



Evangelical
Lutheran Church
in America



ANNUAL REPORT
2024

Prince of Peace Brooklyn Park, MN
Annual Congregational Meeting January 12, 2025

AGENDA

Call to order	Mike Isenberg
Opening Prayer	Pr. Glen Bickford
Adoption of Agenda	Mike Isenberg
Approval of Congregation Meeting Minutes (appended to reports) Annual Meeting of January 21, 2024	Mike Isenberg
Council and Staff Reports	
President/Executive Team Report	Mike Isenberg
Jan-Oct Senior Pastor Report	Pr. Chad Brekke (retired)
Interim Pastor's Report	Katie Rykal
Children, Youth and Family Ministry Report	Pr Glen Bickford
AV/Technology	Rachel Henderson
Business Office Administrator Report	Rachel Henderson
Treasurer Report	Rachel Henderson
Church Council Ballot	
Recognition of Outgoing Council Members	
Introduction of New Council Members	Melissa Johnson
Presentation of the 2025 Budget	Rachel Henderson
Motion to adjourn	Mike Isenberg
Closing Prayer	Pr. Glen Bickford
Appendices:	
Appendix A) Annual Meeting of January 21, 2024 Minutes	
Appendix B) Ministry Reports	
Appendix C) Message from the Presiding Bishop of the ELCA	

Prince of Peace Brooklyn Park, MN
Annual Congregational Meeting January 12, 2025
Council Executive Team Report

Introduction: The Council of Prince of Peace Church convened dozens of times in 2024, including countless special sessions, to address several significant transitions and challenges facing our congregation. This report outlines our collaborative efforts with the synod, staffing changes, financial pressures, and council turnover.

Pastoral Transitions: We worked closely with the synod to navigate the unexpected retirement of Pastor Chad and the departure of Pastor Natalia, who after a time of cooperative discernment, accepted a call at another church. Their leadership and dedication have been invaluable to our community, and we are grateful for their service. The synod has provided guidance and support throughout this transition period.

Interim Pastor Appointment: With the synod's assistance, we have successfully hired Interim Pastor Glen to lead our congregation during this transitional phase. Pastor Glen brings a wealth of experience and a compassionate approach to ministry, ensuring continuity and stability for our members.

Financial Pressures: Our church continues to face ongoing financial pressures. The council is actively exploring various strategies to address these challenges, including budget adjustments, fundraising initiatives, and seeking additional support from Pastor Glen who has experience and training in ministry stewardship. We remain committed to maintaining our programs and services while ensuring financial sustainability.

Staff and Council Changes: The church has experienced some changes in staff, and we are working diligently to manage these transitions, ensuring that new staff members and council members are supported and integrated into their roles effectively. Our focus remains on fostering a collaborative and supportive environment for all.

Despite turnover, we have continued to manage day-to-day office responsibilities without significant disruption. The current staff are working well together and have continued to rise above expectations during the transition. We will continue to strive to make the office more efficient to streamline processes and increase and improve communication.

Conclusion: Despite the challenges, the Council is dedicated to guiding Prince of Peace Church through this period of change. We are confident that with the continued support of the synod and our congregation, we will navigate these transitions successfully and emerge stronger as a community.

Next Steps:

- Continue collaboration with the synod for pastoral support and guidance.
- Implement financial strategies to address ongoing pressures.
- Support new staff and council members in their roles.
- Engage the congregation in open communication and involvement in church activities.

We appreciate the congregation's patience and support during this time. Together, we will continue to uphold the mission and values of Prince of Peace Church.

Sincerely,

The Executive Council of Prince of Peace Church

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Retired Senior Pastor Report (Jan-Oct)

This past year of ministry and outreach at Prince of Peace included people participating in rich and meaningful worship gatherings both in person and online. The year was also marked by acts of generous serving, volunteering and giving. The impact of our ministry extended well beyond our own country through several mission and vision trips to Jamaica and two separate visits to Tanzania in East Africa.

In between all of this activity, there were wonderful youth and children's ministry learning and serving events, bible studies, quilting, rehearsals, weddings, funerals and so much more. 2024 should be remembered as a year full of God's presence and blessings which spilled over to reach out with the love of Christ.

