual Rally Weekend!
 - Sunday School Christmas Program – we start practicing and signing up for narrators and characters in October, and by the time the Program comes, these kids are ready to tell the Story of Jesus' birth in a remarkable way. We added a twist this year with their entrance to the Little Drummer Boy, but we kept the tradition of singing and signing Away in a Manger.
 - Confirmation classes – we have a 2-year program for 7th and 8th graders with weekly classes during the school year. At the end of the year, we have 41 students in the program.

Reflections of Committee Chairs

- Fusion classes for confirmation students – in addition to confirmation classes, our confirmation students participate in two 3-session series learning about other religions and our servant partners.
- Vacation Bible School (VBS)– each summer we open up our church to learn, serve and have fun. Students are in pre-school through 5th grade and Crew Leaders are in 6th through 12th grade. This event requires a lot of planning by a separate committee. The event is 4 half-days Monday through Thursday with a Family picnic on the evening of last day.
- Service –
 - Our Sunday School offerings were enough to purchase a heifer for Heifer International and to donate \$500 to the Waukesha Food pantry.
 - Our Sunday School children spent 3 hours on Martin Luther King, Jr day to volunteer and support our church and our servant partners at our annual Servanthood Blitz.
 - Our confirmation students each picked at least 4 different ways to volunteer and support our church and our servant partners.
 - We collected birthday cake mix, frosting and supplies to donate to the Waukesha Food Pantry.
 - We collected cereal boxes to donate to the Waukesha Food Pantry.
 - We made gift tags for the Holiday Giving Tree.
- Special Milestones –
 - 2nd Graders received their very own Bible from UNITY, after learning the basics of the Bible.
 - 3rd Graders received their First Communion.
 - 9th Graders affirmed their Baptism through their Confirmation.
- Fellowship –
 - Lock-ins and Sleep-underers – we host 4 different events for each age group to play games, do crafts, and enjoy each other at church on Friday nights.
 - Confirmation Trips – 7th graders went to Camp, while 8th graders went on an East Coast Road Trip (the east coast of Wisconsin).
 - Adventfest is an all-ages event where we prepare ourselves and UNITY for Christmas. We share a meal, participate in a service, make crafts, listen to music, eat cookies and drink cocoa.

Submitted by Davida Kroepfl
dakroepfl@gmail.com

COMMUNICATION & TECHNOLOGY

Ed Dominski



Once again this year the Communication & Technology team focused on helping UNITY take advantage of evolving technology inside and outside of all three campuses, Christ the King (CTK), Cross of Life (COL), and all that can be reached via UNITYBrookfield.org.

Weekly online worship services continued along with Belief Beat podcasts, and online children's messages. We even streamed a live, in-service, call-and-response song between El Salvador and summer outdoor worship at the CTK pavilion. Like many things at UNITY it was muy chulo. The 2023 annual meeting continued the tradition of occurring in both campus buildings and online simultaneously. Thank you to Ann Hill and Pat Dowling for pulling this together.

I'd also like to reflect on the fact that the innovations in communication and technology that UNITY has been able to take advantage of, while continuing support of all of our ministries, is only possible because of the support and generosity from everyone at UNITY. Whether you've volunteered using SignUp Genius, assisted with sound or video projection during a service, starred as worship assistant in a recorded worship service, or made a donation via UNITY's secure [online donation page](#) - Thank You!

I'd also like to extend a sincere Thank You to the members of our small but mighty Communication & Technology Committee: Pat Dowling, John Ehlers, Ann Hill, Allen Krueger, and Duane Maas.

We're always looking for new ideas and team members of any age or background. Whether you like gadgets, bits and bytes, multimedia, networking, photography/videography, or just lending a hand, please contact me if you're interested in joining our team ed_dominski@icloud.com 262-875-2105 (call/text) or contact any staff member.

If you'd like to connect to some of our online offerings via your mobile device, below are the QR codes to some key links. Just scan one with the camera on your phone or tablet and follow the link.

Thanks! - Ed



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Worship



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Announcements



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FINANCE

Adrienne Krueger, Treasurer & Phil Roemaat, Finance Chair



The Finance Team works closely with the UNITY Church Council to plan, monitor, and account for the financial affairs of the church. We work on the budget, oversee accounting and depositing of the offerings each week, conduct a limited financial review of prior years' record keeping, and advise the Council on other financial matters as needed.



The Finance Team holds regular meetings with team members monitoring all areas including legal, banking, real estate, and insurance. The current members of the team are Penny Berglund, Michelle Duerr, Kevin Grabowski, Tim Herman, Greg Schreiber, and our pastors. We thank them for their support and continuing to help UNITY with their own unique talents, knowledge, and experience. We are a nerdy, yet fun, group who really care about placing the church in the best possible position for both the church's short-term and long-term goals. If any member of the congregation has an interest in joining UNITY's Finance Team, please reach out.

For 2023, UNITY went into the year with budgeted giving of \$1,243,291, and expenses of 1,243,263, with a small surplus. Actual giving was \$1,205,164, other income was 3,047, and expenses were \$1,173,702, which resulted in a surplus of 34,509. Given the church's financial position at the end of November, it seemed very unlikely that UNITY would end up with a surplus. However, the Congregation responded with the largest ever month of giving of \$251,255.

For the 2023 surplus, Church Council is recommending that 25% (\$8,627) be shared with our partners via benevolence and the remaining 75% (\$25,881) be held in reserve. The additional benevolence puts the actual benevolence funds on par with the 2023 benevolence budget. For the remainder, the pastor call process will bring uncertainty to 2024 and into 2025; having funds in reserve should help manage for unknowable expenses, such as pastoral moving costs.

