



ST. PAUL-REFORMATION LUTHERAN CHURCH

# Annual Report 2024



Come, join the dance of Trinity,  
Before all worlds begun -  
The interweaving of the Three,  
The Father, Spirit, Son.  
The universe of space and time  
Did not arise by chance,  
But as the Three, in love and hope,  
Made room within their dance.

-ELW #412



# Contents

From the Presiding Bishop .....	4
From the Synodical Bishop .....	5
From the Pastor .....	7
Membership and Pastoral Acts.....	8
Congregational Council Roster.....	9
2025 Annual Meeting Agenda.....	10-11
2024 Annual Meeting Minutes .....	12-13
Summary of Proposed Constitutional Changes .....	14-15
Ministry Reports .....	16
Proposed Budget .....	22-24



## St. Paul-Reformation's Clergy and Staff

The Rev. Dr. Patrick H. Shebeck, *Senior Pastor*  
The Rev. Erik Doughty, *Affiliated Pastor*  
Sr. Stacie Lightner, DMA, *Cantor*  
Jennifer Walding, *Parish Administrator*  
Cindy McArthur, *Administrative Assistant*  
Coda Wilson, *Livestream Tehnician*  
Ava Hacker, *Nursery Attendant*

# From the Presiding Bishop

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 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 L. Eaton". The signature is written in a cursive style.

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

# From the Synodical Bishop

*“Protect me, O God, for I take refuge in you: I have said to the Lord,  
‘You are my Lord, my good above all other.’” Psalm 16:1 (ELW translation)*

As we come to the close of 2024, these are complicated days in our world. I think most congregations in this synod are faring better than many other organizations and institutions when it comes to focusing on a core mission, living out their values, and being financially stable. Yet, anxiety is widespread and lots of people are angry and disappointed, fearful and disenchanted. All these dynamics create a perfect context for witnessing to the good news from God. We have much work to do but we know that we work best when we act as church together in this synod.

This past year the synod staff and the Synod Council adopted this mission statement and core 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.

This understanding of our mission allows us to focus staff time and budget dollars to create the most lasting impact in our common work. The core values thread through the way we interact as synod staff and the way we show up in conversations with congregations and the wider public.

In summer 2024, I hosted five Listening Sessions to hear directly from Lutherans like you where you find hope in your congregation and also the worries that weigh on you. Over 100 persons participated and 50 people joined a Zoom presentation to hear what I had learned.

Here are two strategic steps we are taking as a synod to respond to all that I heard: In 2025 we will inaugurate a year and a half emphasis on worship renewal in congregations. This will be funded in part by an ELCA Churchwide grant with an emphasis on inviting our neighbors to join us in worship experiences. Secondly, as a synod, we will encourage and support efforts to make respectful conversations a hallmark of congregational life. You’ll hear more about both initiatives in early 2025.

During 2024, the synod staff over saw call processes and transitions with more than 30 congregations. Several of those included the calling of multiple rostered ministers. This means that nearly a third of the congregations in the synod were in a time of transition this past year. I am grateful for all who have served on a call committee, for our interim pastors, and for faithful members who trust that we are always being called forward into God’s mission for us as the church.

I was privileged to ordain four persons in 2024, including Pastor Wesley Kimball, serving as associate pastor at All Saints in Cottage Grove; Pastor Pepe Demarest, serving as pastor for the Recovery Church in St. Paul with the United Methodist Church (a full communion partner); Pastor Ruthie Mhanga, serving as associate pastor at Gustavus Adolphus in St. Paul;



and Pastor Nathan Lyke, serving as associate pastor at St. John's in Lakeville.

Three of these candidates were from the Saint Paul Area Synod where we currently have 24 persons in the candidacy process to serve as pastors or deacons in the ELCA. I am grateful for those who serve on the Candidacy Committee, for those who mentor and encourage our candidates, for our seminaries and intern sites, and all who support persons as they discern how God is calling them to live out their vocation in the church and world. This is work we all share, knowing that for many the seeds of wondering about becoming a pastor or deacon begin during the elementary school years.

A highlight in 2024 was welcoming Eternal Flame Lutheran Church to recognized congregational status during the Synod Assembly in May. This vibrant congregation, rooted in the growing Hmong community in the East Metro, began as a mission start many years before. The financial support and prayers of many have accompanied this process, as well as our shared work with the ELCA, led by our Director of Evangelical Mission, Pastor Justin Grimm. Also in 2024, St. Mark Lutheran in St. Paul marked its holy closure as a congregation, after more than 100 years of witness on West 7th Street in St. Paul. There are now 106 congregations in the Saint Paul Area Synod with just over 100,000 baptized members.

