



Epistle

St Paul Lutheran Church

4167 Juddville Rd

Fish Creek, WI 54212

920-868-2826

stpauljuddville.com

APRIL 2024

What's in this month's issue:

- Pastor's Message
- Local Benevolence
- April 2024 Calendar
- Church Council Meeting Highlights
- Volunteer Schedules
- Church Life
- Financial Update/Treasurer's Corner
- Church Council Minutes

Congregation Council:

- Pastor Frank Kauzlarich: 920-217-0204
- Cathy Mestek: 262-470-9754
Congregation President & Worship & Music Co-Chair
- Pam Davis: 920-559-9806
Fellowship Ministry Co-Chair
- Greg Ehlke: 920-868-1092
Congregation Treasurer
- Jeff Kuchenbecker: 608-770-0755
Congregation Vice President & Worship & Music Co-Chair
- Peder Nelson: 920-854-0136
Secretary
- Karen Peterson: 920-868-2928
Local Benevolence Chair
- Renee Schwaller: 920-868-9608
Fellowship Ministry Co-Chair
- Steve Stringer: 815-670-5754
Property & Maintenance Chair
- Shawn Mathys: 920-819-6553
Financial Secretary

Thank You!

To all our wonderful volunteers, we thank you!
Without your talents and time church life would lose its luster. We are grateful!

Bless you!



Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
God's work. Our hands.



Christ is Risen! He is Risen Indeed! Alleluia!

As I write these words during Holy Week, I am stuck by the headlines of the day. Not much of what I read is good news. The Holy Scriptures are being offered for sale as a political fundraiser for \$69. A bridge has been struck by a ship and fallen into the river, killing workers and cutting off port traffic. Many of those who live in the land of Gaza, now in ruins, are starving. The words of those who seek to represent us in elected office are often spiteful and show no semblance of the truth as servanthood for many is not their goal but instead, power for the sake of power.

All of this can lead one though up their arms, to live in despair, and hide from the world.

The resurrection of Christ calls us out of the tomb, to live, to share good news and be good news in the world. Sin, death and the power of the Devil are ever present. It is Christ who rises as a servant so that they may not have the last word. This is Good News.

In Baptism, we are always dying and rising in Christ. The old self, our sin, dies. And a new self, rises in Christ. Finally, as death comes, the last word is always New Life.

That is power, not for the sake of power, but for the sake of the one being served in the name of the one serving. We are those being served by Jesus and he alone is that servant.

We are Called to serve in his name, to speak and be Good News for the sale of the world. This is to be a follower, a servant of, and in the name of Christ.

Until Christ comes again and ushers in a new Kingdom, there will be sin and death. I chose to live in this Kingdom now as I await the not yet. And even as I acknowledge my sinful self, I give thanks for the Baptism which washes over me, which Calls me to be a servant of Christ and he alone. The power of the water is not for the sake of destroying others but for cleansing us all. Bring and be Good News, the power of the water is not for the sake of destroying others or the world God continues to make. Indeed, the power of water is its' cleansing of that which is not of Christ. Finally, it does not allow is to hide it a tomb but washes us out into the world to share and be Good News.

This is the Good News. Christ has died. Christ is Risen! Christ will come again!

Pastor Frank Kauzlarich



LOCAL BENEVOLENCE UPDATE

ALWAYS THANKFUL FOR FOOD PANTRY DONATIONS



Thank you for your participation and generosity in our 2024 Souper Bowl of Caring.

Our final totals for the Souper Bowl are listed below.



We are pleased to share that we have allocated the following:

\$1000 to DoorCANCer

\$1000 to Crossways Camping Ministries

\$500 to Feed My People



FOOD DONATIONS. 275 LBS
PERSONAL CARE. 85 LBS
CASH DONATIONS. \$ 800.00

THIS WAS ALL DONATED TO 5 LOCAL FOOD PANTRIES

SHEPHERD OF THE BAY - ELLISON BAY
DOOR OF LIFE - SISTER BAY
STELLA MARIS - FISH CREEK
FEED MY PEOPLE - STURGEON BAY
LAKESHORE CAP - STURGEON BAY

Last year we donated **783 lbs** of food to Lakeshore Cap Food Pantry!

