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My

Church

Shall

Be

Annual Congregational Report for 2023  
Shepherd of the Bay Lutheran Church  
Ellison Bay, WI

2023 ANNUAL MEETING SHEPHERD OF THE BAY LUTHERAN CHURCH  
January 28, 2024

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# Shepherd of the Bay Lutheran Church 2022 Annual Meeting

SHEPHERD OF THE BAY LUTHERAN CHURCH ANNUAL MEETING JANUARY 29, 2023

- I Welcome- President Dick Burress
- II Call to Order
- III Opening Prayer – Pastor Jim Honig
- IV Approval of Minutes from the 2022 Annual Meeting Minutes. Motion to Approve Lyle Amundson, second by Judy Jackson. Motion Carried
- V Approval of Consent Agenda Items  
Staff and SOTB Ministry Reports.Motion to Approve Mickey Swanson, second by Rita Sullivan. Motion Carried
- VI Reflections and Report – Pastor Jim Honig  
Seeing more energy, more unity in congregation  
We are still in a challenging financial context  
A major ministry happening was enrollment in the Thriving Congregation Project  
Welcomed new members. Pastoral care became more active as Covid restrictions eased.  
A prayer vigil for Ukraine was hosted by Shepherd of the Bay, led by several clergy from Northern Door.  
A generous amount was raised for Ukraine relief efforts.  
A special thanks to our many, many dedicated volunteers and staff members.
- VII Reflections of Congregation President Dick Burress  
Dick invited Lynda Pietruszka to say a few words. She spoke of her journey of discernment and her journey to enter ordained ministry. She has enrolled in Wartburg Seminary and will do her studies on-line while continuing to serve at SOTB.  
Dick spoke of the re-defining of committees and responsibilities and praised the work of the Thriving Congregation in their ongoing path.  
We are all looking forward to the burning of the mortgage ceremony in July .
- VIII Finance Report and Budget 2023 – Ron Hupe  
December offering was \$55,000, up from what was expected. 2022 ended with a \$10,000 deficit.  
Regarding the budget for 2023, we will be keeping the 2022 budget and giving the staff a 5% raise.
- IX Elections  
The following individuals have been placed on the ballot to serve in leadership positions by the Nomination committee and have accepted the nominations:
  - i. Congregation Council – Cheryl Becht, Scott Henry, Julia Keepper. Grace Rossman has been nominated as Treasurer. Motion made to accept by Dan Farwell and second by Don Howard. Motion Carried.
  - ii. Audit Committee – Les Keepper, Grace Rossman, Scott Schultz. Motion made to accept by Tara Torkelson, second by Vicki Amundson. Motion carried
  - iii. Synod Assembly Delegates – Cheryl Becht, Lynda Pietruszka. Motion made to accept by Sue West, second by Lon Kopitzke. Motion Carried.
- X Recognition and Thanks  
Out going Council members Edee Madsen, George Cobb, Les Keepper and outgoing Treasurer Ron Hupe for his service to Shepherd of the Bay for the last 22 years. We will celebrate with Ron after church on February 5th.
- XI Closing Prayer – Pastor Jim Honig
- XII Adjourn

Respectfully submitted,  
Sue Daubner, Secretary

# Pastor's Report

As I reflect on the ministry at Shepherd of the Bay in the Year of our Lord, 2023, I think first of **grace**. Over and over in Paul's letters, he tells young and struggling church, that we have been given this ministry by God's grace. We can't take credit for it, it's future success lies on far more than our own competence. This ministry is gift. God has put us here for a reason and God intends to work through us. That is grace.

And because of the active power of God's grace, I am full of **gratitude**. I am grateful to serve ask your pastor. I am grateful for capable and committed leader. I am grateful for the ways that you show up week after week to gather around word and sacrament and to do the things that need to get done for a congregational ministry to thrive. I'm grateful for a great staff that makes my work less lonely and whose gifts multiply the work that we are able to do.

2023 was a year of **growth**. We grew in so many ways. Of course, there are the measured things like several new members and strong worship attendance, but there are also the less tangible things, like growing in relationship, growing in faith, growing in wisdom and understanding, growing in stewardship. With the Thriving Congregations Team taking the lead, we took tremendous strides forward in growing the relational fabric of our congregation. With more than 150 one on one relational meetings, we are strengthening our relationships with each other beyond just talking about the weather and the grandchildren. We are getting to know our mutual hopes and dreams, our disappointments and fears, both as individuals and as a congregation. Further building that relational fabric was the series of house meetings/listening sessions that over 85 of you participated in. We learned about each other's stories and we learned our hopes and dreams for the future priorities of our ministry. Even as I write, we are in the process of combing through that data for clues to where the Spirit is leading us.

in 2023, we were able to celebrate your **generosity**. What a great celebration it was in July to return the debt. We looked back, giving thanks for those whose vision and sacrifice brought us to this place. And we looked forward, committing ourselves to growing and expanding our ministry in ways that were not previously possible. You have let us know that you are not ready to relax with the retirement of the debt, but are ready to forge into the future, using money that would have been used to make mortgage payments for growing and expanding the ministry impact of Shepherd of the Bay.

