

ANNUAL REPORT 2023



Evangelical
Lutheran Church
in America

A MESSAGE FROM PRESIDING BISHOP ELIZABETH EATON



Dear friends in Christ,

Over the past year we have continued to experience changes in the world around us. Even as our church finds ways to adapt to this changing world, we find hope in the unchanging and always present promise of God's love through Jesus Christ. We change and adapt not to conform to the world but because we believe that the gift of God's Son is for the world, and that our congregations and worshiping communities are places to gather and be sent into the world, where we will tell the story of God's love in word and deed.

The ministries of our congregations, our synods and the churchwide organization provide ways for the church to move beyond the boundaries of structures and geography and to share God's love with people in our neighborhoods, our cities, our country and beyond. We engage in this ministry knowing that our church walks by faith, trusting in God's promise in the gospel, and that we exist by and for the proclamation of this gospel word. In John 15:5, Jesus reminds us, "I am the vine; you are the branches. Those who abide in me and I in them bear much fruit, because apart from me you can do nothing." We are connected by the promise that we do all through Christ and can do nothing apart from him.

God gives the Holy Spirit, who uses gospel proclamation — in preaching and sacraments, in forgiveness and in healing conversations — to create and sustain this faith. Just as we rely on God to sustain our faith, we rely on each other to sustain the ministries that offer God's love to the world. Through your generosity to each expression

of this church — your congregation, your synod and your churchwide organization — you add to our collective voice proclaiming God's love for all.

I am grateful for your generosity over this last year. My gratitude spreads far beyond your generous financial gifts. You've shared your gifts of time through countless hours of volunteering, serving and accompanying. You've shared the gifts of your voices as we've tried to discover and learn how God is calling us to be the church now and into the future. And, finally, dear church, you have shared the gift of the realness of God's love with the world around you. Be well, dear church, and stand steadfast in the promise of God's love and grace as you take that promise with you into the world.

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

“I am the vine; you are the branches. Those who abide in me and I in them bear much fruit, because apart from me you can do nothing.” —John 15:5

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FIRST IMMANUEL CORE VALUES

***Spiritual Life * Friendly Community *
Acceptance & Diversity * Tradition & Heritage *
Music & Worship * Growing in Faith *
Family Focus * Serving & Volunteering***

**ANNUAL MEETING
SUNDAY, 4 FEBRUARY 2024
AGENDA**

CALL TO ORDER

OPENING PRAYER

ADOPTION OF AGENDA

QUORUM COUNT

PRESIDENT'S REMARKS

SPECIAL RECOGNITION

REPORT OF NOMINATING COMMITTEE

ELECTIONS:

CHURCH COUNCIL

Four 3-year positions:

for 1st term—Kevin Kindschuh, Chris Weiss, Leslie Wong

for 2nd term—Jeannette O'Brien

One 2-year position:

For 1st term—Maddie Wiens

NOMINATING COMMITTEE

Nominations from the floor; 6 members, including 2 Council members;

1-year term

ENDOWMENT COMMITTEE

1 position for a first 3-year term: Judy Wick

TWO VOTING MEMBERS TO SYNOD ASSEMBLY

June 1, 2024—Online

CONGREGATION PRESIDENT

Nominated by Council: James Bash; nominations from the floor are also possible

TREASURER'S REPORT

2024 MINISTRY PROPOSAL AND RECOMMENDATIONS

COMMITTEE REPORTS

OLD BUSINESS

NEW BUSINESS

Revisions to FILC Constitution

Multnomah County Property Tax Issue

RESOLUTIONS

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS AND THANKS

CLOSING PRAYER

ADJOURNMENT



**First Immanuel Lutheran Church
Annual Meeting
January 29, 2023**

Call to order: Lauren Kim called the meeting to order at 1:03 PM.

Opening prayer: Pr. Melinda led us in our opening prayer.

Adoption of agenda: Motion to adopt the agenda was passed.

Quorum count: There were 37 voting members in attendance. Quorum passed.

President's remarks: Lauren talked about how crazy of a year 2022 had been with continuing to adapt to the needs of the church during/post-COVID times. She also noted the impact of losing Rose Haven as a tenant and the hard work by the newly created tenant task force to fill the vacancy.

Special recognition: Special thanks to Chia Stockwell and Chris Weiss. Chia has faithfully led the virtual worship space by running the Zoom for hybrid church services. Chris has helped with the sound system at FILC, including resolving a sound issue with the choir, with the Zoom service from the sanctuary, and setting up a YouTube channel for recorded church services.

Report of Nominating Committee: Thanks to Kent Fredrickson, Brian Martin, and Melissa Lathen-Bennett for their time on Council. Kent and Brian ended their second three-year terms. Melissa needed to step down after her first year. Tyrell Servo and Lynn Akerman were submitted to replace the two open three-year terms. Martha Driessnack was submitted to take over the remaining two years of Melissa's term. Jim Wick and Chia Stockwell have each agreed to serve a second three-year term on Council. Jim Dunn has agreed to serve a second three-year term on Endowment Committee

Elections: Council nominations for four three-year positions: Lynn Akerman (1st term), Tyrell Servo (1st term), Jim Wick (2nd term), Chia Stockwell (2nd term); one two-year position (with option to re-up for second three-year term): Martha Driessnack. Motion to approve all Council nominations as a slate was passed. Nominations were taken from the floor for nominating committee. Chris Koonce, Ryan Traetow, Pat Andeen, and Julie Young accepted nominations. Two Council members to serve on Nominating Committee to be determined later. Motion to approve Nominating Committee was passed. Motion approved for Jim Dunn to serve second three-year term on Endowment Committee. James Bash and Chia Stockwell volunteered and were approved to attend Synod Assembly. James Bash was elected to serve as Congregation President.

Treasurer's report: Kent shared comparison of end of 2021 vs. end of 2022. Insurance for building and contents has increased about 4% each year. Steeple repair loan is down to \$22k remaining (from \$75k initial loan balance) and will be paid off in just under 2 years. Envelope offerings finished about \$15k under budget of what we planned/hoped to receive in 2022. We were a little optimistic last year thinking we'd have more attendance back in church but COVID has gone on longer than expected. People who pledge do tend to meet their pledges, but non-pledges don't always meet where we would expect/hope. Special gifts were received at Christmas and Easter, but we were still facing a \$60k+ deficit at the end of 2022. Year-end giving in response to year-end appeal brought the actual deficit down to \$19,188 which will be taken from reserve fund (leaving just over \$100k in the reserve fund). 2022 was an unusual year in that we did not have a tenant in lower Sodergren for the majority of the year. New tenants did move in and started paying rent in October. Endowment funds lost over \$69k over the year. Compensation and

benefits are a major part of the budget. Synod recommends a COLA each year. For 2022, FILC met Synod recommendation of 4% COLA. For 2023, Synod recommended 8.7%. FILC is not financially able to meet this COLA this year but will increase salaries mid-year if finances change and allow us to do so. Security services have also become a major expense over the last few years. Motion to approve Treasurer's report subject to audit passed.

