



ANNUAL REPORT



**Lake Nokomis
Lutheran Church**
Enough for everyone





WHO WE ARE

VISION **We believe there's enough for everyone.**

ENOUGH GRACE

We receive grace through God's unconditional love. We in turn, share this grace in our faith community, through acts of service, and in a call to work for justice in all of creation.

ENOUGH SPACE

There is room to grow and be transformed. We affirm that faith evolves, so we make space for questions, skepticism and doubt.

ENOUGH COURAGE

We have the audacity to believe that we are here for a reason. We gather with boldness. We are sent out with purpose. We courageously share the hope within us.

ENOUGH HOPE

Through times of both hardship and celebration we have found hope in God. We stand ready to share this hope with a hurting world. We are eager to be a part of true equity, inclusion for all, and restitution for past failures.

ENOUGH TO SHARE

We affirm that each person, created in God's image, has valuable gifts to offer. We empower one another to share the love of God in unique and meaningful ways. We encourage, nurture, and celebrate generosity in all forms.

ENOUGH, AND THEN SOME

We extend this invitation to all. We open our doors to creative expressions of worship, radical acts of hospitality, and faith-filled endeavors toward love of neighbor.

MISSION **We are called and transformed to create a world of abundance.**

VALUE **Come as you are.**

We gather in faith that there is Enough for Everyone. In worship and community, we seek to grow in love for God and for our neighbor. We trust that we are called and transformed to create a world of abundance. This faith community is committed to genuine, inclusive welcome. Our siblings of all sexual orientations, gender identities, and gender expressions are welcomed and embraced here. And we continue our commitment to work for racial equity, firmly grounded in the belief that everyone is a beloved child of God. Visit lakenokomischurch.org to learn more.



Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
ELCA.ORG



Reconciling Works
RECONCILINGWORKS.ORG

AGENDA

Annual Meeting - January 28, 2024

OPENING PRAYER

CALL TO ORDER

ESTABLISH A QUORUM

ADOPT MEETING AGENDA

APPROVAL OF 2023 MINUTES

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STATE OF THE CONGREGATION REPORT

Kathryn Selin, Congregation President

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Pastor Sara Spohr

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Pastor Arthur Murray

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NEW BRANCHES BOARD REPORT

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Sarah Borgerding, President

2023 FINANCE REPORT

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Jason Buck, Treasurer

APPROVE 2024 BUDGET

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ADOPT LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT STATEMENT

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ELECT LEADERSHIP

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ADJOURN

CLOSING PRAYER

ANNOUNCEMENTS



PASTOR SARA SPOHR

SENIOR PASTOR
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BRINGING VISION INTO REALITY

As your pastor, it is a joy to lead in a place that continues to believe that there actually is **Enough for everyone**. From the beginning to the end of 2023 and now into a new year, I continue to be inspired and motivated by the way God's promises form the central identity of the Lake Nokomis Lutheran faith community.

God's grace for you. May grace and peace be yours in abundance. (1 Peter 1:2)

God's grace for your neighbor. But when they measured it out, everyone had just enough. Those who gathered a lot had nothing left over, and those who gathered only a little had enough. Each family had just what it needed. (Exodus 16:18)

The people of God respond generously. And God is able to provide you with every blessing in abundance, so that by always having enough of everything, you may share abundantly in every good work. (2 Corinthians 9:8)

This is who we are. We gather weekly to hear the truth of God's abundant and unconditional love. We go out to share that love with neighbors, both near and far. We respond with our gifts, the generosity of love, resources and time. It is that simple. It is also a giant counter cultural challenge in our world of fierce independence, individualism, and angst. So despite the challenges, we've kept at this work because we believe it is the hope our world needs!

In 2023 we continued to make progress on the 5 key priority areas that we believe will bring our vision into reality. We also look forward to the exciting next steps we'll take in 2024.

1. Develop meaningful relationships.

- We want to connect people in meaningful ways. Our database has untapped potential for this. We've begun the process of developing an online directory so that our faith community can connect. We continue to see the strength of relationships as a foundational reason that people gather in faith communities. We've been able to foster and grow these connections through intentional opportunities for relationships and conversation.
- Cross Form team, this new team has been working with our leadership this year to attend to the generative work of our organization. While we recognize the changing nature of church membership, the need for genuine connection remains the essential heartbeat of our community and we're excited about the possibilities for relational growth based in genuine care.
- **Looking Ahead** - in 2024 we anticipate being able to facilitate even more engagement and programming for all ages, continued visitation and pastoral care. **Dennis Wallisch** has stepped into our staff communications role and has enhanced our communication strategy with a 2024 plan for regular and inspirational storytelling.