The Planting Hope Campaign, a synod-wide initiative to support congregational vitality, youth development, and outreach efforts in the synod, continued to bear fruit. With our partners at Lutheran Social Service of Minnesota, we celebrated the opening of the Early Learning Center-East Side in August, thanks to a \$1 million investment from the campaign. \$100,000 was shared with congregational vitality efforts this year; over \$50,000 was used to fund paid summer internship for nine young adults. To date over \$1.7 million dollars has been raised for The Planting Hope Campaign. I want to thank all who have donated to the campaign while continuing significant mission support, which allows us to do so much together.

God continues to bless our congregations with people and financial resources. The gifts of time, talent, and treasure enable us to live into God's mission in ways no one congregation could do in isolation. This includes support of our mission starts and redevelopment congregations. In 2024 these included Shobi's Table, Foundation of Life, Eternal Flame, Cristo Rey, St. Paul – Wyoming, Lutheran Church of Peace – Maplewood, and Christ the Servant – Vadnais Heights. An exploration of a possible mission start in Rosemount began in 2024.

Finally, I know you join me in thanking those who serve on the staff of this synod. They include Rachel Holsten, Mary Smith, David Roinas, Kirsten Levorson, Rolf Lowenberg-DeBoer, Justin Grimm, Kirsta Lind, Leslie Ortiz and Patricia Lull. Together with Synod Council members, deans, committee members, congregational leaders, and all of you, we have been able to do much to share God's good news to a world, so eager for hope and direction.

I am grateful to serve as the bishop in this time and place, knowing that God alone is our hope and refuge, as the Psalmist proclaims. May we live out that deep truth with joy and confidence in the year to come.

Yours in God's Service,  
*Bishop Patricia Lull*

## From the Pastor

*“Lord of all, of church and kingdom, in an age of change and doubt, keep us faithful to the Gospel; help us work your purpose out.” - ELW 526*

Dear Friends,

As I write to you, we have just finished celebrating the Feast of the Epiphany. Each year, we give people chalk to take home to write “CMB + 2025” on their doorposts, a very old Epiphany tradition that blesses all who come across that threshold in the coming year. You will, of course, notice that this inscription is written above the doors to SPR’s sanctuary. Our prayer: that all who come here will find blessing, purpose, and hope.

The past year at St. Paul-Reformation has seen many new faces who have joined with the saints already in this place to proclaim the Gospel. When I think of the enormous gifts present in this community I am amazed. I am also reminded that not all of us need to be good at everything or called to do everything; what is the passion of one member of SPR might be something that another is not called to do. But, when put together, each serves the whole, called to fulfill their Christian vocation in their various ways, each proclaiming the Gospel.

Every week I see this. Some are called to engage global partners; others are called to lift their voices in song; others are called to teach or to learn; still others are called to serve in the church’s liturgical ministries. Far from these callings being in competition, they are each necessary to “build up the whole” as St. Paul reminds us. Thank goodness I am not called to the same thing as you; thank goodness you are not called to the same thing as me! In short: *we need each other.*

The church has always operated in this way, and “in an age of change and doubt,” such gifts are needed as much now as they were in the book of Acts. People are suspicious of organized religion, mostly because - especially in these days - it seems to be merged with agendas of various kinds that have purposes other than God.

And yet...

God still calls us into community. God still calls us to service. God still calls us to lives of generosity, integrity, and compassion. We may not always agree on how these virtues are lived out, but as the community of Jesus Christ, we commit to these values as determinative of our life together. We serve because Jesus washed the feet of his disciples; we forgive because Jesus forgave from the cross; we speak truth because Jesus himself is the truth of God.

I am so thankful for you and all the work that you have done to live out these values, and - *in the coming year* - our call to live these out again will not lessen. If anything, this call will increase because the needs of our community and our world are always present. From warming hubs to Sunday School to Meals Ministry to Choirs...each is a precious gift from God and in each God is teaching us something new.

*Continued...*



As we move into the coming year, some major projects are starting to take shape, including a second Capital Campaign. Earlier this year we asked for your feedback on this proposal, and you responded with a resounding “yes!” As this work begins, we will need your help to enact the vision for this project, to give generously, and to help steer the campaign to a successful conclusion. You’ve done it before; it’s time to do it again!

But exciting as such a prospect it, it is not as exciting as the ministries taking place here that are changing lives and helping us to grow - with ever-deeper roots - into Christ Jesus. A deep and rich spirituality of the Christian witness is the most exciting of all: learning, growing, changing, converting our hearts to conform more closely to God. Our work begins here, and the ministries we do flow out of this rich and abundant spring of life.

As you embark on the 142nd year of ministry in this place, you carry with you all of these precious gifts and gifts that we have not yet seen or known. Legacy is great, history is wonderful; but the future call of God must be set within our sights, animating the life of the spirit and the heart.