There is no doubt, 2024 was also a year of significant transition for Prince of Peace. Both Pastors felt the call to move on from our years of service and leadership at Prince of Peace as did several other key staff members. Each of these transitions was handled with grace and excellence by our staff and lay leadership and also by the entire congregation. In what I will describe as a beautiful and sacred way, our community of faith experienced the deep emotions of grief, anxiety, hopefulness and gratefulness that naturally flow from times of profound transition.

And we did so together.

It would not be an unreasonable concern that this level of leadership transition in such a relatively short timeframe could send a wave of distress through the congregation, but the people of Prince of Peace continue to gather, share, worship, grieve and rejoice together. The remaining office, music, support and ministry staff have worked faithfully alongside our council, to keep the community informed and engaged and focused on our ongoing ministry. I am grateful for this faithful service which gives me hope and inspiration.

As for me, my first month of retirement has allowed me to tag along with my wife Lori on a trip to Venice Italy as well as spending Thanksgiving with our daughters in Savannah where I was wearing shorts and a t shirt while I tended to the turkey on the smoker in their backyard! I stopped over to the local Home Depot a week earlier for some supplies and noticed it was already in full-on Christmas mode in there. It was then that I realized that I am, in fact, retired from the active ministry.

For thirty-five years, that first emersion into the onslaught of Christmas culture prior to Thanksgiving always brought about some mild anxiety in me. Do we have everything in place for Christmas Eve? Worship themes, candles, ushers, music, service flows, technology? Is my Christmas Eve sermon ready? Will it be good enough? Should I throw it out and start over? I should throw it out!

But this year, I walked into the big box store a week before Thanksgiving and heard Bing Crosby singing and saw the rows of fake Christmas trees, wreaths and blinking lights... and I just smiled.

I will likely find ways to serve and lead in the wider church sometime in the future. But for now, I am simply deeply grateful for my years of serving alongside a uniquely gifted, creative and faithful team of staff and lay leaders at Prince of Peace.

And I am grateful that I am even able to enjoy pre-Thanksgiving Christmas displays at Home Depot since I know that Pastor Glen and Katie and Alys and John and Paul and Jenny and so many others, have got this!

Happy New Year to everyone and God's Peace surround you all as Prince of Peace moves into God's promised future!

Always,
Pastor Chad

Interim Senior Pastor's Annual Report 2024 (11/4-12-31)

I have spent most of my time meeting folks...

To answer a much-asked question, I don't know how long I will be here. My longest interim was two and a half years; my shortest was six months. I want to connect with you and have a conversation with each of you. Folks at Prince of Peace have been quite welcoming. I want to help you with several areas of the church before the Ministry Site Profile team or call committee is formed. This church needs a little time to grieve and adjust to office and pastoral changes (outlined below)

What else have I been doing with my time? Personally, I've been moving and adjusting to life in Bloomington (27-minute easy commute vs. 35-60 minutes and 694 traffic from Stillwater).

I have led 8 "regular" services (two of these, the Christmas program service and the Cantata, my roles were minor) , 5 special services (2 funerals and Thanksgiving and two Christmas services), many meetings with church officers, more with staff, esp. Karina, Nate and Katie. I have met Pastors Glenn and Edith, and Bud Cushing of the music school. I have yet to meet Samantha, the head of the daycare here, except briefly.

I have spent quite a bit of my time on pastoral care, as I saw that as a great need, as did the Council. I have had many in-home, nursing home and assisted living visits and many office visits, several hospital and rehab visits and dozens of phone calls, including many who have lost family members in 2024. Met almost too many people to remember. I met with Melissa and Terri and will meet with the rest care team after Christmas. Pastoral Care received with thanks, joy and often tears. Developing a list of folks who might need regular visits for a while, or permanently. About 50 on the list so far.

There has been good response to my sermons and worship leadership, and people want to laugh and simply be a church here. I am trying to facilitate that, after people return late from COVID distancing. Worship attendance is up somewhat.