2. Invest in children, youth and family.

- **Pastor Arthur** has been with us for a year now and in 2023 he has been able to connect children, youth and families with each other and with faith community in beautiful ways. His genuine rapport with kids and their parents, along with a clear focus on the story of love and justice, has renewed and strengthened our community as a whole.
- We continued to invest in summer trips and experiences for young people, an important addition this summer was a trip for our families to Wilderness Canoe Base.
- **Looking ahead** - in the year ahead we are excited about opportunities to connect with youth in our neighborhood, and the continued development of a heart toward inclusion and justice in our programming.

3. Take justice and mercy to heart.

- Our Justice and Mercy team has been reestablished. They've worked hard to solidify and focus our key partnerships locally and globally. Their report includes a list of these key partnerships. This demonstrates a commitment to addressing housing and hunger, as well as steps toward racial, indigenous and climate justice.
- This year we'll consider the adoption of a Land Acknowledgement statement. Committed individuals have worked faithfully to understand the complex issues, the importance of acknowledging past mistakes and opportunities for real repair. Together with our New Branches partners, they've hosted conversations and information sessions and now recommend to you a statement that will challenge and direct our efforts. Great thanks to **Linda Ojeda, Kat Vann, and Laurie Zaepfel** for their work.
- **Looking ahead** – our work in 2024 will introduce these partnerships and will work to engage our faith community in education and awareness, direct service, advocacy and organizing, financial support and movement toward meaningful reparations.

4. Expand and deepen sacred gatherings.

- This year our worship has deepened in big ways. Dennis Wallisch and Becky Sun have come onboard as our music ministry staff and they are a phenomenal team. Dennis' faith guides his work in every way. He chooses music that connects deeply to our worship themes and purposefully engages musicians in a variety of ways. Becky has accompanied our worship with creativity, heart, and excellence.
- Our average worship attendance continues to tick up. In January we moved to a later worship time. While this change was not ideal for all, it has led to a noticeable increase in the participation of our children and their families.
- We added Dinner Church this year for our Lenten Wednesday worship, this creative expression of worship was engaging for our young people and fostered faithful conversation for many others.
- **Looking ahead** – we have some exciting worship series planned for the new year, including an Epiphany focus on big faith questions, a Lenten focus on gathering around the table of Jesus' grace, and a post Easter series on the spiritual gift of visual art centered on the many inspiring murals in our city.

5. Cultivate a culture of abundance and adaptability.

- Our council leadership has led with enthusiasm and openness this year. They ask good questions, center themselves on our vision and God's call, and have not shied away from difficult conversations and important decisions. Great thanks to each of these leaders: **William Awe, John Becker (Secretary), Jason Buck (Treasurer), Tom Dowzak, Rachel Klenke, Lori Mueller (Vice President), Kathryn Selin (President), and Jerry Winzig.**
- A year ago we passed a deficit budget. Even with healthy reserves and faith in our vision, it was a big stretch for us. Good news – we ended the year with a deficit that is much smaller than anticipated! Contributing to this effort was a considerable cut in our staff budget, our members responded with generous financial gifts, and we've been very intentional about the faithful use of our resources – these efforts are all helping in this season without a school lease in our education wing.
- **Jason Buck** has stepped into the treasurer role this year. He has a wealth of experience in business management and we're grateful for his leadership on our council and his close work with our bookkeeper, Terea Klotz. This year we were able to hire Teresa directly and we're incredibly grateful for her keen eye on our books and her resourcefulness on any number of topics.
- **Looking Ahead** – this year we'd like to reestablish our finance team with an eye toward faithful future planning. We also plan to conduct an outside audit of our financial systems. This kind of audit hasn't been done at Lake Nokomis Lutheran in the last five years.

I am encouraged and inspired each week by this faithful community of people we call Lake Nokomis Lutheran. We've just spent our advent season with the question – "How does a weary world rejoice?" Its true, so many people are weary and hurting and wondering how to hold on to hope. We get to share the story of God's deep love, we get to be people who share God's big love with our world, we get to enter in with faithful acts of mercy and justice – this gives me reason to wake up and rejoice every single day. I look forward to the year and years ahead of ministry with you in this community.



PASTOR ARTHUR MURRAY

CHILDREN, YOUTH, AND FAMILY
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DANCING GRACEFULLY TOGETHER

General

- I recently passed the first anniversary of my call to serve at this congregation. I have begun to notice that when friends or family ask me how I feel about my current call, my default quick response is "I love it!" It is true. I am very grateful for this compassionate community of service, for the small but incredible team with whom I serve and for the parameters of my role within this team.

