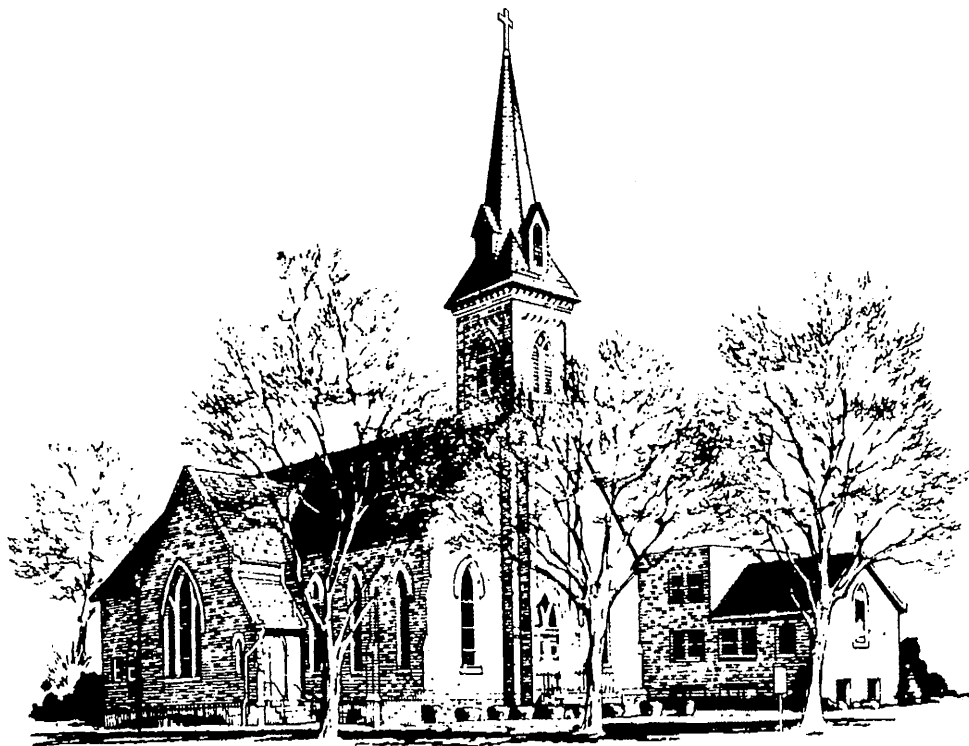


ANNUAL CONGREGATIONAL REPORT FOR THE YEAR 2023



**St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Church
3220 Columbus Street
Grove City, Ohio 43123
January 28, 2024**

St. John's Lutheran Church
Annual Meeting
January 28, 2024

1. Opening prayer
2. Call Meeting to order
3. Approval of minutes of Quarterly Meeting, October 2023
4. Financial report
5. 2024 Budget
6. Senior Pastor's report
7. Associate Pastor's report
8. All Other Ministry Reports Attached
9. Election of Officers/ Congregation Council/ Nominating Team
10. Close with Lord's Prayer

St. John's Ev. Lutheran Church
Quarterly Meeting-October 22, 2023
Following the 11:00 Traditional Worship Service

Opening Pray and Call Meeting to Order-President Aaron Clark called the Quarterly meeting to order at 12:11P.M. following the 11:00 Traditional service and opened with prayer.

Packets were distributed that contained: the meeting agenda, the minutes from the July 23, 2023 Quarterly meeting, the August Financial Statement, the Senior Pastor's report, and the Associate Pastor's report.

Approval of the July 23, 2023 Quarterly Meeting Minutes: Paul Wittenberg made a motion to approve the minutes. Chris Hank seconded the motion. The motion to approve the minutes passed unanimously.

Financial Report-Treasurer Kathy Myers reported that the Monthly Financial Statement in the meeting packet is for August. There was a glitch in our software program Shepherd's Staff and some files were lost. This will be corrected asap. This financial statement reflects a variety of expenses for repairs around the church and costs for mission trips (funds had already been raised for the trips).

A motion to approve the August Financial Report was made by Barb Armentrout. Lori Allmon seconded the motion. The motion to approve the Financial Report passed unanimously.

Senior Pastor's Report-Pastor Seth Jersild directed members to his written report.

