



Our Saviour's
LUTHERAN CHURCH

ANNUAL REPORT 2025



Evangelical
Lutheran Church
in America



400 West Ninth Street
Hastings, Minnesota 55033
(651) 437-9052
www.osel.org

A MESSAGE FROM PRESIDING BISHOP YEHIEL CURRY

Dear friends in Christ,

As Lutherans, we are set free to love our neighbors and seek justice. In Colossians 2, we read: “As you therefore have received Christ Jesus the Lord, continue to walk in him, rooted and built up in him and established in the faith, just as you were taught, abounding in thanksgiving” (6-7).

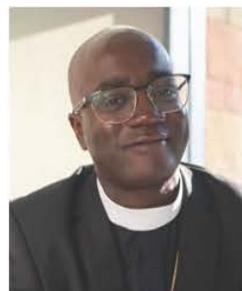
I am abounding in thankfulness for you, church. You are an integral part of this mission as we envision a world experiencing the difference God’s grace and love in Christ make for all people and creation. The ministries of congregations including yours, our synods and the ELCA churchwide organization are all working together today and every day so more people may know the way of Jesus and discover community, justice and love. From providing food to people experiencing hunger, to helping train the next generation of leaders that will lead this church, your support is at work here at home and around the world.

Your generosity to each of the three expressions of the church — your congregation, your synod and the churchwide organization — has made it possible for us to do this work

together. Your financial resources, your time volunteering and accompanying others, and your voices are so valued.

As we look ahead to the coming year, I encourage you to continue to walk in Christ, remembering you are rooted and established in faith, and free to love and serve your neighbors. Thank you, church, for the ways you connect with and support our siblings across the ELCA and in our communities.

In Christ,



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Yehiel Curry'.

The Rev. Yehiel Curry
Presiding Bishop
Evangelical Lutheran
Church in America

“As you therefore have received Christ Jesus the Lord, continue to walk in him, rooted and built up in him and established in the faith, just as you were taught, abounding in thanksgiving.”

—Colossians 2:6-7

AGENDA

ANNUAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING
Our Saviour's Evangelical Lutheran Church
Hastings, MN

January 25, 2026
10:00 AM

President: John Erickson
Secretary: Nikki Reinardy

1. Call to Order
2. Opening Prayer - Pastor Karen Behling
3. Declaration of a Quorum - Council President John Erickson
4. Nominating Committee Report & Election
5. 2025 Financial Report - Treasurer Ashley Dellwo
6. Old Business
 Transition Team Update
7. New Business
 2026 Ministry Spending Plan – Treasurer Ashley Dellwo
 Endowment Committee - President Mike Slavik
8. Announcements - Council President John Erickson/Pastor Karen Behling
9. Motion for Adjournment
10. Closing Prayer & Benediction – Pastor Joel Rova-Hegener

Interim Senior Pastor.....Rev. Karen Behling
 Associate Pastor.....Rev. Joel Rova-Hegener
 Parish Nurse.....Sherri Lohmann
 Director of Children, Youth and Family Ministries.....Amy Hanson
 Contemporary Music Coordinator/Organist.....Jason Craft
 Administrator.....Joyce Nelson
 Communications SpecialistLisa Bushberger
 Administrative AssistantAnn Trader
 Administrative AssistantJennifer Whitson
 Building & Maintenance Lead.....Jeff Conklin
 Sound Technician.....David Doll
 Custodian.....Paula Gillis
 Kitchen Coordinator..... John Wakeen
 Line Cook..... Kyle Peerboom
 Wedding Coordinator..... Lisa Bushberger
 Nikki Reinardy
 Chancel Choir Accompanist..... Linda Gathright
 Choir Directors.....Kathy Hardy, Alison Lohmann, Ryan McCoy
 New Creation Band..... Matt Blackford, Seth Duin, Nick Fox, Lonnie Menard, Paul Woog
 REFRESH Service Band.....Mike Borash, Doug Sprinthall, Sarah Sprinthall, Charlie Milkey, Paul Woog

