

**2023 Annual Meeting Report**  
**January 28, 2024**  
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**Agenda for the Congregation Annual Meeting  
January 28, 2024 9:30 am**

1. Call to Order (Steve)
2. Establish quorum
3. Prayer (Pastor)
4. Secretary's Report:
  - a. Minutes of the Annual Meeting, February 5, 2023 (Debby)
5. Election of Council Members (Steve)
  - a. (3 vacancies – Full Term)
6. Reports:
  - a. Treasurer's Report
    1. 2023 Year End Report
    2. Budget for 2024
  - b. Pastor's Report
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    1. Audit
    2. Education and Outreach
    3. Fellowship
    4. Property/Work Crew
    5. Memorial Garden
    6. Worship and Music
    7. Altar Guild
    8. Endowment Committee
    9. Pictorial Directory
7. Report of Election
8. Election of Nominating Committee member
9. Election of Synod Assembly Voting Members
10. Installation of New Council Members
11. Adjourn
12. Lord's Prayer

**Faith Lutheran Church of Rotonda West**  
**Annual Congregational Meeting Minutes**  
**February 5, 2023**

President Steve Wolfe called the annual meeting to order at 9:35am. Forty one voting members of the congregation were present which constitutes a quorum. Pastor Brian Armen opened the meeting by reading 2Timothy 1:7, then lead the congregation in prayer.

Jim Hughs moved to accept the minutes from the January 30, 2022 meeting as presented for filing, seconded by Lynn Beck. No additions or corrections were noted. The motion passed with a voice vote.

The nomination committee consisting of Art Hanson, Steve Wolfe, and Mary Lou Fitzgerald submitted names to be place on the ballot, There are three open full 3 year terms and 2 open 1 year terms. For the 3 year terms the nominations are: Art Hanson, Larry Bennett and Jeff Kamm. For the 1 year terms: Gene Newlon and Ellen Lindhurst. The floor was opened for nominations, Jay Fisher nominated Jim Porter who declined. As there were no more nominations Ellen Lindhurst moved that nominations be closed, seconded by Brian Lindhurst. Motion passed. Ellen then moved that the secretary cast a unanimous written ballot for the nominees, Tom Jackling seconded the motion and the motion carried with a voice vote. Thanks and appreciation were expressed for the outgoing members of council: Lynn Beck and Toni Newton.

The treasurer's report for 2022 and the proposed budget for 2023 were presented for review. Linda Jackling moved to accept the report and adopt the budget, the motion was seconded by Jim Hughs. Steve presented the motion for a voice vote and it passed unanimously. All Lynn Beck's hard work as treasurer the past three years has been greatly appreciated.

Pastor then thanked the congregation for his sabbatical rest this summer. It was a time of healing and renewal. He came back refreshed and ready to move forward, it help enable him to deal with the stresses caused by Hurricane Ian this fall.

The Pastor's report, parochial report, president's report and committee reports for 2022 were presented for review. Jim Hughs moved to adopt the reports as presented in the annual report. Jim Taylor seconded the motion, The motion passed with a voice vote. Jim Hughs thanked the Tuesday work crew for all their help throughout the year, and especially everyone that helped clean up after Hurricane Ian. This help saved the church thousands of dollars.

Per the constitution, a nominating committee for 2023 is to be formed with three members, one of which is an outgoing member of council. This is a one-year term with no re-election, therefore members of the 2022 committee cannot serve again on the 2023 committee. Pastor noted that also per the constitution one member is to be an outgoing member of council for the year 2023. Gene Newlon volunteered to serve on the committee as the outgoing council member. Steve opened nominations to the floor and Linda Bennett and Jim Taylor volunteered. Tom Jackling moved to nominate Linda and Jim, seconded by Linda Jackling. Jim Hughs then moved that nominations be closed, seconded by Mary Lou Fitzgerald. Motion carried. Tom Jackling moved and Brian Lindhurst seconded to appoint the three nominees to the committee for 2023. The motion passed with a voice vote.

The next order of business was to elect delegates to the Florida-Bahama Synod Assembly in June. One male and one female delegate is preferred. No nominations were made at this time so delegate nominations are deferred to council to elect later in 2023.

At this time President Steve Wolfe turned the meeting over to Pastor Armen who presided over the Installation of new council members: Art Hanson, Larry Bennett, Jeff Kamm, Gene Newlon and Ellen Lindhurst. The congregation pledged their support and welcomed the new members.

Larry Bennett brought up the fact that the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the congregation at Faith will be in 2 years, March of 2025. A committee to plan and execute the celebration will be needed. Pastor made the suggestion that the celebration start in March of 2024 and continue throughout the year concluding on March 2<sup>nd</sup> 2025. This will be brought before council in the near future.