As I looked through my calendar for 2023, I realized also that it was a year of **grief**. We conducted many funerals, and noted the deaths of others for whom there was no formal service at Shepherd of the Bay. Many of these beloved siblings in Christ were active members, folks whose lives were given to making sure Shepherd of the Bay thrived. In beautiful services, we honored their work and legacy, commended them to God, and vowed to continue to the work that they began. And we still acknowledge the vacant spots in our hearts because of their deaths.

Writing these reflections on the past year fills my heart not only with gratitude, but with energy and hope, believing that by God's grace and action, the best years of our congregation are still to come. Here's to a great 2024.

Together for the sake of the gospel of Jesus,  
Pr. Jim Honig

## Council President's Letter

Dear Members of Shepherd of the Bay,

In a recent sermon, Pastor Honig spoke about the importance of writing thank you notes. With that in mind, please consider this my thank you note for the many good things you as individuals and as a whole congregation have said, done, worked at and participated in during 2023.

I'm grateful for our dedicated staff and volunteers. Our spiritual leader and experienced minister, Jim Honig, leads worship experiences and Bible study and uses his knowledge and many abilities to guide us in our faith journeys in addition to all the ways he demonstrates and shares how to be God's hands inside and outside the church building. Musicians, Judy Jackson and Greg Beem, provide inspired and meaningful instrumental and choral music to enhance our worship. Lynda Pietruszka, Director of Children and Youth Ministry, creates developmentally appropriate and important experiences to help all our youngsters in their faith formation. Church secretary, Carol Frakes-Omernick effectively oversees the operation of the church office and assists with a variety of administrative duties. There are many volunteers, from our church council, to committees, to groups and individuals who give their time and talents to make our church function well and be an open and welcoming place for everyone in our Door County community.

Our Thriving Congregation delegation needs to be singled out and thanked for all their work this year to help our whole congregation discern the direction we want Shepherd of the Bay to take. In a short time we can see many things happening from this endeavor. With the one-on-one and small group visits, we have experienced a very positive new energy in our thoughts and actions. The members of the delegation took the initiative to get to know individuals, listened carefully to all the participants, and are now categorizing the information they gleaned to help us move into the next phase. Already we have learned to take some risks, such as meeting and greeting others we didn't know well, communicating on a deeper level with our fellow congregants and moving out into the Door County community to assist in meeting some of its needs. I look forward to what is coming from this undertaking.

Finally, I want to tell you how very much I appreciate each member of this congregation. Instead of being hesitant when we get close to the Passing of the Peace during our Sunday morning service, I now look forward to greeting everyone. I'm gratified at how generous you are with your time, abilities, and finances. Thank you, for your welcoming attitude, your encouraging words and the love you show one another.

Peace be with you.

Cheryl Becht, Council President



# Children, Youth, and Family Ministry

Lynda Pietruszka

***Do not worry about anything, but pray and ask God for everything you need, always giving thanks. And God's peace, which is so great, we cannot understand it, will keep your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus.***

***Philippians 4:6-7***

At the beginning of 2023, the congregation was invited to take a card off a table in the church narthex. The card was flipped, so that you couldn't see the word, suggesting it may be "God's Word" for your life, through out the year. We were to pray, and ponder on that word, and listen to the "still small voice". My word was "choice". Through out the year, I shared that word within all the programs here at Shepherd of the Bay, for children, youth, and families. As the year wrapped up, it was evident in our conversations, that we all have been given Gods gift of "choice", to love, to serve, to spread kindness, to invite, to welcome, to forgive, to be forgiven, and have blessed assurance that we are enough in God's eyes. Upon this, we continue to build our community, and spread the love of Jesus Christ out into the community, as we head into the new year, 2024!

## **Third Sundays, Pancakes and Praise**

September through May, each third Sunday, following Communion, children AND families join us upstairs for a pancake breakfast followed by a time of faith formation for the entire family! Pancakes and Praise Sundays have been very successful, averaging seven families in regular attendance. The other Sundays in the month, Sunday School for children ages 4-grade 6, follows the Children's message, and is located in the conference room, first floor. We have averaged four children in attendance. Kristi Appel is our volunteer assistant teacher.

## **Little Lambs Bible Story Hour**

Each Friday morning, October through May, from 9:00-10:15 a.m., infants, toddlers, preschoolers and their care-providers are invited for a time of free play, Bible stories, art, music, games, and more! Switching the day to Fridays has made it possible for PreK children to continue to attend, expanding on the number of attendees in the program. The Pen Pulse runs an ad for the program, in the daily calendar of events.

## **Wonderful Wednesdays**

Every first and third Wednesday, from October through May, students in first grade through sixth grade may register to ride the after school bus from Gibraltar to SOTB, for a time of fun and fellowship, Bible stories, art, music, special guests, games, snacks, and more! At 5:00 p.m., parents are able to arrive earlier for quiet time in the sanctuary before pick up at 5:30 p.m. The first half of 2023, we averaged 15 children. The second half we averaged 10 children. The direct result of our lower attendance stems from alternative after school programs offered through out the community on Wednesday nights. It may be time to consider partnering with some of the programs through out the year.

## **Summer Wonderful Wednesdays**

Children ages four through grade six, may register to spend five Wonderful Wednesdays from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. at SOTB for a full day of fun, Bible Stories, music, arts and crafts, games, free play, water splash fun, movies, special guests, and a culminating field trip! The summer of 2023, we averaged twenty-two children, with half from Shepherd of the Bay, and the other half, either vacation visitors, or coming from other churches.