2023 ministry proposal and recommendations: As noted in Treasurer's report, FILC had been overly optimistic in non-pledge giving for 2022, so the budget for 2023 is more conservative and aligned with what we actually received in 2022. Rental income budget increasing now based on new tenants and lease terms. We're starting the year with a proposed deficit of around \$40k. Synod benevolence will remain at \$12.2k. Cost for pastors' health insurance has decreased some due to Pr. Aaron going on Medicare. Auto expenses are increasing a bit to \$1.5k, hoping pastors will be able to start doing more home visits and things like that again in 2023. Prior years were somewhere between \$1k-\$1.5k and only since COVID had it dropped significantly. Reconstituted Finance Committee will be meeting to address ongoing financial issues. Committee will report to Council monthly. Members can also request copies of reports at any point during the year. FILC is not giving the recommended 8.7% COLA. In lieu of COLA, there is a new payroll tax for Paid Leave Oregon effective January 2023, funded through payroll deductions. Rather than withholding from employees' paychecks, FILC will cover the payroll tax and not deduct from paychecks. COLA would have increased budget by \$19k this year vs. \$1k for covering new payroll tax. There is no written policy for how big the reserve fund should be but Kent's guideline is not below \$100k, as this would keep the church going for two years. Motion to accept budget as proposed was approved.

Committee reports: Full reports are available online/within the annual report. James highlighted all of the hard work Jim Wick does around the church to maintain the property. Kent acknowledged Leslie Wong as financial secretary and Bobbi Varnes as teller for counting. He also noted Richard Wong has helped with tracking, and Debbie Rehn is a QuickBooks whiz. Finance Committee noted disappointment with not being able to meet COLA but that FILC does honor designated gifts, if any members would like to make designated gifts to help provide some kind of COLA or bonus. On behalf of Congregational Life Committee, it was noted that new cards (created by Rachel Dietz) have been ordered as part of the card care project and are also available to any members who would like some.

Old Business: None.

New Business: None.

Resolutions: None.

Acknowledgment and thanks: Thanks was given to the pastors, Debbie, Ralph, and Karl. Thanks also to all of our partner parking lots that allow FILC members to use them on Sundays.

Closing prayer: Pr. Aaron led the congregation in the Lord's Prayer.

Adjournment: Lauren Kim adjourned meeting at 2:11 PM.

Linnea Zahradnik,
Secretary

OUR MISSION STATEMENT...
FIRST IMMANUEL LUTHERAN CHURCH IS
A WELCOMING COMMUNITY CENTERED IN CHRIST'S LOVE,
JOYFULLY REACHING OUT TOGETHER

CONGREGATIONAL STATISTICS—2023

	2023	2022	2021	2020	2019	2018
CONFIRMED MEMBERS	255	245	240	242	234	235
BAPTIZED MEMBERS	316	312	308	310	302	303
COMMUNING MEMBERS	155**	145*	149*	151*	183	185
ADULT BAPTISMS	0	0	0	1	0	0
ADULT AFFIRMATIONS & TRANSFERS IN	5	8	0	6	4	4
CHILD TRANSFERS IN	1	0	0	0	2	0
CHILD BAPTISMS	1	0	0	1	0	2
CHILD TRANSFERS OUT	0	0	0	0	0	0
YOUTH CONFIRMATIONS	6	1	0	2	2	2
LOSSES BY DEATH	1	4	2	0	5	3
ADULT LOSSES BY REQUEST	0	0	0	0	4	4
AVERAGE WEEKLY WORSHIP	66**	71*	75*	79*	78	79

* Estimated under Covid conditions, Zoom-only worship, and hybrid worship (in-person and on Zoom).

** Includes screen attendance, adjusted/estimated.

BAPTISMS IN 2023:

Zachary Daniel Dietz 02/26/2023

CONFIRMATIONS IN 2023:

Katy Drexler 05/21/2023

Macy Drexler 05/21/2023

Augie Matthias 05/21/2023

Hugo Matthias 05/21/2023

Pearl Matthias 05/21/2023

Luke VanDeGrift 05/21/2023

NEW MEMBERS RECEIVED IN 2023:

Anke Brandstater 03/12/2023

Marilyn Ball 10/22/2023

Amy Harrison 10/22/2023

Jane Sproul, Roy Scott & Allison Scott Sproul 10/22/2023

DEATHS IN 2023:

Lynn Akerman 02/18/1944

DEATH

07/12/2023

REPORT OF THE PASTORS, 2023

Normally we begin our annual reports by reflecting on some of the significant events or accomplishments of the past year. This year we want to begin with expressing our appreciation and thankfulness for you. We served as your pastors for 22½ years, and we are tremendously grateful for the generous, kind and openhearted spirit of this congregation. The past year has been challenging in so many ways, especially with working to return to something like normal after Covid, Pr. Aaron's surgery, and finally preparing for both of us to retire on December 31, 2023. Congregational leaders and members have been tremendously supportive. We have been encouraged by the way congregational leaders stepped up to meet the tasks and challenges at hand. We were touched by the kindness and concern shown by all of those who provided meals and sent get well cards during Pr. Aaron's recovery. We are so grateful for the expressions of love and care we have received over recent months. Thank you!

Looking back over the past year, here are some of the important events, accomplishments and themes.

WORSHIP AND MUSIC

We have been thankful to see **in-person participation** in Sunday worship gradually getting stronger over the course of the year. The year really ended on a high note with the Children's Christmas Program, the Choir Cantata, and beautiful, festive services on Christmas Eve, Julotta, and New Year's Eve Day. We're also thankful for the leadership of Chris Weiss and Richard Wong, who helped improve the sound quality of our **hybrid services** and develop a strong presence on our YouTube channel. Pr. Aaron enjoyed leading the Lenten midweek services (with meditations inspired by a resource from Kate Bowler, "God Blesses the Lives We Actually Have") and was especially grateful for members of choir who led the singing of Holden Evening Prayer. Easter Sunday was a joy, complete with the Easter breakfast in Fellowship Hall and the children's Easter Egg Hunt on the lawn. It was a special joy to celebrate confirmation for 6 of our youth—Augie, Hugo and Pearl Matthias, Katy and Macy Drexler, and Luke VanDeGrift.

When the middle of the year was disrupted with Pr. Aaron's surgery and recuperation, Pr. Melinda held things together. We are both grateful for the help of colleagues who filled in when we were both away. We are very thankful that First Immanuel has such an **amazing team of worship leaders**. We give thanks for Ralph and Sue Nelson and Karl Jurisons, and for our devoted choir members and handbell choir members, for the leadership they give to music. We are grateful to be able to work with a creative and hardworking Worship and Music Committee, eloquent Assisting Ministers, and faithful volunteers who serve as lectors and ushers and prepare Holy Communion.

PROPERTY AND FINANCES

Property and church finances continue to offer some of our biggest challenges. After Rose Haven shelter moved out of the Sodergren Hall lower level last year, we were glad to welcome new tenants, Independence Network and Havurah Shalom. Unfortunately, none of our congregational leaders understood Multnomah County requirements for refiling for tax-exempt status. We truly appreciate the efforts of Marja Selmann and Jim Dunn, who are helping congregational leaders navigate this.

We have both been involved in a variety of other **property and finance related efforts** this year. Since we have been unable to fill the role of Outdoor Maintenance Sexton in the way we did in the past, a lot of the morning clean-up of the property has fallen to us pastors. Pr. Melinda helped out with the spring property clean-up day.

Pastor Melinda provided primary leadership in working with the Stewardship Committee to prepare the **fall pledge program, "Following Christ—We Give Anew."** We appreciated Bishop Laurie Larson Caesar's contribution to the effort, preaching in worship for Stewardship Sunday. We give thanks for the generosity of First Immanuel members who made pledges for 2024 and who made donations to help reduce the 2023 budget deficit. Pastor Aaron worked with the **Endowment Committee** to award endowment grants of \$13,775.