The church's balance sheet remains strong. Total operating cash is \$348,916. The contingency reserve is the church's safety net and contains about 1-month's operating expenses. UNITY has used a portion of the Employee Retention Credit (ERC) funds in 2023 and plans to finish using it in 2024. Lastly, while not on the balance sheet, the balance of the COL mortgage is \$221,448 as of December 31, 2023, with an interest rate of 3.66%, and maturity date of November 9, 2027.

For 2024, UNITY budgeted for a 4% increase in giving compared to 2023. Last year, UNITY budgeted for a 6% increase and achieved a 3% increase when compared to 2022. The 4% giving increase was based on a strong appeal campaign and the hope that our giving trend continues to go up. Most expenses were similar to 2023; the largest change was staff salaries & benefits, plus \$5,000 for call expenses. Given the upcoming pastoral changes, there is a bit more estimation for salaries and benefits; the Finance team will continue to be vigilant and approach 2024 with a flexible mindset. Taking all this into account, we are projecting a break-even year for the church in 2024.

We give special thanks to Ann Hill, Matt Griepentrog, and Craig Nelson, for all that they do to keep our accounts in order and reconciled. Tracking the finances of a church with an annual budget of more than \$1,250,000 is a ton of record keeping. Last, we would like to thank all of YOU as a congregation for your generous giving and commitment to UNITY's mission.

With gratitude,

Adrienne Krueger & Phil Roemaat

GROUP OPPORTUNITIES (GO)
Tiffany Reay

The mission of the GO committee is to bring the congregation together socially. Fellowship allows us to build our community. GO stands for Group Opportunities, and we try to host a range of activities to get everybody involved, adults, kids and those in-between. In 2023 we hosted:

- Game Night
- Fall Fest – we had a great turn out, with a chili dinner, pumpkin decorating and hunt
- Summer Picnic with Cross Lutheran in the CTK backyard.



We are welcoming additional members for the planning committee. Also, your help for the events always appreciated! We send out sign-up for food prep, activities coordinators, crafts, so offer of range of volunteer slots for all sort of talents. It's an easy way to join in – look forward to seeing you at our 2024 events.

Submitted by Tiffany Reay

INVITE

Anna Jansson



UNITY's Invite Committee works to welcome new members to the church, while also encouraging existing church attenders to officially join us! We hold spring and fall New Member Classes in which attendees can learn more about UNITY's core beliefs, serving opportunities, and all that UNITY has to offer. It is also a wonderful time where those involved in helping with the New Member Classes are able to get to know those joining a little bit better.

During the fall 2023 New Member Class we welcomed nine households, including 16 adults and 9 children. The new members were made up of people who had been worshiping for quite some time and many who had grown up here and now had moved back into the area wanting to be a part of UNITY again, and a few who were completely new to UNITY in the last year. We are very grateful to have them all as part of our wonderful community!

With Pastor Sherrie's recent sabbatical and visits to other churches we have realized there are some new ways that we can continue to grow our ability to recognize and acknowledge visitors and will be working on those ideas in 2024! Please let us know if you would like to be a part of welcoming and helping UNITY visitors and/or planning and joining us for New Member Classes!

PROPERTY

David Koenen

When I began writing this annual reflection for our congregation I was simply awestruck to the quantity of items and events that took place for 2023. Our dual campus facilities had multitudes of work done at both COL and CTK. Let me summarize this work for you, but by no means will this documentation of work cover the complete list!



Let me start over at the COL campus with these listed items: new prepped floors for epoxy coatings in lower rooms plus added new vinyl base moldings, phase 1 of the new roof shingling and gutters with sections of rotted wood also repaired, failed furnace replacement plus other furnace motor repair, fire suppression systems “dry & wet” fail with pinhole pipes replaced and new compressor installed, water heater fail and warranty replacement, lower building foundation prepping with countless wheelbarrows of stone base deposited for good drainage, crushed downspouts were fixed and attached for proper water flow away from the building, the outdoor shed got a double facelift with new shingles and needed painting that matches the church colors... a new solar outdoor LED light was also added for safety, the John Deere lawn tractor needed electrical coil and clutch bearing repair... on-going spring tune-ups also occur for various equipment in the shed too, plumbing leaks & drains with bathrooms fixtures were serviced, interior room walls and hallways were prepared fixing cracks and nail/screw marks along with fresh paint for the rooms, “Forester” came twice to take down our problematic dead ash trees, many members helped chainsaw logs and split logs for the congregation to use that firewood, the entire properties’ trees-bushes-perennials were cut and trimmed along with the hauling of numerous trailer loads of brush to the dump from April through November, rusted west lower outside door was replaced and installed, the parking lots lines were repainted (Thanks Denny), include also Spring & Fall Clean-up to this list of work done.

Let me continue over at the CTK campus with these listed items: the entrance median planting area got a beautiful makeover with new plants, grasses and mulch plus numerous waterings in the dry Summer (Thanks Pat & Jane), the large outdoor shed roof had rotten wood repaired and was also re-shingled, the shed interior got seriously organized including all the various stored hand tools that aids in space to allow for new rolling altar and chair storage helping to efficiently set-up the outdoor worship in the pavilion, re-staining of all vertical support beams in the pavilion from weather beaten sun effects, the outside worn door to the fellowship hall was properly prepped & painted red (Thanks Jane B.), plumbing drains replaced, on-going spring tune-ups/maintenance also occur for zero turn & lawn mowers & snowblowers in the shed, “A1 Outdoor Service”

completed cutting and removal of our problematic dead ash trees as a danger on UNITY's property border, new lifetime table and chair racks were assembled.