Jim Hughs moved that the meeting be adjourned, seconded by Tom Jackling. Motion carried. President Steve Wolfe adjourned the meeting at 10:05 am. The meeting concluded with all present joining in praying the Lord's Prayer.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Deborah B. Porter, recording secretary

### **NOMINATING COMMITTEE REPORT 2023**

Committee Members: Gene Newlon  
Jim Taylor  
Linda Bennett

The committee has been diligently searching for three candidates willing to run for 3-year terms on the congregational council for 2024-2027. Members are needed to step up to represent the congregation in this important service. These members have agreed to serve: Gene Newlon, Sue Baran, Sandy Cox.

**Faith Lutheran Church - Rotonda West FL**  
**Balance Sheet as of December 31, 2023**

**Tuesday, January 16, 2024 1:28 PM**

Account #	Account Name	YTD Balance
<b><i>Assets</i></b>		
1.10.101	Checking - Crews Bank	28,086.28
1.10.102	Savings Account - Crews Bank	1,326.63
1.10.104	ELCA Federal Credit Union (CLOSED)	0.19
1.10.201	Mission Investment Fund - ELCA	87,305.96
1.20.101	Thrivent TMAFX Mod Ag-S 4678	66,174.16
1.20.103	Thrivent TLVIX Lg Cap Val -S 9287	81,819.43
	<b>Total Assets</b>	<b>\$264,712.65</b>
<b><i>Liabilities</i></b>		
2.10.100	Accounts Payable/Vendors	0.00
2.10.200	FICA Tax Payable	0.00
2.10.300	Crews Credit Card	0.00
	<b>Total Liabilities</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>
<b><i>Fund Balances</i></b>		
3.10.100	GENERAL(BUDGET) FUND	(28,946.36)
3.20.100	<i>UNRESTRICTED FUNDS</i>	
3.20.101	Pooled Interest/Change in NAV Balance	49,339.93
3.20.110	Undesignated Fund	68,053.34
3.20.150	Parsonage Fund Balance	135,543.08
	<i>Total UNRESTRICTED FUNDS</i>	<i>\$252,936.35</i>
3.40.100	<i>RESTRICTED FUNDS</i>	
3.20.120	Pass Through (Comment) Balance	516.99
3.20.121	God's Work Our Hands Balance	330.00
3.20.122	Golf Outing Balance	15.00
3.20.123	St Francis Food Pantry Balance	2,062.00
3.20.124	Lilly/Poinsettia Balance	62.80
3.20.125	Meals on Wheels Balance	0.00
3.20.126	Kid's Needs Balance	100.00
3.20.127	Stewardship Letter	0.00
3.40.109	Wedding/Funeral Fees Balance	6,239.88
3.40.110	Emergency Assistance Balance	2,205.41
3.40.111	Altar Flowers & Candles	(99.27)
3.40.112	Music	1,544.42
3.40.113	Landscape	1,104.62
3.40.114	Thrivent Choice	1,048.45
3.40.115	Memorial Garden & Gazebo	7,103.75
3.40.120	Ministry Opportunities (Youth/Shawl/Drama/PotLuck)	1,054.99
3.40.121	Love and Serve (Camper Lunch) Balance	2,915.47
3.40.200	Capital Improvement Fund	7,042.70
3.40.300	Endowment Fund	7,475.45
	<i>Total RESTRICTED FUNDS</i>	<i>\$40,722.66</i>
	<b>Total Fund Balances</b>	<b>\$264,712.65</b>
	<b>Total Liabilities and Fund Balances</b>	<b>\$264,712.65</b>