Associate Pastor's Report-Pastor Patti Morlock has a written report in the meeting packet. She announced we are praising the Lord for his provision of a house for the intern and his family to rent in the GC area. Intern Dale Stanley and his family will be in Grove City the weekend of November 11 & 12 to become familiar with the area and meet members at worship services. He begins his internship in February 2024.

Accessibility Construction Team Update-Dan Yeater reported on the status of the project. We continue to give thanks for the blessing of financial resources for this project.

Congregational Questions and Comments-

Members thanked Dan for his ongoing dedication to the Accessibility Project.

What is the status of the repairs to the north Sanctuary walls? The team is seeking bids from three companies for repairing the plaster.

Is there a plan for a permanent concrete pad and step at the Parish House entrance? Yes-that will happen in the spring when the weather warms up. Right now it is an essential access point and this would not be the time to close off that entrance to pour concrete.

Will the financial records be kept on the Cloud going forward? Yes

Adjournment-A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Barb Armentrout. Shirley Blake seconded the motion. The vote to adjourn the meeting passed unanimously. The meeting ended at 12:22 P.M. following members praying the Lord's Prayer together.

Respectfully submitted, Karen Bentley, Secretary

St. John's Lutheran Church

Monthly Financial Statement
Prepared 1/12/2024

December 2023

Monthly/Year to Date Major Funds		
Month of:	December	Year to Date
Income		
Current	\$100,040.47	\$697,292.26
Benevolence	\$33,999.50	\$100,138.91
Building & Maint.	\$143,124.05	\$260,006.48
Total Operating Income	\$277,164.02	\$1,057,437.65
Expenses		
Current	\$53,606.63	\$582,716.40
Benevolence	\$16,045.19	\$73,469.12
Building & Maint.	\$16,096.72	\$192,715.54
Total Operating Expense	\$85,748.54	\$848,901.06
Fund Differences		
Current	\$46,433.84	\$ 114,575.86
Benevolence	\$17,954.31	\$ 26,669.79
Building & Maint.	\$127,027.33	\$ 67,290.94
Totals	\$191,415.48	\$ 208,536.59

Approved Non-Budgeted Expenditures		
Account	Year to Date	
Current	\$0.00	
Benevolence (Previous Year/Designated)	\$34,969.12	
Building & Maintenance	\$0.00	
Total Income	\$34,969.12	

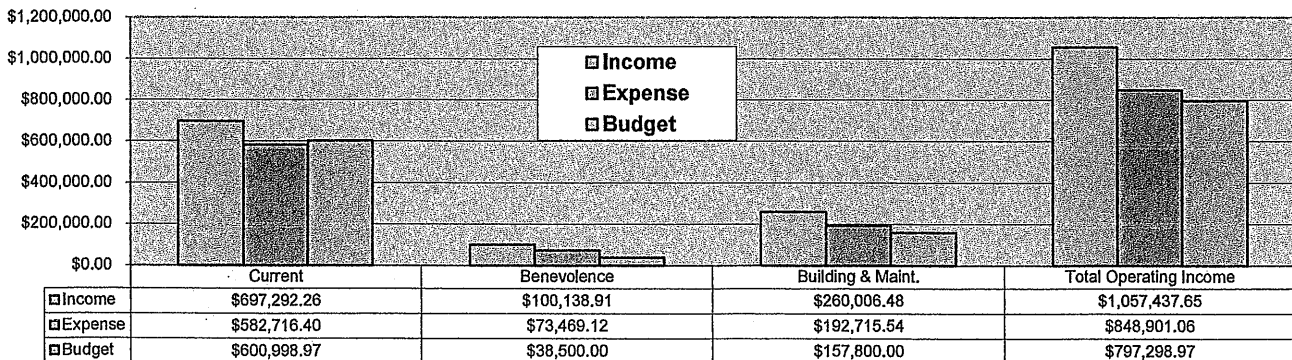
Budget Comparison - Year to Date		
Budget vs. Actual thru	December 2023	
Account	Budget	Actual
Current - Budgeted	\$600,998.97	\$582,716.40
Benevolence - Budgeted	\$38,500.00	\$73,469.12
Bldg & Maint - Budgeted	\$157,800.00	\$192,715.54
Totals	\$797,298.97	\$848,901.06

Budgeted expenditures listed above do not include spending approved from the three (3) operating accounts separate from the budget. These expenditures were approved by either the Council or congregation. They include items such as "pass-through" designated benevolence, benevolence funds received at the end of last year but spent this year, and particular maintenance or capital improvement items.