I've been working with Rachel, Katie, Nate and others to oversee and facilitate seismic change in the office in a congregation where change is both hard and painful (and yet necessary). Katie, Jaime, Alys, John and Paul will thankfully remain in place. Rachel will transition out of the roll of interim business administrator as the tasks of that roll transition to Nate Boucher, but she will remain a regular presence in the office as council treasurer and continuing to manage tech needs(thank you, Rachel). We now have Nate Boucher, who will take on both the office administrator and business administrator duties. Nate has an MBA with specialization in business efficiency practices. He is a welcome presence on our staff and will remain until he is ready to go to seminary internship. While Nate will be

tackling both of these rolls, the job descriptions are such that if needed, we can go back to separate rolls in the office as needed based on future staffing. Nikk VanLiew has also resigned. Sunday morning worship audio visual will be handled by volunteers for the time being. Karina has resigned to pursue charity work around the country (most recently the victims of floods in North Carolina). Nate will also work to clarify job descriptions for his successor(s), as he is semi-permanent, since he plans to leave to be a pastor in a few years. We thank Nikk, Karina and Rachel for their service and looking forward to less staff change in 2025.

I've also been thinking about stewardship and sent a letter in late December meant to be a culmination of the October stewardship drive. Katie has developed a pew card with QR code to ease the ability to give in worship. A capital campaign for church building needs might be helpful.

I am sending out a book study guide for C.S. Lewis' The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe, a Christian allegory for children, originally written for Lewis' goddaughter Lucy. This wonderful story is filled with Christian metaphors throughout, which I have highlighted in my study. I understand that many groups already have their own ideas for 2025 curricula in place. My hope is that this could be a church-wide study, with the varied study groups within the church taking 6 weeks or so sometime in early February 2025 to study this book, so that we might have a common thing to talk about. Books and audio versions are available from a variety of places and options.

I've been listening to members and learning the history of the church, including conflict. I have much to learn before I want to comment on your history. I have not seen evidence of significant conflict lately, just the ordinary discomfort any church might have after saying good-bye to two long-term pastors. Prs. Chad and Natalia are missed, but a church is not just its pastors, and Prince of Peace will continue under my leadership and that of your fantastic staff and council. I know many members are grieving so much change, yet you are a great church with great members, and I expect Prince of Peace will thrive here for many years to come.

Pastor Glen

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Children, Youth and Family Ministry Report

While I thought most of the change had already happened in 2023, October-November of 2024 proved to me that I was wrong. While the departure of both Pr Chad and Pr Natalia (and Nikk's departure) didn't directly affect Children, Youth and Family Ministry, I would be lying if I said it didn't affect me. When you work with a team for as long as we did, there are obviously going to be some growing pains that come with any transition. However, we are moving forward, and Children, Youth and Family continues to be a bright spot for me and this Congregation.

Children's Ministry continues to meet on Sunday mornings, with the occasional Family Event outside of Church. We continue to see energy and growth in our Sunday mornings as we focus on each Sunday's scripture. We use our bodies, our minds and our creativity to explore the Gospel and through all of that we continue growing in our relationships with God and with one another. Sometimes on a Sunday morning you will notice a whole row of young people sitting together or an entire table of young ones eating their cookies. WE as a CHURCH did that.

Middle School Ministry continues Wednesday nights during the School Year and Wednesdays during the Summer. During the school year we focus heavily on the scripture from the previous Sunday through active learning. We also spend time allowing our young people to simply decompress and be young people. This past Summer we enhanced our Wednesday offerings by alternating between Fellowship and Service. Our weeks of service saw a core group of 6, while our fellowship events brought in extra participants. Both opportunities were fun and engaging.

High School Ministry continues to meet twice a month, and it is the area that brings in the most friends. We have found that with High School, their lives revolve around FOOD and FRIENDS, so we provide them with the opportunity for both. While we didn't go on any trips this past Summer, we are heading back to Colorado (and possibly Florida) this coming Summer.

This past year also saw a group of young people (9) Affirm their Baptisms, a group of young people participate in our Communion Milestone, a smart group of 2nd graders receive their new Bibles (as well as 6th graders and 3 year olds), a wonderful group of Seniors graduate and move into their next phase of life, as well as other milestones that we celebrated with them along the way.