**Faith Lutheran Church - Rotonda West FL  
Consolidated Fund Activity Report for December 2023**

**Tuesday, January 16, 2024**

Account #	Account Name	Beg Balance	Receipts	Disbursements	Transfers/JE's	End Balance
3.10.100	GENERAL(BUDGET) FUND	(37,571.80)	31,094.54	22,469.10	0.00	(28,946.36)
3.20.100	<i>UNRESTRICTED FUNDS</i>					
3.20.101	Pooled Interest/Change in NAV Balance	36,064.78	13,479.13	203.98	0.00	49,339.93
3.20.110	Undesignated Fund	68,053.34	0.00	0.00	0.00	68,053.34
3.20.150	Parsonage Fund Balance	135,543.08	0.00	0.00	0.00	135,543.08
3.40.100	<i>RESTRICTED FUNDS</i>					
3.20.120	Pass Through (Comment) Balance	236.99	280.00	0.00	0.00	516.99
3.20.121	God's Work Our Hands Balance	330.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	330.00
3.20.122	Golf Outing Balance	15.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	15.00
3.20.123	St Francis Food Pantry Balance	1,962.00	100.00	0.00	0.00	2,062.00
3.20.124	Lilly/Poinsettia Balance	112.63	120.00	169.83	0.00	62.80
3.20.125	Meals on Wheels Balance	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
3.20.126	Kid's Needs Balance	100.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	100.00
3.20.127	Stewardship Letter	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
3.40.109	Wedding/Funeral Fees Balance	6,239.88	0.00	0.00	0.00	6,239.88
3.40.110	Emergency Assistance Balance	2,205.41	0.00	0.00	0.00	2,205.41
3.40.111	Altar Flowers & Candles	(99.27)	0.00	0.00	0.00	(99.27)
3.40.112	Music	1,544.42	0.00	0.00	0.00	1,544.42
3.40.113	Landscape	1,104.62	0.00	0.00	0.00	1,104.62
3.40.114	Thrivent Choice	1,048.45	0.00	0.00	0.00	1,048.45
3.40.115	Memorial Garden & Gazebo	7,131.25	70.00	97.50	0.00	7,103.75
3.40.120	Ministry Opportunities (Youth/Shaw/Drama/PotLuck)	1,054.99	0.00	0.00	0.00	1,054.99
3.40.121	Love and Serve (Camper Lunch) Balance	2,945.47	120.00	150.00	0.00	2,915.47
3.40.200	Capital Improvement Fund	7,042.70	0.00	0.00	0.00	7,042.70
3.40.300	Endowment Fund	7,475.45	0.00	0.00	0.00	7,475.45
<b>Total</b>		<b><u>\$242,539.39</u></b>	<b><u>\$45,263.67</u></b>	<b><u>\$23,090.41</u></b>	<b><u>\$0.00</u></b>	<b><u>\$264,712.65</u></b>

Faith Lutheran Church - Rotonda West FL  
Budget Worksheet 2023-24

January 10, 2024	Account #	Account Name	2022		2023		Proposed		2024	
			End of Year	YTD Unaudited	Budget	Full Budget	2023-24 CHANGE	Pastor Shared Time		
<b>Income</b>										
4.10.100		Envelopes/Pledges	158,261.92	153,932.95	180,000	180,000	-	180,000		180,000
4.10.101		Loose (Cash/Checks)	17,561.00	17,274.25	20,000	20,000	-	20,000		20,000
4.10.102		Other Inc/Special Worship Services	553.00	6,801.62	1,000	1,000	-	1,000		1,000
4.10.103		Congregation Hurricane Recovery		9,662.00			-			
4.10.105		Interest	788.00	2,101.42	1,000	2,000	1,000	2,000		2,000
4.10.107		Transfer from Savings (or additional)	0.00	0.00	22,339	29,199	6,860	29,199		29,199
		<b>Total Income</b>	<b>\$177,163.92</b>	<b>189,772.24</b>	<b>224,339</b>	<b>232,199</b>	<b>7,860</b>	<b>232,199</b>		<b>232,199</b>
<b>Expense</b>										
<b>Benevolence</b>										
5.10.105		Synod Commitment (ELCA)	8,400.00	8,400.00	8,400	8,400	-	8,400		8,400
5.10.115		St Francis Outreach	300.00	300.00	300	300	-	300		300
5.10.116		Meals on Wheels	300.00	300.00	300	300	-	300		300
5.10.117		Kid's Needs of Englewood	300.00	300.00	300	300	-	300		300
5.10.118		Special Giving Opportunities	0.00	100.00	500	500	-	500		500
			2,400.00							
		<b>Total Benevolence</b>	<b>\$11,700.00</b>	<b>\$9,400.00</b>	<b>9,800</b>	<b>9,800</b>	-	<b>9,800</b>		<b>9,800</b>
<b>Pastoral Compensation</b>										
5.10.135		Pastor Salary	39,600.00	41,599.92	41,600	42,850	1,250	42,850		17,737 *
5.10.139		Pastor Housing	27,900.00	29,300.16	29,300	30,200	900	30,200		30,200
		<b>Total Pastoral Compensation</b>	<b>\$67,500.00</b>	<b>70,900.08</b>	<b>70,900</b>	<b>73,050</b>	<b>2,150</b>	<b>73,050</b>		<b>47,937</b>
<b>Total Staff Compensation</b>										
5.10.151		Organist/Choir Director Salary	14,200.08	14,899.92	14,900	17,100	2,200	17,100		17,100
5.10.153		Substitute Organist Salary	575.00	450.00	1,400	1,400	-	1,400		1,400
5.10.155		Choir Director Salary	0.00	1,650.00	1,700	-	(1,700)	-		-
5.10.156		Custodian Salary	6,013.40	6,903.00	7,100	7,300	200	7,300		7,300
5.10.157		Office Secretary Salary	14,899.92	15,600.00	15,600	16,000	400	16,000		16,000
5.10.158		Bookkeeper Salary	733.82	1,553.91	1,300	1,400	100	1,400		1,400
5.10.170		Staff FICA Taxes	2,815.78	3,174.13	3,500	3,600	100	3,600		3,600
5.10.180		Treasurer Stipend	0.00	0.00	599	599	-	599		599
5.10.190		Financial Secretary - Stipend	737.53	659.39	1,040	1,050	10	1,050		1,050
		<b>Total Staff Compensation</b>	<b>\$39,975.53</b>	<b>44,890.35</b>	<b>47,139</b>	<b>48,449</b>	<b>1,310</b>	<b>48,449</b>		<b>48,449</b>
<b>Pastoral Ministry Expense</b>										
5.10.140		Pastor Retirement	11,268.84	11,836.00	12,900	12,900	-	12,900		10,157 *
5.10.142		Pastor Health/Disability/Life/Retiree	20,725.56	22,206.44	20,500	20,500	&	20,500		23,892 *#
5.10.143		Pastor Mileage & Phone	1,726.64	2,239.61	3,500	3,500	-	3,500		3,500
5.10.144		Pastor Business Expense	75.00	55.00	1,200	1,200	-	1,200		1,200
5.10.145		Substitute Pastor Salary	3,275.00	1,225.00	1,000	1,000	-	1,000		1,000
		<b>Total Pastoral Ministry Expense</b>	<b>\$37,071.04</b>	<b>37,562.05</b>	<b>39,100</b>	<b>39,100</b>	-	<b>39,100</b>		<b>39,749</b>