May God bless you in your work, in your witness, in your prayers, in your songs, in your hopes and in your call. In all things, may God - most of all - keep us faithful to the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Peace to you,

Pr. Patrick H. Shebeck  
*Senior Pastor*  
 St. Paul-Reformation Lutheran Church

## Membership and Pastoral Acts 2024

Total membership on 12/31/23.....	416
Total Membership on 12/31/24.....	428
<b>Members Received</b>	
Infant Baptism .....	6
Adults Received .....	7
Children Received .....	2
Confirmations in 2024.....	5
<b>Members Removed in 2024</b>	
By death .....	2
By transfer to other Lutheran Parishes .....	0
By transfer to other faith communities.....	1
Removal from Roll .....	0
Total members removed in 2024.....	3
<b>Pastoral Acts</b>	
Baptisms .....	5
Confirmations .....	2
Marriages.....	4
Funerals.....	4



# Congregational Council Roster

Name	Year Elected/Reelected	Term
Jan Swenson	2024	First Term, First Year
Chris Thomforde	2024	First Term, First Year
Jessa Anderson-Reitz	2023	First Term, Second Year
Susan Martyn	2023	First Term, Second Year
Kristin Benson	2023	First Term, Second Year
Alyn Bedford	2022/2024	Second Term, First Year
Diane Brennan	2022/2024	Second Term, First Year
Karen Hanson	2022/2024	Second Term, First Year
Pam Peyton	2021/2023	Second Term, Second Year
John Rent	2021/2023	Second Term, Second Year

- = *Going off Congregational Council*
- = *Nominated for Reelection to Second Term*



# St. Paul-Reformation Lutheran Church 2025 Annual Congregational Meeting

Sunday, January 26, 2025

---

## Agenda

1. Prayer
2. Call to Order
3. Declaration of Quorum; Appointment of the Parliamentarian
4. Approval of 2024 Annual Meeting Minutes
5. Adoption of 2025 Budget

*Based upon planning and review of financial information, the Congregational Council makes the following resolution:*

### **A Resolution to Approve the 2025 Parish Budget:**

**Resolved:** that St. Paul-Reformation Lutheran Church adopt the 2025 Budget as proposed by the Congregation Council (pg. 22-24).

8. Election of members of various boards and committees (*En bloc*):

### **A Resolution to Elect the Following Persons to Various Offices:**

**Resolved:** that the following persons be elected to the following offices:

- *Congregation Council, First Term:* Ian Block, Christopher Lyman, Carla Hagen
- *Congregation Council, Second Term:* Kristin Benson, Susan Martyn
- *Nominating Committee:* Luke Hanson, Pam Peyton, Eldora Pearson
- *Synod Assembly Voting Members:* from floor (Synod Assembly: May 16-17, 2025, St. Andrew's



**9. Constitutional Changes**

**A Resolution to Approve Constitutional Changes (First Vote)\***

**Resolved:** that St. Paul-Reformation Lutheran Church adopt the revised constitution and bylaws (pg. ) as proposed by the Congregation Council (pg. 15).

- 10. New Business**
  - Capital Campaign Update
- 11. The Lord's Prayer**
- 12. Adjourn**

*\*Note:* a constitutional change to SPR's Constitution requires two votes over two years.



# St. Paul-Reformation Lutheran Church 2024 Annual Congregational Meeting

Sunday, January 28, 2024

---

## Minutes

The Congregation Annual Meeting convened at 12:30 pm via Zoom.

### **Preliminary Matters**

- The meeting was called to order by Vice President Alyn Bedford at 12:30 pm.
- Motion to Approve the 2024 Agenda; Alyn Bedford moved, Chris Thomforde seconded, motion passed
- Quorum was met, 45 in attendance.
- Approval of 2023 Annual Meeting Minutes; Luke Hanson moved, Leo Treadway seconded, motion passed

### **2023 Financial Report**

John Rent, Treasurer, reported that 2023 ended with a small deficit. The cell tower check for the year was received. Payments for the roof repair (14K) will be made monthly throughout the 2024 year and are reflected in the 2024 budget.

### **2024 Budget**

John Rent, Treasurer, presented the 2024 budget. The 2024 budget reflects a 5% increase in revenue. Motion to approve 2024 budget passed by the Parish Council. Leo Treadway seconded; motion passed.

### **Election of members of various boards and committees.**

- New members to the 2024 Parish Council are Jan Swensen and Chris Thomforde.
- Diane Brennan, Alyn Bedford and Karen Hansen were elected to serve a second two-year Council term. Approved
- Members of the current Endowment Fund Committee were renominated for the next term. Approved
- Nominations for the May 2024 Synod Assembly included Jim McGovern (self-nominated) and Marilyn Harder. Approved
- Members for the Nominating Committee approved by the congregation include Luke Hanson, Deanna Sande and Kathy Thomforde.
- Motion to approve all nominations, Leo Treadway and seconded by Marilyn Harder.