LEADERSHIP, ADMINISTRATION AND COMMUNICATION

As we've begun to make our way back to planning large, in-person congregational events, we've found that communication has been an ever-present concern. Regular contact and a reliable source of information are very important. Pastor Melinda oversaw the weekly e-news and website updates, and Pastor Aaron composed a weekly digital devotion. We continued to share preparation of weekly pastors' messages for the e-news, and are thankful for Council members who wrote for the e-news through Pr. Aaron's surgery and recuperation. We continued to post sermon texts and devotions on the FILC website. Administration is important for keeping a congregation running efficiently. Both pastors engaged in countless emails and phone calls supporting the work of Executive Committee, Council, and other groups. We truly appreciate the many able volunteers and our **wonderful office manager, Debbie Rehn**.

Pastor Melinda and Anna Wilde took the primary role in developing the April 29 **FILC Congregational Retreat**. 21 members attended, and we appreciate the contributions of everyone who contributed to the task of discerning the shape of our congregation's ministry for the future. The group identified a need for congregational self-care and re-engagement with members, focusing on internal work in order to build a foundation to reach out post-pandemic.

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION FOR ADULTS

Pastor Melinda led the Forum through several book studies while also managing a hybrid format for the group. In the winter and spring, Pastor Melinda led discussion of ***The Book of Joy by His Holiness the Dalai Lama and Archbishop Desmond Tutu***. Next, we studied ***Civic Life and Faith***, using a resource from the ELCA. Participants in the study were able to contribute to the development of ELCA social teaching. In the fall we discussed ***The Liturgy of the Ordinary: Sacred Practices in Everyday Life***, by Tish Harrison Warren. In the winter, we began a study of ***How to Know a Person: The Art of Seeing Others Deeply and Being Deeply Seen***, by David Brooks. The Forum continues to be a rich place for in-depth learning and thoughtful conversation.

CHILDREN AND YOUTH

Pastor Aaron enjoyed **Confirmation** classes for the 2022-23 program year, with 8 youth from First Immanuel and 5 youth from Zion Lutheran participating with their parents twice each month. We finished our exploration of the message of the Bible using Dan Erlander's ***Manna and Mercy***. This fall a new class has begun for the 2023-24 program year, using Luther's Small Catechism and the Gospel of John as resources for exploring the essentials of Christian faith. Pastor Aaron is grateful for Pr. Joan Beck, who is leading the second half of the program beginning in January.

In the winter and spring, Pastor Aaron led **Sunday School classes** for elementary kids, developing a curriculum based on stories from the beginning of the book of Genesis. We appreciate the congregational leaders who have stepped up to reshape Sunday School during Pr. Aaron's absence. One of the highlights of the year was the **Children's Christmas Program**, "Macy's Magical Christmas Program," with 22 children and youth participating. Pastor Aaron wrote the script to include special guests St. Nicholas, Ebenezer Scrooge and the Sugar Plum Fairy. It was a whimsical and fun way to tell the traditional Christmas story.

SUPPORTING COMMUNITY AND CONNECTION

Pastor Melinda worked with the Congregational Life Committee, which was active in **nurturing community and creating connections** between members. She coordinated the book group and participated in the Zoom baking days, which proved to be a wonderful way of bringing people together for fellowship. The committee was glad to sponsor events like the Easter Breakfast, Rally Day and the Advent Workshop, which were all well-attended. It was a joy to have time together for fellowship. The committee has continued to sponsor "care cards" sent to members. As we work at building up our faith community together in the aftermath of the pandemic, this group has been creative and energetic in sponsoring coffee time, meals and gatherings.

OUTREACH

We were excited to welcome **new members**: Anke Brandstater in March, and Marilyn Ball, Amy Harrison, Jane Sproul and Roy Scott and their daughter Allison in October. Pastor Melinda served as a pastoral liaison to Lift Urban Portland and its nutrition programs, which FILC supported with successful spring and fall **food drives** this year. We were glad to see FILC members support our longtime relationship with **Gallagher Plaza** low-income apartments with generous Giving Tree donations that made possible a \$15 Fred Meyer gift card for each resident at Christmas. We also are thankful for FILC members who are supporting outreach at Emmons Place, delivering groceries to residents from Lift Urban Portland. Both pastors participated in the **blood drives** this year and attended the “**Classical Up Close**” concert in April. It is a joy to welcome our neighbors to events in our space.

PASTORAL AND SPIRITUAL CARE

As pastors it is our great privilege to accompany members through the significant events of life and offer spiritual support. This year we rejoiced at the baptism of **Zachary Dietz** and celebrated with Rachel and Dan (and big brother Nolan). We also grieved the death of our member and friend, **Lynn Akerman**, and commended her into God’s care. Pastor Melinda was thankful for the opportunity to support Mike and his family through a difficult time. Pastor Melinda also led the memorial service for Pastor John Trom, father of FILC member Jennifer Trom. We were able to make a number of pastoral visits this year to share Holy Communion, and we kept in touch by phone and Zoom with those who live alone or face struggles. Pastor Melinda updated the **Prayer Chain** with needs and concerns regularly, and Suzanne Nelson oversees the email Prayer Chain. All of these connections sustain faith and community in this challenging season.

WIDER CHURCH

We appreciate opportunities to be part of the wider church’s life. Pastor Aaron served as chair of the Reference and Counsel Committee for the Oregon Synod Assembly this year. We both attended Synod Assembly online. Pastor Melinda serves as chair for the Oregon Synod Byberg Preaching Conference planning team. She also serves as dean for the Rose Cluster of the Oregon Synod.

TRANSITIONING TO NEW LEADERSHIP

During the past few months we’ve been working to make the transition to new leadership as smooth as possible. There has been a lot of knowledge to pass on, lists to update, responsibilities to share, and much more. We appreciate the diligence of First Immanuel’s staff, council members and other leaders who have been tremendous partners, both in dealing with the immediate tasks at hand and looking ahead to prepare for the interim period. We’re thankful that the Oregon Synod has found an interim pastor to lead you through the period of reflection and discernment ahead. We so value the joys of Christian community we’ve shared with you, and we believe in the future of Christ’s work through First Immanuel.

Preparing to leave this community where we’ve shared 22½ years of ministry is bittersweet. We are excited about what the future may hold for us, but we’re also sad to be leaving the friendships and the sense of belonging in community that have been such a gift. We appreciate the Synod’s wisdom about needing to fully remove ourselves from First Immanuel in order to make room for discernment during the interim period and partnership with a new pastor after that. We will miss you and continue to pray for you, trusting that members will step up to the challenges of this transition time.

CLOSING THOUGHTS AND THANKS

We are truly and deeply thankful for the call to serve with you as your pastors. We have experienced First Immanuel as a lively, creative and grace-filled community. We value **our congregational leaders and staff**. They are both extremely competent and a joy to work with. We appreciate Skipper Bessette, Karl Jurisons, Ralph Nelson, Debbie Rehn, and Vincenzo Vargo.

Finally, we give thanks for you, the people of First Immanuel, for your joyful spirit and your commitment to Christ’s work. We have worked hard together to find our way together through an exceptionally challenging time. Our relationships with each other and the faith we share give stability and peace in a tumultuous and anxious time. We are stronger, more patient and more compassionate because of the

support and encouragement we give to each other. As a community, we are a visible sign of God's love and care, the living presence of Christ in Northwest Portland. With our words and actions, we extend Christ's forgiving and healing work to our neighbors. We rejoice to have shared this community with you, worshiping God and serving our neighbors in Christ's name.

In Christian service,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Pastor Aaron". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long, sweeping underline that extends to the right.

Pastor Aaron J. Couch

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Pastor Melinda". The signature is cursive and elegant, with a small loop at the end.