Continuing at the CTK campus with "The Backyard" listed items: the entire properties' trees-bushes-perennials were cut and trimmed along with the hauling of numerous trailer loads of brush to the dump, granite stone piles were leveled out at the labyrinth location currently used for fire pit burnings, after parking lot resurfacing edges were leveled and soil-grass seed-mulch added (We must try again in wetter Springtime to grow), various dead ash trees were cut in the back of UNITY's lot and again logs split and put into storing & drying rack for future use, a large 10 ft. drain dug 2 ft. deep and 18 ft. long was installed to handle excess waterflow surging to the lower northeast parking lot that now redirects water flow to the retention ponds (big thanks to Roger), along with the drain install was tons of stone hauled to lock in proper drainage, the ice rink was set-up this year however the weather has not cooperated at all and now we are unsure of its use this Winter, include also Spring & Fall Clean-up to this list of work done, the Boy Scout's were busy again and built the "9 Square" game plus relocated the "Alligator" balance game cement core bases to the southeast property plus repaired and repainted all the picnic tables on the property plus there is a current open path through the woods now connected to the Brookfield Parkway (Kudo's to everyone for the planning-efforts-goals to meet these accomplishments)

I must go on by thanking everyone for the on-going day to day events like the weeding, lawn mowing, snow blowing and shoveling, planting flowers and watering. The list of what our congregation does extends out to others and fosters working together to achieve our goals. The Property Committee always welcomes the abilities of our congregation's coordinated work & participation when we ask. We truly appreciate your time and action helping out in any way possible. I thank you so much and I welcome your thoughts, comments, or questions.

David Koenen, UNITY Property Chair
davidkoenen@wi.rr.com, 414-559-6974

SERVANT MINISTRIES

Jackie Herington



UNITY's love and generosity for all our ministry partners is such an incredible gift, spiritually and financially! It is an honor and a privilege to share the compassionate and generous ways that UNITY extended healing and support locally and beyond this year. Thank you for every act of generosity! Let's keep spreading love and healing and may God continue to bless us and our partners.

UNITY has 10 Servant Ministry partners, which include 2 inner City Milwaukee congregations, 2 El Salvadorian congregations, 2 addiction treatment centers, a homeless shelter, a free clinic, a food pantry, and a blood center!! Each partner has a dedicated UNITY advocate that works with the partner to create meaningful relationships with our congregation and walk together as the body of Christ to meet the needs of the people that the partner serves. Thank you to our devoted ministry advocates for bringing the opportunities for service!

In 2023, **12.5% (13.0% with surplus addition) of UNITY giving (\$159,126)** was gifted in Benevolence to our Partners. In addition, with member directed gifts and transfers from reserves **-a total of \$311,077 was available for use beyond ourselves!** The Servant Ministry Advocates work with their partners to project and finalize financial support amounts to assist with our partners operational needs to continue with the amazing work they offer! Please refer to the 2023 Benevolence Financial Report for giving details. Also, see below for some highlights of the needs that were met for our ministry partners through UNITY's generosity and support:

- **Aspen Recovery Center:** UNITY renewed and reinvigorated our relationship with Aspen Center in 2023! We hosted 3 cooking classes, shared fellowship with confirmation students and their dogs, provided a Thanksgiving meal, 52 Christmas gifts, and funds to support recovery treatment this year!
- **American Red Cross:** UNITY hosted FOUR(4) blood drives and collected 119 blood products!
- **Bread of Healing Clinic:** Thanks UNITY for many months of volunteering at medical / dental clinics caring for un- or under-insured patients, 8 Angel Tree gift cards and benevolence funds gifted support the clinic, and the Thanksgiving offering, which totaled \$5,244 to purchase Continuous Glucose Monitors for the clinic! Enough to help 11 people for one year, almost doubling current patient count.
- **Cross Lutheran Church:** UNITY members took time to volunteer with their Backyard Garden Project, UNITY Fellowship Choir (adult) sang at Cross Lutheran Church during service.
- **El Salvador:** UNITY members continued to support our partners in El Salvador:
 - 21 travelers served in the El Salvador Mission of Healing Clinic in February, providing local in-person medical information and aid for nearly 120 patients/day in 4 communities

- 18 travelers celebrating 20 years of partnerships with our Salvadoran companions at Cordero de Dios and Rutilio Grande through worship, games, pupusa-making, and dance parties
- To renew support of 70 El Salvador scholarship students, our Pledge-A-Thon live-streamed for 24 straight hours and exceeded our goal of \$35,000 by raising \$37,044!
- **Hephatha Lutheran Church:** Thanks to the generous UNITY members for so many gifts and deliveries:
 - Collected \$21,486 in Lent offerings to help fund their goal in replacing their 15 passenger van!
 - Donations of much-needed baby supplies for the Strong Baby Sanctuary
 - 64 backpacks filled with school supplies for prekindergarten through college level
 - Volunteered at Hephatha's Sunday School Luncheon (50 people) and the Lenten Luncheon (60-75 people), bringing and serving food, and an Easter egg hunt!!
 - 70 Christmas wishes granted by the UNITY Angel Tree Gifts
 - Numerous mittens, scarves, and various other donations made throughout the year
- **Hebron House:** UNITY collected and delivered 26 complete Kitchen Kits in support of their new housing program to assist young adults, provided 200 cut out cookies for their Jingle Jam Christmas party, provided meal deliveries every other month with the new Monthly Partner Meal Program, sent 28 Christmas gifts, and Benevolence gifts were used to help fund remodel projects which will enable them to serve more guests in greatly improved spaces!
- **Serenity Inns:** UNITY members, including many confirmation students, continue to step up and provide meals multiple times per month to both the SI residential house and SI Alumni house. Additionally, 32 gifts were fulfilled by UNITY to spread God's love to their residents this holiday.
- **Waukesha Food Pantry:** UNITY volunteers regularly served at the Food Pantry throughout the year.
 - The Summer and Fall Bag Sales collected record totals of \$2,462 and \$3,762 respectively!
 - UNITY hosted the Food Pantry of Waukesha County fundraiser event at our CTK pavilion
 - In honor of Karen Tredwell's 26 years of service, UNITY made a \$2,600 donation

Romans 12:10 - "Be devoted to one another in love. Honor one another above yourselves."