### **Constitutional Changes**

A change to the existing definition of quorum was proposed and agreed to by the Parish Council last year. The proposal was to define quorum as 40% of average weekly attendance. John Rent made a motion to approve, Kathy Thomforde seconded, and the motion passed.

### **New Business**

- There was a discussion on the number of members needed for the Parish Council. The constitution requires between 7-12. Even though there are not currently 12 members, the number is within the allowable range. So, unless someone steps forward, the council will continue with its existing roster. Approved.
- Discussion regarding the need to clarify the policies and procedures for the Endowment Fund. As the council works on reviewing and updating the Constitution and By Laws, it is proposed that the council bring this matter forward in a mid-year meeting.
- Leo Treadway stressed the importance of the Annual Synod meeting as a way to share useful information between the congregation and the Synod.

Meeting ended with the Lord's Prayer.

Motion to adjourn.

+*Kristin Benson, Parish Council Secretary*



# Summary of Constitutional Changes

## Summary

Last spring, the Congregation Council formed a subcommittee of Chris Thomforde and Susan Martyn to review the current 2017 SPR Constitution and Bylaws, the ELCA 2022 Model Constitution, and recommend updates. Chris and Susan studied the current SPR Constitution and Bylaws, the ELCA 2022 Model Constitution and made recommendations to the Congregation Council.

They began with an understanding that the ELCA Constitution requires any congregation that “wishes to amend any provision in its governing documents” incorporate required provisions in the most recent ELCA Model. These required provisions are marked with by an asterisk [\*]. They also discovered that provisions not marked with an asterisk are recommended, meaning that they may be included, omitted, or altered as each congregation wishes.

Chris and Susan recommended that the Congregation adopt all the ELCA 2022 Model required sections and made recommendations for updates to some of the recommended provision to reflect SPR history, mission, and current practices. In several meetings, the Congregation Council reviewed and discussed each recommendation. It decided to accept, amend, or reject each recommended provision. After final decisions were made, the Congregation Council reviewed the document once more and adopted this final proposed Constitution with Bylaws at its November 12, 2024 meeting. The congregation will give first consideration at the January 26, 2025 Annual Congregation Meeting and again at a second meeting in January 2026.

The Congregation Council approved all required provisions in the ELCA 2022 Model Constitution to be incorporated into the proposed SPR Constitution. The Congregation Council approved most of the recommended provisions of the ELCA Model Constitution. It made changes to the ELCA recommended provisions in Sections C5.05, C10.04 (previously adopted by Congregation), C10.07, C12.02, C12.03, C12.04, C12.05, C12.07, C13.02, C13.03, and C13.04.

The Congregation Council also reviewed the current SPR Bylaws and approved updates to reflect provisions in the 2022 Model Constitution as well as our current practice and congregational mission. Proposed bylaws are included in this combined document. Bylaws are indented and appear in italics following each relevant constitutional section.

On January 12, 2025, Congregation Council member held an adult forum to review and answer questions about the SPR Proposed Constitution. Chris spoke about the purpose of our constitution: to express who we are and how we will function to life out our mission. Susan reviewed a list of amended sections, including both 2022 ELCA amendments and SPR proposed amendments.

Sixteen members attended the forum, offering thoughtful questions and insights. All approved of the proposals presented, including one “friendly amendment” to our Mission Statement in Bylaw C4.05.11, indicated in red below. The first change (“In Christ”) makes clear we are a Christian Church. Changing “City” to “World” reflects our missions abroad as well as in the city.

**C4.05.11** Mission Statement of St. Paul-Reformation Lutheran Church:  
In Christ, In the World for Good. In the World for God.