Outside of the everyday ministry that we do here at Prince of Peace we are also finding ways to reach them where THEY are at as well. I have spent time at Soccer Games, Volleyball games, Lacrosse Games, concerts, plays and more as we have been intentional about going out into the community to see our young people, and not always relying on them to come to us.

We acknowledge that worship can be "difficult" for some and so we have created a Worship Cart for the weeks that Children's Ministry doesn't meet. This allows our young people to keep their minds and hands busy so that they can stay engaged in worship.

We continue to provide a space that is open and welcoming to all, and we will continue to work through this transition to continue to offer that. My hope is that ANYONE who walks through our doors on a Sunday morning feels the love that God has for them.

With much gratitude,
Katie Rykal - Director of Children, Youth and Family Ministry

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Technology Report

Throughout the year and with staffing changes, we upgraded several office computers, at this point, we have replaced all office computers within the past 2 years-so we should be good for a while.

There are still several parts of our worship system that are showing their age, including the projector system; and that continues to be on our list of hopeful repairs in the future. We replaced the worship center computer and streaming camera in the past couple years and Rachel will be working to update the program we use for Sunday morning projection of worship flow.

In November, Nikk decided it was time to move forward with new opportunities. We are grateful for all the years Nikk was with us at POP and how he got us set up for success. When Nikk left, Rachel took over most of the AV tech, and Katie and Nate have been doing the communications and social media. We have had a few minor hiccups, but for the most part, we have been functioning well through this transition. The biggest need we recognize will be ongoing volunteers for our Sunday morning tech.

Rachel has continued to update the sign on 81 as well as the website as needed. As we continue to explore and dream of the future of POP-if you have any updates for website or communication, please let us know.

Submitted by Rachel Henderson

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Business Administrator Report

The business administrator position has seen significant change in 2024. In the spring when Paul Hahn decided to give retirement another try, Rachel, as Treasurer, took over the tasks of the business administrator. Paul had been with POP for five years and we are thankful for all he did while at POP.

Rachel continued to manage finances and property logistics throughout the year. POP runs as smoothly as it does because of many volunteers helping to keep things in motion, both out front and behind the scenes. The men's work group, garden group and office volunteers have put in countless hours managing the grounds, building tasks and office mailings. We are so thankful for those who are able to give their time and talents to POP.

We continue to have ongoing long-term rental groups in POP and we have done great work to maximize the use of our space and building income to supplement our finances. Our long-term rental groups include: Smiling Faces daycare, Children's Music Academy, Hope ministries, Jesus Fiel Amigo ministry. We also continue to host Troop 542, local scouts and serve as a polling place for Brooklyn Park elections.

Rachel and Katie have worked hard to clean up and organize many areas of the church, so we have more rooms for team meetings, as well as organized space that works well for use of all the shared rental groups. We will continue to work through several more spaces in the coming months.

After a positive response to the Faithfully Forward campaign, we were able to replace the broken heating unit in the sanctuary just before Christmas, so we should be toasty and warm moving into the next year.

Moving forward in 2025, Rachel will transition out of the roll of Business Administrator, and Nate Boucher will combine the rolls of office administrator and business administrator as the Church Administrator. This will allow us to streamline processes and communication as well as have the office open for regular business hours moving forward.

Submitted by Rachel Henderson

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Treasurer Report

What a year it has been. 2024 presented us with some challenges, but POP was able to rise to the occasion. While this year has seen more change than any other at POP, the council navigated these changes with grace and commitment.

The year started off with Paul Hahn, our business administrator, giving retirement a second chance and leaving in May. Soon after, the council became aware of Chad's plans for retirement, and Natalia's decision to move on to the next phase of her ministry. While navigating these challenges-we kept in mind the current financial situation of POP and did the best we could to plan for our future moving forward, making decisions that would set us up for the best options for future dreams and missions.

While we have kept spending tight, finding small ways in the office to reduce spending and managing our business plan with resources we have in place, we managed to meet the end of the year very close to our budgeted expenses. The most significant impact on our budgeting was the reduced offering income. We budgeted expected income based on previous year's offerings, and from the beginning of 2024, we saw lower offerings coming in. We continued to communicate transparently with the congregation and managed the best with what we had.