## **Confirmation**

Every first and third Wednesday, students in grades seven and eight may travel on the Gibraltar bus to SOTB for Confirmation. The remainder of the month provides opportunities for retreats, fellowship, field trips, service and outreach. October through Confirmation camp in June! May of 2023, the following students were Confirmed: Carena Reisen, Bobby Opper, and Xavier Gaddes. The 2023-2024 class: Reagan Buchner, Kenzie Thomas, and Cosette Orrick.

## **High School Youth**

September through May, every second and fourth Wednesday from 6:30 to 8:00 p.m., students in grades nine through twelve, gather for fun, fellowship, devotion, reflection, and planning for the next big event or community service! February retreat, Spring 30 Hour Famine, and Summer travel! High School average attendance six to ten students, but climbs during special events, as our students are good to invite friends from the community. We celebrated the graduation of the following students on high school senior Sunday, 2023: Michael Garza, Elsie and Rae Jungwirth, Zoe Armbruster, Caitlin Gieseler, Makenize Koehler, Anna Casanas, Ellie Scherer, and Nick Davis. Makenize Koehler received a \$250.00 scholarship from the outdoor worship design contest.

### • **Highlights of faith formation in 2023**

- “Touch the Water, Taste the Bread” first Communion class was held twice. Five children received the sacrament for the first time this year: Anthony Torcivia, Avery Burress, Niko Bonovich, and the two grandchildren of Paul and Anne Lings, Philip and Elise Kuda.
- Lynne Buchner received the “Pencil Award” for outstanding support of faith formation for our children and youth.
- Generous support from our congregation as we fundraise for programs with our annual “going bananas” bread sale, and Easter bake sales.
- Synod Youth Gathering, “Journey with Jesus” at Imago Dei, in February, 2023. Attended by six of our middle/high school students.
- Middle School and High School serve two Lenten meals
- Resurrection Egg Hunt on Easter Sunday morning, 21 children participating!
- Confirmation Service project and outing at the Red Putter
- Wonderful Wednesday, Habitat for Humanity fundraiser and lock in at SOTB, lodging in their own creation, a cardboard house!
- High School Youth participated in three, “faith filled fasts” a version of the 30 hour famine, fundraising and fasting for Ukraine.
- Confirmation Camp at Imago Dei in June.
- The “planetarium” in the sanctuary, and rock hound Cal Pierson at Summer Wonderful Wednesdays.
- Pancakes and Praise guest speaker, Debbie Clement!
- Children’s Christmas Program within worship!
- 

### • **Outreach and Service**

- Card Ministry to home and Scandia residents
- Quilts for graduating senior high students
- Prayer shawls for Confirmation students
- Cereal Box challenge for the Door County Food Coalition
- Confirmation clean up day
- 30 hour famine service to the Door County Food Coalition pantries
- Imago Dei Crossways Camps day of service
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### • **Milestone Ministry**

- Back to school back pack blessings
- Bible Sunday for Confirmation students, and grades 3 and 4
- New Readers, receive leveled paper back books
- Confirmation and Graduation Sundays
- Baptism and Birthday Cards

## **Nursery**

The nursery is currently used for gathering and play for Friday Little Lambs. The nursery is open Sunday mornings and during special events. The nursery is a space for parents and care providers to spend time with their little ones during worship (the service is on intercom). There are age appropriate toys, a changing table, and a rocking chair for nursing, and a crib available. Currently the nursery is not manned by paid staff, or volunteers.

## **Prayground**

On the east side of the Sanctuary, we provide a year round “prayground” for small children, attending worship with their families. We also provide activity bags for your young children. Both are stocked and changed seasonally by one of our faith formation volunteers, currently Ruth Ann Hjelle.

## **Communication**

- Facebook Shepherd of the By Family and Friends page
- SOTB monthly newsletter and church website
- Email, text message, U.S. mail, and phone calls
- Personal visits

## **Youth Director Training/Experiences**

- Extravaganza Youth Ministry Conference/On-line from Anaheim, CA
- Guatemala mission trip through Pray for America/Manos De Jesus
- Full Circle Discernment journey, considering the call to seminary
- Annual Synod Assembly
- Synod youth board member, ad hoc
- Participation in a mental health forum for families in northern Door
- Education/Ally partnership with the Diversity Acceptance Alliance at Gibraltar school, advocacy table at the Sister Bay Pride festival.
- Directing the Faith Formation Team
- Leading the “Cut-Up” club
- SOTB van social outings to the Peninsula Players and Green Bay
- Building relationships with children and youth through attendance and participation in events through the local school district.

## **Ongoing**

- Safety training and background checks for volunteers
- Intergenerational partnerships/mentoring
- Partnership with Thriving Congregations
- Updating communications/program planning
- “Shepherding” families in need



# VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL REPORT

The theme for VBS 2023 was “On Fire for God” and was the story was of Elijah. The Elijah stories take place at a dark time in Israel’s history. The country has been divided north and south. The northern kings have gone from bad to worse. The challenge for Elijah and all the other prophets was that Israel didn’t give up worshiping the Lord, the God of Israel, but rather thought that they could worship him and Baal. That, of course, was impossible. The Lord allows no other gods. He is truly a “jealous” God.