## List of Amended Constitution Sections

Section	Source	Explanation
*C 4.02 d	ELCA	Assembly proposal
C 5.05	SPR	Adopt. Cong. Council
*C 6.05 a & d	ELCA	Inclusive Language
*C 9.03 a. 8)	ELCA	Assembly proposal
*C 9.12	ELCA	Deleted “parochial”
*C 9.13	ELCA	Inclusive Language
*C 9.14	ELCA	Deleted “parochial, inclusive language
*C 9.23	ELCA	Assembly proposal
*C 9.25	ELCA	Inclusive Language
*C 9.31	ELCA	Inclusive Language
C 10.04	SPR	Previously adopted by congregation
C 10.07	SPR	Reflects Synod Procedure
C 10.08	ELCA	“or its equivalent” added
C 10.09	ELCA	“ex officio” defined
C 12.02	ELCA/SPR	“as applicable” allows Deacon’s preference
C 12.03	SPR	CC “may,” rather than “shall”
C 12.05 c.)	SPR	Deleted CC authority limitation to contract for specified amount due to C 12.05 d (limiting CC authority to create deficits)
C 12.05 d.)	SPR	Substituted budget percentage rather than dolloar amount
C 12.04 b.)	SPR	Added SPR Constitution racism provision
C 12.05 e.)	ELCA	Deleted synod treasurer to allow greater flexibility in receipt of funds
C 12.07	SPR	“periodic review” substituted for annual review
C 12.13	ELCA	“or its equivalent” recognizes various means of communication, e.g., those with hearing difficulties
C 13.02	SPR	No term limit on nominating committee service
C 13.03	SPR	Deleted and updated Bylaw C11.01a11
C 13.04	SPR	No term limit on mutual ministry committee service
*C 15.02	ELCA	Inclusion of all Rostered Ministers
*C 16.02	ELCA	Updated for precision
*C 16.04	ELCA	Updated for precision
*C 20.02	ELCA	Editorial Change
*C 20.03	ELCA	Editorial Change

\* = Required constitutional provisions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

Note: The full Constitution and Bylaws of St. Paul-Reformation are available at [www.stpaulref.org](http://www.stpaulref.org).



# Ministry Reports

## Adult Education

Adult Education continues to be a bright spot at St. Paul-Reformation, underlining this parish's commitment to learning and inquiry into the faith. Learning is never done, and the continual formation of Christian people in the tradition they profess is work that continues for a lifetime. Each Sunday during the year, Adult Forum is offered with a variety of speakers in theology, social justice matters, and the arts. SPR's LISTEN Series continues to run during Lent, and our Summer Lyceum not only welcomes SPR members, but friends of SPR members who join us.

+Pr. Patrick H. Shebeck

## Building Committee

SPR's Building Committee continues to take care of our grand building that is somewhat... finicky! At 112 years old, some things are bound to need repairs and upkeep, and - in addition to the work of the Building Committee - the faithful "Tuesday Tinkerers" continue to lovingly care for this building each week. Major matters that were addressed in 2024:

Repaired and painted ceiling in Tiedeman Hall.

- Painted and touched up basement office area as prep for new rental
- Repainted floor in basement bathroom
- Changed banners and flags in front of the church throughout the year.
- Installed new, locking handle and new toilet paper dispenser in bathroom by youth room.
- Cleaned out garage
- Fixed downspout on Oxford side of church.

+Brian Olson

## Confirmation

This past year, SPR confirmed five young people who had completed our three-year program of study. We are particularly thankful to Eric Beckman who continues to patiently lead this small but mighty group of learners. This year also saw the completion of a three-year program of curriculum titled "Faith that Frees: Living the Lutheran Tradition." SPR continues to participate in the St. Paul Consortium of ELCA Parish's "Deep Dive," and a highlight this past year was going to the Guthrie Theater in Minneapolis to see "A Christmas Carol."

+Pr. Patrick H. Shebeck

## EveryMeal

This past year, SPR continued its partnership with Every Meal to address food insecurity among students at Capitol Hill Magnet School. Each Friday during the school year, our dedicated volunteers met to discreetly place bags of food into the backpacks of students in need, ensuring they had sustenance for the weekends. Through this ministry, we provided vital support to dozens of children and their families, reflecting our congregation's commitment to serving our community with compassion and care. We are deeply grateful to all the volunteers who contributed their time and energy to this important work. Together, we are making a tangible difference in the lives of these students.

+Krisi Matenaer



## Global Ministry

Since 2007 Global Ministry has continued in relationship with our two companion churches in Pella, Nigeria and in Nahualapa, El Salvador. We continue to include them in our weekly prayers of the church.

- Archbishop Musa Panti Filibus of the Lutheran Church of Christ in Nigeria and Rev. Nunyi Polycarp in Pella extended condolences to SPR on the recent death of Gary Sande and thanked SPR for our continuing relationship with the church in Nigeria.
- This has been a very significant year for the church in El Salvador with the election of a new Bishop, Pastor Guadalupe Cortes who will be installed in January, 2025 after the retirement of Bishop Medardo Gomez after serving for 38 years.
- Seven members from SPR traveled to El Salvador in October spending a week learning about the history of the country and the Lutheran church there as well as spending time with our sister congregation Cristo Libertador in Nahualapa. We were able to spend time worshiping and hearing from some of our older students and had a lot of fun playing "Bible Bingo"
- We continue to support over 100 students age kinder through University with school scholarships supported by SPR members.

+ *Deanna Sande and Sandy Iverson*

## Good Samaritan Fund

SPR's Good Samaritan Fund continues to make a tangible difference in the life of members of our community in immediate need. On the second Sunday of the month, we continue to take a dedicated second offering for this purpose, and SPR's members are generous. Each week, we receive calls for assistance, and SPR member Steve Winfield diligently distributes assistance to members of the St. Paul Community in need. Thank you to all who have given!