Pastor Melinda J. Wagner

TREASURER'S REPORT - February 4, 2024

First Immanuel Lutheran Church
Comparative Balance Sheet - 2022 and 2023

Page 1 of 3

ASSETS	12/31/2022	12/31/2023
<u>Current Assets - General Fund</u>		
Checking Account - US Bank	\$47,096	\$74,518
Petty Cash	\$25	\$25
Total Current Assets	\$47,121	\$74,543
<u>Fixed Assets</u>		
Land - 632 NW 19th - Church	\$867,440	\$867,440
Land - 1816 NW Irving - Sodergren Hall	\$1,548,970	\$1,548,970
Land - 616 / 626 NW 19th	\$1,456,030	\$1,456,030
	\$3,872,440	\$3,872,440
Building / Organ - 632 NW 19th - Church	\$2,238,343	\$2,238,343
Steeple Repair - Loan Contra Account	\$22,661	\$11,054
Building - 1816 NW Irving - Sodergren Hall	\$986,874	\$986,874
	\$3,247,878	\$3,236,271
Contents / Furniture - Church	\$336,446	\$336,446
Contents / Furniture - Sodergren Hall	\$148,080	\$148,080
	\$484,526	\$484,526
Total Fixed Assets	\$7,604,844	\$7,593,237
<u>Other Assets - Designated Fund Accounts</u>		
Money Market Account - US Bank	\$64,875	\$33,922
Money Market - Reserve / Bequest - US Bank	\$2,015	\$1,747
US Bank CD #1 and #2	\$0	\$20,077
Money Market - Property Fund - US Bank	\$15,279	\$15,284
Mission Investment Fund (MIF) - Property Fund	\$10,069	\$10,119
Endowment Funds - Vanguard Group	\$320,958	\$358,043
Endowment Funds - Vanguard Loan - Prop Devel	\$22,500	\$22,000
Mission Investment Fund (MIF) - CD	\$1,133	\$1,138
Cert of Deposit - Confirmation - US Bank	\$3,233	\$0
US Bank CD Conf/Adult Ed	\$0	\$5,019
Total Other Assets	\$440,062	\$467,349
TOTAL ASSETS	\$8,092,027	\$8,135,128
LIABILITIES, EQUITY and FUNDS		
<u>Current Liabilities</u>		
Payroll Taxes	\$2,702	\$2,437
<u>Long-Term Liabilities</u>		
Synod Loan - Steeple Repair	\$22,661	\$11,054
Total Current and Long-Term Liabilities	\$25,362	\$13,490
<u>Church Equity</u>		
Physical Plant	\$7,582,183	\$7,582,183
Working Capital	\$647	\$647
Total Church Equity	\$7,582,830	\$7,582,830
Designated Funds / Reserve - Summary from Page 2	\$483,835	\$538,808
TOTAL LIABILITIES, EQUITY and FUNDS	<u>\$8,092,027</u>	<u>\$8,135,128</u>

First Immanuel Lutheran Church

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Comparative Statement of Receipts and Disbursements - 2022 and 2023

<u>Receipts - General Fund</u>	<u>2022 Actual</u>	<u>2023 Actual</u>	<u>2023 Budget</u>	<u>Over/(Under) Budget</u>
Envelope Offerings	\$267,511	\$274,518	\$268,060	\$6,458
Special Offerings (Easter, Christmas, etc.)	\$7,023	\$6,731	\$7,000	(\$269)
Special Gifts - Undesignated	\$53,575	\$56,287	\$3,000	\$53,287
Loose Offerings	\$563	\$1,212	\$1,000	\$212
Bldg Use - Sodergren - Lower Level	\$13,700	\$32,704	\$38,704	(\$6,000)
Bldg Use - Other	\$3,955	\$3,960	\$7,070	(\$3,110)
Miscellaneous	\$430	\$566	\$500	\$66
Investment Income / Interest	\$17	\$224	\$20	\$204
Transfer - Designated Funds	\$1,000	\$5,000	\$0	\$5,000
 Total Receipts - General Fund (before Reserve Fund Transfer)	 \$347,773	 \$381,202	 \$325,354	 \$55,848
Transfer - Reserve Funds	\$19,188	(\$15,642)	\$40,255	(\$55,897)
 Total Receipts - General Fund	 \$366,962	 \$365,560	 \$365,609	 (\$49)

Disbursements - General Fund - See Page 3

Summary of Receipts and Disbursements - Designated Funds

<u>Designated Funds</u>	<u>Beg Balance</u>	<u>Receipts</u>	<u>Disbursements</u>	<u>End Balance</u>
Reserve Fund	\$101,028	\$15,642	\$6,093	\$110,577
Confirmation (1)	\$1,866	\$142	\$0	\$2,008
Memorial Funds	\$2,945	\$2,865	\$1,228	\$4,582
Bequest Funds	\$0	\$52,400	\$52,399	\$1
World Mission Endowment (3)	\$125,255	\$18,080	\$5,000	\$138,334
FILC Endowment Fund (3)	\$219,476	\$31,727	\$8,775	\$242,428
Special Gifts - Designated	\$7,003	\$7,249	\$4,085	\$10,167
World Hunger	\$0	\$2,160	\$2,160	\$0
Adult Education (2)	\$2,868	\$11	\$0	\$2,879
Building / Property Fund	\$3,593	\$40,000	\$36,620	\$6,973
Steeple Repair Fund	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Organ Restoration Fund	\$1,869	\$0	\$300	\$1,569
Property Development Fund	\$400	\$0	\$0	\$400
Youth / Education / VBS	\$8,130	\$1,230	\$134	\$9,226
Security Deposits	\$3,456	\$0	\$0	\$3,456
Library Fund	\$236	\$0	\$0	\$236
Homebound Ministry Fund	\$1,185	\$0	\$0	\$1,185
Congregational Life	\$1,693	\$1,520	\$573	\$2,640
Outreach	\$1,546	\$1,365	\$1,200	\$1,711
Choir Music Fund	\$1,286	\$50	\$900	\$436
 Total	 \$483,835	 \$174,440	 \$119,467	 \$538,808

(1) Endowment Principal - \$2,000

(2) Endowment Principal - \$2,845

(3) World Mission / Endowment Funds:

Combined Market Value @ 12/31/23

\$380,762

 Balance includes \$22,000 loan to FILC
for Property Development Expenses

First Immanuel Lutheran Church
Comparative Statement of Receipts and Disbursements - 2022 and 2023 (continued)