The central teaching points were:

1. Every Christian life will be a struggle between God’s call to worship him alone and all the false gods in our lives.
2. True faith is a trust relationship between ourselves and God who in the Gospel makes wonderful promises to us. We trust most of all that all of our sins are forgiven because of Jesus and his death on the cross. This grants us the hope of everlasting life. But we trust also that God, the true God, will provide us with all that we need for our physical existence and that he will protect us from danger.
3. Faith leads to faithfulness. By that I mean that our trust in God’s promises leads us to live in a certain way in our daily lives. The heart of the Christian faith isn’t keeping the commandments. Rather, knowing the love of God in Jesus Christ our Lord we, through the power of the Holy Spirit, will seek to please God and live according to his will.

The Bible verse was Psalm 46.

The 7 churches of Northern Door County partner on activities for the week and VBS is held at the First Baptist Church in Sister Bay. We hosted just over 90 kids ages preschool thru 6th grade.

As always, Shepherd of the Bay had a good turnout of adult volunteers and children. The Craft Committee is lead by Kristi Appel and Carol Omernick. Bruce Foster edited the skits and curriculum and Lynne Buchner directed the skits. We had many adults help with being tribal teachers, craft helpers, set up and taking down of the craft booths and tents, snack helpers, picnic lunch helpers and clean up crew. Thanks to everyone who supported this wonderful program.

Carol Omernick

# Music Ministry

## A VIEW OF THE CHOIR LOFT FROM THE PIANO BENCH

Allow me to speak of the many generous gifts of service, bestowed on a grateful church Sunday after Sunday throughout this past year, gifts of music given by a talented group of singers and instrumentalists, enhancing the worship endeavors of Shepherd of the Bay. I am indeed fortunate to lead the Sanctuary Choir each week, to help shape the worship from the piano and from the choir loft, to collaborate with instrumental friends for special occasions, to be part of the community that continues to care for each other like family. God is so good to us!

The year 2023 held many high points in the Music Ministry of Shepherd of the Bay:

The Sanctuary Choir sang for every Sunday worship service in the calendar year (with the exception of December 31), as well as for many special services in Lent, Advent, Christmas. I never had to convince my choir members to sing at any time! Their willingness to offer their talents and their time was truly a wonderful gift to us all.

The singers of the Sanctuary Choir exhibit many gifts! They are also saxophonists, bell ringers, egg shakers, tambourine players, maraca shakers, drummers, guitar players and pianists. Thank you Erik Torkelson, Mary Perdue, Pat and John Skogsbakken, Jeanne Aurelius, Cathy and Scott Henry, Sandy Reisenauer, RuthAnn Hjelle for always saying “yes” when an opportunity arose!

Guests and friends of Shepherd of the Bay have offered to share their musical gifts with us as well throughout the year, from Charlotte and Dan Bogda (violins), Emily Watts (violin), Alicia Doudna (violin), Eric and Ellen Olson (PMF oboe and viola), Paul Bellino and Terry Leahy (PMF trombones), Scott Bourdeau and Greg Beem (organ).

Singers from the Sanctuary Choir combined their voices in unique combinations to provide beautiful music to specific occasions in the church year. A few of the ensembles which contributed special music, specifically at Christmastime, were Lyle Amundson and Scott Henry; Sandy Reisenauer and Joe Megan; Sandy Reisenauer, Donna Hupe, Mary Perdue, Cheryl Becht and Cathy Henry; Sandy Reisenauer, Donna Hupe, Mary Perdue, Cheryl Becht, Cathy Henry, George Cobb, Solbjørg Daubner, Scott Henry and Lyle Amundson.

The Sanctuary Choir sang for several funerals throughout the year, honoring the lives of past members of our choir and supporters of our music program: Marilyn Johnson in April, Eloise Lindem in August, Lars Larsen and Erv Hitzeman in October. There were other memorial services throughout the year that were celebrated: Doris Loss in April (with Charlotte Bogda, violin), Sigrid Ostrem in July, John Zacek in August, Cliff Darken in October, Christopher Bergner in November. We were honored to remember and celebrate the lives of these saints of our community with our music.

One of the interesting occurrences of the year came as a result of a live-streamed Sunday service, which featured the Sanctuary Choir singing an anthem Pepper Choplin. Representatives of the composer heard our singing and contacted me, in hopes that our choir would come to New York City in May and collaborate with other chosen singers, performing a major new choral work under the baton of the composer, Pepper Choplin ... AT CARNEGIE HALL! It was a flattering invitation and would have been an interesting adventure, but the Sanctuary Choir decided not to participate in the event. It was lovely to be recognized in this way, nevertheless!

I would like to recognize some generous gifts given to the Music Ministry of Shepherd of the Bay:

The estate of Gayle George gave us a beautiful set of bongos and a stand to use in our worship experiences.

Peter J. Nehlsen continues to support our musical endeavors at Shepherd by tuning and maintaining our two beautiful Steinway pianos in the sanctuary and the Mason and Hamlin in the choir rehearsal room, contributing his services to us without ever presenting a bill. We are very grateful for Peter's generous spirit and support.

I continue to write a monthly article for the Parish Door and a weekly email to the members of the Sanctuary Choir, as well being responsible for the health and well-being of our church pianos, which I play occasionally on any given Sunday morning.