Moving into 2025, we do not have any outstanding balances on liabilities, except for the building mortgage. However, we have spent down the majority of our extra assets (endowment fund and CDs) and have been managing with cash on hand, from month to month.

Nate and I have been careful in setting the budget for 2025, hoping for increased offering as the congregation continues to explore what it means to give generously out of abundance and hope for mission and ministry, instead of out of obligation. The council has had many discussions and has been very intentional in planning for the congregation and ministry we can support moving forward with the financial picture we currently have. Part of this planning includes building up our "rainy day fund" and cash reserve as well as rebuilding the endowment fund-as we hopefully strategize for the future of POP.

We have presented a real budget that we are confident we can work within, at this point it is a deficit budget; but as we continue to work with Pastor Glen, we will plan for a future at POP that fits within the capacity of our congregation. We have already started to see an increase in attendance and faithful giving in the last couple of months. We are optimistic for this continued trend and continued growth in ministry in 2025.

We remain committed and hopeful for the future of Prince of Peace.

Submitted by Rachel Henderson, POP Treasurer

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Council Ballot

EXECUTIVE TEAM NOMINATIONS (Each serve a 1 year term, but can choose to re-up)

Nominated	Write-In	
President	<input type="checkbox"/> Anne Maczuga	<input type="checkbox"/> _____
Vice President	<input type="checkbox"/> Terri Revell	<input type="checkbox"/> _____
Secretary	<input type="checkbox"/> Allison Isenberg	<input type="checkbox"/> _____
Treasurer	<input type="checkbox"/> Rachel Henderson	<input type="checkbox"/> _____

MINISTRY TEAM NOMINATIONS (Each serve a 2 year term and can have 2 consecutive terms)

	Nominated	Write-In
At Large	<input type="checkbox"/> Mari Senstad	<input type="checkbox"/> _____
At Large	<input type="checkbox"/> Melissa Johnson	<input type="checkbox"/> _____

MINISTRY TEAM MEMBERS CONTINUING THEIR TERMS

At Large Pam Eliason (Year 2)

NOMINATING TEAM (Each serve a 1 year term and can serve up to two terms)

<input type="checkbox"/> Julia Sevald (Chair)	<input type="checkbox"/> Rob Welde (Year 2)	<input type="checkbox"/> Judy Heisick
<input type="checkbox"/> Kay Newstrom (Year 2)	<input type="checkbox"/> Geogia Larson	

SYNOD ASSEMBLY DELEGATES

<input type="checkbox"/> Nate Boucher	<input type="checkbox"/> Ann Maczuga
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Proposed 2025 Congregational Budget

Prince of Peace Lutheran Church 2025 budget

	2025 budget	2024 ACTUAL	2023 ACTUAL	2022 ACTUAL
INCOME				
Contributions	467,500	489,954	578,658	622,836
Other Receipts ¹	129,500	142,316	288,224	89,990
<u>Endowment Fund</u>			328	(11,316)
TOTAL INCOME	\$597,000	\$632,270	\$867,210	\$712,826
EXPENSES				
Building (Mortgage)	157,944	157,944	157,944	157,944
Personnel	350,000	408,462	468,634	552,479
Administration	12,456	11,272	12,957	12,007
Property	117,050	111,414	120,144	102,583
Community Life	775	492	195	307
Spiritual Growth	350	409	752	660
CYF Ministry	3500	3,183	3,790	1,978
Worship/Music/AV	3970	3,013	3,945	2,646
Outreach	500	467	529	500
Stewardship	6350	5,523	4,734	4,574
Sunday Morning Experience	1,750	134	499	376
Leadership/Cong Development	1,431	1,431	959	1,208
<u>Benevolence</u>	<u>1,000</u>	<u>1,000</u>	<u>1,000</u>	<u>1,000</u>
TOTAL expenses	\$657,076	\$704,744	\$700,379	\$776,082
NET Income/Expense	(60,076)	(\$72,474)	\$91,128	(\$109,912)
Spending from Endowment Fund	0	0	\$49,358	\$81,609
Gain/Loss²	(60,076)	(\$72,473)	(\$36,824)	(\$15,524)

¹ 2023: Other Income includes \$177,310 ERC funds

2024: Special Appeal/GTTM NOT included in expected income calculation

² 2023: total deficit excludes ERC funds

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Appendix A- 2024 Annual Congregational Meeting Minutes 1/21/24

Prince of Peace Lutheran Church
Annual Congregational Meeting Minutes
January 21, 2024

CALL TO ORDER: With a quorum present (gathered in person and via Facebook Live streaming), Mike Isenberg, President called the 2024 POP Annual meeting to order at 10:38 a.m.