Open Loan (Principle Reduction)		
Month of:	December 2023	Since Inception
Current	\$0.00	

The charts below show total income and expense, rather than budgeted items only.

Fund Balances: End of Month Balanced	
Account Name	Amount
OPERATING:	
Operating -- Current + B&M	\$347,120.24
Benevolence	\$19,929.57
DESIGNATED:	
Genesis Fund	\$3,181.88
Youth Designated Fund	\$41,672.64
Sarah Circle & Elizabeth Circle	\$564.20
Beacons	\$1,278.61
Bereavement Dinner Ministry	\$3,889.54
Designated Funds Interest	\$209.32
MEMORIAL:	
Memorial Fund Unrestricted Savings	\$63,964.77
Memorial Restricted (M/R) Library	\$315.24
M/R Handbell	\$5,846.82
M/R Kitchen	\$6,348.82
M/R Music	\$28,972.48
M/R Youth Camp Memorials	\$849.93
M/R Youth	\$9,974.34
M/R OWLs	\$221.24
M/R Special One-Time Account	\$32,344.36
M/R Accessibility Project	\$349,232.23
M/R Puppet Ministry	\$1,350.81
M/R Mission Trip Gen	\$25,761.98
M/R Mission Trip Alaska	\$14,371.06
M/R Mission Trip Mexico	\$28,105.77
M/R Columbarium Fund	\$17,040.00
M/R Organ and Renovations	\$50.89
M/R Bell Tower Carillon	\$2,000.00
ENDOWMENT-PRINCIPAL:	
Endowment/Gen/Restricted/Principal	\$496,510.95
Endowment/Prop/Restricted/Principal	\$234,404.64
Endowment/Youth/Restricted/Principal	\$32,395.25
Cemetery Endowment Principal	\$46,000.00
Unrealized Appr/(Depr)	\$55,399.73
ENDOWMENT-AVAILABLE INCOME:	
Endowment/Gen/Available Income	\$85,221.91
Endowment/Prop/Available Income	\$46,731.19
Endowment/Youth/Available Income	\$9,084.30
Cemetery Available-HNB Premium MM	\$2,327.64
COLLEGE GRANTS/SUMWALT LOANS:	
College Fund Savings - HNB	\$5,766.10
Sumwalt Savings Account - HNB	\$0.00
Loans Payable	
Accessibility Project Outstanding Loan	\$0.00



2024 Church Budget

Account Name	2023 - Final	2024 vs 2023	2023 first 6 months	2024 - preliminary	Category/Network
Debt Reduction Total	\$50,000.00	\$50,000.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	Debt Reduction Total
Stewardship Total	\$1,900.00	(\$300.00)	\$1,694.00	\$2,200.00	Stewardship Total
Benevolence Total	\$38,500.00	(\$3,500.00)	\$23,938.34	\$42,000.00	Benevolence Total
Youth & Family Ed. Total	\$8,850.00	(\$500.00)	\$5,844.00	\$9,350.00	Youth & Family Ed. Total
Evangelism Total	\$2,300.00	(\$1,650.00)	\$2,242.00	\$3,950.00	Evangelism Total
Fellowship Total	\$4,800.00	(\$100.00)	\$1,525.00	\$4,900.00	Fellowship Total
Finance Total	\$1,300.00	\$300.00	\$810.39	\$1,000.00	Finance Total
Spiritual Care Total	\$7,975.00	(\$1,900.00)	\$5,453.97	\$9,875.00	Spiritual Care Total
Worship Total	\$15,550.00	(\$1,325.00)	\$8,958.43	\$16,875.00	Worship Total
Youth Total	\$12,500.00	\$0.00	\$7,762.00	\$12,500.00	Youth Total
Property Mgt. Total	\$156,800.00	(\$30,600.00)	\$97,708.90	\$187,400.00	Property Mgt. Total
Admin. Operations Total	\$19,000.00	(\$5,100.00)	\$12,179.79	\$24,100.00	Admin. Operations Total
Pastoral Staff Total	\$215,137.20	(\$8,824.48)	\$141,085.03	\$223,961.68	Pastoral Staff Total
Youth Staff Total	\$103,078.59	\$847.42	\$64,906.47	\$102,231.17	Youth Staff Total
Support Staff Total	\$217,544.11	(\$5,163.87)	\$125,922.16	\$222,707.98	Support Staff Total
					Staff / Executive Total
Grand Total	\$855,234.90	(\$7,815.93)		\$863,050.83	Grand Total

Respectfully submitted by Kathy Myers, Treasurer

Senior Pastor's Report
Annual Congregational Meeting
January 28, 2024

Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of Lights, in whom there is no variation or shadow cast by change.