Several special musical events were held at Shepherd during the year:

Haydn's Seven Last Words of Christ, played by the Pro Arte Quartet, led by seven speakers  
and sponsored by Midsummer's Music in March

Jonathan Bass performed with Trio Voyager in June

July saw another Midsummer's Music event

Organist Laura Bottei performed a Shepherd Concert Series event in August

Pianist Jonathan Bass returned to play a solo recital in August

Organist Dan Schwandt was the final artist in our 2023 Concert Series in September

The life of a musician is rewarding, challenging and joy-filled, especially when the musician finds herself collaborating with such fine human beings ... who happen to love music, become friends and evolve into a beautiful family. I am indeed grateful for the position I have been granted at Shepherd of the Bay. With God's grace, I'll continue in this position a little while longer.

Soli Deo gloria!

Judith Jackson, Sanctuary Choir Director and Principal Pianist



## Worship and Music Committee

Shepherd of the Bay has become that special place for so many of us where we come together each week whether it be in-person, in the parking lot, or live stream, to offer up praise and thanksgiving to the God of our salvation. We come together to worship our Lord and Savior, finding nourishment in God's Word and His Sacrament. It is a place where we come together to serve God, to serve each other, and from where we go out to serve the community around us. It is a place where we celebrate the joys and sorrows of life, where we laugh and cry together, and where we hold one another up in prayer. It is in this context that the Worship and Music Committee works together to offer a worship experience that is meaningful and encouraging.

When it comes to the worship life of our congregation, so many tasks go on behind the scenes in order to accomplish this: the recruiting of readers, ushers, communion assistants and sound system and video operators; making sure the flowers are in place and that the altar is set up for communion. As we move through the church year, we see the look of the sanctuary periodically transformed as banners, altar clothes and various other decorations change to reflect the season. Finally, there is the weekly task of planning and preparing the liturgy and music that will lead us through our time of worship each week. A big word of appreciation goes out to ALL who make this possible, including W & M Committee members Sharon Pluff, Cheryl Becht, Sue Daubner, Greg Beem, Jane Mohit, Judith Jackson, Carol Omernick, Jim Honig, Lynda Pietruszka, and Scott Henry.

Regarding evangelism and outreach, Shepherd of the Bay takes on many forms. One of those forms is the Summer Concert Series that Shepherd of the Bay provides to our community each year. During this past summer we were able to again offer several performances: Midsummer's Music presented Haydn's The Seven Last Words of Christ on Friday, March 31, 2023. On Friday, June 16, Voyager Trio comprising three upcoming young artists, pianist Jonathan Bass, cellist Sophia

Eckdale- Dudley, and violinist Gabe Roethle, performed. On July 14, Eric Lewis, a favorite of Door County residents, joined Midsummer's Music in-residence composer Will Haley to present a concert. On August 22, Laura Bottei presented an evening of organ music. Laura is a native of Green Bay who recently graduated with her master's degree in organ performance from Indiana University. On August 3, Jonathan Bass returned to Shepherd of the Bay to perform a solo piano concert. Jonathan is a native of Washington Island, WI. On September 16, an organ concert was performed by Dr. Daniel

Schwandt, DMA. Born and raised in Appleton, Wisconsin, Dr. Schwandt is currently University Organist and Lecturer in Music at the Lawrence University Conservatory of Music where he teaches organ and harpsichord. He also teaches organ at Purdue University Fort Wayne, Indiana.

As we continue to move forward, we look forward with excitement to see how God will use Shepherd of the Bay to help in building up the faith of His people. And, as we move forward together, let us continually be aware that worship is a work of the people of God and is not owned by any particular individual or committee. As you have questions or suggestions that arise, please feel free to share them with me or anyone on the committee.

Respectfully submitted by

Lyle Amundson, Acting Worship and Music Committee Chair

Greg Beem, Principal Organist (and Tutor to the Acting Chair)

## ***Women of the ELCA***

The quilting group continues to meet on Thursday mornings under the leadership of Barb Tuttle. We delivered eighty quilts to Northern Door Childcare in December. The quilts were used on site and given to the families who use the center. Twelve quilts were sent to Guatemala with the SOTB mission team in March along with 12 handmade canvas bags.

We sponsored Social Six, a program that assembles groups of about six people to meet socially over a three or four month period. It's a great way for people in the congregation to know each other better. Stay tuned for our next opportunity to sign up.

Gretchen Farwell continues to lead her book club, and they occasionally meet with book clubs from other churches as well.

You are welcome to join us! We look forward to a fun 2024 as we create more opportunity for fellowship.

Grace Rossman  
WELCA Chair



# Thriving Congregations

2023 started and ended the same way- prayerfully paying attention to God and to each other within the congregation and within the community. Thickening the relationships within the church, and thinning the walls with the larger community.

By the end of 2023 we had conducted about 150 individual one on one meetings. Most were within the church but also with community members. We shared our Door County stories, how we came to SOTB, and our interests and passions. Very few of us were born in Door County but got here as soon as we could. Family and music were the major interests.

In March the team attended the second training program in North Carolina. The focus was on how to expand relational meetings from individual ones to group sessions. We asked non team members to host and / or lead these sessions. We called them house meetings, and conducted 11 of them at the church or in people's homes. About 85 people participated in the meetings in August and September. We asked people to share a time they felt very connected to a congregation and their hopes and dreams for the our future. The top three things mentioned were music, caring for each other and having more opportunities to connect with each other, and using our resources (grounds, building, van, people) to better serve the the congregation and the community.