\$300 to Lakeshore CAP food pantry

The \$800 to the food pantries was from your generosity during our Souper Bowl of Caring drive!

Thank you all,
Karen

KIDKNITS UPDATES



This past month, we shipped 90 items. They will be distributed all over the world. Since 2016 our group of dedicated knitters and crocheters have now sent 902 items out into the world. Please check the bulletin board in the basement for a thank you. We appreciate all the continued support of our fellow members.



CALENDAR / SPECIAL EVENTS

SUNDAY WORSHIP SERVICES – (INDOOR & OUTDOOR) - 8:00 A.M. & 9:30 A.M.

PARKING LOT WORSHIP: We continue to offer parking lot worship at all services. If you know of others who are in a season of their lives where this option makes worship more accessible, please encourage them to join us at 92.1 FM from their vehicle every Sunday morning.

ALL ARE WELCOME!

KIDNITS: TUESDAY, APRIL 2 at 1:15 P.M. Meetings held at the church.

WORSHIP & MUSIC MINISTRY: TUESDAY, APRIL 9 at 10:00 A.M.

CHURCH COUNCIL: WEDNESDAY, APRIL 17 at 1:00 P.M. Held in the church basement.

Our leadership gathers to do the work you called them to do as they lead and give guidance to our ministry. You are always welcome to attend.

FELLOWSHIP TIME ON SUNDAYS: Please sign up on the bulletin board in the Narthex to host a Sunday coffee hour.



COUNCIL HIGHLIGHTS – MARCH 20, 2024

Council began with a devotion based on the Serenity Prayer and also prayers for those in need in our faith community and beyond. First things first.

Pastor outlined plans for pastoral coverage in April as he recuperates from an upcoming second (very successful) shoulder surgery. Pastor expressed sincere thanks to all those who stepped forward to lead worship and other tasks this past month. Pastor also raised the concern about community-wide pastoral care for seniors. Scandia Village is in a state of transition and the need is great.

Council approved a number of Local Benevolence allocations. Generous gifts during the Souper Bowl of Caring made possible \$500 for Feed My People and \$300 for Lakeshore CAP (Community Action Program). In addition, \$1000 will go to Crossways Camping Ministry and another \$1000 to Door CANcer. Members noted that St. Paul has become known as a congregation that consistently reaches out to care for those in need in our community. Thank you for your part in that.

Council looked ahead to fellowship opportunities, especially as members who are away for the winter return to our pews. A grill-out potluck was scheduled for April 28, with details to follow. In the next month, Council will put together a calendar of summer events, including another worship cruise, golf outing, outdoor worship and the like. Stay tuned....

Bishop Anne of the South Central Synod of WI - ELCA will be with us to lead worship on Sunday, June 2nd and to join us for fellowship to celebrate our shared ministry. Council and others are working to shape plans for this special day in the life of our congregation.

Council approved an additional hour per day for Megan, our administrative assistant. Megan has proved herself to be a great blessing, wisely using her time and also taking on additional tasks that require more time in the office for the coming months.

The plan to live-stream worship services is on hold until we have a clear vision of the objectives as well as a core of volunteers willing and able to do the Sunday morning taping.

The ELCA Synod Assembly will be held May 17-18 at the Oshkosh Waterfront Conference Center. St. Paul can send 2 lay delegates (1 male/1 female) as well as Pastor. Jeff Kuchenbecker offered to serve as one delegate and now we seek a female delegate.

Council concluded, as we started, with prayers of thankfulness for those around the table/by phone (what a good bunch to hang out with) and also in gratitude for your generosity in time, talents and financial support of those in need. You are truly blessed to be a blessing.