Opening Prayer: Pastor Chad led us in an opening prayer.

Adoption of the Agenda: Mike Isenberg called for a motion to adopt the agenda for today's meeting. Julia Sevald made a motion to adopt the agenda, Nate Boucher seconded the motion. Motion carries.

Approve Minutes: Mike Isenberg called for a motion to approve the minutes from the 2023 Annual Congregational Meeting. The motion was made by Bill Frederick. a second was given by Allison Isenberg. Motion carries.

Presentation of Budget: Pastor Chad presented a quick review of 2023's reduction of expenditures and reduction in staff hours to fit in with our annual income. Even with the staffing configuration (no full time Pastors, Chad and Natalia ¾ time) there was still a sustainable deficit of approximately \$80,000, and further reductions were necessary to balance the budget. To close the deficit, we were able to increase the rental income for use of our building and had to make further staffing reductions. This brought our deficit down close to a nearly balanced budget, and we feel good that this is sustainable going forward.

Pastor Chad reminds members that they can always stop by the office with questions. Both Paul Hahn and Chad are available to you.

Mike Isenberg asked for a motion to approve the 2024 budget. Julia Sevald called for a motion to approve the budget. Candi Kvamme seconded the motion. All were in favor. Budget Approved.

Ballot: Mike Isenberg presented the list of nominations for 2024 POP Executive Team, At Large Members, the Nominating Team, and the 2024 Synod Assembly Delegates. Mike called for a motion to approve a "white ballot" vote. A motion was made by Bill Frederick for a "white ballot" approval vote, seconded by Terri Revell. Motion carries and ballot approved.

Review of Annual Reports: Complete written reports are available in the published annual report.

President: Mike Isenberg wanted to mention he is involved in getting our Mental Health Connect Team up and running. It is an important part of his tenure as President. The members we have so far are fantastic. Please feel free to ask Mike any questions.

Children, Youth and Family (Katie Rykal): This has been a year of growth, change, and constant evolving in Katie's expanded position. She would like to thank the families for embracing the changes. One big change was changing the high school gatherings on Wednesday nights to two Sunday nights a

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month. This gives the high school students a place to belong, and she has seen a significant growth in those attending.

The Jingle Jangle Coin Drive was a success and Katie is excited to bring this to us again soon!

Pastor Natalia: 2024 is an important year of the Synod Assembly because we are electing a new Bishop in May. February 4, after worship there is a gathering of information about the kind of bishop we would like to see.

2024 Synod Assembly Delegates: Nate Boucher, Marian Hutchens, Marv Hutchens, Terri Revell, (open) youth position

New Business: We are thankful for all our council members who have dedicated time to making Prince of Peace a thriving faith community.

2024 Council Members: President: Mike Isenberg, Vice President: Nate Boucher, Treasurer: Rachel Henderson, Secretary: Patti VanLiew, At Large: Anne Maczuga, Cathy Krogstad, Pam Eliason

Motion to Adjourn: Mike Isenberg called for a motion to adjourn. Julia Sevald made the motion and Jeff Hanson seconded the motion. Meeting adjourned at 11:42

Closing Prayer: Pastor Natalia led us in a closing prayer.

Appendix B- Church Ministry Annual Reports

Care Team Annual Report

Our Care Team was created in the fall of 2022 and we continue to improve the model so all members are comfortable sharing their needs and desires with our faith community. The current Care Team is a small but faithful group of people committed to pray for, visit, and connect with those in our community who have asked for care.