In July we hosted Tim Conder and Dan Rhodes from the Black Mountain School of Theology and Community for their site visit. It was scheduled for when we had the Mortgage Burning festivities. After lunch the team met with them and we all took a ride in the van to show them the surrounding communities around SOTB.

In October we went back to North Carolina to focus on coding and discernment. Coding is reading and rereading the information we have collected and turning those spoken words into manageable chunks of data to interpret. The coding can be done by looking for patterns, themes, topics, or emotions. In November the team individually coded all the material and then met in small groups to discuss and consolidate what they found.

The next step is discernment. Discerning where the living God is re-creating anew. Or where we recognize and respond to God's leadership and guidance, both personally, and in the community. Or to move forward, faithfully being the Body of Christ in the here and now.

In December we decided to expand the group of people looking at this information to ensure we are not stuck in our own interpretations of what we are hearing. In January the church council, the church staff, and others will be asked to participate in this process. They will be asked to read and reread the information from the house meetings, code the information, and to meet in small groups to share what they have found.

So 2023 was a good year. We start 2024 as we did 2023, prayerfully paying attention to God, to each other, and to the wider community.

*Vicki Amundson*

## Guatemala Mission Trip

We partnered with Peace Lutheran Church in Antigo, WI to send 9 people to Guatemala for the first time in three years since the pandemic. Members of Shepherd of the Bay traveling March 2 - 12, 2023 were Lynda Pietruszka and Carol Omernick.

Programs at Manos de Jesus in Guatemala are evolving. They are concentrating on building relationships with the community by hosting a VBS style soccer day camp. This camp is in partnership with OneWay Ministries. We took over 100 frisbees and taught the kids to play ultimate frisbee. (It is like soccer but using frisbees). The kids enjoyed it so much they continued to ask to play after our team had gone home. We helped in the tutoring center with small group English lessons for neighborhood children. They tutor kids who fell behind in school during the pandemic. We visited 2 soccer camp families and our sponsor families. We took blankets (made by our WELCA quilters), food and other needed items. We also visited a feeding program which supplies food (corn & beans) to families every two weeks.

We continue to do fundraising with a water station for the Door County Half marathon and a freezie pop station in the Door County Triathlon. We also hosted 2 Lenten Meals.

We hope to build back our team for future trips.

Carol Omernick

# Klaud's Food Pantry

*"Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be filled." Matthew 5:6*

We are blessed to have such tremendous support of this outreach at Shepherd of the Bay Lutheran Church. This past October marked 5 years the Pantry has been serving the people of Northern Door County. Area churches, civic and business organizations and personal gifts by so many give us a variety of food, hygiene and cleaning products, as well as knitted hats and scarves, greeting cards, and so many other needed items.

Special thanks go to Jane and Kouros Mohit for hosting Jane's birthday benefit. Non-perishable food was collected, and all profits made from Jane's flower sales went to the Pantry, nearly \$600. We are also grateful to the many people who volunteered to drive the church bus and shuttle people to and from the Christkindlmarkt. A huge thanks to Dick Burress for organizing this effort. Tips collected totaled \$1,000! Thank you to the Door County Realtors Association for including Klaud's Pantry as a recipient in their food drive. As always, Carol Omernick regularly shops for a variety of items and makes sure the fridge and freezer are well-stocked. Thanks to Tom Tuttle for managing the operation of the fridge. Unfortunately, we will be looking for a new refrigerator/freezer this spring as the current one is not able to be repaired. Thankfully, our monetary donations this past year will allow that to happen.

God's blessings to all,  
Edee Madsen and Klaud's friends

## Stephen Ministry

Stephen Ministry has encountered challenges during these times of uncertainty. However, we continue to provide care and help to people in need. Caring visits have been conducted by telephone, email, cards and letters and in-person during the past year. The results have been satisfying to all.

**However we need assistance!** We need additional **Stephen Leaders** and **Ministers**. We are looking for caring interested people who would/could give time and efforts to helping people (one on one) in the congregation and the community to walk with confidence and grace into the future. We are blessed to have two persons who will be taking Stephen Leader training this spring and will then be working within the congregation and community.

The training for Stephen Ministers and Leaders requires on-line time for training and discussions.

If you are such a person or know of such a person or would like information please contact me at the number listed below or Carol Omernick in the the church office. We want to continue our programs but ask for your help and prayers as we enter 2024.

George S. Cobb  
Stephen Leader  
(920-421-2702)

# Building and Grounds Report

The following report covers the projects and maintenance activities during 2023.

Thank you to all those who supported or donated to fund the various activities and projects listed below.

Mandi Schuyler with help from Carrena Reisen and Xavier Gaddes for keeping the building clean.

Elijah Schuyler and Steve Nuey for keeping our sidewalks, parking lot, driveways and clear of snow and ice.

Joel Thomas for keeping the mechanical systems functioning and in repair.

Garden Club for keeping our grounds beautifully maintained.

Glen Rossman for keeping the lawn mowers tuned up.