-James 1:17

2023 was a year of transitions at St. John's. Sometimes change kicks up anxious feelings in a congregation. However, frankly, I never sensed very much anxiety at St. John's in 2023. I think it's because we do a wonderful job as a congregation, keeping our eyes on the prize: Jesus Christ and the proclamation of the Gospel. God has blessed St. John's with a deep sense of our singular purpose and mission. Rooted in the resurrected Christ and his living Word, we can (and do) navigate through changes with God's peace in our hearts.

The most visible change at St. John's in 2023 has been the construction of the new wing on the north side of our building. As with all construction projects, we've hit some speed-bumps and experienced mild frustrations along the way. Yes, the halls have been dusty. We've had to re-route our normal foot traffic. For a time, the northeast wall of our beautiful main sanctuary looked, well...not good. Thank you for your patience and understanding as we roll with these inconveniences!

Underneath it all, I've sensed the excitement. The work is almost done, and our new wing is going to be beautiful! Soon, people with mobility issues will enjoy easy passage between the parking lot, sanctuary, and Family Life Center. We'll have a much-needed restroom near the north entrance. Also, St. John's will have a warm and inviting entrance area, and a place to gather and enjoy conversation and refreshments in between worship services. We are excited about dedicating the New Wing to the glory of God on **Sunday, March 3rd** with a special service and lunch at Noon. We hope you can come!

Again, I praise God for the incredible generosity that members of our congregation have shown in support of the Accessibility project. We should be able to complete the project without taking out a loan. This is amazing! We owe a special thanks to Dan Yeater for his dedication and his almost daily involvement with the project over the past few years. Thank you Dan, for all the love, work, and thought that you have given to the project, all for our benefit.

Other major changes we've experienced in 2023 have to do with church staff. Early in the year, Elaine Bennett stepped down from her position as Director of Lay Ministries. Laurie Pecuch and Diana Imbrock have formally decreased their hours with youth ministry. Our building manager, Mike Esposito, retired at the end of the year. And now, Jan Miller, our Recorder (and part-time Administrative Assistant), has announced her upcoming retirement from her position in May. Each of these servants of God have held their position at St. John's for more than twenty years (more than 35 in Laurie's case). Obviously, this represents a major shift in day-to-day leadership of many of our programs and activities at St. John's.

We are so thankful to God for Elaine, Laurie, Diana, Mike, and Jan, and for their faithful leadership through the years!

Now, we ask for your prayers for the following people:

- Megan Grossman, our new Director of Lay Ministries.
- Tom Lang, our new Building Manager.
- Gini Rogers, who is helping out with youth ministry in this interim period.
- Our Youth Ministry Search Team, as they search for a new full-time Youth Minister.
- Our Finance Team as they search for a new Recorder.

In all of these changes, we can be confident that God will continue to provide St. John's with all that we need to serve Him faithfully as we move into a new year.

Speaking of the new year: in 2024, St. John's will be celebrating 175 years of ministry in Grove City! Please read my January *Eagle* article, where I list some of the fun things we have on the calendar to celebrate this milestone in our congregation's long and rich history. We have so much to be thankful for as we move forward in faith.

In Christ,
Pastor Seth Jersild

Associate Pastor Annual Report 2023

“Out of His infinite glory, may He give you the power of His Spirit for your hidden self to grow strong, so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith, and then planted in love and built on love, you may with all the saints have the strength to grasp the breadth, the length, the height and the depth, until knowing the love of Christ, you are filled with the utter fullness of God. Glory be to Him whose power can do infinitely more than we can ask or imagine. Glory be to Him.” (Ephesians 3:16-20)

The above Scripture has been my touchstone during this last year, as I focus on one of our 4 Core Values in the NALC – Christ Centered. This value means that -

“We confess the apostolic faith in Jesus Christ according to the Holy Scriptures. Jesus Christ, revealed in Scripture is the Lord of the Church and the only Savior of the world. We affirm the authority of the Scriptures as the authoritative source and norm, of our life and faith, “according to which all doctrines should and must be judged” (Formula of Concord). We accept the ecumenical creeds and the Lutheran Confessions as true witnesses to the Word of God.” (NALC Core Values Document)

Practically speaking, as a church, it means that all we do in our mission and ministry here at St. John’s stems from our call to follow Jesus. It also means that Jesus is the center of all we do.