Early Childhood (birth – 5th grade) Ministry

- A major highlight of this year was the wonderful core of committed volunteers who help plan and teach Sunday School every week. We were thrilled to add a couple of new teachers and families this fall!
- Sunday School plans for the new year include exploring the Bible story of the week, weekly singing, and our ongoing work on a tapestry led by Ruth Patzloff. Thank you, Ruth!
- I am so grateful to Kat Vann for her ongoing willingness to connect Sunday School with worship through weekly singing.

Confirmation

- Wednesday night confirmation classes have grown in size this year with the attention of several wonderful new middle schoolers.
- Our teaching team has grown to include our fantastic Youth Ministry Intern, Stephen Nushann, (freshman at Augsburg University) in addition to Linda Ojeda, Pastor Sara and myself. Many thanks to the LNL Foundation for funding this new position.
- This fall we focused on the story of Moses, we used the movie Prince of Egypt to engage the story.
- Dennis and I have been working on finalizing a lawn sign to invite neighborhood families with middle schoolers to join the Wednesday night fun at church.

High School Youth

- I am thrilled with the formation of a new ministry leadership team for High Schoolers. Together we have planned several events for 2024. I am particularly excited about plans to attend sports games and artistic productions which our high schoolers are involved in. Let's show up and support them as they use their God-given gifts!
- Boundary Waters trips were an important point of connection with high school students in 2023 and will be offered again in 2024.

Summer Activities

- Summer of 2023 was very active. LNL had great involvement in South Minneapolis Day Camp, Camp Wapo (Youth and Seeds), Wilderness Canoe Base Family Camp, and our self-guided BWCA trip. The schedule for 2024 is already posted. Come join the fun! There is something for everyone!

New Branches

- Several events took place last year in collaboration with other New Branches congregations. Highlights included participation in Pride Week and hosting an open house for Nokomis Days. I am hopeful that these collaborations will continue. Increased lay leadership will be needed in this area.

Worship Leadership/Preaching

- I typically followed a monthly schedule for preaching and/or leading worship in the past year and anticipate continuing this pattern in 2024.

Music in Worship

- While I am very willing to add my trumpet to worship when requested, my fullest joy comes from helping others find a pathway to adding their musical gifts to the worship life of the congregation. This past year the Intergenerational LNL Jazz Band debuted on All Saints Sunday, and returned on Christmas Eve. These opportunities seem to be a joyful pathway to involving middle and high school musicians in the life of the congregation. It is only possible through mentors leading the way, especially our beloved musical team of Dennis, Becky and Kat. I am so grateful for the openness and collaborative spirit of this community that makes this adventure possible!

Personal Update

- Over the past year I have resumed offering private trumpet lessons (something I was unable to do when in a full-time call). Please feel free to share my information with those who may be interested.

Global Ministry

- A significant portion of my spare time is devoted to service on the board of PACT www.pact-mn.org. At times this work overlaps with my role at LNL. If you are interested in learning more about the amazing work of PACT, please be in touch with me. We recently postponed a planned trip to West Africa. More updates will be available in the coming weeks.

Summary

- Over my first full year, I have experienced Lake Nokomis Lutheran to be a community full of grace and open to possibility. I have witnessed multiple other new families and individuals drawn in by this spirit. Many in our world are tired. Others are feeling revived and are looking to actively serve. LNL provides ample space for both. We provide a place to heal and a place to engage. My prayer is that we may continue to dance gracefully together in the midst of this tension. Both spaces will be needed in the days to come.



DENNIS WALLISCH

DIRECTOR OF WORSHIP AND MUSIC/COMMUNICATIONS
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FINDING OUR "CAN"

Blessed

I continue to be blessed at Lake Nokomis Lutheran Church. Everyone has welcomed me, my partner Jill, and my son, Grayson, with open arms. It has also been a blessing to work with Pastor Sara, Pastor Arthur, Becky Sun, our gifted worship leader and pianist; our Worship Ministry Team, and all members of the ensembles here. Lake Nokomis is a congregation that loves music, to be a part of it, and to receive it in the context of worship.

I also cannot begin to tell you how important it is to be a part of the work being done to reach and be mindful about ALL of God's people. I stated in the interview process how important this position is, and this calling is, to me professionally and personally. It is the culmination of a journey that began over 30 years ago for me with the help of long-time friend and composer, Dan Pederson, who wrote our beloved *Come to the Table*. God has called me here to be a piece of the ministry offered to members and guests alike, a ministry that boldly states that there is *enough for everyone* here, regardless of race, gender, or sexual orientation. I love being a part of that mission and vision, and I will work to the best of my ability to do my part to help further that mission and vision.