Cathy Mestek, Council President



MUSICIANS FOR APRIL

- Apr 7 Doreen Holt
 Apr 14 Doreen Holt
 Apr 21 Doreen Holt
 Apr 28 Jan Meier
-

USHERS FOR APRIL

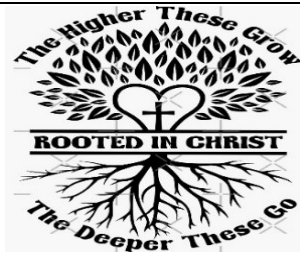
- | | | | | |
|---------------|---------|--------------------------------------------------------|---------|-----------------------------------------------------------------|
| Apr 7 | 8:00 AM | Indoor: Mary Anne Scherer
Outdoor: Clarence Scherer | 9:30 AM | Indoor: Frank Paul
Outdoor: |
| Apr 14 | 8:00 AM | Indoor: Jerry Lecy
Outdoor: Clarence Scherer | 9:30 AM | Indoor: Sher Rockway
Outdoor: Todd Rockway |
| Apr 21 | 8:00 AM | Indoor: Al Peterson
Outdoor: Andrea Esau | 9:30 AM | Indoor: NEED VOLUNTEER
Outdoor: NEED VOLUNTEER |
| Apr 28 | 8:00 AM | Indoor: Jerry Lecy
Outdoor: Dave DeCock | 9:30 AM | Indoor: NEED VOLUNTEER
Outdoor: NEED VOLUNTEER |
-

ASSISTING MINISTERS FOR APRIL

- | | | |
|---------------|------------------------|------------------------|
| Apr 7 | 8:00 AM: Jane DeCock | 9:30 AM: Debbie Jones |
| Apr 14 | 8:00 AM: Cathy Mestek | 9:30 AM: Cathy Mestek |
| Apr 21 | 8:00 AM: Dwight Zeller | 9:30 AM: Pat Kaldor |
| Apr 28 | 8:00 AM: Jane DeCock | 9:30 AM: Dwight Zeller |
-

ALTAR GUILD FOR APRIL

- Apr 7: Bev Prohl
 Apr 14: Jill Dew
 Apr 21: Jill Dew
 Apr 28: Terri Back



CHURCH LIFE

THE LUTHERAN MAGAZINE: Available in the narthex or from the outdoor usher. Be informed concerning the ministry we share as part of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

CHRIST IN OUR HOME DEVOTIONS: Available in the narthex and from the outdoor usher. Enter into the daily discipline of reading the word, reflection and prayer.



HELP IS NEEDED! SIGN UP ON THE NARTHEX BULLETIN BOARD...

- **Shoveling-** The church entrance areas and sidewalks
- **Coffee Hour-** Provide refreshments following Sunday worship

PRAYER SHAWLS

Thank you to all who have been distributing prayer shawls. If you are aware of someone in need of one, please pick one up from the credenza in the narthex or from the table outside on Sunday before or after worship or call the office during the week. For those of you who knit or crochet, we are always grateful for any contributions you make of these gifts of care and concern. For additional information, contact Debbie Jones at 651-328-1261 or debbie.jones.pmp@gmail.com.



WOMEN'S SPIRITUAL GROWTH GROUP – SPRING 2024 SESSION SPRING 2024 SESSION

The Women's Spiritual Growth Group will begin its Spring study on Thursday mornings in person at St. Paul Lutheran Church from 8:45-10 AM beginning **Thursday, April 4 through Wednesday, May 8**. We will use the study by Max Lucado called "How Happiness Happens: Finding Lasting Joy in a World of Comparison, Disappointment, and Unmet Expectations (aka How Happiness Happens)". This is a 6-week study with DVD, study guide, and optional book published in 2019.