So many wonderful things have happened in the name of Jesus this last year, too numerous to list for fear of leaving something out. Suffice it to say that we continue to grow as a church, not just numerically, but spiritually as well.

Yes, we have suffered some tremendous losses this past year as we commended to our Lord those who have gone to their Eternal Reward. These losses touch your pastors deeply, as we have come to know and love them as part of our family of faith. Sometime soon, there will be a grief share group for those who are interested in working through their personal loss. As we have let go of these saints of ours, we have also welcomed new saints through Baptism. I love this particular pastoral act, as I now get to be a part of their journey of faith in Christ Jesus. Pastoral care through home visits continues to be one of the favorite things I get to do, and praying with those in the hospital and those near the end of their earthly journey is a most humbling experience.

Looking forward, Dale Stanley and his family join us next weekend as he officially begins his year-long internship with us to learn and grow in the practical side of ministry as he prepares for ordination. I will be his supervisor, mentoring him through the day-to-day workings as a pastor. He will also have a committee to meet with him monthly to reflect on and grow in this process with them. Thanks to Karen Bentley for leading this group which includes Rick Butsko, Phil Pennington, Pastor Tom Phillips, Jill Althoff and Holly Starr. Dale will be in good hands all around.

Back by popular demand will be another women’s retreat later in the year, with an easier timeframe and schedule. I look forward to working with a tremendous group of women to plan and prepare for this endeavor.

My continued work with the NALC in working with folks who are interested in Ordination Under Special Circumstances has been such a blessing, as I see the Lord work in and through folks who have a strong desire to serve as ordained pastors in very small, needy congregations. Being able to share these experiences and

explain the process in various settings has been rewarding. Attending the Pastor's Conference in Orlando in January, and then the NALC Convocation in August helps me to remember why I am in the NALC in the first place. Our 4 Core Values serve to lead and direct my ministry among you.

2024 will be a year of wonderful celebrations as we dedicate our new addition to the glory of God, and as we celebrate 175 years of faithful service in His Name to the people of Grove City and beyond.

Looking forward in faith.

Pastor Patti

Youth Staff Annual Report 2023

Highlights for 2023

Souper bowl Service Project, student-led by Brooklyn Cress, raised \$1,901.82 to tackle hunger. Brooklyn thanks you for your generous support in feeding the hungry in our community.

Blankets of Love, student-led by Layla Greer, tied blankets and provided sheet sets for all the beds delivered by the Bed Brigade in February.

Students who confirmed their faith at 11am traditional worship on May 22 were Brooklyn Cress, Stephanie Dent, Hunter Thompson, and Merrick Wilson. *Thanks be to God!*

Graduate Sunday was held on May 7th. Seventeen seniors received recognition and beautifully made prayer shawls from the St. John's Prayer Shawl Ministry.

We welcomed Jon and Emily Martin to St. John's this past Spring for a "God of Generations" concert. Then families met weekly for devotions and "The Family Worship Initiative". It was well received.

We continued our Family Faith ministry to over 70 families. Lenten Blocks, "Celebrate Summer" Family Faith Bags, and Journey to the Manger Advent book were well received.

We kicked off our June with Joyful Pause for preK-4th grade students and their families, a Summer Fun event for grades 5 – 8, an "Encountering Jesus" event, What Do You Think? and Fast-Food Friday for High School youth, and a week of VBS. Fun, Faith, and Fellowship!

In July, we again hosted Joyful Pause, Summer Fun, What Do You Think? and a Fast-Food Friday. At our summer weekly service camp, Serving Like Jesus, students (grades 5 – 12), did the following serving: Food Pantry, Bed Brigade, Blessing Bags for the homeless, Sewing baby quilts with the quilters, deliveries to Lifecare Alliance, and special projects for Kobaker House. Serving beside Linda Chenault, Mary Young, Jill Althoff, Elaine Bennett, and Ron Nighbert was a highlight for the youth.