2024 Guidelines	95,874
	50%
	47,937

* Change due to Pastor's time reduction
# ELCA Health Insurance
& Lori's Employer Health

Faith Lutheran Church - Rotonda West FL  
Budget Worksheet 2023-24

January 10, 2024

Account # Account Name 2022 End of Year

2023 YTD Unaudited Budget

Proposed

2024 Full Budget

2023-24 CHANGE

2024

Pastor Shared Time

**Worship & Music**

5.10.301	Worship Supplies	856.51	1,200	1,200	-	1,200
5.10.302	Choir Supplies	0.00	200	200	-	200
5.10.306	Instrument Maintenance	0.00	500	500	-	500
	<b>Total Worship &amp; Music</b>	<b>\$856.51</b>	<b>1,900</b>	<b>1,900</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>1,900</b>

**Administration**

5.10.501	Church Supplies (consumables)	704.51	1,500	1,500	-	1,500
5.10.504	U.S. Postage	533.00	500	500	-	500
5.10.505	Office Machine Expenses	4,379.51	4,000	4,700	700	4,700
5.10.507	Memberships Fees	61.25	200	200	-	200
5.10.508	Church Utilities and Alarm Monitoring	6,976.05	7,500	8,000	500	8,000
5.10.509	Church Telephones	2,487.37	2,500	2,500	-	2,500
5.10.510	Church Technology	1,299.14	1,500	1,500	-	1,500
	<b>Total Administration</b>	<b>\$16,440.83</b>	<b>17,700</b>	<b>18,900</b>	<b>1,200</b>	<b>18,900</b>

**Leadership and Training**

5.10.601	Stewardship	589.57	600	600	-	600
5.10.602	Evangelism	0.00	200	200	-	200
5.10.603	Publicity	3,149.88	3,500	3,500	-	3,500
5.10.605	Mid Gulf Conference	0.00	250	250	-	250
5.10.606	Synod Assembly	1,782.42	2,000	2,000	-	2,000
5.10.607	Fellowship	0.00	400	400	-	400
5.10.608	Education	50.00	100	100	-	100
5.10.610	Stephen Ministry	0.00	500	100	(400)	100
	<b>Total Leadership and Training</b>	<b>\$5,571.87</b>	<b>7,550</b>	<b>7,150</b>	<b>(400)</b>	<b>7,150</b>

**Total Property**

5.10.703	Lawn Service	2,640.00	2,750	2,850	100	2,850
5.10.704	Maintenance (Interior/Exterior)	10,199.54	11,500	12,000	500	12,000
5.10.706	Insurances	10,113.72	10,000	12,000	2,000	12,000
5.10.709	Real Estate Tax	6,071.74	6,000	7,000	1,000	7,000
	<b>Total Property</b>	<b>\$29,025.00</b>	<b>30,250</b>	<b>33,850</b>	<b>3,600</b>	<b>33,850</b>

	<b>Total Expense</b>	<b>\$208,140.78</b>	<b>224,339</b>	<b>232,199</b>	<b>7,860</b>	<b>207,735</b>
	<b>Difference</b>	<b>(\$30,976.86)</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>24,464</b>

(24,464.00)  
Savings



## Pastor's Report 2023

Looking back on 2023 to write this report, I am pondering today's devotional verse: **Do not remember the former things or consider the things of old. I am about to do a new thing; now it springs forth; do you not perceive it? I will make a way in the wilderness and rivers in the desert.** Isaiah 43:18-19 (NRSV-UE)

In 2025 we will celebrate Faith's 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary as a congregation. Prior to our incorporation on March 2, 1975, Pastor Carl Kaltreider worked as a mission developer with the people who would become the charter members of the congregation. Moving to Rotonda West in 1973, Pastor Kaltreider founded what has become Faith Lutheran Church, and also served as a chaplain to the "The Superstars," a production involving ABC Sports, Ed McMahon and name athletes of that day. Later this year (2024) and into 2025 we will explore, highlight and celebrate that history.