Church Council Officers

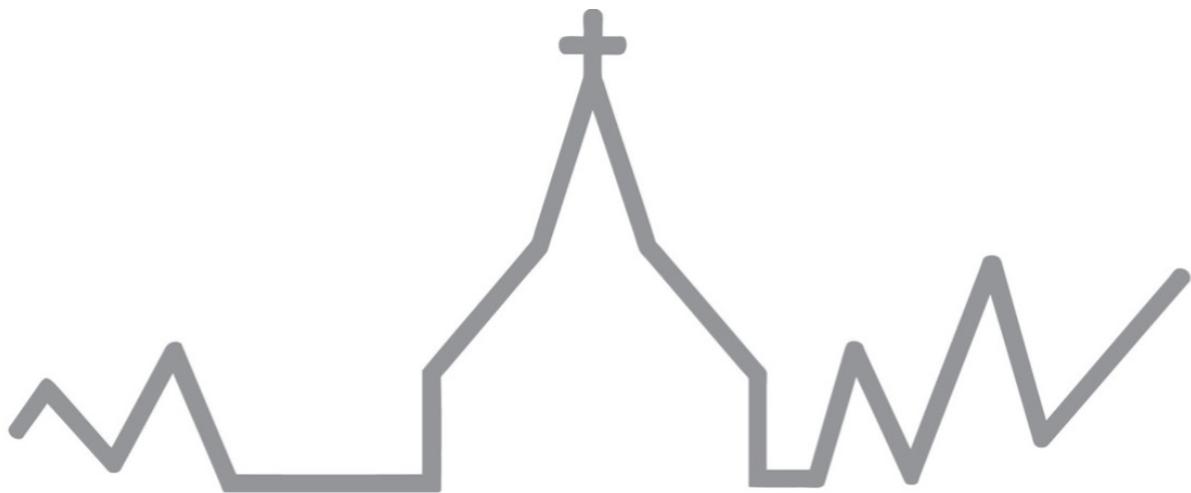
President.....John Erickson
 Vice President.....Steve Gomez
 Secretary.....Nikki Reinardy
 Treasurer.....Ashley Dellwo

**Church Council
 Council Members**

Aaron Bushberger
 Sheri Fox
 Heidi Lund
 Lori Mikel
 Cary Nygaard

President's Committee

John Erickson
 Sheri Fox
 Steve Gomez
 Heidi Lund



STAFF REPORTS

I am about to do a new thing; now it springs forth; do you not perceive it? I will make a way in the wilderness and rivers in the desert.

Isaiah 43:19

This is God's promise then and now and always. When Isaiah proclaims these words to God's people, they are feeling unsettled and uncertain because they are in a time of transition. These words call to mind the Red Sea crossing, when God's people ventured beyond the familiar towards an unknown future. That time of transition in the wilderness was challenging for God's people, and God remained true to God's promise to provide and to lead and to sustain.

Our Saviour's has been in transition this year. Saying farewell to a long-tenured Senior Pastor involves saying farewell to a significant chapter in the life of the congregation. The future will be different. HOW will the future be different? That's the BIG unknown, and that big unknown can stir up a wide array of emotions. Some are feeling fearful and anxious, because let's be honest and acknowledge that change often feels unsettling and uncomfortable. Others are feeling eager and energized for the adventure of something different. And plenty are feeling wary and cautious. None of this is surprising. These are typical human responses to change.

So here's the challenge: Are we willing to trust that God is leading this process? Are we willing to take some new steps? Are we open to listening to God and to one another? And are we willing to follow wherever the Holy Spirit leads? Throughout the book of Acts, when the early church was in their own time of wilderness, as they transitioned from following Jesus who walked this earth to carrying on the mission of the resurrected Christ in this world, two things became abundantly clear:

1. God was always with them, leading the way.
2. When folks followed where the Spirit led – even when that Spirit led them beyond the comfortable and familiar – that same Holy Spirit regularly surprised them by leading them to new places, new people, new relationships, new insights, and new, life-giving ways to be church in a changing world.

In the services of Baptism and Affirmation of Baptism, we make promises:

*To live among God's faithful people,
To hear the word of God and share in the Lord's supper,
To proclaim the good news of God in Christ through word and deed,
To serve all people, following the example of Jesus,
And to strive for justice and peace in all the earth.*

This is challenging work. This is life-giving work. This is our mission as followers of Jesus Christ.

After ten months serving with you at Our Saviour's, I offer these observations:

- This congregation is blessed with excellent staff who support one another and rise to face challenges together. They are awesome and they carry a heavy workload.
- Our Saviour's is blessed with plenty of people of all ages who are eager to be equipped, supported and blessed for the work of ministry. There are plenty of ministry tasks and finding ways to share these tasks will require time, along with on-going, thoughtful, consistent planning and organizing.
- "Practice makes progress." My observation is that Our Saviour's has settled into the practice of avoiding uncomfortable conversations. Such practice has left little opportunity for learning how to engage in respectful conversations over challenging and important social issues. The Greek word "polis" means "city" and is the root for the word "political" which is all about our life together. To engage in political conversation is to engage in conversation that seeks the common good, the well-being of all. When Jesus focused attention upon the poor and marginalized and vulnerable, he was being political. The church is called to be political, NEVER partisan. That is a crucial distinction. Our Saviour's has an opportunity to meet a deep need in today's world by providing space where people can respectfully speak and listen and learn and wrestle together over important issues for the life of the world which is so beloved by God.
- Our Saviour's will benefit from growing deeper connections within the ELCA and stronger partnerships with area agencies working for the common good.