Recognizing the ways people want to offer care are as varied as the ways people would like to receive it. Our team is divided into groups who call, send cards, visit and provide communion, and pray. When a request is received, the team who is responsible is informed and they offer care as they are able.

The shift into consent-based care has not been quick or easy, but we are committed to offering care to every person the way each person would like to receive it. The rules are ever changing around confidentiality. Our goal is to ensure your privacy is honored while sharing what we are able to keep our church members informed.

Here are the ways you can connect with the Care Team for prayers or additional care.

- Fill out a blue card in the pews on Sunday morning
- Contact one of the staff members or pastor (via email) with a request for care
- Contact the church office with a request for care (via the office phone 763-560-8958)
- Submit a care request through the website: <https://princeofpeacechurch.org/community/care/>

Above all, we believe we are called into this work of caring for each other as people of faith. We believe that caring for each other is the work of ALL of us, and each time one of us picks up the phone, sends a card, or offers a prayer, Prince of Peace has shown up, the Church has shown up, and in doing so we remind those in need that God shows up.

Faithfully submitted

Pastor Glen, Melissa Johnson, Terri Revell

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Church Library Report

The purpose of the Prince of Peace Church Library is to support the church’s mission by providing resources that serve the spiritual, emotional and intellectual needs of children, youth and adults in their journey of faith.

Use of the Library: The library is open and staffed before and after each Sunday service as well as on the evening of the Wednesday night Lenten services. A book cart with interesting fiction and non-fiction books is in the Welcome Center during Sunday Fellowship Time for all to browse and enjoy. Displays of new and older books are always on display in the hallway next to the library for all to check out.

New Acquisitions: 42 new books and 7 DVDs have been added through donations and purchase. Thank you to those who generously donated resources to supplement our very limited budgeted funds. We always welcome suggestions to be considered for purchase and accept suitable books for donation. Monetary gifts are always needed and appreciated.

Weeding of the collection: 40 books and 2 DVDs have been withdrawn from the collection during an ongoing weeding procedure. The shelf space is now limited and more weeding needs to be done.

Little Free Library: Thank you to Marv and Marian Hutchens for tending to this “library” that is located on the front sideway on West Broadway. Donated books are always needed for others to take and enjoy as they pass by this library.

Twin City Area Church Library Association: We continue to belong to TWACLA and attend the spring and fall meetings. In the fall, we enjoyed an interesting meeting which featured a presentation on book banning.

Circulation data: A-V Resources..... 33 DVDs and CDs
Books.....235
TOTAL..... 268 Books and A-V

Thank you to the Library Team members Laura Burns, Bonny Lingren, Mary Jane Johnson, Jodie Spoden, Marv and Marian Hutchens, Elaine Johnson and Kathy Gilbertson for all their help and support.

Respectfully submitted,

Sally Onstad, Librarian

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Mental Health Connect Report

POP continues to be a collaborative congregation with Mental Health Connect. Mental Health Connect is a Christian collaborative organization working to destigmatize mental illness, offer education and support in churches and connect people with customized, confidential support.

The Mental Health Connect team at Prince of Peace team is Jeff Amstrup, Rachel Henderson, Allison Isenberg, Mike Isenberg, Cathy Krogstad and Mari Senstad. This group serves as ambassadors for MHC, which offers monthly meetings and training as well as discussions on bringing mental health to the forefront of conversations and accessible in our church. Rachel also serves as a navigator for the mental health warmline, offering free, customized support for those in need of mental health and social support.

Our work started this year by organizing and planning our Lenten worship theme. The theme of Shalom (peace, completeness) highlighted a full range of wellness topics; spiritual, educational, emotional, social and physical.

In early spring we were honored to work with the Swanson family and Matteo's Message to put up the Harm Reduction box, which offers Narcan and fentanyl test strips free to the public on the northeast side of the POP property.

We continued to brainstorm about mental health accessibility and conversations at Prince of Peace. We have information on the website, as well as posters and information around POP with information about accessing mental health support.

During the ministry fair, we asked the question "what is the biggest mental health challenge you or people you know are facing?" which gave us the answer that people are looking for safe and supportive places to talk about mental health and the continued struggle of loneliness. We continue to plan opportunities for conversations and support in 2025 at POP. We are looking forward to several opportunities in the coming months.