Page 3 of 3

Disbursements - General Fund	2022 Actual	2023 Actual	2023 Budget	Over/(Under) Budget
<u>Outreach Ministry</u>				
Synod Benevolence	\$12,200	\$13,200	\$12,200	\$1,000
Evangelism / Publicity	\$275	\$0	\$275	(\$275)
Sub-Total	\$12,475	\$13,200	\$12,475	\$725
<u>Worship and Music Ministry</u>				
Altar Supplies / Devotional Booklets	\$516	\$648	\$600	\$48
Music and Instruction	\$506	\$527	\$1,000	(\$473)
Bulletins	\$716	\$536	\$725	(\$189)
Substitute Pastor	\$1,375	\$2,400	\$2,000	\$400
Substitute Organist	\$1,250	\$1,375	\$750	\$625
Sub-Total	\$4,363	\$5,486	\$5,075	\$411
<u>Congregational Ministry</u>				
Christian Education/Youth	\$194	\$597	\$400	\$197
Conferences / Seminars	\$2,346	\$1,109	\$600	\$509
Discretionary	\$0	\$0	\$200	(\$200)
Special Programs	\$332	\$62	\$400	(\$338)
Sub-Total	\$2,872	\$1,768	\$1,600	\$168
<u>Compensation and Benefits</u>				
Payroll	\$175,855	\$179,862	\$178,522	\$1,340
Benefits (Health Insurance, Pension)	\$59,315	\$53,763	\$53,200	\$563
Auto Expenses	\$390	\$676	\$1,500	(\$824)
Housing Allowance	\$37,992	\$37,992	\$37,992	\$0
Payroll Taxes / Unemployment Insurance	\$9,881	\$10,549	\$11,300	(\$751)
Sub-Total	\$283,433	\$282,841	\$282,514	\$327
<u>Operational Ministry</u>				
Continuing Education	\$310	\$374	\$600	(\$226)
Office / Printing / Supplies / Copier	\$10,289	\$9,057	\$10,200	(\$1,143)
Insurance	\$6,628	\$7,650	\$6,700	\$950
Security Services	\$3,535	\$4,699	\$3,600	\$1,099
Licenses / Taxes / Bank Charges	\$3,566	\$3,625	\$3,800	(\$175)
Telephone	\$1,292	\$1,954	\$1,700	\$254
Postage/Mailings	\$2,376	\$2,347	\$2,400	(\$53)
Offering Envelopes	\$221	\$248	\$225	\$23
Organ / Piano Maintenance	\$795	\$1,020	\$720	\$300
Utilities	\$28,793	\$27,052	\$29,000	(\$1,948)
Maintenance / Janitorial	\$6,013	\$4,237	\$5,000	(\$763)
Miscellaneous	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Sub-Total	\$63,819	\$62,264	\$63,945	(\$1,681)
Total Disbursements - General Fund	\$366,962	\$365,560	\$365,609	(\$49)
Receipts less Disbursements - General Fund	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

**First Immanuel Lutheran Church
Ministry Proposal - 2024**

Annual Meeting - February 4, 2024

Acct #		Actual 2022	Actual 2023	Budget 2023	Proposed Budget 2024
RECEIPTS					
40100	Envelope Offerings	\$267,511	\$274,518	\$268,060	\$267,624
40200	Special Offerings (Easter, Christmas)	\$7,023	\$6,731	\$7,000	\$7,000
40300	Special Gifts	\$53,575	\$56,287	\$3,000	\$3,000
40700	Loose Offering	\$563	\$1,212	\$1,000	\$1,500
40900	Rent / Sodergren Hall - Lower Level	\$13,700	\$32,704	\$38,704	\$40,252
41000	Rent / Building Use - Other	\$3,955	\$3,960	\$7,070	\$3,870
41500	Investment Income / Interest	\$17	\$224	\$20	\$940
41400	Miscellaneous	\$430	\$566	\$500	\$500
41700	Transfer - Designated Funds	\$1,000	\$5,000	\$0	\$0
	Total Receipts	\$347,774	\$381,202	\$325,354	\$324,686
	Ministry Challenge			\$40,255	
	Reserve Funds - Used / (Saved)	\$19,188	(\$15,642)		(\$1,904)
	Total Actual/Anticipated Receipts	\$366,962	\$365,560	\$365,609	\$324,686
EXPENSES					
Outreach Ministry					
61500	Benevolence	\$12,200	\$13,200	\$12,200	\$12,200
63000	Evangelism / Publicity	\$275	\$0	\$275	\$275
	Sub-Total	\$12,475	\$13,200	\$12,475	\$12,475
Worship and Music Ministry					
62200	Altar Supplies/Devotional Booklets	\$516	\$648	\$600	\$600
62400	Music & Instruction	\$506	\$527	\$1,000	\$1,000
62500	Bulletins	\$716	\$536	\$725	\$725
62700	Substitute Pastor	\$1,375	\$2,400	\$2,000	\$2,400
62100	Substitute Organist	\$1,250	\$1,375	\$750	\$1,000
	Sub-Total	\$4,363	\$5,486	\$5,075	\$5,725
Congregational Ministry					
62800	Christian Education / Youth	\$194	\$597	\$400	\$600
63200	Conferences & Seminars	\$2,346	\$1,109	\$600	\$600
63300	Discretionary Expenses	\$0	\$0	\$200	\$200
65000	Special Programs	\$332	\$62	\$400	\$400
	Sub-Total	\$2,872	\$1,768	\$1,600	\$1,800
Personnel Expenses					
65601	Payroll	\$175,855	\$179,862	\$178,522	\$162,232
65604	Benefits (Health Ins & Pension)	\$59,315	\$53,763	\$53,200	\$30,000
65605	Auto	\$390	\$676	\$1,500	\$1,500
65606	Housing Allowance	\$37,992	\$37,992	\$37,992	\$30,000
65608/10	Payroll Taxes	\$9,881	\$10,549	\$11,300	\$11,300
	Sub-Total	\$283,433	\$282,842	\$282,514	\$235,032
Operational Ministry					
63500	Continuing Education	\$310	\$374	\$600	\$600
636/639	Office Supplies & Printing/Copier	\$10,289	\$9,057	\$10,200	\$10,500
64100	Insurance	\$6,628	\$7,650	\$6,700	\$7,750
64200	Security Services	\$3,535	\$4,699	\$3,600	\$4,700
64400	Licenses, Fees & Taxes	\$3,566	\$3,625	\$3,800	\$3,800
63800	Telephone	\$1,292	\$1,954	\$1,700	\$1,950
63700	Postage & Mailing	\$2,376	\$2,348	\$2,400	\$2,400
63100	Offering Envelopes	\$221	\$248	\$225	\$250
64700	Organ & Piano Maintenance	\$795	\$1,020	\$720	\$800
64000	Utilities	\$28,794	\$27,052	\$29,000	\$30,000
64500	Maintenance & Janitorial	\$6,013	\$4,237	\$5,000	\$5,000
65900	Miscellaneous	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
	Sub-Total	\$63,819	\$62,264	\$63,945	\$67,750
	Total Ministry Goal / Expenses	\$366,962	\$365,560	\$365,609	\$322,782

CONGREGATIONAL LIFE COMMITTEE REPORT—2023

It was a great year of in-person activities. We are blessed with dedicated and hard-working volunteers who, along with our staff, make wonderful things happen to enrich this community. Here are some of the highlights of the past year.

Congregational Events

This table shows the events that Congregational Life coordinated in 2023.

Date	Event	Description
Feb. 5 Mar. 5 Apr. 16 June 11 Oct. 1	Baking days	The committee coordinated five baking days in 2023. Different bakers volunteered to demonstrate special treats. Many thanks to our wonderful bakers, makers, and observers who have participated.
Feb. Apr. June Aug. Oct. Dec.	Card care team	Members wrote cards every other month to members and friends of FILC. On average, 30 people received cards each month. Many thanks to our dedicated card care team members: Lauren Kim, Leslie Wong, Rachel Dietz, Linnea Zahradnik, and Tammy VanDeGrift. Thanks to Pastor Melinda for keeping the card care list up to date.
Apr. 9	Social Event: Easter Breakfast and Egg Hunt	Congregational Life organized a simple buffet Easter breakfast with coffee, juice, baked goods, hard-boiled eggs, and bagels. Despite some rain, we held the Easter egg hunt outdoors. Thanks to all who donated breakfast food and filled Easter eggs for the children's egg hunt.
May 21	Social Event: Confirmation Celebration	We celebrated our six confirmands with a special coffee hour celebration with snacks and cake. Many thanks to Tyrell Servo and Lynn Akerman for organizing this celebration.
May 28	Social Event: Board games	We organized a board game fellowship time during coffee hour. Thanks to those who stayed and played.
June 24 July 15 Aug. 12	Social Events: Backyard BBQs	Three FILC members hosted backyard BBQ potlucks for social time. Many thanks to the Akermans (June), Wildes (July), and Bobbi Varnes (August) for opening their homes for these gatherings.
Aug. 6	Celebration of Life	The committee organized the preparation of desserts for Lynn Akerman's memorial service. Many thanks to Chris Koonce and Misty Ibsen for their leadership and organization.
Sept. 10	Social Event: Rally Day Picnic	We held a Rally Day picnic after worship. This was funded by a FILC endowment grant and coordinated by the committee. Many thanks to the main shoppers: Becky Shoemaker and Lauren Kim.