Thankfully, in the face of so much opportunity for hard, important work, we are not alone. God is leading the way and God always leads toward life.

Thus says the LORD, who created you, who formed you:

*Do not fear, for I have redeemed you. I have called you by name; you are mine.
When you pass through the waters, I will be with you, and through the rivers, they shall not
overwhelm you. I am the LORD your God,
the Holy One of Israel, your Savior.
You are precious in my sight and honored and I love you.*

Isaiah 43:1-4 (abbreviated)

“Teacher, which commandment in the law is the greatest?” Jesus said to him, “ ‘You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.’ This is the greatest and first commandment. And a second is like it: ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’ On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets.”

Matthew 22:36-40

In the second half of 2025 we have been focusing upon the statement God’s love grows community. The Transition Team created this phrase as a way for us as a congregation to think about who we are, whose we are and what we can be about during these months of transition. God’s Love Grows Community is not the mission statement of Our Saviour’s Lutheran Church, but it is our missional watchword during this interim season of transition. As we walk into 2026 together, let us strive to live out God’s love with one another while also sharing God’s incredible love with our neighbors in the world so that community may grow!

As Associate Pastor, I minister in the pastoral areas of preaching, teaching, visitation, leadership, and supervision, as well as planning worship, overseeing music, overseeing outreach, assisting with youth ministry, and helping to lead nursing facility worship. I am also involved in the Saint Paul Area Synod (SPAS), SPAS’ South Conference, SPAS’ Iringa Committee (Bega Kwa Bega) and am a part of the Hastings Ministerial Association.

We are blessed by the music ministry at Our Saviour’s. The musicians and technicians provide beautiful and meaningful music for our worship services and special occasions. There are four different opportunities to worship each week, in-person and online. I want to thank all of the musicians and singers who have shared their gifts, talents and hard work to create beautiful live music and to put meaningful music online each and every week. You all know what you do and I thank you most sincerely for your hard work, ingenuity, vision, skills and good sense of humor as you share with us all the gifts that God has given to you. These musicians include but are not limited to Kathy Hardy and the Jubilee Ringers, Mike Borash and the REFRESH Band, Alison Lohmann and the Good News Gang children’s choir, Ryan McCoy and the Chancel Choir, and Jason Craft and the New Creation Band. Jason Craft is also our organist and pianist. We thank Linda Gathright and others who help provide leadership when needed and offer special music throughout the year.

We give thanks for David Doll, Jake Bohlken and Paul Hellen who mix, balance and amplify the music we hear from our updated sound booth. The technical side of the gift of worship tends to be forgotten, so it is important to recognize the work in the sound booth that allows us to hear and enjoy the music being offered.

Each week an online worship service is recorded, edited, produced and uploaded online so that those near and far who cannot worship in-person have a worship service to attend virtually. For this, we must offer gratitude to Seth Duin. His talents, expertise and guidance make this possible. Thank you Seth!

Our Refresh evenings on Wednesdays are a great time to gather mid-week and be refreshed by a great meal, time in fellowship and then by worship as a congregation. Refresh Wednesdays offer the opportunity for guests, visitors, members, and children and youth to grow in faith and community. Come and join us, and see what it is all about!

If you are interested in continuing to learn as an adult, we have opportunities throughout the week. The following study groups meet weekly: the women's study on Tuesday at 9:00 am in the chapel, men's studies occur on Wednesday at 7:00 am and Thursday at 9:00 am, both in the Fellowship Hall. Each Sunday morning at 10:00 a.m. CONNECT adult learning is offered in the Fellowship Hall. The sessions last for about 25 minutes. A variety of subjects are offered by a variety of speakers during the year.

Part of my ministry is in assisting Amy Hanson in helping to teach and lead our youth. Every Wednesday I lead a small group of ninth graders as part of our God + Life confirmation ministry. This is a great moment in my week. I also assist with Donuts and Devos, High School youth nights, elementary youth nights, and assorted other needs throughout the year.

This year, again, I was able to travel on the Mission Trip with our high school youth. In July, 26 high school youth and four of us adults flew to Columbia, South Carolina for the mission trip. What an amazing experience it was for our youth to learn and grow both in their faith and in themselves. We worked on numerous job sites in the Columbia area. On our free day we spent the day at a beach near Charleston. Helping to make this experience meaningful and fun for our youth were two great volunteers, Christy Baum and Pat O'Connor.

Our Saviour's has a long and deep companion church relationship with the parishes of Ilambilole and Ihominyi in Tanzania. This past year our congregation was blessed with enough funds to gift each parish funds that were earmarked towards construction projects of their choosing. Ilambilole used the funds to put a roof on their future church building. These are relationships that we must continue to strengthen and grow.