I contrast what we will do at our anniversary with what God says through Isaiah, **Do not remember the former things or consider the things of old.** The history of Israel, in written record and in worship, had a healthy way of recalling the past, i.e. God was known as the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. Though the patriarch the people are invited to remember the acts of God's faithfulness and the reality of their leader's struggles.

When God tells us not to remember and not to consider the things of old, God is instructing us not to dwell on the past which marked failure. And God does not want us to live in the past based on the success of those who came before us. Yes, there are important lessons to be learned from former times, both persons and circumstances. But as in the time of the prophet Isaiah, God wants his people looking forward, to what God is going to do.

**I am about to do a new thing; now it springs forth; do you not perceive it?** With this phrase, God declares that He is going to do a new thing. God is going to act, not as a reaction to our endeavors, but based on God's will and God's desire. **Now it springs forth.** What God is doing it not sometime in the future. God's activity is in the here and now. There is a truth that God is always at work in the present. Yes, we see how God was active in the past, and God has made promises about the future. But the point of our attention should be on how God is at work in the present, in our lives, in our communities, and in our world. **Do you not perceive it?** In asking the question of his people, God asks us are we really paying attention. And if we don't perceive it, the problem is not with God, it is with us. The call of Advent to watch, be alert and look is pertinent for every day and every season of faith and life.

**I will make a way in the wilderness and rivers in the desert.** If there is any hesitation or uncertainty on our part, God assures us that He is leading us. God will guide us through the wilderness as God led Israel out of Egypt over 40 years, and Jesus through 40 days. And God's work, God's presence, will transform the wasteland of wilderness into a place of rivers of refreshment and life.

As we look back on 2023, we witness God's faithfulness sustaining us through the wilderness of recovery from Hurricane Ian, a journey many are still walking or wading through. God sustained us through a pandemic and the upheaval that created. We can look back over 50 years as a congregation and recall many wonderful things, and many hard things.

The message to remember today, gathered at the Annual Meeting of our congregation, is that God is still with us. God is working here and now to accomplish His work, by our hands, to accomplish his ministry. We cling to the promise that God will lead us, always before us, into God's future.

This past year we have said goodbye to quite a few members. Some have entered eternity and we celebrate their faith and life. Others have moved to new communities in our area which, in some cases, means they have begun participating in a new congregation. Some of our seasonal family members have not been able to return because health concerns prevent them from traveling, or homes or rental homes were damaged or sold and they have no place to come back to. Then there are some that have moved to other places to be closer to family, friends, or fewer hurricanes. We grieve the absence of those no longer with us on a weekly basis. A number of them are joining us for worship on-line through the cameras at the back of the sanctuary, which help us live-stream our weekly worship services.

Regardless of what tomorrow brings, we will continue to do God's work, LISTENING, CARING and SERVING. And for today, we remember Pastor Kaltreider and all those who have gone before us, by adding a 4<sup>th</sup> word to our list.... INVITING.

We LISTEN to God's word, our congregation and our neighbors. We CARE and we are transformed by what we hear. And because we care, we SERVE. May we learn from our history and the God who is with us, so that we are moved to INVITE others to follow Jesus as well as INVITE them to come and see what God is doing in our lives and community.

God's blessing as we move through 2024,

+Pastor Brian

## **Parochial Statistics Report**

Following are the statistics for the year 2023:

Baptisms: 1  
Confirmed: 0  
Weddings: 0  
New Members: 6  
Deaths: 5  
Removed (by request or by council): 31  
Current Membership: 160

## **2023 Presidents Report**

As I conclude my term as council president, I would like to thank the congregation for your support of the council during a couple of challenging years in 2021 and 2022. I was fortunate to have a very talented and willing group to help with the mission of the church. It has been a very educational and fulfilling experience.

While 2023 has been a far more predictable year than the last couple, it still had a few challenges. As a member of the Tuesday work group, I believe we have nearly completed the storm recovery repairs. We are very thankful to the congregation for their financial support to get the repairs done and help the church budget.

Financially, the church is in a very solid position due to the past leadership's foresight and planning. Unfortunately, expenses did exceed revenues again this year, due largely to a decline in membership, as well as Hurricane Ian and Covid-related expenses. I continue to believe that, as we move forward, membership and giving will grow and help solve this issue.

I'm sure you have noticed we have a second congregation sharing our church, and donating to its continued support and upkeep. It truly is a blessing for both congregations.

As we move forward, the church will have its challenges. With prayer and guidance, we will adjust to meet them, and continue to prosper and meet the needs of our Faith community

It has been my pleasure to serve Faith Church.