In Max Lucado's "How Happiness Happens," he explores passages of Scripture - explaining how practical acts of generosity can produce a life of satisfaction and moments of true joy. In a world searching for happiness, Lucado provides a personal plan for a life filled with lasting and fulfilling joy, supported by Jesus' teaching and modern research. He uses scripture to show us how to address some of the common sources of unhappiness, such as:

- Dealing with difficult people.
- Coping with tough circumstances.
- Overcoming low self-esteem.
- Managing stress.

If you are interested in attending this study or learning more about our discussions, please contact Debbie Jones (651-328-1261 or debbie.jones.pmp@gmail.com). All are welcome!

ST PAUL MEN'S BIBLE STUDY GROUP – FRIDAYS AT 8:30 A.M.

The St. Paul Men's Bible Study group continues to meet on Friday's at 8:30 am, currently using Zoom as a way for everyone to gather and discuss the readings and questions. We will begin the in-person group in April with more information coming on the date, time, and location.

For more information or to receive a copy of the readings and questions, please contact Gary Jones at gary.jones09@gmail.com.

**COMING SOON THIS
MONTH OF APRIL
2024**

Coming, Spring 2024, the next round of the groundbreaking TV series, "The Chosen" discussion sessions will begin. All are welcome. If interested or have any questions, contact Jeff Kuchenbecker at jlkuchenbecker27@gmail.com or by via telephone 608-770-0755.



The Chosen is an American Christian historical drama television series. Created, directed, and co-written by filmmaker Dallas Jenkins, it is the first multi-season series about the life and ministry of Jesus of Nazareth. Primarily set in Judea and Galilee in the 1st century, the series centers on Jesus and the different people who met and followed or otherwise interacted with him.

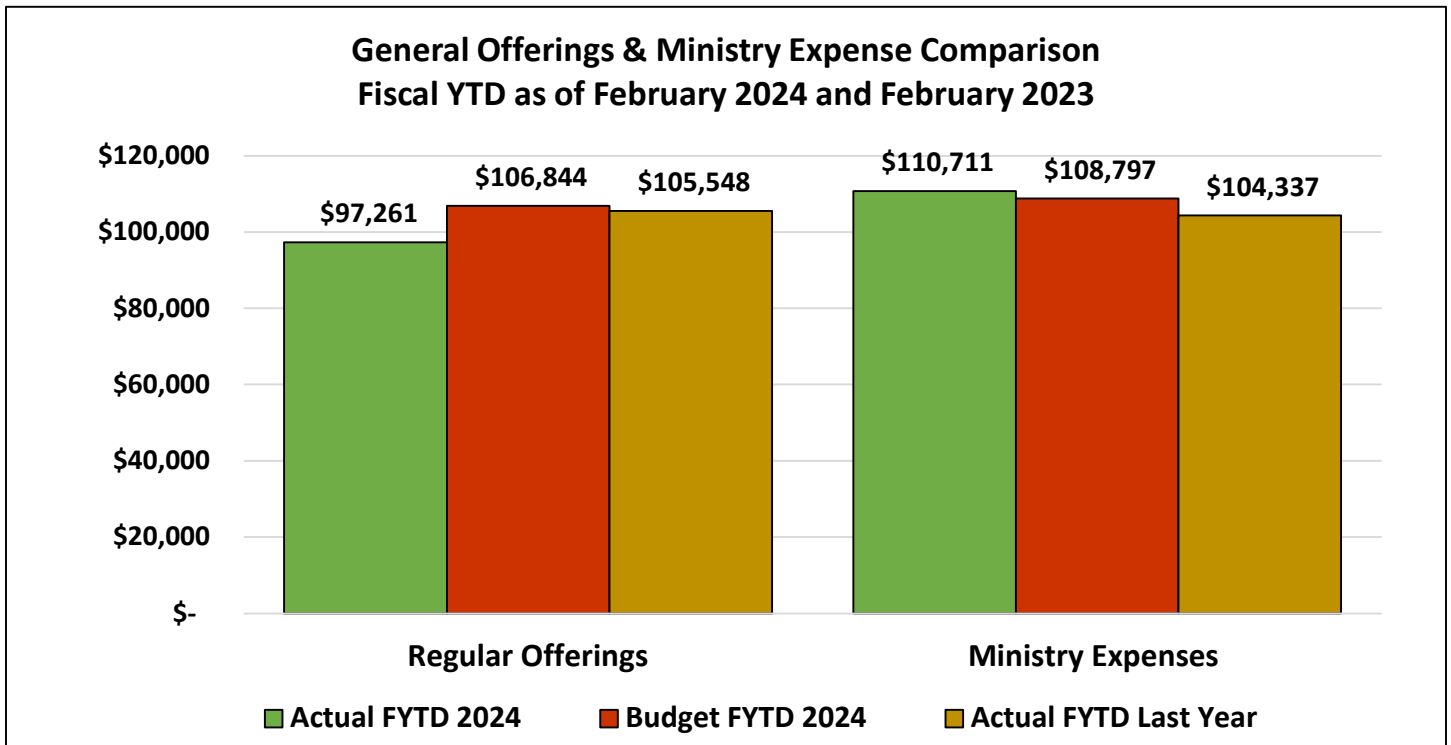
"Take it from a critic and a Christian with an aversion to Christian entertainment: The show is good." – *Chris DeVille, The Atlantic*