This past December I stepped down from my position as a board member of Hastings Family Service (HFS). My time on the board helped me to learn more about the needs of our community and to assist Our Saviour's to work well with HFS. We will continue to support and care for those in need within our community through HFS's great services.

As Our Saviour's continues to journey through this season of transition, I encourage all of the members of the congregation to trust in the Lord. For we have faith that God is at work here in this place and in this time. A part of this means that we also need to trust in the process. The Lord provides!

In Christ's love.

On March 1, 2021, I was blessed to step into a newly created role at Our Saviour's, as Parish Nurse. I began reaching out to members, assessing their needs, and imagining ways I could offer support and education to the Our Saviour's family and community through a physical, mental, and spiritual lens. Every day is a blessing! Here is a Parish Nurse overview for 2025.

Support

In-person: I try to be a caring presence at the Information Desk for most worship services, listening to needs and concerns, providing resources, and taking prayer requests. I love welcoming guests and answering their questions. On home visits, I offer Communion, listen to their concerns, assess challenges to activities of daily living, and offer resources. I also interact with members and others at community events. I play piano and sing for weekly Ecumenical Services at Benedictine Regina as well as at Our Saviour's services at Oak Ridge Manor. I hosted a table as Parish Nurse for our community Fentanyl Poisoning and Overdose event on 8/21/25 and for our Red Ribbon event on 11/1/25. At my table I provided education on adolescent brain development, how to access treatment for substance use disorder (SUD), grief support, and offer Scriptural support verse cards and peace cards to attendees.

Phone, Mail & Email: I process incoming phone calls or emails from people asking for help. If I cannot help, I make referrals. I make outreach calls to check on people and assess if there are issues that I can help with. I send large print sermons to about 10-12 members weekly. If I am aware of someone in a care center or for short term rehab I will send them sermons to help them feel connected.

Prayer Chain: I continue to anchor the Our Saviour's Prayer Chain. This role connects me with people in need and can be a bridge to pastoral care if desired.

Caring Visit Ministry: This new ministry began as an idea early in my role, then to written plans in 2024. In 2025 the first visitors began visiting members in their homes. Several connections continue, despite changes such as relocations of the members. If anyone is interested in visiting a member in their home or receiving visits, please let me know.

Health Support: I give people verse cards, peace cards, resources for equipment and articles I've written. I can meet with members in person by request to assess needs and help determine help at home or care facility options. I offer names of clinics or clinicians for mental health needs. I advocate for members who ask for help navigating the medical system.

Grief Support: I create Scriptural Verse Cards and Peace Cards for family members after the death of a loved one. I check in with people in-person or via phone after a loss. Each year I send out grief support mailings prior to the first Christmas without their loved one. This year I sent 38 pre-Christmas mailings to members and 10 mailings to families in our community.

Education

CONNECT 2025 teaching: Stories and Insights of Parish Nurse, Connection of Gut Health with Body and Mind Health-Steps Toward Better Health, Falls – Many Causes: Prevention - Many Ideas, and Water for Life – Body and Soul. Handouts provided for each of these topics.

Messenger articles 2025: "Joy in the midst of uncertainty and tough times", "Voices we hear in our youth, and their implications throughout life", "Handling unexpected losses-physically, emotionally, and spiritually", and "Falls-causes and prevention".

In the moment: I try to teach on the spot as needed or requested. For requests for help on a medical topic, I research as needed and respond.

Whether helping someone navigate to a vehicle, providing resources, or uplifting spirits by reading scripture, singing hymns and praying at a bedside of someone on their last days, I am honored to serve as Parish Nurse for Our Saviour's. Peace to you all.

2025 Annual Report for Families and Next Generation

2025 was filled with both growth and progress in many areas of youth ministry. A few highlights of the year included:

- Our High School Donuts and Devos group reached meeting capacity at Froth & Cork so for 2025-26 we offer the opportunity twice per month, allowing for more students to attend.
- 29 students affirmed their faith in God during a special Confirmation Service.
- 24 students celebrated their First Communion with the congregation.
- We hosted seven age-specific youth nights for elementary and middle school students with over 90 total students attending.
- The High School Mission Trip to South Carolina hosted 24 High School students with ten of those students attending for the first time.

ANNUAL PROGRAMMING***Cradle Roll***

We continue to welcome our newest members by providing a SPARK Bible and candle keepsake at their baptism. This program also sends yearly celebration notes on the date of the child's baptism.



127 students ages 3 yrs – 6th grade grew their faith through activities and stories in our JAM (Jesus & Me) program for the 2024-25 school year.



83 students in 7th – 9th grade continued their faith journey in our God+Life (Confirmation) program during the 2024-25 school year.



Ali Lohmann continues as the Director of our Children's Choir which typically hosts 6-9 students in grades 1 – 6.



Between 22-32 High School students met once per month to share in a short devotional and prayer before school at Froth & Cork.