Our building suppliers that help us keep the building and grounds in good condition; A&A Fire & Security, Action Electric, Stuber Electric, Culligan, Eagle Mechanical Inc, Ferrellgas, Going Garbage, Hartmann Signs, Lakeshore Waste Systems, Summit Plumbing, TruGreen, Vans Fire & Safety, Warner-Wexel LLC, Wil-Kil Pest Control.

## Grounds

**Garden Club** – Thank you Scott Thies for leading the weekly ground keeping efforts with our volunteers. We continue to receive many positive comments about the grounds from our members and visitors. The dead ash tree just to the west of the steeple had to be cut down. Thank you, Karl and Carol Omernick. The Club also spread 14cu yds of fresh hardwood mulch in the flower beds and around the trees in the Fall.

**Lawn** – Weed, fertilizer and pest control continued.

**2023 Major Projects** – No major projects were done.

**Solar Power** – The potential use of solar power was investigated with 4 contractors submitting quotes for various sized systems at a cost of \$70-170k before rebates and incentives. B&Gs and the Council agreed that this should be considered with other potential capital improvements and a plan developed by B&Gs.

## 2023 Building Repairs and Improvements

**HVAC Systems** – Bi-annual maintenance continued. The 2<sup>nd</sup> floor AC unit died. Quotes for replacement were \$9000. Decided not to replace it at this time.

**Pest Control** – Quarterly maintenance continued.

**Fire Protection** – Annual inspection and maintenance of the extinguishers, fire door and alarms continued.

**Portico** – Pedestrian Crossing signs and traffic cones added for safety.

**Interior Finishes** – Window trim in the Fellowship Hall, Sanctuary, Pastor's office, and Conference room was sanded and refinished with new polyurethane. The tops of the sanctuary plant stands, communion basket stands, and tables were also refinished. Glass was added to the table of the baptismal font to protect it from water damage.

**Kitchen Range** – Some of the burners were not heating properly. The range was evaluated and even though the oven interiors are in rough shape it was deemed serviceable and repaired.

**Misc Small Jobs** - Choir loft cabinet moved to sound closet for storage, replaced front door stop, robe hook installed in Lynda's office, weather stripping on some fire doors replaced, kitchen DW faucet leak repaired, kitchen cabinet laminate re-glued, Sacristy cabinet edging reglued, pew ends repaired, cold air return added to church office, planed off bottom of west stairway door in Fellowship Hall allowing it to close properly,

**AV Maintenance** – We struggled through the 1<sup>st</sup> quarter trying to resolve nagging system problems resulting from a service technician error from November 2022. By the end of the quarter, they had finally been resolved. Thank you for your patience.

### **Members Volunteer Involvement in 2023**

**Buildings and Grounds Committee** – Carol & Karl Omernick, Scott Theis, Joel Thomas, Tom Tuttle

**Garden Club** – Scott Theis, Dave Boock, Dick Burress, Cal Pierson, Lynda Pietruszka, Don Provo, Glen Rossman, Tim and Margaret Schoewe, Scott Theis, Tom Tuttle, Bill Wegehaupt, and Tim West - approximately 500man-hrs

**Interior Cleaning** - Mandi Schuyler, Carrena Reisen, Xavier Gaddes

**AV Operators** - Ron Hupe, Scott Eckdahl, Tom Tuttle

### **2024**

B&Gs will be developing a capital improvement plan consisting of those capital-intensive projects that will need to be done in the next several years.

Submitted by,

Thomas Tuttle - Chair Buildings and Grounds

## ENDOWMENT COMMITTEE REPORT

The Endowment Fund as of December 31, 2023 totaled \$274,914.24, an increase of \$24,826.03 from the prior year end balance of \$250,088.21.

The Fund earned net investment income of \$31,936.68 and distributed \$12,300 in 2023 for the church's operating expenses.

The Fund grows its distributions two ways: It grows through its gains, and it grows when members contribute to it. Thank you to the generous members who have given. Also, new funds can be opened according to donors' wishes.

Ben Pothast, Chair

<b>Shepherd of the Bay</b>							
Endowment Fund Summary							
December 31, 2023							
	Balance				Investment	Capital Gains/	Balance
	1/1/23	Additions	Distributions	Earnings	Fees	Losses	12/31/23
Undesignated	49,294.24		2,600.00	1,652.01	632.96	6,269.77	53,983.06
Youth Ministry	36,543.62		1,900.00	1,225.64	469.58	4,658.10	40,057.78
Parish Nurse	9,403.86		500.00	315.02	120.70	1,197.60	10,295.78
Home Missions	8,492.92		450.00	284.56	109.03	1,081.75	9,300.20
Bruce Foster Missions	26,358.29		1,400.00	883.02	338.33	3,356.92	28,859.90
Building & Grounds	9,075.07			320.53	122.54	1,202.87	10,475.93
Scholarship Fund	98,446.49		4,800.00	3,312.71	1,269.04	12,579.82	108,269.98
Music	12,473.72		650.00	418.31	160.27	1,589.85	13,671.61
<b>Total</b>	<b>250,088.21</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>12,300.00</b>	<b>8,411.80</b>	<b>3,222.45</b>	<b>31,936.68</b>	<b>274,914.24</b>