Enough

This word *enough* permeates the fabric that is Lake Nokomis. It has also been a word that has meant a lot to me over the years. Quite truthfully, it is hard for me at times to embrace it. Early on in life, I was told that I wasn't *enough*, or that I didn't matter. As I have now worked in several churches, and in different denominations, I have come across many people with similar experiences, where they were told that they were not *enough*. Some heard it in the context of church music or choir, which destroyed their interest in ever being a part of it. Some heard it in the context of their vocation, creating a great amount of anxiety to perform, always feeling that they could never measure up. Some just hear it while trying to be the best person they can be, eroding self-confidence and self-worth. In all instances, they...we, have now told ourselves that we can't.

You Can...

I have built a career on trying to help people realize their *can* rather than their *can't*. When I think about music, I believe that all should have the opportunity to make it, regardless of experience. When I think about worship, all should have access and be welcome without shame, judgment, or guilt. You *can* make music. You *can* belong. It is why our worship services are intentional about content. It is why Pastor Sara, Pastor Arthur, and our guest preachers are so authentic in their approach to the Word. It is why we have amazing leaders like Pastor Arthur and Kat Vann teaching and guiding our youth in music to be a part of something bigger than themselves and with great success. It is why the word "community" is in the choir's name. All so that people can feel like they belong, be in relationship with others, and with God, and find their *can*.

Looking Ahead

And speaking of community, one of the goals this coming year will be to engage all three New Branches congregations through music...together. I will be working with the music leaders of Living Table and Spirit to make this dream a reality. It will be another opportunity to add to the menu what Lake Nokomis and New Branches as a whole have to offer.

We want the world to know about what we do here, so we do our best to communicate the vision and mission of Lake Nokomis, to share all the amazing things that people can enter and grow into, and to instill the confidence that all are truly welcome here. And by golly, I'm proud to be a part of it. Thank you for allowing me to be.



KATHRYN SELIN

LAKE NOKOMIS LUTHERAN PRESIDENT

CREATING "ENOUGH" FOR EVERYONE

Peace and greetings, Lake Nokomis Lutheran members,

I am Kathryn Selin and for the last two years, I have had the privilege of being the Council President for Lake Nokomis Lutheran. I would like to extend my sincere thanks to the council for trusting me to keep our faith community moving forward while keeping our core values close.

We have seen more changes as time goes by. Some changes, as always, were easier than others, and some changes are still happening. But together, we continue to keep our promise of making sure there is enough for everyone.

In April we welcomed Dennis Wallisch and Becky Sun into our community. Dennis has been a wonderful addition to our staff as our Director of Worship and Music for Lake Nokomis as well as the Events Coordinator and Building Manager for our New Branches community. We are truly grateful for all both he and Becky have brought to us! Their leadership has brought another level of music, fun, and faith to us that, I feel, has deepened, and enriched our worship time and our connection to each other.

We have also had some fun and meaningful collaborations with our New Branches friends. The kids had an Easter Party, there was a joint table at the 2023 Twin Cities Pride Festival, as well as the Thanksgiving Eve service. These events have really helped us all to become a community and make sure there is enough for everyone.

I'd like to take this opportunity to recognize all of you as well. Without each of you, this community wouldn't be what it is, a space for faith, laughter, friendship, and connection. Each member brings something to this place that is unique to them and enhances the experience for everyone. For all you do, and for all you bring, I thank you.

May this coming year be joyful, full of promise, and, if you remember Pastor Sara's Star Words from earlier this month, may we all do what we can to "create" more for our community. Create more connections. Create more laughter. And create enough for everyone.



BARB TAUFNER

VISITATION MINISTRY AND PARISH NURSE

PROMOTING WELLNESS

Promoting wellness of body, mind and spirit continued to be the focus of both my Parish Nurse and Director of Visitation roles in 2023. As COVID restrictions were gradually lifted there were increased opportunities to help with these wellness goals. With the help of Health Cabinet members (Karen Schlies, Maggie O'Groske, Carolyn Hoolahan) we sponsored educational speakers, Mental Illness Awareness Sunday and a Red Cross Blood Drive.