STEWARDSHIP TEAM

Trisha Smith



Excitement and new energy abound in our Stewardship Team! In the Fall of 2023, a new UNITY Stewardship Team came together with congregation members bringing different backgrounds. We took the approach of being storytellers and developed with staff three videos sharing the good works accomplished by the money given to UNITY. The first video highlighted the individuals who work at UNITY. The second video showcased UNITY's internal programs and the third video described our external ministries. We

incorporated the videos into our sweet-themed 2024 pledge appeal.

Thank you to everyone who supported the pledge drive and year-end giving campaign. We exceeded our goal of 300 pledges and had the highest response rate since 2019! The total giving commitments showed 2024 will have an increase in giving that will enable UNITY to meet raising costs and accomplish the congregation's goals.

Stepping into the role of the Stewardship team chair seemed daunting at the beginning. I should not have worried. I have been surrounded by caring and supportive people all focused on bettering the lives of those in the church and our partners. Steve Taipala, Brian Olsson and Kelsey Morrison brought energy, creativity and passion as committee members. Ann Hill spiced up and automated the video storyboards we brought to her. We were amazed to see the expertly done final videos! Bakers quickly volunteered to donate delicious desserts. Craig Nelson, the Financial Secretary, regularly provided updated pledge results with comparisons to previous years. And throughout it all Pastor John offered guidance and support.

The great pledge drive indicates that our church has growing momentum. Watch for the Stewardship Team's continued work in 2024. We welcome your feedback and open discussion on what stories to tell and how we present information on the church's good works.

Best wishes,

Trisha Smith

WORSHIP & MUSIC

Steve Johnson

2023, what a year for worship! UNITY Music grows and thrives (think Brass Quintet on Easter and Christmas, and of course, our fabulous Praise Band, Handbell Ensembles and choirs)! There have been bumps in the road, but we have weathered them.

Our online presence continues to grow. Many people tune in to our weekly online service, not just from our area, but from all over the U.S. and even some other parts of the world. All the different Podcasts are a great way to hear the message as well.



Because of our inviting, friendly and multiple formats of worship, we have gained many new members and there are more ready to join. Visitors love the friendliness not only of our pastors and staff, but also of you, the congregation of UNITY. I know we have had a few volunteers from our visitors who aren't even members yet. That's because of you!

The Backyard Project is complete and we have had our outdoor summer services in the new pavilion well attended. Also our summer concert series was a success.

UNITY is a great place for worship and every year since we have become UNITY, we have become stronger as a congregation and it is great to see in person numbers going up. Please don't feel pressured to come in person.

Speaking of volunteering. Please consider being a volunteer at worship. We need more people to do so, especially since attendance at all services is up from last year.

Have a wonderful and blessed 2024

Steve Johnson
steve.johnson61@gmail.com

YOUTH COMMITTEE REPORT

Eric Borkenhagen



I guess time does fly when you are having fun. Hard to believe that it has been almost four years since I stepped into the Youth Committee chair role, and this will be my last annual report. It has been a great experience and my many thanks to the parents and youth that I have been able to connect with during this time. And thanks to my fellow council members who I have no doubt are always making decisions to make UNITY a better place for those who worship here and for the outside partners we are connected to.

We started 2023 like previous years and spent the first weekend of February in Merrimac WI for the annual ski trip to Devils Head Ski Resort. Happy to report that it was an injury free weekend. In July of 2023, we had our mission trip with the Appalachia Service Project where 25 youth and 11 adults went to Prestonsburg KY to assist with home repair/improvement projects for low-income families living in Central Appalachia. These projects help to make their homes more energy efficient, accessible, and safer. All the youth did a great job working in some difficult conditions, as the normal high temperature would be in the upper 80's with high humidity. The best part of the trip is seeing the smiles on the family members and the picnic at the local park where the volunteers get to commune with the families. I do not know with 100% confidence if God is real. I have been on this trip three times, and each time at the end of the trip, my confidence is 99.99%.

Aside from these trips, the senior high kids would meet up on most Sunday evenings while school was in session. The following are some of the events that took place: Game Night, Crazy Uncle, Bonfire at CTK Backyard, Gaga Ball, Pumpkin Carving, Chopped Cooking Competition, Food Pantry Scavenger Hunt, College Care Package Event, White Elephant Gift Exchange and a Freshman Welcome Picnic at Wirth Park. We have a lot of really great Senior High kids at UNITY from different schools and it's a pleasure to see them bond with each other on the trips and at the Sunday evening events.

As many of you know, we did lose our Youth Ministry Director about halfway through the year when Matt Griepentrog moved on to become the Director of Adult Programs. Matt was an awesome Youth Director and I witnessed firsthand how much the kids enjoyed his leadership, sense of humor and infectious laugh. We wish him all the best as he takes his talents forward to be used within the Adult Ministry Program. We were hoping to backfill Matt's position in the fall of 2023 but only had two candidates that showed interest but before we could conduct a formal interview process had removed themselves from consideration. If anyone is interested or knows someone who would be a good fit for this role, please contact myself (ericnborkenhagen@gmail.com) or any of the pastors to discuss. In the meantime we have been and will continue to be supported by so many great parents that assist with the program. As I had mentioned in a recent council corner article, the right candidate will present themselves and UNITY Church will have the best person in place as Youth Ministry Director. I'm 99.99% sure of it.