High School Youth Group

This year's group experienced 5 gatherings including outings like Top Golf and Activate at the Mall of America. 13-20 students attended per event.

Youth Nights

We hosted 7 different themed youth nights for age-specific groups 1st – 6th grades, impacting 13-15 youth each time.

Summer Blast

Over 20 youth participated each time in our Summer BLAST program where youth served community organizations and then enjoyed an activity. Youth put together kits for those experiencing homelessness, organized a Book Sale fundraiser, cleaned up parks and packed Food4Kids bags for the United Way.

Vacation Bible School

We had 32 youth and 16 youth helpers experience “True North” and how Jesus always shows us the way.

Mission Trip

24 students spent one week in July serving those in the South Carolina community of Columbia. Students were involved with community partners in construction, housing and food insecurity.

Camp Wapo

We sent 64 students grades 1st – 10th to grow their faith and build relationships at Camp Wapo near Amery, WI.

SPECIAL EVENTS

First Communion

In April, we were able to celebrate First Communion with 24 youth ages 5th grade and up.

Confirmation Service

In September, 29 students affirmed their baptism and faith in front of the congregation as a milestone for their faith journey.

Baccalaureate Service

We honored 23 seniors from three different area high schools during the special Baccalaureate Service in June.

ADDITIONAL MINISTRIES

Tree House Youth Support Group

The Tree House Youth Support Group grew to 10-12 students meeting every Monday after school during the school year at Our Saviour’s. This faith-based program focuses on building relationships among students and growing confidence and authenticity within students.

Women’s Book Club

The Women’s Book Club covered 6 books and enjoyed a special pottery event. This group sees 12-16 women come together for discussion and fellowship once per month.

Early Risers Bible Study

In partnership with Nick Werner, owner of Froth & Cork, this community Bible Study sees a handful of people twice per month studying specific themes of the Bible.

QUOTES/TESTIMONY

“Looking back, I can honestly say these experiences have changed my life. From years at Camp Wapo, to every mission trip, I’ve grown in my faith, have learned what it means to serve, love others, and see God work in so many beautiful ways.”

– Lydia Latch, HHS Senior

“Our Saviors has taught me the importance of serving others not only in the Hastings community but communities around the country. I am so grateful I grew up in this church and for the people I have met here who are now my biggest role models.”

– Ellie Magnus, HHS Senior





Council &

Ministry Team

Reports

The Finance Committee thanks you for your continued partnership and support of the program ministry and vision of Our Saviour’s. Your generous donation of time and resources allows us to sustain many areas of ministry and maintain our beautiful church. We are grateful to work with you as we seek to live the mission statement of Our Saviour’s: “Living as the hands, feet and heart of Christ”.

Below is a summary of the operating activity for 2025.

Giving

- 2025 giving was \$956,419, a decrease of 5.1% – or \$51,154 – as compared to 2024.
- Despite the decrease in giving, we were able to meet all expenses and increase our Operating Reserve. Our goal is to have 3-6 months expenses in our Operating Reserve and we are currently at nearly two months in reserve.

Expenses

- Total expenses for 2025 were \$956,076, a decrease of 4.5% – or \$44,738 – as compared to 2024.
- This decrease was largely due to decreased payroll expenses due to retirement, unfilled staff positions (NextGen Ministry Director and Outreach Coordinator), and changes with administrative staffing. We also had decreased expenses in the area of Youth as Youth Ministry needs were largely satisfied by your generous Dedicated Giving to this ministry.
- Decreased expenses were offset somewhat by increases in Serving Ministries (Wednesday Night Meals), building maintenance and repairs, and insurance expenses.

Projects

With your Dedicated Giving, we were able to complete our landscaping project without any expense to our Operating Budget. Thank you for your continued generosity to maintain our place of worship!

Summary of 2025 Operations

Giving + Interest	\$ 956,419
Expenses	<u>-\$ 956,076</u>
Giving less Expenses	\$ 349
Payments to St. Paul Area Synod	\$ 61,668
<i>*Includes \$3,160 for Planting Hope</i>	
Operating Account Balance	\$ 112,627
Designated Savings Balance	\$ 232,975
Designated CDs Balances	\$ 217,400
Memorial Savings Balance	\$ 43,156

Submitted by,

Ashley Dellwo
Treasurer

FINANCE COMMITTEE MEMBERS: Ashley Dellwo, Rob Judge, Jerrie Pittenger, Jerry Wiegrefe, Karen Behling and Joyce Nelson