To keep connected with our LNL Elders/Homebound I made visits to them at their home, hospital, assisted living or nursing home. Pastor Sara, Carolyn Hoolahan and Robbie Becker accompanied me on some of these visits. Barb Geiger (Crafter extraordinaire) helped our LNL youth/Sunday school children assemble gift boxes to deliver to our Homebound people. Another way we as a church have supported our church & community Elders is lead worship once a month at Nokomis Square. Pastor Sara, Kat Vann and I helped with these services and consider it an honor & a privilege to spend this worship time with these dear people.

Thank you to those who helped with our Health Cabinet events. A special shout out to the blood donors.
Thank you to the gift box builders and those who helped deliver the gift boxes to our Homebound members.
Thank you Tom & Becky Dowzak who often provided treats for Nokomis Square gatherings.
Thank you to our members who kept in touch with our Elders and Homebound through your many individual acts of kindness.

Blessings to you all and may 2024 bring you opportunities to give and receive in ways that promote wellness of your body, mind and spirit.

Peace & love in Christ,
Barb Taufner



SARAH BORGERDING

NEW BRANCHES BOARD PRESIDENT

LOOKING FORWARD TO "MORE"

Year in Review

The New Branches Board has now existed for three years. Like many toddlers, we are busy at work on the fundamental skills of communication and coordination, healthy curiosity, and seeking joy. In honor of our third birthday we hold up three milestones from 2023:

New Branches hired **Dennis Wallisch**, our **Office and Events Manager**. This is a pivotal and varied role that keeps the building running smoothly for our Faith Communities and beyond.

The **educational wing is not occupied** by a tenant as expected. We anticipated occupation by a new magnet school and early education program this fall. The timing and requirements did not come together for them to open in September so the space remains on the market.

A beautiful marker of our growth as an ecumenical community is numerous examples of **cross-community collaboration** - Property and Gardening Teams that provide upkeep and beautification for our property; Land Acknowledgement and Beyond group that researched and recommended a statement acknowledging and honoring the ancestral land on which we are located; COVID workgroup that navigated emerging science, community viral metrics, and cultural nuances to inform a masking policy; and more.

Financial Review

New Branches financials have two goals: (1) cover expenses associated with the property and (2) fund a capital reserve fund. All three Faith Communities co-own the property. Based on the annual budget, each church contributes a monthly amount to New Branches to pay the bills including utilities, staff salary, cleaning and maintenance expenses. The churches also contribute to a reserve fund to cover future replacement costs for items in the building.

For the fiscal year ending July 2023, New Branches ended with a slight surplus. This surplus was driven by building rental and miscellaneous income as well as lower than anticipated expenses. The capital reserve was also funded \$25,000 for the fiscal year.

As mentioned, an ongoing concern for New Branches is that there is not a tenant in the educational wing. When New Branches was formed, the financial assumption was that there would be a school renting the education space. Because that has not happened, each of the churches must contribute more money to New Branches than originally planned. This increase in contributions causes a financial hardship for each of the member churches. The Board is continuing to work on finding a tenant for the space.

Looking Ahead

In 2024 we look forward to MORE. More collaboration, particularly into areas of social justice. More discernment about what the future could hold for the educational wing, even thinking beyond the historic use of schools that pay rent. And more growth of our New Branches community.

NEW BRANCHES FINANCIALS

The Multi-Church Initiative (MCI), a corporation that is jointly owned and rented by Spirit of St. Stephen's Catholic Community, Living Table UCC, and Lake Nokomis Lutheran completed its third full year of operation on December 31st, 2023. New Branches is our public facing name, while The Multi-Church Initiative is the legal name in our articles of incorporation. The MCI was created to own and maintain the New Branches property, and as such all the revenue and expenses MCI incurs are related to the maintenance and upkeep of New Branches.

Some of the financial highlights from the past year include:

- Total assets of \$1,800,000.
- A December 31, 2023, cash balance of \$113,000, which includes a capital reserve cash balance of \$33,000.
- A reduction of long-term debt of \$15,000.
- Additional rental income of \$4,700.
- A net loss of \$3,200.

The MCI budgets each year to closely match operating expense with revenue throughout the year. Annual assessments are as follows:

- Spirit of St. Stephen's - 38% of budgeted operating costs
- Lake Nokomis Lutheran - 38% of budgeted operating costs
- Living Table UCC - 24% of budgeted operating costs

Annual assessments are then billed monthly to each congregation. All congregations are paid in full for all assessments through December 31, 2023.