## Shepherd of the Bay Lutheran Church

### Statement of Financial Position

As of December 31, 2023

	<b>Total</b>
<b>ASSETS</b>	
Current Assets	
Bank Accounts	
Checking	29,936.00
Money Market	226,603.66
Total Bank Accounts	\$256,539.66
Other Current Assets	
RBC Money Market	30,890.84
RBC Bond Fund	83,822.08
Endowment Fund	274,914.24
Total Non-Bank Accounts	\$389,627.16
Total Current Assets	\$646,166.82
Total Fixed Assets	\$4,017,364.66
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>	<b>\$4,663,531.48</b>
<b>LIABILITIES AND EQUITY</b>	
Liabilities	
Total Accounts Payable	-\$5,082.97
Total Credit Cards	-\$592.85
Payroll Deductions Payable	\$68.84
Accrued Benevolence	\$14,083.28
Accrued Expenses	\$30,066.34
Miscellaneous Receipts	\$83,189.80
Unrestricted Funds	\$216,747.44
Restricted Funds	\$75,123.21
Total Liabilities	\$413,603.09
Total Equity	\$4,249,928.39
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES AND EQUITY</b>	<b>\$4,663,531.48</b>

Friday, Jan 12, 2024 02:24:43 PM GMT-8 - Accrual Basis

**Shepherd of the Bay Lutheran Church**

**Budget vs. Actuals & Proposed Budget**

**January - December 2023**

	<b>Total</b>			
	<b>Actual</b>	<b>Budget</b>		<b>Proposed 2024 Budget</b>
<b>Income</b>				
<b>Regular Offering</b>	<b>\$474,948.15</b>	<b>\$513,800.00</b>		<b>497,000.00</b>
<b>Additional Giving/ Income</b>	<b>\$45,994.90</b>	<b>\$15,200.00</b>		<b>\$24,000.00</b>
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>\$520,943.05</b>	<b>\$529,000.00</b>		<b>\$521,000.00</b>
<b>Expenditures</b>				
<b>Worship</b>	<b>\$3,716.00</b>	<b>\$2,500.00</b>		<b>4,500.00</b>
<b>Debt Service</b>	<b>\$53,632.67</b>	<b>\$53,072.00</b>		<b>\$0.00</b>
<b>Caring for Building &amp; Grounds</b>	<b>\$80,528.81</b>	<b>\$95,700.00</b>		<b>117,000.00</b>
<b>Benevolence</b>	<b>\$26,023.55</b>	<b>\$28,296.00</b>		<b>27,596.00</b>
<b>Administration</b>	<b>\$16,886.91</b>	<b>\$17,200.00</b>		<b>\$45,050.00</b>
<b>Staff</b>	<b>\$291,129.57</b>	<b>\$295,447.00</b>		<b>299,998.98</b>
<b>Faith Formation &amp; Other Program</b>	<b>\$18,597.83</b>	<b>\$20,500.00</b>		<b>21,500.00</b>
<b>Total Expenditures</b>	<b>\$490,515.34</b>	<b>\$512,715.00</b>		<b>515,644.98</b>
<b>Net Operating Income</b>	<b>\$30,427.71</b>	<b>\$16,285.00</b>		<b>\$5,355.02</b>

## Shepherd of the Bay 2023 Benevolence

### Local Outreach:

Klaud's Pantry	\$10,106.48
United Way of Door County	500.00
DC Habitat Ramps Up	2,500.00
Help of Door County	500.00
Bridges Migrant Workers	<u>170.00</u>
Total Local	13,776.48

### Family Assists:

Gas and grocery cards	700.00
Ferrellgas	478.19
Door County Medical Dental	250.00
Target	340.16
Emergency assistance	<u>1,000.00</u>
Total Family Assists	2,768.35

### ELCA:

ELCA domestic and foreign	25,596.00
Total Benevolence	42,140.83

## SHEPHERD OF THE BAY CHURCH REPORT OF MEMBERSHIP

	BAPTIZED	CONFIRMED
A. MEMBERSHIP AS OF DECEMBER 31, 2022	528	362
B. Members received by:		
Baptism	2	0
Affirmation of Faith	5	5
Transfer	4	4
Confirmation	3	3
	14	12
Sub Total	542	381
C. Members removed by:		
Death	10	10
Transfer/Moved	13	13
Other	0	0
Statistical Adjustment	10	10
	33	33
D. MEMBERSHIP: DECEMBER 31, 2023	509	348

### WORSHIP LIFE OF SHEPHERD OF THE BAY LUTHERAN

Sunday Worship Services = 53                      Weekday Worship Services = 0  
 - In person services = 53                      Other Services = 6  
 - Drive in services = 53  
 - Online services = 53

#### Average Weekend Attendance

2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
279	256*	258*	207*	223*	197*	179*	128***	108***	103***	110***
	230**	231**	195**	200**	179**	161**	88****	58****	23****	33*

\*Includes weekday services - Lent (2019 Lent & Vespers)

\*\*Does Not include weekday services

\*\*\* *In-person worship including drive in services*

\*\*\*\* *On line (YouTube) first 7 days after posting*

### STATISTICAL REPORT FOR SHEPHERD OF THE BAY LUTHERAN

#### Baptized members:

2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
750	713	706	684	680	660	644	583	555	528	509

#### Confirmed members:

612	574	553	528	519	498	481	434	400	362	348
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### PASTORAL ACTS FOR 2020

	MEMBERS	NON-MEMBERS
Baptisms	2	0
Confirmation	2	1
Weddings	0	2
Funerals	8	3
	21	