+ *Pr. Patrick H. Shebeck*

## Hallie Q. Brown Foodshelf

SPR continues its decades-long partnership with the Hallie Q. Brown Foodshelf and community center. This year, in addition to making regular donations to the foodshelf (and at the request of Hallie Q. Brown), a portion of our giving was used to fund the historic archives at HQB. This archive continues to tell the story of the Rondo neighborhood.

+ *Pr. Patrick H Shebeck*

## ISAIAH

ISAIAH's work in 2024 focused on St. Paul issues, including the city budget and ordinance enforcement. We organized a large public meeting with Mayor Carter to shape his work on the city budget, and held separate meetings with each city councilperson. The approved budget included funds for youth programming and affordable housing that we fought for, though climate action was beyond what the electeds felt the property tax levy should include. Late 2024, and going into 2025, we pushed for the city to adopt a charter change so they could effectively enforce ordinances.

+ *Ed Stuart*



## Meals Ministry

For over six years, an extraordinary group of volunteers have come together each month on a Saturday to prepare, package and deliver delicious, home-cooked meals for our members who are ill or unable to cook regularly. In 2024 our efforts resulted in over 580 lunches and dinners, serving on average 12 individuals each month. This ministry would not be possible without the efforts of the many volunteers who generously share their time making Meals Ministry a vital part of the SPR community.

+ Gwen Peyton and Kris Stevens

## Ministry of Music: Report of the Cantor

I continue to be amazed and grateful for the dedication of the musicians who give their time and talent each week to rehearse and provide music in Wings of Grace handbell choir and Chancel Choir. Please thank these wonderful people for their work supporting the musical life of our congregation!

A cohort of The Way met this summer, during which participants prepared to affirm their baptisms at the annual picnic in Como Park in July. The Way is much easier to do

than to describe, but here goes: we meet for six sessions or so for a dinner party with good food and wine and intentional conversation about faith. The cohorts include new members of SPR and people who have been around for longer (I won't call them "old members"). It's a way of welcoming newbies and folding them into our community, and it's a place where all can ponder our baptism or prepare to be baptized. We delve into the Bible and the ways it continues to speak to us in this time and place. New groups happen periodically when there are enough new people. I hope you will consider participating.

This summer was a busy time for me: in addition to The Way, I led our Summer Lyceum book study on Phyllis Tickle's *The Great*

*Emergence*. I also was honored to be the clinician for a four-session practicum in organ and piano service playing at the national Association of Lutheran Church Musicians workshop held in Valparaiso, Indiana.

What a blessing it is to gather with you each week around font and table to worship God! May God be glorified in the music we make together, joining our voices with all creation to sing praise.

+ Sister Stacie Lightner

## Parish Council Report

The Parish Council of St. Paul-Reformation is responsible for the overall operational and financial health of the parish. The Parish Council meets the second Tuesday of every month to monitor the budget and lead other initiatives of the congregation.

### Some Highlights of 2024:

- The year began with congregational approval of new Council members, Jan Swensen and Chris Thomforde and the election of new officers by the Council:

President:	Alyn Bedford
Vice President:	Susan Martyn
Treasurer:	John Rent
Secretary:	Kristin Benson



- Alyn Bedford, Council President, focused the Council on prioritizing goals for 2024. These priorities included the operations and structure of the endowment fund, the governance documentation and personnel practices.
- The Endowment Committee, chaired by Luke Hanson, developed new procedures for how endowments are managed by the church. These changes were presented to the congregation for feedback in July. Council approved the Endowment Fund proposal with an amendment to change the title to Mission Endowment Fund to align with the church constitution.
- Susan Martyn, Council Vice President, and Chris Thomforde, Council member, led the noble initiative to revise the SPR Constitution and By Laws to conform with the ELCA Model Constitution. These changes were approved by the Parish Council in November.
- The Personnel Committee, chaired by Chris Thomforde, began a comprehensive review of its personnel policies and practices. This work is ongoing.
- SPR completed the second year of hosting the Warming Hub. The Ramsey County staff were very appreciative of the congregational support. SPR purchased 200 hygiene kits and staff provided sandwiches every Wednesday night for guests. Ramsey County paid \$1000 toward 2024 utility costs.
- Pastor Shebeck and Alyn Bedford, President, presented a preliminary timeline for a Fall 2025 Capital Campaign. Early discussions included the recruitment of leaders and members for the Campaign Finance and Campaign Building Committees as well as project objectives.