NEW BRANCHES BALANCE SHEET

July 31, 2023

ASSETS

Current Assets

Checking/Savings

10001 · Checking - US Bank

78,188.78

Total Checking/Savings

78,188.78

Accounts Receivable

11000 · Accounts Receivable

9,112.81

Total Accounts Receivable

9,112.81

Total Current Assets

87,301.59

Fixed Assets

14000 · Buildings

362,346.06

14001 · Building Renovations

1,198,215.13

15000 · Furniture and Equipment

159,200.63

17001 · Depreciation - Building

(14,493.84)

17002 · Depreciation - Renovations

(44,003.16)

17003 · Deprec- Furniture & Equipment

(30,903.36)

Total Fixed Assets

1,630,361.46

Other Assets

18700 · Security Deposits Asset

76,022.64

Total Other Assets

76,022.64

TOTAL ASSETS

1,793,685.69

LIABILITIES & EQUITY

Liabilities

Long Term Liabilities

27200 · Other Liabilities

27201 · Construction-Mission Investment

229,250.93

27203 · Mortgage-Mission Investment

349,627.08

Total 27200 · Other Liabilities

578,878.01

Total Long Term Liabilities

578,878.01

Total Liabilities

578,878.01

Equity

30000 · Opening Balance Equity

1,178,540.00

31500 · Temp. Restricted Net Assets

31501 · Designated Fund(Reserve)

37,500.00

Total 31500 · Temp. Restricted Net Assets

37,500.00

32000 · Unrestricted Net Assets

82,424.06

Net Income

(83,656.38)

Total Equity

1,214,807.68

TOTAL LIABILITIES & EQUITY

1,793,685.69

NEW BRANCHES PROFIT AND LOSS

Ordinary Income/Expense

Income

45000 · Investments

45030 · Interest-Savings, Short-term CD

340.06

Total 45000 · Investments

340.06

46400 · Other Types of Income

46430 · Miscellaneous Revenue

9,685.44

47220 · Building Use Revenue

8,033.25

Total 46400 · Other Types of Income

17,718.69

47200 · Other Income

47241 · Tenant Revenue

4,196.14

Total 47200 · Other Income

4,196.14

48000 · Rent Income

48100 · Lake Nokomis Lutheran Church

73,884.00

73,884.00

0.00

48200 · Living Table Church of Christ

46,662.96

46,663.00

(0.04)

48300 · Spirit of St Stephens Catholic

73,884.00

73,884.00

0.00

Total 48000 · Rent Income

194,430.96

194,431.00

(0.04)

Total Income

216,685.85

194,431.00

22,254.85

Expense

60900 · Business Expenses

60920 · Business Registration Fees

30.00

0.00

30.00

60921 · Interest Construction Loan

10,584.12

10,017.00

567.12

60922 · Interest Mortgage Loan

14,711.66

15,278.00

(566.34)

60923 · Annual Reports - 2022

411.00

0.00

411.00

Total 60900 · Business Expenses

25,736.78

25,295.00

441.78

62100 · Insurance and Professional

62110 · Accounting Fees

2,930.00

3,600.00

(670.00)

62140 · Legal Fees

8,072.00

0.00

8,072.00

62150 · Outside Contract Services

1,485.00

0.00

1,485.00

62151 · P&C Policy

16,118.33

15,200.00

918.33

62152 · Workers Comp Policy

0.00

350.00

(350.00)

Total 62100 · Insurance and Professional

28,605.33

19,150.00

9,455.33

62800 · Building Maintenance

62830 · Lawn and Snow

9,706.33

8,400.00

1,306.33

62840 · Repair/Maintenance/Supplies

10,043.31

12,000.00

(1,956.69)

62841 · Equipment Purchases

3,993.97

0.00

3,993.97

62842 · Licenses and Inspections

956.11

5,500.00

(4,543.89)

62843 · Boiler

3,441.02

5,300.00

(1,858.98)

62844 · Hennepin County Assessments

4,282.04

3,000.00

1,282.04

62845 · Trash

2,551.79

2,200.00

351.79

Total 62800 · Building Maintenance

34,974.57

36,400.00

(1,425.43)