Dec. 3	Advent Workshop	We had a chili and cornbread lunch and Advent Workshop with greenery and crafts after church. Many thanks to the volunteers who made food and brought items to make this event possible.
Dec. 17	Bake Sale	FILC members donated baked goods for the Advent Bake Sale. Sales from the bake sale support the FILC youth group.

Greeting Cards

A Thrivent mini-grant supported printing more FILC greeting cards. Many thanks to Tammy VanDeGrift and Rachel Dietz for coordinating this. These cards are used by the letter-writing team to stay in touch with members and writes notes of support and care.

Coffee Hour

Many thanks to those who volunteer to host coffee hour after worship on Sundays. Anyone who would like to host coffee hour may sign up on the sheet near the kitchen in Fellowship Hall. Hosting coffee hour is really simple—make a few pots of coffee, fill up a canister with hot water, and put out cookies, treats or snacks, and juice boxes. Even those who do not want to host coffee hour can bring shelf-stable cookies or treats, juice boxes, and ground coffee. Many thanks to Debbie Rehn who keeps an eye on our coffee hour supplies.

Endowment Grant Awarded

The committee applied for and was awarded a FILC endowment grant to support social/community-building activities, such as Easter breakfast, Rally Day, and other celebrations. The grant also supports postage for the card care team to send letters.

Book Group

The book group continues to meet every other month and has now returned to gathering in people's homes. This activity is not an official Congregational Life Committee activity, but it does offer community, learning, growth, and fellowship for our members. Again, we just want to document this activity in the annual report.

Invitation to Participate

The Congregational Life Committee meets once per month (usually Monday evenings via Zoom). We are always looking for new members to join the group. If you are interested, please reach out to Tammy VanDeGrift at tammy.vandegrift@gmail.com. We welcome new ideas for ways to connect our community.

Acknowledgments

The Congregational Life Committee is grateful for all the volunteers who have made in-person and virtual events possible during 2023. We especially thank our bakers for being brave, patient, and helpful in front of the Zoom camera and for sharing their talents for coffee hours and special celebrations. We thank our card writers as well. We thank those who participated in food trains to support the pastors and Mike Akerman during the summer months. This is a resilient and caring community.

We also remember Lynn Akerman, who used her many gifts to serve others throughout her life. She was committed to supporting an inclusive community, welcoming to all. She was an active member of the congregation and its social ministries. We miss her dearly.

Respectfully submitted,

Tammy VanDeGrift (on behalf of the Congregational Life Committee)

Members: Rachel Dietz, Lauren Kim, Marja Selmann, Tyrell Servo, Becky Shoemaker, Tammy VanDeGrift, Leslie Wong, Linnea Zahradnik, and Pastor Melinda Wagner

EDUCATION COMMITTEE REPORT—2023

Through the past year, as First Immanuel returned to in-person and hybrid education activities, we were happy to see participation growing.

Sunday School—Adult Forum

Through the winter and spring (the second half of the 2022-23 program year) the Adult Forum, led by Pastor Melinda, was held in hybrid format, beginning with a study of *The Book of Joy: Lasting Happiness in a Changing World*, by His Holiness the Dalai Lama and Archbishop Desmond Tutu. This was followed by a study of *Civic Life and Faith*, a resource from the ELCA. Participants in the study were able to contribute to the development of ELCA social teaching. In the fall Forum participants discussed Tish Harrison Warren's book, *The Liturgy of the Ordinary: Sacred Practices in Everyday Life*. Finally, in the winter, Pr. Melinda began a study of *How to Know a Person: The Art of Seeing Others Deeply and Being Deeply Seen*, by David Brooks.

Thank you to Pastor Melinda for providing growth opportunities for the mind, the heart, and the spirit.

Sunday School—Children's Ministry

Pastor Aaron began the year with a series for Sunday School exploring stories from the early chapters of the book of Genesis. Ralph Nelson led music for the kids. Attendance was somewhat sporadic, but the kids who participated had a wonderful time together. During the summer, Martha Driessnack led a thorough clean-up and organizing of the Sunday School rooms—thank you, Martha! In the fall, Pastor Aaron was unable to return to teaching Sunday School, so members of the Education Committee developed a new plan for ministry for children and youth. Sunday School meets twice a month, with Tyrell Servo leading the youth class and Emily Traetow and Tammy VanDeGrift leading the younger kids' class. A highlight of the year was the Children's Christmas program. Pastor Aaron wrote a Christmas script, "Macy's Magical Christmas Program," that was whimsical and fun. Children and youth did the performance during worship on December 10. It was very well-received.

Confirmation

Pastor Aaron taught confirmation classes for middle school youth and enjoyed the process of faith formation for youth and their families. It was a joy to celebrate the rite of Confirmation for Katy and Macy Drexler, Augie, Hugo and Pearl Matthais, and Luke VanDeGrift in the Spring.

Respectfully submitted,

Members of the Education Committee: Nancy Matthias, Emily Traetow, Tammy VanDeGrift and Anna Wilde

ENDOWMENT COMMITTEE REPORT—2023

The Endowment Committee was happy to award 6 grants this year from our two Endowment Funds – the First Immanuel Lutheran Church Endowment Fund, which provided \$8,775 to support initiatives for evangelism, outreach, social ministry, and building support, and the Doris Palmblad World Mission Endowment Fund, which provided \$5,000 to support mission and service activities outside the United States. These two endowment funds have been created by generous gifts from the estates of our members.

From the First Immanuel Lutheran Church Endowment Fund:

FILC Property Committee	\$2,775
Remove and replace dead trees and stumps, perform deferred building maintenance	
Lift Urban Portland	\$1,500
Purchase branded food drive donation bins	
FILC Congregational Life Committee	\$1,500
Fund community-building gatherings for FILC members and friends, such as Rally Day picnic; and fund care card mailings	
Beaverton Literacy Council	\$1,000
Purchase educational materials for ESL students	
Legacy Health Foundation	\$2,000
Donation to capital campaign for Emanuel Hospital's new health chapel	

From the Doris Palmblad World Missions Endowment Fund:

Green Village Schools	\$3,000
Purchase library books for girls' school in Helmand Province, Afghanistan	
ELCA Global Missions	\$2,000
In accordance with Endowment governing documents, surplus grant funds were given to ELCA Global Missions	

The Endowment Funds are primarily invested with Vanguard. The funds had an ending balance of \$358,043.04 on December 31, 2023.

Respectfully submitted,

First Immanuel Endowment Committee

Members: Jim Dunn (Chair), Chris Wiens (Financial Secretary), Marja Selmann (Recording Secretary), Bobbi Varnes (Church Council Liaison), Pastor Aaron Couch

OUTREACH COMMITTEE REPORT—2023

Purpose of the Outreach Committee: To inspire, support, and equip the congregation's ministry of "sharing the good news of Christ through word and deed."