August brought yet another Joyful Pause, Summer Fun, What Do You Think?, and Fast-Food Friday before everyone readied for the start of the school year.

On September 1st Laurie Pecuch went from full-time ministry to part-time, 25 hours per week. Diana Imbrock went from 25 hours a week to 15 hours per week. An interim youth director, Gini Rogers, was hired to cover Sunday School and Wednesday night high school programs for 10 hours per week.

Adventure Club, Faith Trek, Explorers, and Energizers weekly programming kicked off in September! We are celebrating our 26th year of Adventure Club! We are thankful to our many adults and teens who make Wednesday and Thursday nights amazing, filled with faith webbing and discipleship.

Operation Christmas Child, led by the Gottshall Family, collected 127 boxes for Samaritan's Purse to spread the Good News across the globe. Additional boxes were also made on-line.

The Bike Project, student-led by Corban Allman, raised funds that enabled us to purchase 25 bikes and helmets. Everything was delivered to the east-side facility of The Buckeye Ranch to distribute to children and youth in foster homes in the Columbus area.

The Mitten Tree, student-led by Ellen Previts, collected over 800 mittens, gloves, socks, and scarves and delivered them to the Grove City Free Store.

AXIS, an on-line parenting resource, was provided to parents, families, and adults who faith web with our youth. Currently, AXIS has made all their resources available to everyone free of charge. Videos and parent guides, as well as other materials, are available at their website. We continue to provide printed copies of various parent guides across from the Youth Office.

We are privileged to be a part of these amazing ministries, led by these amazing volunteers...Jenn Czaplicki and Kate Shrum (Children's Church), Tim Allman (Sunday School Superintendent), Christina Allman (VBS), Amy Wanner (Parenting SS Class), and Betty Lewis (Altar Guild – acolyting), Pam Castle (Veteran's Dinner), Mistie Clark (Trunk or Treat), Marian Walsh and Jenn Czaplicki (Selah Room), Debbie Abbitt (Christmas Program), Megan Grossman (Christmas Kindness Bags), and the Mission Events held throughout the year. Their ministries are significantly touching young people's lives for Jesus' sake. It is a blessing to do ministry with them!

Looking forward to in 2024...

The Mexico Mission trip is on the calendar for the summer of 2024. Talk to Diana about how to prayerfully support and/or attend this meaningful week with the children.

Special thanks to...

Those who through Thrivent's Financial charitable grants during 2023 enabled us to partially fund these projects: Faith in Action, Bike Project, Blankets of Love, Veteran's Luncheon, Christmas Kindness, Children's Church, the Selah Room, and the Women's Retreat, among others. If you're a Thrivent member, feel free to ask the youth staff how you can request grant monies to help with ministries at St. John's and in our community! We're hoping to get \$10,000 in 2024.

Gary Allen for his generous donation to the St. John's playground and his faithful giving over the years.

Ron Nighbert for being the financial recorder for the Youth Designated Fund.

Gayla and Jeff Anderson for their continual donations to St. John's Youth Ministries.

Kevin and Holly Starr for their special donation given every year in honor of Brock, Grace, Jaxon and Alice Starr.

Others whose special donations supplemented our Faith in Action service projects and leadership development were Matt and Kaleigh Westerfeld, Bob and Bonnie Swanson, Pam and Charlie Brown, and the family of Rosemary Krebs. Thank you for your generous gifts.

Pam Wittenberg for her expertise and support with the Raise Right program. Raise Right profits in 2023 were \$661.57.

81 households who have linked their Kroger Card with the Kroger Community Rewards Program, raised \$1,870.23 this past year. Our enrollment number is EY530.

The countless adults who faith web and volunteer with the youth programs at St. John's!

To God be the glory!

Respectfully submitted by Laurie Pecuch, Diana Imbrock

Lay Ministry Director Annual Report

Just starting this position in October 2023, I knew I would have big shoes to fill following Elaine Bennett. She has built a great foundation, and I can't wait to see where God is leading me here at St. John's. Here are a few highlights since starting this position:

- We had a very successful Trunk or Treat. We had so many great volunteers and had so many new faces that attended the event. It was a great community outreach event.
- We had many volunteers come and help us decorate the church for Christmas.
- The Christmas program was a wonderful event and we had so many people attend.
- Christmas Kindness was another amazing event. We handed out bags and poinsettias so many shut ins, or members who have had a tough year. We had 15 people/families volunteer to spread Christmas Kindness to 60 people.
- Our Angel Trees were very successful. We helped 7 families with their Christmas. Our congregation did so wonderfully by taking angels and buying gifts for these families.