	Aug 2022 - July 2023	Annual Budget	\$ Over Budget
65000 · Misc Building Costs			
65010 · Office Copier Lease	4,939.00	5,400.00	(461.00)
65020 · Web Hosting	1,738.18	480.00	1,258.18
65040 · Supplies	3,089.71	1,740.00	1,349.71
65050 · Google Domain	536.98	216.00	320.98
65062 · Hospitality/Events	280.91	0.00	280.91
65063 · New Branches School	0.00	0.00	0.00
Total 65000 · Misc Building Costs	10,584.78	7,836.00	2,748.78
65100 · Utilities			
65120 · Center Point Energy - Gas	30,749.34	23,000.00	7,749.34
65121 · Xcel Energy- Electric	21,252.10	18,000.00	3,252.10
65160 · City of Minneapolis - Water	6,807.58	9,000.00	(2,192.42)
65161 · USI - Internet	1,225.00	1,800.00	(575.00)
65162 · CenturyLink - Phone	1,629.78	2,100.00	(470.22)
65163 · Parking Lot	1,220.04	1,200.00	20.04
65164 · AT&T	211.30	0.00	211.30
65165 · Misc Utilities	0.00	200.00	(200.00)
Total 65100 · Utilities	63,095.14	55,300.00	7,795.14
66000 · Custodial&Building Management			
66002 · Joseph Sahai	19,988.93	21,000.00	(1,011.07)
66003 · Payroll Taxes	1,639.19	4,200.00	(2,560.81)
66004 · Tony Aspholm Wages	11,870.04	35,000.00	(23,129.96)
66005 · John Becker Pay	14,047.11	0.00	14,047.11
Total 66000 · Custodial&Building Management	47,545.27	60,200.00	(12,654.73)
68300 · Costs Allocated to Construction			
68321 · Post Construction Architect	400.00		
Total 68300 · Costs Allocated to Construction	400.00		
Total Expense	210,941.87	204,181.00	6,760.87
Net Ordinary Income	5,743.98	(9,750.00)	15,493.98
Other Income/Expense			
Other Expense			
81000 · Capitalization Costs			
81007 · Contractor	97,639.90		
81012 · Contingency	497.26		
81013 · Alt#2 Access Hardware	0.00		



DENNIS WALLISCH

NEW BRANCHES EVENT COORDINATOR AND BUILDING MANAGER
info@newbranchesmn.org

DREAMING ABOUT OUR FUTURE

What a great building! When I first came to Lake Nokomis, and had a chance to settle in, I took some time to just walk around. The first thing that you see is this beautiful Commons, and then the Large Sanctuary. Venturing further, I discovered the Small Sanctuary, and saw pieces of awesome fabric hung on the walls and I wondered what happened in there. And then there was this other part, with two staircases, one going up, and one going down. I decided to go downstairs first and venture around. "My goodness," I said to myself. "There is so much space over here!" "What is this place?"

As I continued down the hallway, I noticed another staircase that went up. I walked upstairs, turned to my left, and there, I saw, the most amazing room, full of sunlight, warm in color, and I began to dream.

I continued on my journey, eventually taking every staircase and also eventually getting lost. "Where was my office again?" "If this is here, then that means...nope, I was wrong."

Almost every day since last April, I have made a point of going over to the education wing and looking, thinking, and pondering. Of course, some of the rooms were occupied with materials for the Angela Day school which, unfortunately, did not work out. And so when the rooms were empty, I could really dream.

Fast forward to now, and I have moved from having a mere acquaintance with the building, to knowing it quite intimately. Thanks to John Becker, Barb Geiger, and Greg Owen, who have been wonderful at getting me up to speed with the ins and outs of this place, I feel I am learning a lot of the mechanics and dare I say "quirks" of the property. But I still dream.

I dream about what this place was like "back in the day." Maybe some of you do as well. Perhaps my dreams of the past are only as real as the pictures I have seen in archived photographs. And regardless of the energy that was once felt here, that was *then*, and we have to understand what our *now* or *not yet* is. There are still two buildings on this property, and there is still so much energy here, a new kind of energy, one that has never been felt here before. That energy comes from not just one faith community, but three faith communities...UCC, Catholic and Lutheran...oh my! And that energy is contagious and it flows and it permeates. In over 30 years of ministry, I have never experienced anything like it.

We owe it to each other to keep that energy flowing, and growing, out past the walls of this place. This kind of energy is what will bring people here, and the people who project that energy are what will keep them here, and make someone feel at home.

THIS IS OUR HOME! New Branches is our home. It is the home of Living Table United Church of Christ, Spirit Catholic Community, and Lake Nokomis Lutheran Church. We owe it to each other to make everyone feel at home. We owe it to the legacy of the rooms and hallways and stairwells where so many have walked and learned before, to take care of our home, and dream about its future.

This place is bigger than rooms or boilers or air handlers. It is a place where God is present, and where justice, mercy, and above all, love are shared.