Respectfully,

Steve Wolfe  
Council President

## **Audit Committee Report 2023**

The audit committee has reviewed the financial transactions of Faith Lutheran Church for the calendar year 2023. Our review included bank statements, brokerage statements, checks, invoices, payroll records, tax returns, and insurance policies.

In our opinion, the Treasurers Report for 2023, and the Balance Sheet as of December 31, 2023, fairly present the financial activity for the year 2023, and the financial status as of December 31, 2023.

Respectfully submitted, Brian Lindhurst, Chairman, Jim Porter.

### **2023 Education Report**

We have two adult education groups—the “Our Life Together” (OLT) group meeting on alternate Wednesday afternoons, and an adult Sunday School group meeting after worship (between the Sunday worship services when there are two services).

The OLT group which began about six years ago, has continued to function, although it is struggling a bit to re-group. We are meeting in the “Outback”. It had been led by Autumn Hardenstine, but since Jim’s fall, subsequent rehab, and continuing therapy, we are relying on Debby Porter and John Schleede. Both of them have had health and family issues as well, so we are expecting to get back on track this year.

In 2023, the OLT group read and discussed the following:

Adam Hamilton, [The Lord’s Prayer, the Meaning and Power of the Prayer Jesus Taught](#)

C.S. Lewis, [The Screwtape Letters](#)

Josh Scott, [Bible Stories for Grown-Ups: Reading Scripture with New Eyes](#)

Walter Brueggemann: [Names for the Messiah: An Advent Study](#)

We offer our financial resources as well and sent \$350 to ELCA World Hunger and \$300 to the Florida Bahama Synod for the fire in Maui.

The second adult education group is led by Jeff Kamm. They started their discussion last spring on “Thoughts, Questions and Shared Wisdom from God’s Word” followed by their current discussion using the book [God Is Here](#) by Max Lucado.

We are grateful for the leadership provided for these groups. Both groups welcome your participation.

Respectfully submitted,

Ellen Lindhurst

## **2023 Fellowship Report**

2023 brought back several fellowship events including the following:

Five soup suppers were held Wednesdays during Lent prior to evening worship with an average of 29 people attending each week. Soup, bread and dessert were brought by volunteers. Set-up and clean-up were accomplished with the help of volunteers. This was the first time we held soup suppers since Covid restrictions in 2020.

Friendship Dinners were held on February 16 and March 16. The February dinner was held at church and the March dinner at host homes. Both dinners had hosts for tables of 6-9 participants. A total of 41 people attended the February dinner and a total of 51 people attended the March dinner. This was the first time in 7 years we held Friendship Dinners and they were well received.

Coffee was set up at the 8:30 service held outdoors. Coffee and snacks for the Tuesday men's work group and Lutheran Chicks is also provided.

An Easter breakfast was provided for those who participated in both 8:30 am and 10:30 am worship services including the choir, chime choir, pastor and assistants. There were about 35-40 happily-fed people included.

Chris and Ann Banting hosted three Holy Grounds events: February 18<sup>th</sup>, April 15<sup>th</sup> and July 22<sup>nd</sup>. A number of people participated, offering musical skills, while providing treats and coffee. July's offering was "Christmas in July" with Christmas favorites.

A church picnic was held October 29<sup>th</sup> at the Englewood Gardens Beach Club on Manasota Key. We invited Grace Community Church and about 10 of their members attended, for a total of 65-70 participants. Pastor Brian led a worship service following the picnic.

Respectfully submitted,

Ellen Lindhurst

## Property Committee Report 2023

Carry over activity from Hurricane Ian was the most time consuming and resource draining impact on our church facility this year. Expenses incurred due to damage from Ian topped \$25,000. The efforts of the Tuesday morning work crew kept our costs from being much more. All work possible was completed by our member volunteer work crew team, and many specialty skills sets as well as good old fashioned manual labor were used to address the challenge.

Initial cleanup efforts focused on brush removal and raking, with the debris being transferred to the wooded perimeter of the yard area. There was a lot of chain saw work, trimming back growth and broken branches. Once the yard area was cleared, we contracted an individual to come and grind up the brush that was moved from the yard to the tree line. It was necessary to grind this material up to prevent a fire risk in what turned out to be an extremely hot and dry summer. Ian also killed numerous pine trees on the property. Where possible, the work crew removed the dead trees and broken branches; however, given the proximity of some of the trees, it was necessary to contract the services of a tree removal service. After the stumps were ground down the mulch/soil material was redistributed to low spots throughout the yard. Five (5) yards of top soil were spread over the low areas in the yard. On top of hurricane cleanup work, our volunteers continued to maintain the trimming, mulching, and weed control surrounding the building and Memorial Garden area.

The “Double Wide/Outback” also required significant work as a result of hurricane damage. The work crew team completed repairs/replacement and painting of the building’s skirting and trim. Inside, water and drywall damage was repaired, as was the external lighting.