FINANCIAL UPDATE

Gregory Ehlke, Treasurer

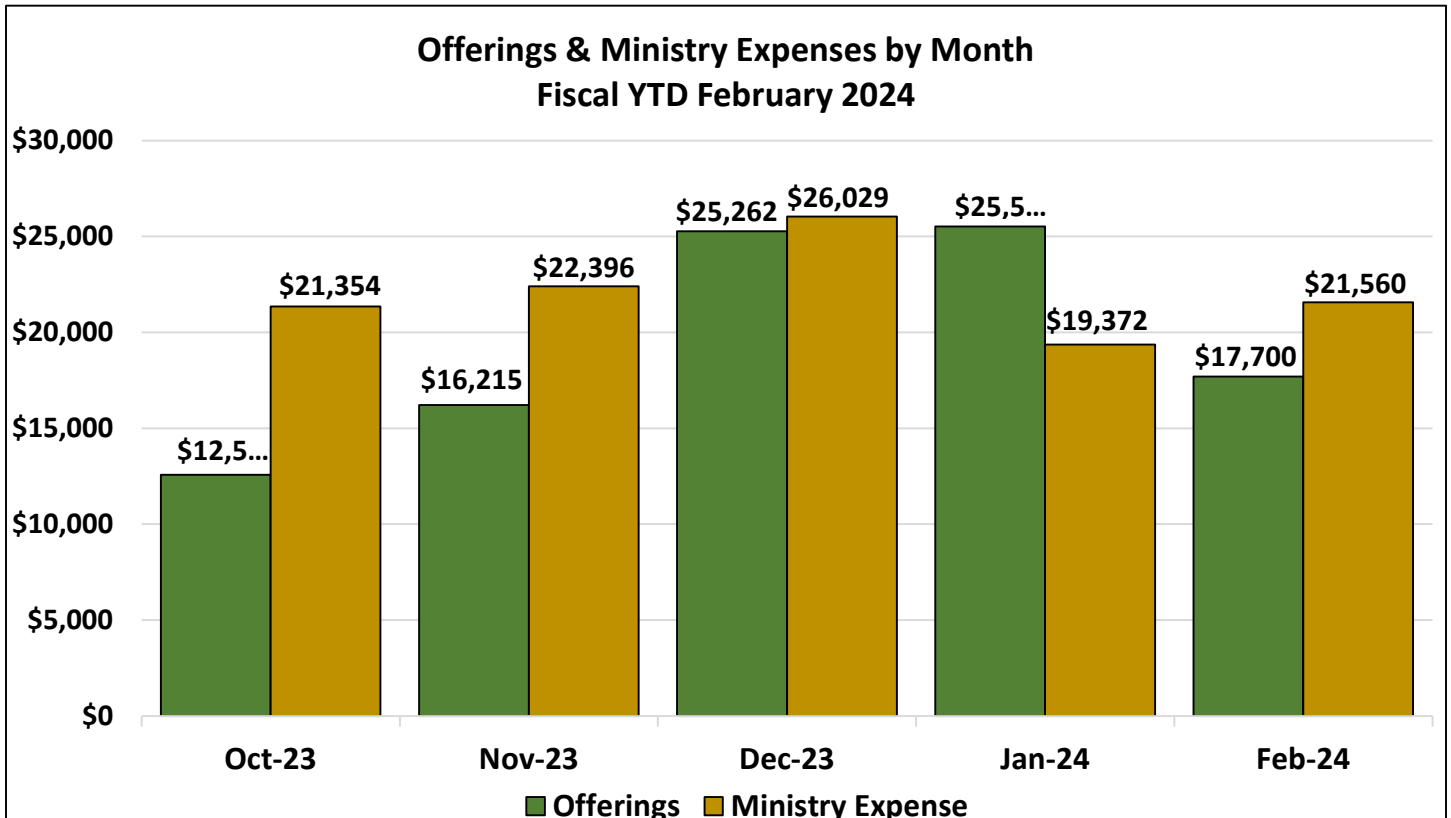
Fiscal Year-to-Date Financial Summary



- FYTD = Fiscal Year-to-Date. St. Paul Lutheran's fiscal year begins on 01-Oct.
- The 2023-24 fiscal year Ministry Expenses budget is \$264,434
- General Offerings received in the first five months of the fiscal year were \$8,287 (or 8.5%) lower than in the prior year (\$97,261 vs. \$105,548), principally reflecting \$8,945 of lower Offerings received in December versus the comparable prior year month
- General Offerings were lower than Ministry Expenses by \$13,450 (i.e., \$97,261 - \$110,711 = \$13,450)



FINANCIAL UPDATE CONTINUED



- General Offerings in February of \$17,700, shown above, were about \$3,700 lower than budgeted
- General Offerings received in the months of October, November and February were each lower than budgeted which has resulted in fiscal year-to-date General Offerings being almost \$9,600 below budget



Additional Ways to Financially Support Our Lord's Ministry through St. Paul Lutheran

Did you know that there are four easy ways to financially support Our Lord's Ministry through St. Paul Lutheran in case you can't make it to Juddville for Sunday worship services this month?

Thrivent Choice Dollars

Some of our members have insurance policies with Thrivent Financial that enable them to support charitable organizations such as St. Paul Lutheran through Thrivent Choice Dollars. Last year members who were Thrivent Financial policyholders directed \$243 of Thrivent Choice Dollars to support St. Paul's Ministry programs. The deadline for directing Thrivent Choice Dollars for 2023 is March 31st.

Online Giving

Our secure online giving platform, established through Vanco, is a great way to make one-time or periodic donations to support our Ministry program. Over twenty-five households give periodic donations via the online platform. Just go online to the link on the St. Paul website to get started, or contact our Church Treasurer for additional assistance.

Common Stock or Securities Donations

The equity markets have been strong in 2023 and 2024. Perhaps you have securities that have appreciated in value and wish to donate them to a charitable organization such as St. Paul Lutheran to permissibly avoid capital gains that would otherwise be incurred if you sold the securities and used the proceeds for the charitable donation. In 2023, we opened a brokerage account through Thrivent Financial to enable our members to donate securities directly to St. Paul Lutheran. If you wish to learn more about making a donation of common stock or other securities to St. Paul to support the Lord's Ministry, please contact our Church Treasurer.