Be safe and be well,

Eric Borkenhagen

Reflections of UNITY Staff

DIRECTOR OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

Michelle Aprahamian

“Let my teaching fall like rain and my words descend like dew, like showers on new grass, like abundant rain on tender plants.” Deuteronomy 32:2

Though He grew up a carpenter’s son, Jesus’ first and only ministry was teaching, and teaching about God. Teaching is not just a privilege, an honor, but also a duty that God has called upon those with the gift to teach.

We started our 2023 program year by welcoming 16 new families and 28 new kids to Sunday school. We opened our arms to over 100 kids during Rally weekend and attendance has been stronger than previous years. With such strong attendance, we made an appeal for an additional 15 Sunday school teachers, and we were just shy of our goal with 12 volunteers answering the call! All our Christian Education programming is dependent on the many leaders and teachers who make it happen and wow, did you make it happen this year!

Thank you for sharing your gift of teaching and your love for our kids!

This past spring and summer the buildings were energized with Sunday school lock-ins, First Communion, Vacation Bible School, and summer Sunday school. We held our first Servanthood Blitz in three years with 35 kids and 10 adults coming together to serve our partners. During Vacation Bible School 106 kids, 45 crew leaders, and 38 site leaders and volunteers at the COL campus learned what it was like to “Be a Kid Where Jesus Did” and even experienced walking on water! During Summer, we saw an energized return to summer Sunday school with options to attend at COL and CTK. In the midst of really busy family schedules, the new normal is a commitment to Sunday school and kids showing up at either campus depending on the time that worked best for that particular weekend. We saw this trend continue into our regular Sunday school year which is really cool in building a shared Sunday school community across campuses and “time zones”. Thank you, families and volunteers, for this commitment to strengthening our faith community at UNITY!

As we headed into fall, 26 kids enjoyed “confirmation wrap-up” with lunch, games and pictures, and affirming their baptism the weekend of September 16-17. The very next weekend we welcomed 40 seventh and eighth at a meet and greet which included, you guessed it, more games, and more food. This time they worked on some community building with challenge courses and of course, a bon fire competition. How else do you roast hot dogs and buns?! All of this took place in our newly finished pavilion, backyard, and Greenway trail.

This year, our children have filled the altar during Children’s Message time and the classrooms and the hallways with pure laughter and joy. I am so grateful to Colleen King, Council Chair and Davida Kroepfl, Education Chair who led Advent Fest and the multitude of volunteers who made it happen for 230 people this year. I am also thankful for the unwavering support of our education team for their leadership, planning, and “all in” commitment to our program.

Education remains true to its vision. We are committed to creating an inclusive environment where our children will grow in their faith, community and connections. I am in awe of the commitment of our families and the dedication of our children to serve their church and their community through their music, their stories, and their desire for service projects. Through our collected Sunday school offering we donated \$500 to the Waukesha Food Pantry and we were able to purchase three cows for Heifer International during their 3x match initiative. Dollars and cents can make a difference:) However, more importantly, thanks be to God for our gifted leaders, teachers and volunteers who answer the call to teach and honor the legacy of an outstanding Christian education program where all of God’s children can learn God’s word through the Bible, serve others as followers of Jesus, and share the Good News to the world.

Thank you and God Bless,
Michelle and the UNITY Education Team



DIRECTOR OF ADULT PROGRAMS

Matt Griepentrog

“Love Strong”



"Love isn't a state of perfect caring. It is an active noun like 'struggle.' To love someone is to strive to accept that person exactly the way he or she is, right here and now." - Fred Rogers

This quote is one that our Senior High students spent time learning and applying as we traveled to the hills of Eastern Kentucky, and spent a week on various housing projects for area residents. The trip takes them to a part of the country that is rarely seen or heard from, and completely different in many ways from our home here in southeastern Wisconsin. The week was bittersweet for me personally, knowing that this would be the last time leading our high schoolers through an experience like the one we had. But I must say, I was so impressed with our students and our adults, who endured really hot temperatures all week and lived out the theme “Love Strong” in a way that would make you all proud. The looks on the faces of the homeowners said it all. We were able to make a difference through our hard work, and hearing their stories blessed us as well!

It was only one week in a busy, jam-packed year, but it ends up being so much more than that for these young people, as the experience together forms and shapes them into Christ-like servants. Know that your support of them, both financially through fundraisers, and through your prayers, makes experiences like this possible!

Following the trip, I quickly made the transition to my new role as bookkeeper and Director of Adult Programs. It has been enjoyable to take on new duties and responsibilities, and work with the Adult Programs team to bring new opportunities to fruition! One such opportunity that is now underway is a new group, called Twentysomethings. This group is a mix of young people, many of them reconnecting after being apart during college. Be sure to watch the announcements to see where they're meeting next!

We also have worked on a variety of ways we can connect and “Bloom” this Lenten season! Check the website and newsletter for all the opportunities you have to bloom this spring!



DIRECTOR OF MUSIC MINISTRIES

Lynn Key

How can I keep from singing . . . or playing . . . ?

UNITY is such a wonderful place to make and share music! We have such a warm and inviting congregation that truly appreciates the music that is shared here. And what a special place, having so many gifted members willing to share their love of music – all to the Glory of God. Just come on any ‘All Music Tuesday’ night to experience the fabulous mix of sounds mixed with boundless energy. Music is ageless - from our littles to our most experienced members. You can’t help but smile... or sing, or play along!



Music needs to be shared - you need both musicians and listeners who enjoy it. It's a symbiotic relationship. You as the congregation give back as much with your energy.

There are many special people who have developed this wonderful program over the years. The UNITY music staff is amazing - they share their love of music with all our musicians, generously assisting participants and furthering their abilities. It's such a joy to see people come out of their shells.

Our goal is for every group to have the opportunity to share their music with each different service time/location. We also are reaching out to share with our partners. The Fellowship Choir visited Cross Lutheran Church to share music together in November, and plans are in the works to share our bell choir music with Hephatha Lutheran in the spring of 2024. We appreciate everyone's efforts to make these special events happen and look forward to future opportunities to share.