Submitted by Rachel Henderson and Allison Isenberg

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Outreach Team Report

Thanks to the Outreach Team and POP congregation we made a BIG impact on our community this year through our Outreach activities:

- Raised \$1,650 for Avenues through our Building on Dreams sponsorship and Caritas Concert
- Purchased around \$500 in holiday gifts for an Avenues youth and young family and hosted the holiday gift wrapping event
- Hosted 6 Avenues birthday parties and celebrated 5 Avenues high school graduates
- Collected toothpaste and other personal care items throughout the year for Avenues youth
- Drove more than 100 Meals on Wheels routes
- Collected around 2,000 pounds of food for the CEAP food shelf
- Donated 716 pounds of new and gently used clothing to the CEAP Thrift Store
- Packed more than 200 emergency diaper kits for CEAP families
- Packed and distributed enough fresh vegetables through CEAP Farm Fresh to feed about 500 families
- Donated 76 pounds of school supplies for CEAP families
- Teamed up with a group of volunteers to pack 12,789 pounds of sweet potatoes for Second Harvest Heartland
- Filled and distributed 120 Care bags for neighbors in need
- Cleaned up Hwy 61 in the Spring and Fall
- Dedicated time as reading buddies to 3rd graders at Park Brook Elementary; hosted Park Brook 5th Grade Graduation celebrations; and volunteered at other miscellaneous Park Brook events
- Hosted the Thanksgiving Eve Pie Social
- Revitalized the Sunday morning coffee and cookie volunteer team
- Organized 2 holiday caroling events at senior living facilities

A huge thank you to the congregation for your continued support of our Outreach activities and events! You help us grow deep, reach out and help our neighbors in need.

2024 PoP Outreach Team: *Jodi Spoden (Co-chair), Melissa Johnson (Co-chair), Jeanne Hanson, Amy Kust, Elaine Zimmer, Sally Onstad, Michelle Hudlow, Ann Maczuga, Jo and Frank Fachman*

Appendix C- Message from the Presiding Bishop of the ELCA

A MESSAGE FROM PRESIDING BISHOP
ELIZABETH EATON



Dear friends in Christ,

All around us, we see signs of God's love and goodness. A person who has stepped away from church for many years steps back into a congregation, feeling the call of the Holy Spirit. Young adults feeling isolated in a digital-first world start gathering in person in a small group, enjoying the warmth of a hug and a new friend asking about their week. A mother plants a garden, and it yields fruits and vegetables, giving her nutritious food for her kids and extra produce to sell at the local market. Everywhere we look, we see signs of Christ's love. In Psalm 93, we read: "More majestic than the thunders of mighty waters, more majestic than the waves of the sea, majestic on high is the Lord! Your decrees are very sure; holiness befits your house, O Lord, forevermore" (4-5).

God's love is a majestic thing, and it moves us to share it in word and deed. The ministries of our congregations, our synods and the ELCA churchwide organization are all working together to share God's love with people in our neighborhoods, across our country and around the world.

I am so grateful for you, dear church. Your generosity to each of these three expressions of the church — your congregation, your synod and the churchwide organization — has bolstered the church's ability to share the message of God's love to people who are longing for it. Through your

“More majestic than the thunders of mighty waters, more majestic than the waves of the sea, majestic on high is the Lord! Your decrees are very sure; holiness befits your house, O Lord, forevermore.”

—Psalm 93:4-5

financial resources, your time volunteering and accompanying others, and your voices, you've helped carry this message of God's majestic love. Thank you, dear church. As we look ahead to the coming year, I encourage you to stand steadfast in God's promises, sure of God's love and goodness.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Elizabeth A. Eaton".

The Rev. Elizabeth A. Eaton
Presiding Bishop
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

Through your generosity, God is at work across the ELCA. A portion of your offering, called Mission Support, advances the ministry of our church, helping the ELCA nurture Christian community, raise up leaders, serve our neighbors and strive for justice. Read stories and learn more at [LivingLutheran.org/SOFIA](https://www.lutheran.org/SOFIA).