I look forward to getting to know you all more and continuing working with all the wonderful ministries and people here at St. John's.

Thanks,

Megan Grossman

2023 Business Manager's Report

This has been a year of change for Business Manager position of St. John's. After 20 years of service, Mike Esposito retired at the end of 2023. As I worked under Mike, I have learned so much and Mike was instrumental/patient in helping me transition into this role. It's been a lesson on the many facets of St. John's as a church and a family. As I start this year, Mike has taught me how valuable the members of this church are to the success of this position. Since I began, that has been very clear. I hope I can continue to have your support as you gave to Mike. I am missing him already.

With the construction of the new addition, the Business Manager's role took a back seat with the lead of a lot of the building activity happening here at St. John's. Cleaning will be a priority as we transition from a building phase to our beloved church once again. It has not been easy on all of us as we worked around the construction and adjusted to changes occurring daily. We would like to thank everyone for your patience as we had to make changes to the ongoing changes in access to the building. I personally want to thank the many people of the congregation who brought to my attention issues daily that I was able to handle before they became major issues. Moving forward, I will strive to notice and take more of a lead in identifying and dealing with building issues earlier; however, I still encourage everyone to bring issues to me so we can keep our church functioning well and maintaining its beauty.

Accomplishments:

- LED lighting upgrades
 1. The lights in the kitchen of the old fellowship hall were converted from fluorescent to LED.
 2. The lights in the parking lot in front of the Family Life Center were converted to LED. They were previously not working and are now functional.
 3. The lights illuminating the two stained glass windows exterior were also updated to LED.
- Storage sheds were purchased as planned and a driveway was poured to provide access to the doors of one of the sheds.
- The heating and air conditioning systems continue to be problematic throughout the building. Accurate Heating has been very responsive to our calls.
- We've all noticed a lift in the Family Life Center these past few months. A new system for monitoring smoke and fire in the FLC. Our contractor is completing his work and we hope to be through by the time of the new building completion.

New for 2024:

- A new committee will be established to support the needs of the building. I hope I can count on everyone to help in keeping our building clean and functioning at a high level.
- A remodel is being planned for the restrooms of the Family Life Center.
- Altar Guild project scheduled for 2023 was postponed and will be completed in 2024.

A big thank you to all who have helped in big and small ways to keep our church great shape...even though a little dusty lately. I'll be looking forward to all your support in 2024. We'll miss you, Mike; enjoy retirement.

Respectfully,

Tom Lang, Business Manager

St. John's Altar Guild Annual Report 2023

St. John's Altar Guild met on January 16, May 9, and September 12.

Members who served this past year were: Lynda Berry, Gloria Biggs, Don & Diane Carducci, Bill & Linda Diehl, Jo Dimond, Lynn Ehrlich, Judy Graessle, David & Karen Grossman, Dee Harlor, Dellno & Betty Lewis, Donna Linder, Mel & Carol Penrod, Sarah Schmitz, David & Lisa Stallard, Hunter Thompson, Linda Vozel, Linda Wagner, and Paul & Pam Wittenberg. To our members who give of their time and talents each month to serve their Lord, we give a big **"Thank You!"**

Our **Altar Guild Team** is looking for members who want to use their spiritual gifts and are willing to help prepare the Altar area for worship. By adding more people to assist, this will lengthen the time that we need to serve throughout the year. Please contact Betty Lewis, 614-272-6696 or Karen Grossman, 614-578-3198 to join our team. You will be trained.

Duties of the **Altar Guild Teams** include making sure the correct color of paraments is on the Altar, getting communion ready, and checking candles for the upcoming services. Each week the pews are checked for envelopes that need replaced and pencils that need sharpened. Members also prepare the Baptismal items, if needed. After the second service, the oil candles are filled for the next weekend and get the Altar flowers ready to be picked up by members or deliver them to shut-ins or are given to staff members. We use our wax candles for funerals. New red paraments were ordered in September. A lightweight funeral pall was also ordered in January. Our old paraments and funeral pall were then given to another church that could use them.