Outreach Committee Team Members: Dan Dietz, Rachel Dietz, Lauren Kim, Melissa Lathen-Bennett, Jeannette O'Brien, Ryan Traetow, Pastor Melinda Wagner

The Outreach Committee met four times in 2023: Jan. 19 (with Lift UP), Feb. 1, May 24, and Oct. 23. We also conducted some business via email.

OUTREACH COMMITTEE INITIATIVES FOR 2022

Collaboration with Lift UP:

- We continued to collect food during the year. This year we had increased emphasis to support needs during Spring Break and the Fall Nut Butter Drive (collecting 67 jars at last count, exceeding our goal of 50 jars).
- First Immanuel members have been delivering food boxes to Emmons Place Apartments once each month since April. Emmons Place is across the street on 18th Avenue and provides supportive housing to low-income seniors. Thanks to our core group of volunteers: James Bash, Anke Brandstater, Martha Driessnack, Lauren Kim, and Amy Harrison (who is coordinating the volunteer schedule). We were able to obtain a grant to purchase two wagons to help transport the food into the building.
- Judy Wick has agreed to be our liaison to the monthly meeting with Lift UP (Pastor Melinda previously served in this role)—thank you, Judy!

Red Cross Blood Drive: Two successful events were held this year on May 7 and Dec. 8 (21 donors, 19 usable units collected).

Gallagher Plaza: Thanks to the generous Giving Tree donations, we were able to provide a \$15 Fred Meyer gift certificate to each of the 80 residents at Gallagher Plaza.

*Respectfully submitted,
Jeannette O'Brien*

PROPERTY COMMITTEE REPORT—2023

January 2023 began with a frozen furnace drain pipe. Waste water from the furnace exited the wall, froze, plugged the pipe and created an expanding pool of water moving toward Fellowship Hall. We thawed out the pipe and insulated it.

The biggest project this year was another flood in the lower level of Sodergren Hall. A drain at the south entrance to the lower level had plugged with debris after heavy rains, allowing rain water to enter the lower level and damage the walls. Debbie Rehn moved swiftly to get help. The drain was cleared and a contractor dried out the area. Then the walls were repaired and the baseboards replaced. Since flooding is frequently a problem which over the years has resulted in major costs, the property committee created a checklist of items to be done each Fall to avoid further expense.

A big thanks to everyone who helped in the Easter Cleanup this year. After weeding was completed, flowers planted and bark dust applied, the grounds looked great. In December, volunteers decorated the Christmas trees and the sanctuary in preparation for holiday activities.

This year, a light bulb needed to be replaced 22 feet above the choir loft and organ. The socket that held the bulb was loose, so instead of being able to unscrew the light bulb, the socket just turned. Heavy lift equipment would have gone through the floor, our ladders were too short, and scaffolding would have cost \$6,000. Finally, we built a platform four feet off the floor and placed a 16-foot ladder on top of the platform. What a job to change a light bulb!

2023 Property Committee Projects

Sodergren Hall:

- repaired flood damage in lower-level leased space
- replaced multiple lights, bulbs, and ballasts

Church Building and Grounds:

- created maintenance checklist (Dan)
- replaced 4 broken windows
- replaced shed lock after break-in
- purchased replacement tools after shed break-in
- trimmed bushes and trees (James)
- met with the Fire Marshal for their inspection and replaced two exit signs
- repaired sacristy locks
- cleaned water-damaged carpets in Fellowship Hall
- upgraded sound system (Chris & Richard)
- painted benches between Sodergren Hall and the church
- removed unstable benches between the parking lot and the lower lawn
- worked with PGE to repair parking lot light (Martha)
- continued \$1,000 monthly payments to Oregon Synod for steeple loan
- Easter cleanup & Christmas decorating (Bobbi, Kent, Lilli, Craig, Steve, Dan, Marilyn, Jim, James, Tyrell, Skipper, Pastors Aaron & Melinda)

2024 Property Committee Goals

- obtain bids to: repave the driveway & parking lot, paint the sanctuary, reroof the church building
- remove dying Japanese Maple tree in lower garden
- respond to maintenance emergencies

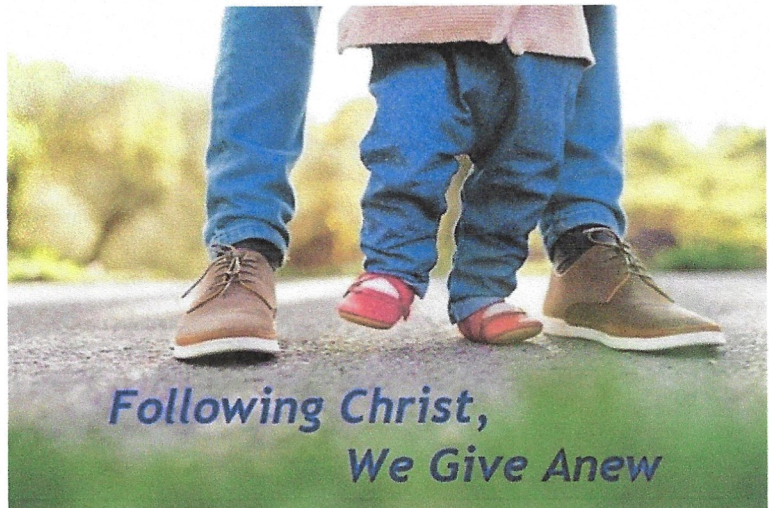
Respectfully submitted,

Jim Wick

Members: Jim Wick (chair), James Bash, Pastor Aaron Couch, Dan Dietz, Kent Fredrickson, Craig Langley, Bobbi Varnes, Steve Venn

STEWARDSHIP COMMITTEE REPORT—2023

We are very thankful that our church has so many excellent stewards. We willingly give of ourselves, our time, and our possessions to make our congregation survive and thrive. To inspire us this past year, your trusty Stewardship Committee (including our outgoing Pastors Aaron and Melinda) used the theme of **“Following Christ, We Give Anew”**. That sums up a lot for us as Christians, and it resonated with our members. We received 59 pledges totaling more than \$218,000, which will help us meet financial demands and balance our budget. We are blessed as a congregation to have the resources, time, and energy to make sure that the momentum goes forward!



We have a fun group and are always looking for new members. Stewardship is a responsibility of the entire congregation, and with your help we can say that we are **“Following Christ, We Give Anew”**!

Respectfully submitted,

Your Stewardship Committee: Bobbi Varnes and James Bash

WORSHIP AND MUSIC COMMITTEE REPORT—2023

MEMBERS: James Bash, Pastor Aaron Couch, Martha Driessnack, Karl Jurisons, Ralph Nelson, Chia Stockwell, Pastor Melinda Wagner

The Worship and Music Committee supports the worship life of First Immanuel, assisting with planning and implementation of worship services and worship-related activities throughout the year, as well as with special music events.

After nearly three years of giving a lot of energy to online and hybrid elements of our worship, it was a joy to have the committee's work in 2023 focused more on how to express the way the movements of the church year speak to the spiritual life. The committee provided assistance with worship planning and preparation for services, especially for special days like Palm Sunday, Confirmation Sunday, and the Sundays in the Advent season.

The committee is thankful for the continuing work offered, especially by Chris Weiss and Richard Wong, to improve the experience of our hybrid services, and by Chia Stockwell to serve as our regular Zoom host. We've been gratified to see the growth of our First Immanuel YouTube channel. Video recordings of sermons, choir anthems and organ preludes and postludes are receiving a number of views every week.