Qualified Charitable Distributions ("QCDs")

If you have an Individual Retirement Account ("IRA") and are at least 70.5 years of age, you may be able to make charitable contributions to a 501(c) charitable organization by making a QCD. A QCD is a nontaxable distribution made directly by a trustee of an IRA (other than a SEP or SIMPLE IRA) to an organization eligible to receive tax-deductible contributions. QCDs are subject to maximum annual exclusion limits. St. Paul Lutheran cannot provide any tax guidance with respect to QCDs but will confirm such donations made by individuals were received directly from the trustee of your IRA. Several of our members contribute to St. Paul Lutheran in this manner. Please contact our Church Treasurer if you wish to learn more about QCDs.



MEETING MINUTES

COUNCIL MINUTES – February 21, 2024

**St. Paul Lutheran Church
Council Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, February 21, 2024**

Mission: St. Paul Lutheran Church is a welcoming family bringing Christ into people's lives by developing, nurturing and supporting disciples.

Council Members Present: Cathy Mestek, Steve Stringer, Renee Schwaller, Greg Ehlke, Jeff Kuchenbecker (via telephone), Peder Nelson (via telephone) and Pam Davis (via telephone)

Excused/Absent: Pastor Frank and Karen Peterson

Meeting Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Cathy Mestek at 2:03 P.M.

Devotions

Peder Nelson provided an opening devotion focused on an adaptation of "May the Force Be With You" emphasizing "May the Lord Be With You" and an opening prayer.

Agenda Approval

The previously circulated agenda was reviewed and accepted.

Minutes

The previously circulated minutes from the January 24, 2024 meeting, following a motion made by Greg Ehlke and seconded by Steve Stringer, were approved.

Record of Electronic Business Approval

Cathy reported that no actions had been taken electronically by unanimous approval since the last meeting.

Community of Faith

- Pastor Frank is recuperating from shoulder replacement surgery earlier in the week and advised various Council members prior to the meeting that he appreciated all who have offered prayers on his behalf.
- Supply Pastors are in place for the next two weeks while Pastor Frank recuperates (i.e., Pastor Fenner and Pastor Ingram).
- Jeff Kuchenbecker advised the Council that Season 3 viewing of The Chosen will start near the end of April and continue for an additional eight weeks for which all are welcome to join those gathering for the viewing, a simple meal and discussion after each weekly viewing.

Financial Report

- Greg Ehlke referred to the financial summary and supporting reports that he had distributed by email prior to the meeting. The financial summary for January 2024 highlighted that Total Offerings for the month approximated \$25.8K which was about \$0.4K lower than the prior year month. Ministry Expenses approximated \$19.4K, which was about \$2.6K higher than the prior year month.
- Year-to-date Regular Offerings in the first four months of the 2023-24 fiscal year were \$79.6K or \$12.9K lower than the prior year period. Ministry Expenses were \$89.2K in the first four months of the fiscal year, which was \$5.1K higher than the prior year period. The fiscal year-to-date Ordinary Net Loss was \$8.8K or \$17.4K worse than the prior year.
- Undesignated funds available would cover about 5.4 months of Ministry Expenses without any reliance on additional Offerings being received. This includes the liquidity that could be quickly provided from approximately \$61.1K of liquid assets (cash, U.S. Treasury Notes, bills and securities) invested with Thrivent Financial to enhance the church's investment income.
- The two Endowment funds invested with the ELCA Foundation's Ministry Growth Fund benefitted from a 7.7% investment return during the fourth quarter of 2023.
- As part of the Treasurer's ongoing review of Financial Processes with the Council, Greg summarized his previously distributed documents describing: (i) the Annual Church Budget process, (ii) the Annual Financial Process Calendar describing key month dates for activities performed by the Financial Secretary and Treasurer and (iii) the Portico Benefit Services processes provided by the ELCA which includes important health, retirement and other benefits for pastors.
- The Financial report was approved by the Council pursuant to a motion made by Renee Schwaller and seconded by Cathy Mestek.
- A copy of the January 2024 Financial Summary, along with the financial statements, schedules and Financial Processes summaries provided to the Council, was ordered to be filed with the records of the meeting.