2025 OSEL Total Income/Expenses - Operating + Designated

	<u>Operating Budget</u>	<u>Designated</u>	<u>Total</u>		<u>Budget</u>
Giving-General Fund	956,343		956,343		
Interest Income	81	16,692	16,773		
Giving-Designated Funds		229,481	229,481		
Total Income	<u>956,425</u>	<u>246,173</u>	<u>1,202,598</u>		<u>1,200,000</u>
 EXPENSES					
MISSIONS/OUTREACH	15,722	113,472	129,194	10%	25,000
 PROGRAM MINISTRY					
Small Groups	1,000	1,922	2,922		2,000
Family Ministries	0	251	251		1,000
Church School	5,298		5,298		8,700
Christian Education	1,818	3,386	5,204		7,000
Youth	2,515	65,770	68,285		11,000
Evangelism	4,426		4,426		7,000
Hospitality	3,749	4,449	8,198		5,000
Worship	22,917	6,004	28,921		35,000
Music	11,798	7,924	19,722		18,200
Stewardship	3,361		3,361		5,500
Caring Ministry	2,936		2,936		3,200
Leadership/Admin	16,019	512	16,532		12,000
Total Program Ministry	<u>75,837</u>	<u>90,219</u>	<u>166,055</u>	13%	<u>115,600</u>
 STAFF COMPENSATION & Benefits	744,165	1,441	745,606	60%	878,400
 OPERATIONS & GROUNDS	<u>120,352</u>	<u>82,246</u>	<u>202,598</u>	16%	<u>181,000</u>
 TOTAL EXPENSES	<u>956,076</u>	<u>287,377</u>	<u>1,243,453</u>	100%	<u>1,200,000</u>
 NET	<u>349</u>	<u>-41,204</u>	<u>-40,855</u>		<u>0</u>
	76.89%	23.11%			

As we expected, 2025 has been a year of change for Our Saviour's.

We bid farewell to Pastor Menke as he began a well-earned retirement. We welcomed Pastor Karen Behling as our Interim Senior Pastor. Our Transition Team was formed in May to continue the process for calling a new Senior Pastor. Their valuable, difficult work continues in 2026 and we look forward to seeing the fruits of their labor.

We wished Linda Gathright the best as she retired from her office position. We are thankful to still have her contributing to the music programs.

We completed a landscaping refresh and update project (and paid for this completely from congregational donations and memorial funds). Thanks to the building and grounds committee for spearheading this.

We welcomed Jennifer Whitson to the office staff and are grateful to have Lisa Bushberger on the team as our Communications Specialist.

In our program areas, the Families and Next Generation ministries led by Amy Hanson continue to be a source of new ministry growth at Our Saviour's and our Parish Nurse, Sherri Lohmann continues to support and uplift many congregation and community members. I encourage you to read their reports to truly grasp the scope of their reach.

2026 promises to be another year of change and I look forward to seeing where it takes us.

Thank you for the opportunity to serve as President of the Congregation Council.



The Endowment Committee is responsible for administering the Endowment Fund, investing the principal and disbursing the earnings as directed by the Our Saviour's charter. Members of the Endowment Committee are elected at the congregation's annual meeting. Committee members are elected for a three-year term beginning the year of their election.

The Committee set two goals for 2025: growing the Endowment Fund and congregation education. New marketing materials were developed in 2025 and distributed during worship services and are available at the Information Desk. In November, members of the Endowment Committee used the Connect time between Sunday worship services to update the congregation on the OSEL Endowment's mission and history.

Below is a summary of the endowment financial activity for the year:

Vermillion State Bank - Cash Account*	
Beginning Balance - 12/1/2024	\$ 4,292
Interest from ELCA & VSB	\$ 6,497
Donations Received	\$ 4,375
Expenses	\$ 108
Transferred to ELCA Endowment Trust	\$ 2,500
Ending Balance - 11/30/2025	\$ 12, 556

ELCA Endowment Trust*	
Beginning Balance - 12/1/2024	\$168,324
Change in Market Value	\$ 22,386
Additions	\$ 2,500
Income Distributions	\$ 6,277
Ending Balance - 11/30/2025	\$186,933

*At the time this report was constructed, year-end figures were not available for the ELCA Endowment Trust Account, so November 30 balances are listed.

Faithfully Submitted,
Mike Slavik, President

ENDOWMENT COMMITTEE MEMBERS:

President: Mike Slavik Treasurer: Mike Swanson Secretary: Jennifer Lawson
Member: Cindy Benson, Jenny Green, Julie Lund
Advisor: Pastor Karen Behling

The Memorial and Gifts Committee oversees the funds the church receives in memory of or in honor of loved ones or special occasions. Families can designate ministry areas in which the funds can be used. Any funds that are not specifically designated are distributed as the committee recognizes needs or receives requests.