Other challenges including roof repair, electrical and plumbing issues required the assistance of specialty tradesman contractors. Other significant projects taken on by our work crew team involved:

- Painting of the front window panels and exterior door trim
- Replacing the irrigation nozzles around the building
- Installation of solar motion lights on the back steps
- Installation of a downspout on the NE corner of the building
- Rewiring LED signs
- Straightening the utility pole between the “Main Building and the Double wide/Out back”
- Sorting and reorganizing the contents of the garage
- Repaired the Garage door following a break in

The work crew also put up the outside Nativity Scene as well as helped with putting up Christmas decorations. We are truly blessed with a very engaged group of members eager to make a difference. I have been around the work crew team for over a year now and find their fellowship tough to beat! We are always looking to expand our circle. And remember, many hands make light work.

Jeff Kamm

## Faith's Memorial Garden

Faith's Memorial Garden, eight years old, continues to be a place of peace, meditation, remembrance, internment and worship. Comments from people are it is such a restful place, it is beautiful, so serene and a wonderful place to meditate and just to sit and take in nature --most of the time you can hear the sounds of nature. Just outside the gated area, this space was used for early worship services during most of the year.

The Garden continues to be overseen by the committee consisting of Steve Wolfe, liaison from council, Jeff Petersen, Jim Hughs, Marcia Wilkins, Mary Lou Fitzgerald, Linda Bennet and Noma Hickock. Gardening, sporadically is being done by Linda and Harold Schultz, Marcia Wilkins, Jay Fischer, Kendra Evans, Sue Michaleski, Mary Lou Fitzgerald Dave Woodliff and the Tuesday Morning Work Crew. Because of the extreme heat during the summer the garden "took off" and in Sept a major trimming was undertaken. Thank you to all for your help and commitment to the garden. The committee always welcomes new members to both the committee and the gardeners. Just let me know—Mary Lou Fitzgerald. Just a minimum number of meetings and hopefully monthly sprucing up the area.

During the past year the following has taken place in/and immediately outside the garden:

- Easter sunrise service was held.
- Early Sunday worship service.

In 2023 memorial bricks bordering the sidewalk were placed. Each was purchased for a fee of \$100 from the following:

- Noma Hickok
- John and Laura Kohler
- Cathy Deitrich from Dave Deitrick
- Marie Rutherford from Kay and John Culver
- Ernie Rutherford from Kay and John Culver
- Tommy Rutherford from Kay and John Culver
- Lisa Mary LaQuay from Lori Armen

Four bricks ordered and awaiting arrival are:

- Cherished Memories from Buccine and Egan Families
- Jack Moynihan from Jan Moynihan
- Scott Grosvenor from Bruce and Linda Grosvenor
- Nancy Hills LaQuay from Lori Armen

The Memorial Garden fund has a balance of just over \$4500. These funds are used to mulch, and fertilize. Some purchasing of plants will be secured in the rainy season of 2024.

Bricks, to honor, remember or commemorate a special event may be purchased for a fee of \$100. Six people have prepaid for their interment. *Anyone who wishes a Christian burial may be buried in the Memorial Garden.* Guidelines for the memorial garden and bricks are in a brochure in the narthex of the church. Funds to perpetuate the garden may also be donated.

So, take some time to visit the garden, any time, and enjoy the natural beauty of God's creation.

*Mary Lou Fitzgerald*, chair

## **Worship and Music Committee Report 2023**

Members: Jeff Petersen, Pastor Brian Armen, Candace Montesi, Marcia Wilkins, Mary Lou Fitzgerald, Debby Porter, Noma Hickok, Jim Porter, Ellen Lindhurst, Lou Taylor, Jeff Kamm

Committee meetings were held on 3/6, 10/9, and 12/4. Members reported on their areas of responsibility and plans were made for services throughout the year.

Worship services were held twice each each Sunday beginning in January - April with an outdoor service being held at 8:30 a.m. and an indoor service being held at 10:30 a.m. After that time a weekly Sunday service was scheduled for 9:30 a.m. During time when Pastor Armen wasn't available we were fortunate to have Pastor Autumn Hardenstein lead us in worship. During Lent and Advent we offered Wednesday services at 6 p.m. We have added a Sunday school under the able leadership of Jeff Kamm to our worship study.

Numerous worship assistants and ushers were gracious enough to offer their services at both the outdoor and indoor services throughout the year. Their efforts are greatly appreciated by the congregation.

The altar guild worked seamlessly behind the scenes to help our services happen.

Candace Montesi has led us musically from the keyboards throughout the year and provided us with leadership for our choir. The choir had been on hiatus during covid but resumed rehearsals during January and provided music for services numerous times. The chime choir also resumed rehearsing and performing this year. Thanks to all who have helped in these and other music efforts throughout the year to enrich our worship services.

Our technical staff has once again helped us provide sound reinforcement and visuals for our services. In addition, their skills allowed us to broadcast via You Tube for those not able to attend. Many thanks to those dedicated tech team members.