Pastor's Report

Pastor Frank's Pastoral Report was deferred until the next meeting given the start of his recuperation from shoulder replacement surgery earlier in the week. These includes his report on his ongoing review of the congregation's membership roster to ensure it is accurate and current.

Property Report

Steve reported on numerous property-related developments. These included:

- Steve has received inquiries recently on the availability of cemetery plots. No sales of plots have occurred recently.
- It has been reported that odors have been noticed coming from the hot water heaters in the bathrooms; the solution to that issue is being investigated.
- Steve reported the quarterly testing of our water supply was completed and we are awaiting the results of that quarterly test.
- Greg reported that the new Ricoh copier was installed earlier this week and that documents for the new five-year lease were executed consistent with approvals obtained at the prior month's Council meeting.

Worship and Music Report

Cathy and Jeff reported on various matters concerning the Worship and Music Ministry. Items addressed included:

- Worship services on Sunday will continue to be held at 8:00 and 9:30 A.M.
- Holy Week services will be held on Maundy Thursday at 6:00 P.M., on Good Friday at 1:00 P.M. and 6:00 P.M. and on Easter Sunday at 8:00 A.M. and 9:30 A.M.

Local Benevolence

In Karen's absence, Greg reported that there were no Benevolence outlays during January.

Fellowship

Renee provided an update on Fellowship plans in the next few months. She reported that she had purchased a new microwave for the kitchen as the old one was no longer operative.

OLD BUSINESS

Streaming Worship Services Update

Cathy reported on efforts to form a Task Force to live stream worship services through the purchase of additional hardware and software. In addition to assessing the costs and hardware necessary to complete this project, the Task Force will address the project objectives and manpower needs to regularly provide this service to view worship services remotely (whether weekly worship services, funerals or weddings). Dwight Zeller has agreed to be a member of this Task Force and other members are being approached to join this working group.

Church Directory Status Update

Cathy reported on the effort to finalize the release of a new church directory. She noted there is still a need, and also opportunities, for members to include their picture in the new directory. The goal is to finalize the directory for hard copy release in the near future.

- Greg confirmed that the monthly subscription for the Church360 database was being dropped given the use of the Instant Church Directory as a replacement alternative.

Bishop's Visit

A discussion was held concerning important planning items that need to be coordinated for the Bishop's planned visit to St. Paul Lutheran on Sunday, June 2nd. Numerous items need to be finalized including lodging needs, the duration of her visit, opportunities for discussion, etc. The Executive Committee will begin the logistical planning at their meeting in March prior to gathering further Council input at the March 20th Council meeting.

NEW BUSINESS

Future Transition Plans – Financial Positions

Cathy noted there was a need to plan for the transitioning of the Treasurer and Financial Secretary positions, especially in light of Greg's completion of six years as Treasurer and Shawn's desire to transition out of that role after more than five years of service and the evolution of QuickBooks usage by the congregation.

Adjournment

There being no other business, the meeting adjourned at 3:12 P.M. with the praying of The Lord's Prayer.

Next Council Meeting

Wednesday, March 20, 2024; 2:00 P.M. in person at the church. Karen Peterson will provide the opening devotion.

Respectfully submitted,
Greg Ehlke, Acting Secretary

Five Little Seeds

Five little seeds,
Five little seeds,
Three will make flowers,
And two will make weeds.



Under the leaves,
And under the snow,
Five little seeds are
Waiting to grow.



Out comes the sun,
Down comes a shower.
And up come the three,
Pretty pink flowers.



Out comes the sun,
That every plant needs,
And up come two,
Funny old weeds.