If you have ideas or suggestions of things you'd like to see or hear, please share them with any one of our music staff. We will do as much as we can to share that love of music.

My journey is still evolving to find all the hidden treasures at UNITY and their gifts, but the first six months have been amazing!

MEMBER CARE

Jim Ahlquist



“Minister of Member Care” is a title shared by all members of this congregation. Many thanks to Debbie Riederer who coordinated this ministry for years, and even though not titled as such any longer, continues to share alongside all of us.

Having only been with you since November (unless you remember me from 2012-2017), it is indeed a blessing to be amongst all of you who love and care for each other through the hills and valleys of especially these last years. What a privilege to spend my early years of “retirement” doing what I love...visiting and sharing the greatest gift ever. As we seek to bring blessing to those struggling with life and death, so we are blessed even more.

Thanks to the amazing staff and volunteers who have kept UNITY healthy and growing in faith, member by member, reaching out way beyond this congregation to extended family and friends. Much of this ministry takes place behind the scenes, not always making the pages of an annual report.

If you would like to be part of our Visitation Team or would like to be visited by a caring and loving member, please contact us as we continue to reach out and be “blessed to be a blessing” in 2024 and beyond!

Jim Ahlquist
jim@unitybrookfield.org
715-210-2245

DIRECTOR OF COMMUNICATIONS

Natalie Kamenick



Thank you for your incredible support in 2023! Take a look below at some of the fun memories shared on Facebook last year. Be sure to follow us on Facebook to stay up to date on what's happening at UNITY!

Wow! Servanthood Blitz was a success! The kids did so much to help our church and community partners! They made 200 craft kits for our El Salvad... See more



📦 477 Boxes of Cereal were Donated to Waukesha Food Pantry today 📦

Thank you to everyone that donated and helped our Sunday schoolers surpass their goal of 375!!!



Another wonderful day on the Mission of Healing trip in El Salvador 🙏🇸🇻



Thank you to everyone that helped out yesterday at Cross Lutheran Garden Work Party!



East Coast Road trippers made it back this past Friday! Thank you, Lord, for this incredible group of campers & the memories they made on this trip. 🙏❤️



What a fabulous Fiesta! Thank you everyone that came to the fiesta card night!



That's a wrap! Huge shout out to the incredibly talented cast of Jesus Karaoke! Thank you for sharing your talents with UNITY this weekend for the performance of the year! 🎤🎶



Good News Neighborhood! Be a kid where Jesus lived! 2023 VBS has officially started! 📖👶



Thank you to the wonderful decorating crew at CTK, it looks absolutely beautiful ❤️