Our **Communion Teams** work one Sunday a month following the service that they attend. We have openings for after the early and late services. If you would like to assist us, please contact Betty or Karen. You will be trained. You are not required to attend our meetings. This is an easy way to "get involved" and help our Altar Guild Members who are on for the entire weekend.

A big **THANK YOU** to Tim & Christina Allman whose 5th grade Sunday School Class helped us by putting our palm crosses in baskets and getting the Christmas Eve candles ready. Their support is greatly appreciated. Thank you, Tim & Christina!

Our **flower chart** is maintained by Lesa Corbin (614-875-8836). There are still open dates for 2024 (cost per vase is \$25). You can sign up in the Parish House Entrance until our North Entrance reopens. Lesa will contact you for bulletin information and Rita will deliver your flowers. A big "Thank You" to Rita Bausch of Prairie Flowers & Gifts (614-701-8902) for providing our beautiful flowers this past year. You can also order flowers for the pulpit & lectern from her and she will deliver them to the church.

Communion Count for 2023

The following number of members communed were:

January	866	February	1003	March	833	April	1423 (EASTER)	May	906
June	849	July	990	August	693	September	855	October	1128
November	918	December	1558 (CHRISTMAS)	TOTAL COMMUNED FOR 2023				12,022	

It has been a very rewarding year as we work together to make sure the Altar area is ready for worship each week. Won't you consider joining one of our teams!

Working together for Our Lord,
Betty Lewis & Karen Grossman, Co-Chairs

Bereavement Annual Report 2023

Our church family members who have donated food, helped with serving of the luncheons have made this ministry very comforting for the families and friends who have lost their loved ones.

<u>Date of Luncheon</u>	<u>Deceased</u>	<u>Age</u>	<u># Served</u>
March 11, 2023	Rita Lang	65	102
April 5, 2023	Jan Rosenthal	82	123
April 6, 2023	Michael Stephan	36	64
April 26, 2023	Pastor Ray Rosenthal	84	30
June 24, 2023	Bill England	91	47
August 14, 2023	Lucille Alexander	95	47
September 22, 2023	Walter Roth	96	63
October 9, 2023	Robert Swanson	84	72
October 20, 2023	Paul Offenburger	101	48
November 11, 2023	Rosemary Turnbull	90	121
November 30, 2023	Dorreen Zimmer	85	55
December 14, 2023	Joann Allwine	81	30
December 16, 2023	Bob Easley	94	53

On behalf of the Bereavement Committee, we would like to thank everyone who worked and/or provided food for funeral luncheons. It was very much appreciated not only by the bereavement committee, but by the families who lost loved ones this past year.

Suzie Brace
Betty Lewis
Wilma Phillips
Sue Sutton

ST. JOHN'S EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

MEMBERSHIP STATISTICAL REPORT

DECEMBER 31, 2023

Baptized Membership as of end of 2022	1773	Confirmed	963
Members received during 2023			
By Baptism: Children	12		
By Baptism: Adults	4	4	
By Affirmation of Faith:			
By transfer	4	2	
From other sources & statistical adj.	0	0	
Total Members received in 2023			
Baptized youth who were confirmed	<u>4</u>	<u>4</u>	
Total Members Received 2023	20	10	
Members removed during 2023			
By death	18		18
By transfer	0		0
Other sources and statistical adj.	<u>163</u>		<u>163</u>
Total members removed in 2023	181		181
Membership end of 2023	1612	792	

Sunday School Annual Report 2023

January 8, 2024

This past year was another successful year for the youth Sunday School program. We continue to use Spark Lectionary curriculum for preschool through fourth grade which has weekly lessons that follow the scripture readings in worship that week. Fifth and sixth grades continue to do a two-year pre catechism curriculum and Pastor Seth teaches the seventh and eighth grades catechism class. Our high school class uses the AXIS discussion topics. We purchased 11 new Bibles for the Chapel to replace some of the older ones that are starting to fall apart. Our typical weekly attendance ranges from 90 to 100 for all Sunday School classes preschool through adult. We have welcomed a few new teachers and helpers this year and want to thank God and thank them for their service. I'd like to acknowledge the years of faithful service from Debbie Abbitt and Karen Stewart who needed to step away from teaching.

Tim Allman
Sunday School Superintendent