The highlight of the committee's work this year was purchasing copies of the new hymnal supplement *All Creation Sings*, with memorial gifts given in memory of Risë Johnson. We are excited about picking new hymns and chants to learn, as there are many beautiful resources in the new hymnbook.

Other high points of the year included a lively and beautiful Easter morning worship and celebrating confirmation for Katy and Macy Drexler, Augie, Hugo and Pearl Matthias, and Luke VanDeGrift. We celebrated beautiful Christmas Eve and Julotta services. We especially enjoyed the Children's Christmas program and the Choir Cantata Sunday. 22 children participated in the Christmas program, Ralph Nelson and Karl Jurisons prepared a beautiful cantata with selections from Handel's *Messiah*, and the choir was amazing!

The Worship and Music Committee is grateful to the pastors, staff, and many volunteers for all they do to provide a high-quality, meaningful worship experience at First Immanuel.

Respectfully submitted,
FILC Worship and Music Committee

COVID TASK FORCE REPORT—2023

The Covid Task Force continued to meet this past year to make recommendations on how best to ensure that our FILC congregation could continue to worship and socialize safely.

2023 began with masks still being mandated during worship to keep our vulnerable members as safe as possible. In March, the task force agreed to make masks optional. This was a big milestone for FILC. Fortunately, even after that big change, no outbreaks of Covid were seen among our congregants.

Currently, hand sanitizers continue to be available in the pews, masks continue to be available to anyone who would like to use them, and we continue to avoid intinction for Holy Communion. We continue to use our three air purifiers during worship in the sanctuary and when meeting in Fellowship Hall.

Although the task force no longer meets monthly, we continue to follow the latest scientific information available to keep us up to date on the virus. The dedicated members are willing to meet on short notice if there is new information to share or if any action needs to be taken. We last met on Nov. 30 to discuss the newest mutations of the Covid virus. We felt that no new action needs to be taken at this time. We will continue to monitor and meet as necessary to keep everyone as safe as possible.

Respectfully submitted,

Lauren Kim

Members: Lauren Kim (Co-Chair), Becky Shoemaker (Co-Chair), James Bash, Pastor Aaron Couch, Bria Martin, Chia Stockwell, Pastor Melinda Wagner



Oregon Synod

A Word from Bishop Laurie Larson Caesar

One of the great joys of my call is to visit the faith communities across this synod. Our territory includes rocky coastlines, massive mountains, rich soil, quiet lakes, and powerful rivers. Our 115 diverse camps, campus ministries and congregations have been planted in cities, suburbs, open farmland, and small towns. We are very different from each other; yet in Jesus Christ, we all are one.

As we've journeyed together this year, we have been united by focusing on the promises Christ has given us, particularly John 15:15 - "I no longer call you servants but I have called you friends." Be present in *this* way to the world, Jesus invites us.

Thank you for the way you, as beloved of God, embody the living Word in your congregations, communities and daily callings. You are engaging in ministry every day that is vital to the life of the world. Although many of us are still exhausted from pandemic adaptations, congregations are emerging from these difficult years with a clearer sense of who we are and what God is calling us to be and do today. May we be brave for the sake of Love! The dedication of our church leaders to ministries of word, sacrament and accompaniment in Christ's name has never been greater.

Thank you, for your ministry and your faithful gifts to the ministry of the Oregon Synod. Though you are facing your own financial challenges, most of you continue to give generously to our shared work as synod and a larger national church. Your partnership has made possible our ministry with those facing hunger, the houseless, young leaders growing in their calling, our interfaith companions, new creative ministries, ecumenical journeys of racism, disaster and climate resilience, innovation with youth and international leaders and so much more.

If you have not yet sent in a Mission Support contribution for this year, will you please consider a gift yet in January? Every gift counts! And if you have not yet returned a Mission Support Intent form for 2024, please do so. We are deep in planning the 2025 budget that will be presented at the 2024 Synod Assembly, and your planning will help us do our best planning, as well. Thank you!

Blessings on your annual meeting, your key decisions and discernment, and your ongoing ministry on the Way of Jesus for the sake of the life of the world. And do not forget to elect your voting members for our June 1 Synod Assembly. Most congregations are eligible to elect up to eight voting members: two initial voting members, two more who are youth or young adult (15-29), two who are black, indigenous, persons of color or whose first language isn't English and two more who identify as LGBTQIA.

Holy God, we praise you for calling diverse people into your church and its ministries. Uphold all leaders with your strong and loving arms. Empower ministers to serve your people with the word of scripture, the water of life, the meal of grace, and deeds of love and mercy and justice. Equip them with both beloved traditions and fresh ideas; grant them joy in their tasks; and renew them daily by the Spirit of Jesus Christ, the Word among us, now and forever. Amen. (adapted from ACS, p. 46).

With grace, peace, and love,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Laurie L. Caesar".

Reverend Laurie L. Caesar
Bishop, Oregon Synod, ELCA

ANNUAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING

OPENING LITURGY

Son of God, Eternal Savior

Recognizing that our faith is a living, busy, active and mighty thing, may the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with each of you.

And also with you.

Teach us to love you with all our heart, soul, mind and strength.

Receive our prayer, O God.

Descend on our hearts, that we may love others in the ways Jesus loves us.

Receive our prayer, O God.

Empower us to be enthusiastic in pursuing your vision for our congregation.

Receive our prayer, O God.

Move us to engage issues in our community in Christlike ways, and to pursue deep and authentic relationships with those with whom we serve and partner.

Receive our prayer, O God.

Strengthen us to face the barriers we encounter in doing your work, learning to work with others amid disagreement.

Receive our prayer, O God.

Give us the ability to adapt to the cultural, economic and social changes that occur in the neighborhoods we serve.

Receive our prayer, O God.

Guide us to be a healthy congregation that learns from its failures as well as its successes and offers wisdom to others.

Receive our prayer, O God.

As we strive to become the church that we proclaim to be, raise up leaders who focus on the gospel of freedom, forgiveness and reconciliation as given to us through God's indescribable act of love in the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Renew us daily in our baptism, that we may discover vitality in our relationships with you, each other and those we serve in the world.

Amen.

1 Son of God, e - ter - nal Sav - ior, source of life and truth and grace,
2 As you, Lord, have lived for oth - ers, so may we for oth - ers live.
3 Come, O Christ, and reign a - mong us, King of love and Prince of peace;
4 Son of God, e - ter - nal Sav - ior, source of life and truth and grace,

Word made flesh, whose birth a - mong us hal - lows all our hu - man race,
Free - ly have your gifts been grant - ed; free - ly may your ser - vants give.
hush the storm of strife and pas - sion, bid its cru - el dis - cords cease.
Word made flesh, whose birth a - mong us hal - lows all our hu - man race:

you our head, who, throned in glo - ry, for your own will ev - er plead:
Yours the gold and yours the sil - ver, yours the wealth of land and sea;
By your pa - tient years of toil - ing, by your si - lent hours of pain,
by your pray - ing, by your will - ing that your peo - ple should be one,

fill us with your love and pit - y, heal our wrong, and help our need.
we but stew - ards of your boun - ty held in sol - emn trust will be.
quench our fe - vered thirst of plea - sure, stem our self - ish greed of gain.
grant, oh, grant our hope's fru - i - tion: here on earth your will be done.

Evangelical Lutheran Worship, 655

Text: Somerset C. Lowry

Music: IN BABILONE, Oude en Nieuwe Hollandse Boerenlities en Contradansen, 1710;

arr. Julius Röntgen

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in America