Financial Reports

Fund Balances

Year Ended December 31, 2023

UNITY Lutheran Church - Fund Balances

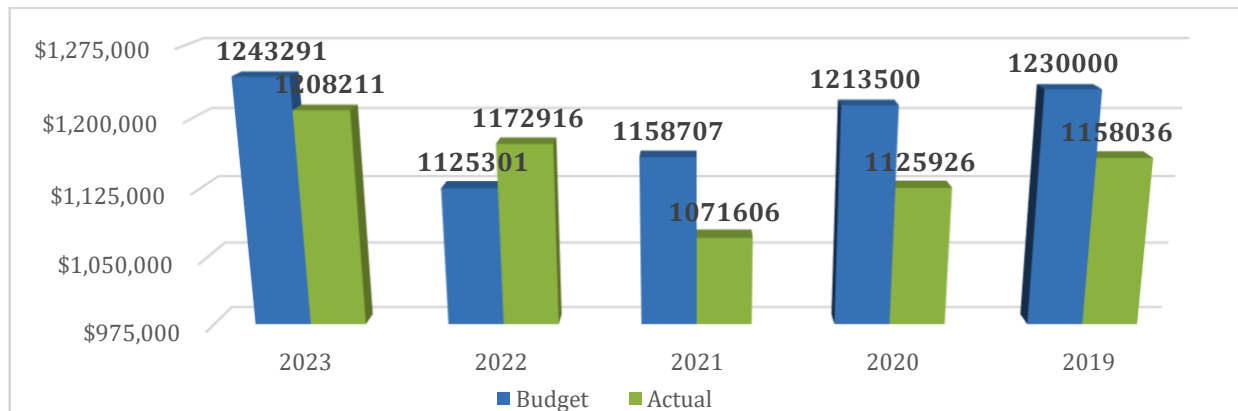
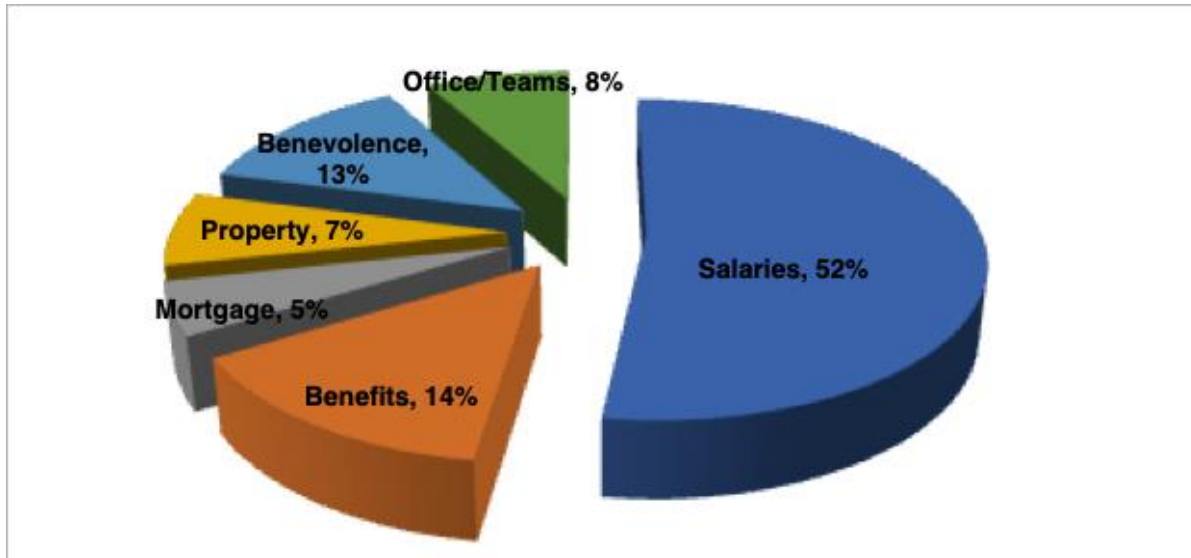
			Fund 10 Benevolence	Fund 15 Backyard	Total
	12/31/2023	12/31/2022	12/31/2023	12/31/2023	12/31/2023
Cash & Investments					
<i>Cash & investment accounts</i>					
Petty cash	\$ 875	\$ 400			\$ 875
Operating cash account-PNC	\$ 143,866	106,676	217,548	(82,485)	278,929
Operating cash account-BMO	\$ 156,043	113,520	(64,814)	(4,652)	86,577
Reserve Fund- CTK	\$ 31	31			31
ELCA Mission Fund	\$ 48,100	45,054		102,860	150,960
<i>Total cash & investments</i>	\$ 348,916	265,681	152,734	15,723	517,373
Other assets		(0)		-	-
Total Cash & Investments	\$ 348,916	265,681	152,734	15,723	517,373
Liabilities and operating surplus					
Contingency reserve	\$ 100,624	100,624			100,624
Memorial fund (COL & CTK)	\$ 34,580	48,543			34,580
Building Use	\$ 5,929				5,929
Pastors' discretionary fund	\$ 7,679	5,753			7,679
Music/library/Thrivent fund	\$ 9,542	6,571			9,542
Prepaid pledges	\$ 38,806	28,100			38,806
Property	\$ 7,200	7,200			7,200
Operating Reserve (ERC Funds)	\$ 63,693	(11,112)			63,693
Sabbatical	\$ 25,587	24,631			25,587
Special benevolence	\$ -		46,815		46,815
Education Fund					
Other liabilities (youth & Tech)	\$ 4,556	760	1,140		5,696
Payroll taxes payable		(823)		-	-
Total liabilities	\$ 298,196	210,247	47,955	-	346,151
Beginning balance	\$ 16,212	55,434	33,361	-	49,573
Year-to-date Surplus/ (deficit)	\$ 34,508		71,418	15,723	121,649
Total operating surplus/(Deficit)	\$ 50,720	55,434	104,779	15,723	171,222
Total liabilities and operating surplus	\$ 348,916	\$ 265,681	\$ 152,734	\$ 15,723	\$ 517,373

Revenues and Expenses Year Ended December 31, 2023

UNITY Lutheran Church - Revenues and Expenses Year Ended December 31, 2023

	Actual 2023	Budget 2023	Actual 2022	Actual 2021	Actual 2020	Variance to Budget
Revenues						
Recorded offerings	\$ 1,181,719		\$ 1,156,100	\$ 1,057,483	\$ 1,101,606	
Loose receipts	23,445		24,730	13,818	20,579	
Other income	3,047		618	305	3,741	
Total without PPP				1,071,606		
PPP Loan Recognition				117,125		
Total revenues	1,208,211	1,243,291	1,172,916	\$ 1,188,731	\$ 1,125,926	(35,080)
Expenses						
Benevolence	149,916	155,411	129,882.09	\$ 128,556	\$ 129,051	(5,495)
Salaries	612,958	635,269	562,685	531,989	555,778	(22,311)
Benefits	166,308	198,732	192,095	184,080	184,459	(32,424)
Debt service	62,053	62,000	62,053	62,295	67,949	53
Office administration	24,278	22,000	22,614	16,746	16,061	2,278
Contingency/operating reserve				117,125		
Teams						
Education	8,599	7,600	8,350	7,670	1,447	999
Adult Programs	1,188	3,650	1,651	750	1,145	(2,462)
New Members	985	1,200	1,143	1,162	465	(215)
Group Opportunities	3,112	3,000	3,385	4,288	1,125	112
Call Committee			-		-	
Property	86,767	91,600	91,580	93,321	92,360	(4,833)
Servant Ministry	281		33		-	281
Stewardship	2,088	1,900	1,356	1,269	1,905	188
Worship & Music	12,828	13,000	13,339	13,229	7,444	(172)
Youth	6,853	3,500	3,218	1,705	2,241	3,353
Communications & Tech	35,489	44,400	40,311	45,124	35,372	(8,911)
Total Teams	158,190	169,850	164,366	168,518	143,504	(11,660)
Total expenses	1,173,702	1,243,262	1,133,694	1,209,309	1,096,802	(69,560)
Income/ (Deficit)	\$ 34,509	\$ 29	\$ 39,222	\$ (20,578)	\$ 29,124	34,480

Giving and Spending Chart Year Ended December 31, 2023



Where is the 2023 Surplus going?

Council is recommending that 25% of the 2023, \$8,627, be given to our benevolence partners. The remaining 75%, \$25,881, will be held in reserve. It is Council's recommendation that these funds be saved and available for the Pastor call process. The cost of the call process can vary due to length of time, travel and moving costs.