Our Eucharist Ministry is headed up by Linda Schleede. Lou Taylor is the Stephen Ministry coordinator. Linda Schultz coordinates and helps a number of ladies to provide lunches for the community "campers" every Tuesday.

Thanks to all of the coordinators who have worked so diligently behind the scenes to supply our services with the volunteers needed for our worship services.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jeff Petersen, Worship and Music Committee



## Altar Guild 2023

Two thousand twenty-three was a rather interesting year for the Altar Guild. Number of communicants was 3832 which was an increase over 2022 by just ONE. Our highest year was 2018 when we communed over 6000. We have a long way to go to reach that number.

This year again the guild lost a member as Margaret Murphy moved from the area, but we welcome Kathy Gallagher to the group. Debbie Porter is a tremendous help as she helps by cleaning up after the 10:30 service. So, this makes a crew of 16. We have 2 husband and wife teams and many members are doing multiple months.

So what is expected of a member? On either Friday or Saturday set up the altar for communion—filling communion cups, placing communion vessels and linens on altar and changing the colored paraments at different liturgical seasons. (Changing of the paraments, colored cloths on altar and filling of candles was done mostly by Harold Schultz and Brian Lindhurst.) After service the communion glasses are counted and recorded. The altar is then cleared and the linens that were used for communion are laundered. So how long does it take to set up the altar? About 40 minutes -- and to clean up about 20! Short time considering the importance of the work done.

- With early services outside near the Memoria Garden there is a second altar to set up but everything is placed in a cart and there is plenty of help taking things outside and setting up.
- Wine had always been purchased around the time of the Jewish holidays since it was on sale for about a saving of 25%. Now it is difficult to find Manischewitz Concord Grape wine unless traveling to Port Charlotte.
- Special displays of lilies and poinsettias adorned the altar at Easter and Christmas. Thank you to those who sponsored the flowers. Easter lilies and poinsettias that remained in church after the Sunday were planted near the Memorial Garden. There are Lilies pointing their little heads thru the soil near the large gate to the Memorial Garden, poinsettias on each side of the gate.

Special thanks to Debbie Easterday, Linda Hughes, Linda and Tom Jasper, Gloria Marsh, Kathy Myers, Linda Ovitz, Julie Petersen, Linda Schleede, Linda and Harold Schultz, Pam Sinclair and Rose Anne Woodliff for their commitment to Faith's Altar Guild for 2023. Also, Debbie Porter who helps by cleaning up after the late service

This ministry is so important to our worship! More help would be appreciated in 2024 so that two could team together when there are two services. How about using a portion of your time and become a member of the guild? You will be trained and hopefully working with another person so ask a friend. It really is an easy job but so necessary!

Also, a special note that when the price of flowers for Sunday were \$50. It was decided to stop buying flowers. Two large arrangements which are double sided were created Kathy Myers after a monetary donation and are used interchangeable. Real flowers may be placed on the altar if you first check the date with Barbra, church secretary.

Need more info, have questions just ask me and perhaps I can answer and/or encourage you. For me the time I spend doing the altar is a time when I am in conversation with God.

*Mary Lou Fitzgerald*, chair

## **Endowment Report 2023**

The Faith Mission and Ministry Endowment Fund was a concept championed by Fred Warner and a number of other members over 15 years ago. Building on that foundation, the Mission and Ministry Endowment Fund was incorporated into our constitution as a resource to fund God's ministry as a part of our life together. We have received a number of donations over the years that "seeded" our fund. The financial reports of the congregation include the financial information for the Endowment Fund. If you need help with, or would like more information on, including Faith's Endowment Fund in your estate planning, please contact our church office.

Sincerely,

Your Endowment Committee: Larry Bennett, Debby Porter, Jim Taylor

and the congregation Pastor, President and Treasurer.

## **Pictorial Directory**

With the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Faith approaching, it was decided that a Pictorial Directory be published. Universal Church Directories was selected and the process began. Two days of photography in Nov. 2022 and 2 days late Jan. 2023. The committee of Noma Hickok and her group for securing and signing in people, Bruce Grosvenor, Ellen Lindhurst and Mary Lou to compose the directory spent many hours to bring the project to fruition.

Photographs from personal cameras we searched to compose the activity pages. Mary Lou took photos of people who were camera shy for the photographer and between Ellen and Bruce they were made directory ready. Ellen timed the sun correctly so she got a great picture of the church for the cover. The time to arrange the graphic design of the activity pages was considerable—mostly done by Ellen. Of course, then there were the Roster pages. Well Pastor was in charge of that. A timely task!!

Was it worth it??? We think so, even though it took a considerable amount of time before the copies arrived and were handed out. What do you think? Now you can put a name to that face you see in church!

Mary Lou Fitzgerald, Chair

PS If your photo is in the member section you are entitled to a directory. Some of you have not picked up your copy. Please see Barbra in the office!