In 2025, \$20,133 was dispersed from the Memorial and Gifts fund:

- Worship & Music - Communion Chalices for Grape Juice, Handbell Music, All Creation Sings Hymnals
- Building - Landscaping
- Youth & Christian Education - Youth Group Activities, Busses for God & Life Students to Feed My Starving Children, First Time Camp and Mission Trip Attendees
- Missions - Quilters
- Small Groups - Book Club Activity
- Endowment

Memorial and gift opportunities are in the following ministry areas: Christian education, youth, worship, music, facilities and grounds, and administration. Specific memorials and gift items are welcomed for consideration by the committee and the Church Council.

We meet quarterly or as a request is received by the committee. If you would like to join our Ministry Team, please contact any of the committee members listed below.

A special thank you to Marie Smead for recording and depositing gifts, Pam Ganrud for entering all memorials in the permanent record book and to Ruth Dahl for sending thank you notes to donors.

Sam Sorenson, President

Committee members Ruth Dahl, Diane Nelson, Dana Pettit, Deb Siebrecht, Marie Smead, Jerry Wiegriefe and Pastor Karen Behling

God's Love truly grows Community here at Our Saviour's Evangelical Lutheran Church.

The Transition Team has eight members in addition to Pastor Karen Behling our Interim Pastor:
**Scot Bigalke, Theresa Chatelle, Ann Erickson, Michelle MayoHelle, Lonnie Menard,
Kathleen O'Connor, Dave Oxley, and Jan Tripp.**

The Transition Team is part of Phase 2 of the Call Process.

- Phase 1 is the leave taking of the retiring Senior Pastor.
- Phase 2 is the Transition Team and Interim Ministry.
- Phase 3 is the Call Committee.
- Phase 4 is Beginning New Ministry

We are NOT the Call Committee but we are part of the Call Process

What have we been doing?

We have engaged in active listening, conversations, consulted church records, and begun writing the Ministry Site Profile. The purpose of the Transition Team is to gather the necessary data/information to complete the Ministry Site Profile. The Ministry Site Profile is the Document that the Call Committee will share with the Synod and potential candidates. The goal of the Transition Team is to hear from as many participants in our congregation as possible to gain a complete picture of our congregation.

The transition team met monthly over the summer and bi-weekly since September compiling data to complete the ministry site profile.

- The transition team has engaged in over 100 one-on-one listening sessions with congregational participants ages 10-100 this summer and early fall.
- A central value we are hearing is Community.
- After hearing that the church values community, council and staff adopted a theme for 2025:
God's Love Grows Community.

THE DATA SHOWS WE ARE NOT THE SAME. What really matters is the love of god unites us beyond any division!

This fall we added four Engagement Boards in the Gathering Space and distributed four short surveys so that we could hear from more people. Results of these Engagement Boards and four surveys can be found in the full Transition Team Report available at the Information Desk or at osel.org under Events and News.

NEXT STEPS:

The team is beginning to work on drafts of the Ministry Site Profile for the Congregation to review. Our process will end with an in-person and virtual Town Hall planned to take place this spring.

You can reach the transition team by:

- Reaching out to a person wearing a green transition team shirt.
- Calling the church office and ask to be contacted by a member of the transition team.
- Emailing the Transition team email oseltransitionteam@gmail.com.
- Dropping a note in the suggestion box at the information desk.

Blessings in Christ, Your Transition Team



2025 Annual Report of the Synod

But go, tell his disciples and Peter that Jesus is going ahead of you to Galilee; there you will see him, just as he told you. Mark 16:7

At Easter, when the three women come to the empty tomb in Mark's Gospel, an angel gives them a surprising assignment. They are instructed to tell the others that the Risen Christ has gone before them into Galilee. I continue to ponder what the message of a God "who goes before us" means for us as a synod in this first quarter of the 21st century. Like those first disciples, we have been entrusted with a message of surprising, good news to share with others in our day.

We have found a variety of ways to join the congregations and baptized members of this synod in doing just that, being especially mindful of our mission statement and care values:

As followers of Jesus, we are called to accompany faith communities and equip leaders for God's mission in the world.

Our core values are – authenticity, connection, compassion, and curiosity.

Through The Planting Hope Campaign in 2025, we were able to address the seminary debt load of 16 pastors and deacons, fully retiring the debt of six and greatly reducing the debt of 10 others. We invested an additional \$100,000 in congregational vitality, complementing the funding already in our budget. We hosted 11 summer interns at a variety of work sites, offering young adults an opportunity to explore their own vocation while being immersed in a ministry site. We offered financial assistance to enable 16 youth and young adults to travel with their congregations to our global mission partners in Guatemala and Tanzania. Thank you for contributing to this common work.

As a synod, we equip leaders through training events for lay leaders, a theological conference and gatherings of the ministerium for rostered ministers, and through Zoom events on timely topics like Minnesota's new Paid Family & Medical Leave and the ELCA's Social Statement on Faith and Civic Life. This included six day-long work-shops, sponsored by the Congregational Vitality team and two cohorts of pastors and lay leaders, working on increased skills for stewardship and congregational renewal. The synod also received an ELCA grant for worship renewal and hosted a day-long seminar on "Worship in an Inviting Church" in April. We know that we are all stronger when we work together on matters that impact all 106 congregations and mission starts in the synod.