2023 Benevolence Summary

Summary of our Giving		Notes on Giving
a. General Benevolence 12.5%	\$ 150,127	12.5% of operating giving
b. 2023 Surplus 25%	\$ 8,999	Brings the 12.5% to 13.1%
c. Employee Retention Credit 10%	\$ 12,903	
d. From Reserves	\$ 19,421	El Salvador Scholarships (Jo Ann Tomm/Jim Batdorf Memorials)
d. Member Directed Giving:		
Aspen Center Recovery Program	\$ 518	
Bread of Healing Clinic	\$ 11,100	
El Salvador		
Trip Expenses	\$ 4,648	
Trip Supplies	\$ 3,057	Mission of Healing Clinic and Summer Trip
Airfare	\$ 24,192	Payments by travellers
Scholarships	\$ 37,044	Scholarship Sponsors
Hephatha Lutheran Church	\$ 2,000	Safe Baby Sanctuary meals for new and expecting moms
Lent Offering	\$ 21,486	New van for Hephatha Lutheran Church
Ned Consigny Book Drive	\$ 605	
Hebron House	\$ 275	Kitchen Kits
Sunday School Offering	\$ 950	\$740 Heifer International, \$210 Food Pantry of Waukesha Co
Thanksgiving Offering	\$ 5,244	Continuous Glucose Monitors for Bread of Healing Clinic
VBS Offering	\$ 833	Hebron House Bedding
Waukesha Food Pantry	\$ 7,675	Bag Sales, Souper Bowl, Member Directed Gifts
Member Directed Total:		\$ 119,627
Total Giving for 2023:		\$ 311,077

2023 Benevolence Summary – continued

Summary of How the Giving Was Used

Aspen Center	\$ 724	Events/support for residents (remaining balance from prev years went to scholarships)
Bread of Healing Clinic	34,844	Staff RN, vaccine clinics, continuous glucose monitoring
Cross Lutheran Church	12,074	\$12K outreach programs, joint outdoor worship and lunch
El Salvador:		
Trip Expenses	24,874	37 travelers (21 in February, 16 in summer)
Trip Supplies	7,292	Mission of Healing Clinic and Summer Trip
Airfare	29,835	All travelers with financial support for 3 travelers/2 staff
Scholarships	29,891	42 students + Rutilio transport
Rutilio Grande	2,980	Christmas chickens, public restroom
Cordero de Dios	5,000	Vocational Classes (bakery/jewelry for adults, soccer/music for kids)
Christmas Baskets	1,340	
ELCA/Greater Milwaukee Synod	38,000	
Hebron House	9,300	\$7K operating expenses, VBS offering for bedding, kitchen kits
Heifer International	740	Sunday School Offering, (one half)
Hephatha	39,875	\$12K operating expenses, \$25,091 van, \$2K Safe Baby Sanctuary meals
Fabric Ministries	1,430	Quilts for partners, pillows for breast cancer surgery survivors
Serenity Inns	9,231	\$7K operating expenses, 2x monthly meals
Servanthood Events	750	Blood drives, monthly partner meal prep for Serenity, Hebron
Waukesha Food Pantry	30,985	\$7K operating expenses, \$2.6K Tredwell Endowment, \$8K high-demand items, \$14K capital campaign
Misc	\$ 1,025	Emerson Juarez visit, Ned Consigny book drive
Subtotal Shared:	\$ 280,190	from General Benevolence and Directed Gifts:

Moved to reserves for 2024 scholarships \$ 26,574

Balance sheet adjustment/transfers to Memorial \$ 4,313

In Benevolence Reserves:

Total Shared/Reserved: \$ 311,077 Beyond Ourselves in 2023

Proposed 2024 Budget

Unity Lutheran Church - Proposed 2024 Budget

	2024 Budget	2023 Actual	2023 Budget	2023 act vs bgt	2022 Actual	2021 Actual
Total Revenues	1,256,539	\$ 1,208,211	\$ 1,243,291	\$ (35,080)	1,172,916	\$ 1,071,715
Expenses						
1 Benevolence	157,067	149,916	155,411	(5,495.37)	129,882	128,493
2 Salaries	655,000	612,958	635,269	(22,311.00)	562,685	531,989
3 Benefits	182,000	166,308	198,732	(32,424.42)	192,095	184,080
4 Debt service	62,000	62,053	62,000	52.55	62,053	65,143
5 Office administration	24,000	24,278	22,000	2,278.00	22,614	16,742
6 Potential staff bonus/pay				-		
7 \$15k to property reserves				-		
8 Remaining PPP to reserves				-		
				-		
Teams						
9 Education	10,750	8,599	7,600	998.83	8,350	7,670
10 Adult Programs	2,000	1,188	3,650	(2,461.62)	1,651	750
11 New Members	1,400	985	1,200	(214.99)	1,143	1,162
12 Group Opportunities	3,000	3,112	3,000	112.32	3,385	4,288
14 Call	5,000			-		
15 Property	91,000	86,767	91,600	(4,832.56)	91,580	93,321
16 Servant Ministry		281		280.84	33	
17 Stewardship	1,400	2,088	1,900	188.02	1,356	1,269
18 Worship & Music	13,000	12,828	13,000	(172.25)	13,339	13,229
19 Youth	4,500	6,853	3,500	3,353.24	3,218	2,155
20 Communications & Tech	44,400	35,489	44,400	(8,910.52)	40,311	45,124
Total Teams	176,450	158,191	169,850	(11,659)	164,366	168,968
Total Expenses	1,256,517	1,173,704	1,243,263	(69,559)	1,133,695	1,095,415
Surplus/(Deficit)	22	\$ 34,507	\$ 28	\$ 34,479	39,221	\$ (23,700)

This budget includes:

- 4% increase in givings from 2023
- 3% raise for staff and salary increase for Pastor Muriel and Pastor Sherrie to bring them closer to Synod guidelines
- 12.5% of givings to our benevolence partners