+*Kristin Benson, Parish Council Secretary*

## Personnel Committee

The Congregational Council asked Chris Thomforde to serve as Chair. He was joined by Jan Swenson, Karen Hanson, and Gwen Payton to form the Committee. The Committee met on several occasions in the summer and fall of 2024 to review the “St. Paul-Reformation Lutheran Church Personnel Policy” (2009) document and the “Policy for Working with Children and Vulnerable Adults in the Ministries of St. Paul-Reformation Lutheran Church” (2022). Questions that arose were addressed to the Council for clarification and updating. The Personnel Committee also met with the Finance Committee to discuss staff member compensation for the 2025 Budget. Going forward in 2025, the Personnel Committee will review job descriptions and present edited and updated copies of all personnel documents to the Council for approval. The Committee will continue to work for full compliance of daily work at SPR in accordance with personnel policies and documents. + *Chris Thomforde*



## Policy for Children and Vulnerable Adults

In keeping with SPR’s spirit of welcome and sanctuary, our Church Council adopted a Policy for Working with Children or Vulnerable Adults in its Ministries in 2004. This policy was updated in 2022. The personnel committee thoroughly reviewed the policy and recommendations will be made to the congregational council in 2025 for final approval. Copies of the 2022 policy are available in the church office.

+*Karen Hanson and Darcie Farrell*

## Sanctuary Support Committee

Our sister Dorcas and her children Daniel, Elizabeth and Deborah are all doing well in building their lives in Saint Paul, with Dorcas making progress in pursuing LPN training, Daniel a Central senior currently investigating colleges, and with the support of Steve Winfield, baseball scholarships. Elizabeth burns up the court in Central's basketball season, and the once-little Deborah has grown to be a junior high young lady. Dorcas' October asylum hearing was cancelled after her case was dismissed, leaving us uncertain about future steps, but glad that Dorcas' lawyer is on top of things. Our years of support has given the family the security needed to grow and develop in this new land with confidence and gratitude. *Soli Deo Gracia.*  
+Tim Iverson



## Quilting Group

We are so appreciative of the generous donations of beautiful fabrics and financial support from SPR and community members. We completed more than 65 quilts, wall hangings, table runners and other quilted projects in 2024. Several of the items were sold at the annual SPR Craftacular sale. The proceeds are used to purchase batting, thread and other supplies. We made several tie blankets which were donated to the Warming Hub. We also donated several quilts to the new Harriet Tubman Shelter for women which recently opened in Maplewood. We look forward to continuing this work in 2025 to support members of our community who are in need of warm quilts. Thank you to all who donate their time and talents to make this initiative a huge success. A special thank you is given to the women who faithfully join us each month to work on the beautiful projects. +Gwen Peyton

## Sunday School

As we have reported to you the last several years, Sunday School at SPR remains in a state of "rebuilding." The parish continues to be challenged by families having other priorities than religious formation, and some if this can - still - be owed to patterns established by COVID-19. We are thankful to Eldora Pearson and Liz Haen who continue this good work, and - with the arrival of many new little ones - we continue to anticipate that this will rebound in the next several years.  
+ Pr. Patrick H. Shebeck

## Theology on Tap

Theology on Tap continues to meet bi-monthly at local Saint Paul Breweries, and a robust group of people join together each time to take on some theological topic! Over some excellent beer, we have kicked the theological football around, and this time together is both centered on deep conversation, but also on fellowship.  
+Pr. Patrick Shebeck

## Warming Hub

St. Paul Reformation is now in our third year of welcoming the Ramsey County Warming Hub to our building. This program offers a low-barrier welcome to those who need a warm place to rest each night.

For the first two years, we welcomed women, and this year we welcome children and families. In the first two years we served between ten and forty women. Our congregation has responded with a full closet of supplies such as pillows, blankets, socks, and hygiene kits.

We began our third year with these gifts in early December. This winter, Ramsey County designated our site for families and children. As before, they also provide wonderful caring people to manage the site. We are not sure why, but the number of people who visit our place has declined. As a result, we do not need any new supplies at present. The county has been looking into why this has happened, and hoping to increase the number of folks served. *We stand ready to assist as needed.*

+Susan Martyn



# Proposed 2025 Budget + Income

The following budget is recommended to the congregation for approval per action of the Parish Council on January 14, 2025:

	2025 Proposed	2024 Actual/ Projected	2024 Budget	Notes
<b>INCOME</b>				
<b>1</b>	<b>General Offerings</b>			
2	Current & Benevolence	424600	401410.19	395400
3	Altar Flowers	2000	2082	2000
4	Seminary Intern (Vicar)	0	0	0
5	Total General Offerings	426600	403492.19	397400
6				
<b>7</b>	<b>Seasonal Offerings</b>			
8	Lent	200	119	200
9	Easter	1500	1523	1000
10	Christmas	2000	2000	2000
11	Special Offerings:	600	569	1200
12	Total Seasonal Offerings	4300	4211	4400
13				
<b>14</b>	<b>Rent Income</b>			
15	AA/Saturday's Children	1500	1399	1800
16	Apartment Rent	20900	16550	18300
17	Basement Rent	11000	18550	13000
18	Bell Tower Income	30000	30000	30000
19	Damage Deposit	0	0	0
20	Total Rent Income	63400	66499	63100
21				
<b>22</b>	<b>Other Income</b>			
23	Memorials	0	0	0
24	Cost Recovery	0	0	0
25	Interest Income	4800	4453.35	5000
26	Mission Investment Fund Interest (Op only)	0	0	0
27	Building Improve Fund Release to Operations	0	0	0
28	Deficit Reduction Campaign	10800	10393.66	10000
29	Sale of Bell Tower Installment	0	0	0
30	SBA PPP Debt Forgiveness	0	0	0
31	CARES Act ERTC Credit	0	0	0
32	Total Other Income	15600	14847.01	15000
33				
<b>34</b>	<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b>509,900</b>	<b>489,049.2</b>	<b>479,900</b>

# Proposed 2025 Budget + Expenses

		2025 Proposed	2024 Actual/ Projected	2024 Budget	Notes
<b>EXPENSES</b>					
35	Salaries and Benefits	303600	294813.12	297600	
36	Accounting and Payroll Service	21000	21329.84	20400	
37	Advertising	3000	3279.4	2000	
38	Bank Service Charges	300	423.33	300	
39	ROOF PAYMENTS	0	14648.4	14650.08	
40					
41	Building Repairs and Maintenance				
42	Boiler (Building Equip Repairs/Mtn)	4900	4100.62	3000	
43	(Building) Repairs and Maintenance	11400	8632.49	7800	
44	Building Repairs/Mtn - Apartment	1000	0	1000	
45	(Building Maintenance) Supplies	1200	1001.4	1800	
46	Elevator (Repairs & Maintenance)	2400	2419.47	2160	
47	Janitorial Contracted Services	15900	15413.19	14400	
48	Snow Removal	3500	3350	3000	
49	Trash (Refuse) Removal	6600	6932.55	4680	
50					
51	Building Utilities				
52	Utilities - Xcel Gas and Electric	17500	18821.76	23000	
53	Utilities - Water	3000	2978.45	2600	
54					
55	Children and Youth	0	0	0	
56	Contractor - Nursery Attendant	3600	300	0	
57	Copier Expense	0	0	0	
58	County/City Assessments	1400	1352.7	0	
59	Credit Card Processing Fees	2000	2068.515	1500	
60					
61	Education Expense				
62	Adult Education	1000	787.74	1500	
63	Conferences/Retreats	0	0	0	
64	Confirmation	1500	1286.01	1500	
65	Sunday School	1000	783.86	1500	
66					
67	ELCA Synod Benevolence Support	11700	11019.51	10500	
68	Fellowship Events	2500	2114.52	3000	
69	Insurance	22200	22435.38	17820	
70	New Member Development/(Outreach)	3000	5125.31	2000	

		2025 Proposed	2024 Actual/ Projected	2024 Budget	Notes
<b>EXPENSES</b>					
71	Constant Contact / Livestream Firm	600	610	540	
72	(Office) Equipment Purchase	0	175.99	0	
73	Office Supplies and Expenses	9600	10036.43	9275	
74	Personnel Expenditures	500	826.53	0	
75	Postage/Mailings	3000	2947.44	3600	
76	Rental Income Related Expenses	0	0	0	
77	Program General	0	0	0	
78	Seminars and Education - Staff	1000	2128.36	500	
79	Stewardship	500	407.17	1000	
80	Synod Assembly/Conference	200	243.16	100	
81	Technology - Software	1400	340	600	
82	Telephone and Internet	5000	7527.58	3600	
83	The Way	0	0	300	
84					
85	Worship and Music				
86	Altar Flowers and Plants	2000	3998.82	2000	
87	Holy Communion and Candles	900	899.56	600	
88	Honoraria	1000	1150	600	
89	Music - Choral & Instrumental	2000	2907.84	1200	
90	Organ/Pianos Maintenance/Repair	1000	1068	1000	
91	Supplies	2400	3094.71	2275	
92					
93	Interest Expense	0	351.82	0	
94					
<b>95</b>	<b>TOTAL EXPENSES:</b>	<b>476300</b>	<b>484130.975</b>	<b>464900.08</b>	
96					
97	NET FUND BALANCE	33600			
98					
99	<u>Cash Flow Items</u>				
100	Tower Certificate of Deposit	0			
101	MIF Debt Service	-33600			
102					
103	Cash Flow	0			
104	Culumative Cash Flow				