Not every congregation was in transition in 2025, but the synod staff worked with 17 call processes for pastors and deacons and supplied interim pastors during those times of transition. We also supported the discernment and candidacy process for 22 individuals. We received two of those candidates back into

our synod for their first call. Ordained in 2025 were Pastor Katie Hendrikson (called to Abiding Savior, Mounds View) and Pastor Lauren Mildahl (called to St. Mark in Circle Pines).

As always, I am particularly grateful for those who serve on synod committees and on Synod Council. They are the key guarantors of continuity and stability in our work. In 2025 we welcomed Matt Smith as our new synod treasurer and sent 21 voting members to the Churchwide Assembly in Phoenix.

Throughout these months, God continued to bless us financially with \$1.675 million received as mission support from congregations in 2025 toward our goal of \$1.95 million by the end of January. Your contributions funded the work noted above and a portion was shared with the Churchwide Organization for global mission, ecumenical and inter-religious endeavors, advocacy, and preparation of a new generation of leaders. In addition, many of you contributed generously to the work of our global companions through our Bega Kwa Bega partnership with the Iringa Diocese in Tanzania and our work with the Iglesia Luterana Agustina de Guatemala (ILAG).

Finally, as I begin my last months as the bishop of this synod and help prepare for a new bishop to lead you starting in August 2026, I am keenly aware of the many relationships that make us a healthy, growing and thriving synod. Many of you see those signs of new life in your own congregation and neighborhood. Like me, I know you also appreciate the work of the whole synod staff, who serves alongside me. They include Rachel Holsten, Mary Smith, David Roinas, Kirsten Levorson, Rolf Lowenberg-DeBoer (through July), Justin Grimm, Krista Lind, Leslie Ortiz, Dawn Alitz (beginning September), Joe Lees (beginning September), and Terri Endres (beginning December).

Like the very first disciples, God continues to call us to go forward into the places where God awaits our coming. This includes all the messy places of mistrust and division in our world today. It is a privilege for me – as it is for each of you – to bear the good news of Christ to our many neighbors, who feel especially discouraged and beat down these days, and it is an added joy to share that news alongside all the ministry that happens in and through our lives.

Yours in God's service,



Bishop Patricia Lull



105 University Avenue West, St. Paul MN 55103
651-224-4313 | spas-elca.org

THROUGH YOUR GENEROSITY, GOD IS AT WORK ACROSS THE ELCA.

MISSION SUPPORT

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.

ELCA WORLD HUNGER

Part of our church's long tradition of meeting human needs, ELCA World Hunger testifies to our hope for and commitment to God's promise of a time when we will hunger and thirst no more. ELCA World Hunger walks alongside communities in more than 60 countries — including the United States — to create unique solutions to hunger and poverty.

LUTHERAN DISASTER RESPONSE

Lutheran Disaster Response shares God's hope, healing and renewal with people whose lives have been disrupted by disasters in the United States and around the world. When the dust settles and the headlines change, we stay to provide ongoing assistance to those in need.

WHERE NEEDED MOST

Where Needed Most supports the powerful ways we work together around the world — supporting leaders, inspiring young people, fueling ministries and championing global mission. Gifts to Where Needed Most support and sustain the people, congregations, synods and ministries working around the world to realize the hope-filled future God promises.



Evangelical
Lutheran Church
in America

Sign up to hear more stories of impact from the ELCA churchwide organization at [ELCA.org/subscribe](https://www.elca.org/subscribe).

Read about Mission Support and learn more at [LivingLutheran.org/SOFIA](https://www.livinglutheran.org/SOFIA).

Nominating Committee Report

Our Saviour's Evangelical Lutheran Church
Hastings, MN 55033

Annual Congregational Meeting
Sunday, January 25, 2026
10:00 AM
Official Ballot

Church Council

Vote for three for three year term

- Ashley Dellwo
- John Erickson
- Steve Gomez
- _____

Nominating Committee

Vote for two for three year term

- John Osendorf
- Stephanie Nelson
- _____

Endowment Foundation

Vote for two for three year term

- Scot Bigalke
- Ali Lohmann
- _____

Delegate to Gustavus Adolphus

Congregation Association

Vote for one for one year term

- Rochelle Nielsen
- _____

Delegates to Saint Paul Area

Synod

Vote for six for one year term

- John Erickson
- Ann Erickson
- Dave McCook
- Dennis Nygaard
- Virginia Nygaard
- Kathleen O'Conner
- _____

Alternates to Synod

Vote for four for one year term

- Harvey Sandahl
- Dorothy Sandahl
- _____