JASON BUCK

TREASURER

FINANCIAL REPORT

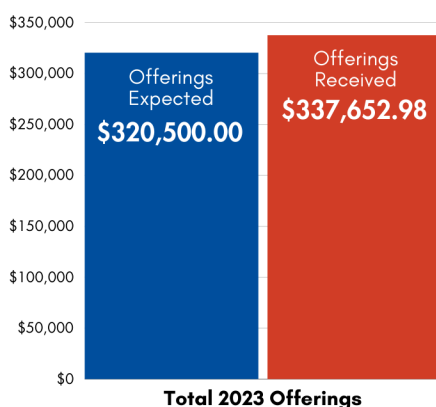
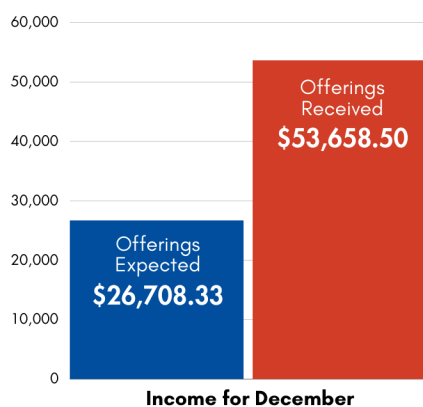
Analysis

*****LNL CLOSED 2023 \$1,581.21 IN THE BLACK!!!***** Let me repeat, LNL took a \$92,782.00 projected budget deficit at the start of 2023 and through the incredible generosity of the congregation, selfless volunteers stepping up to plug holes where needed, and the tireless work of Pastor Sara and Pastor Arthur; LNL will not have to dip into reserves for operating for 2023. Absolutely amazing! As of December 1, LNL was projecting a \$25,000 to \$35,000 deficit for 2023 after benevolences were donated; but generosity prevailed. A huge thank you to everyone on the Council for your work this past year, you all embody the generosity and spirit of the LNL community!

House Keeping

For 2024, LNL will change how "Unrealized Gains" are accounted for in the Statement of Activities (SoA). There can be some wild swings in unrealized gains that get reported on the SoA that can complicate reporting and lead to a less than accurate depiction of the monthly PnL. Eric Grube is working with Teresa Klotz to transition this reporting so as to give a more accurate depiction of LNL's financials. For 2023, all financial reporting has included "Unrealized Gains" to keep the SoA uniform. February will (most likely) be the first month Unrealized Gains are removed from the SoA. Look for an update on this for February.

Lake Nokomis Lutheran Church Income

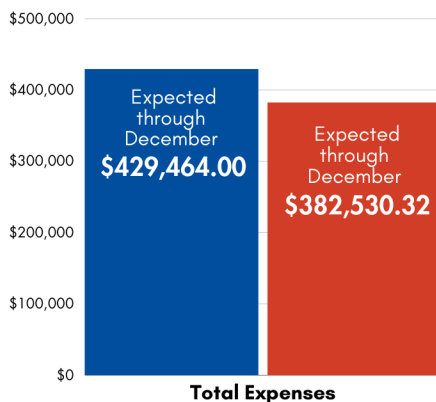
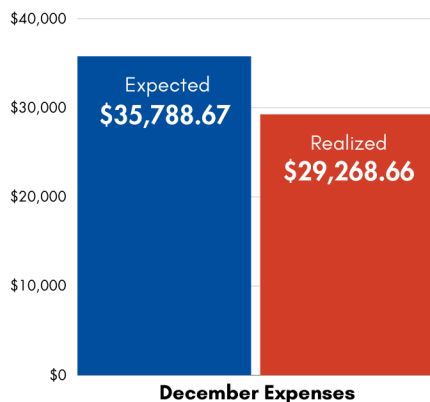


Total Income Expected: \$336,682.00

Total Income Realized: \$384,111.53*

*Total Income Expected/Realized includes Program Offerings (Summer Trip Fees, CYF Fundraising, etc.)

Lake Nokomis Lutheran Church Expenses



Bottom Line Income Monthly and YTD

December realized income: **\$59,920.43**

December realized expenses: **\$45,802.14**

December PnL: \$14,118.29

Year to Date

Realized Income: **\$384,111.53**

Realized Expenses: **\$381,778.55**

PnL 2023: \$2,332.98

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

TERESA KLOTZ

BOOKKEEPER

	Year Begin Balance	Year to Date Balance	Year to Date Change	Balance Last Month	Year to Date Last Year
Assets					
Bank Accounts					
1005 WellsFargo Checking	19,075.81	52,689.26	33,613.45	39,909.00	19,075.81
1010 WellsFargo Savings	18,701.88	18,729.96	28.08	18,727.57	18,701.88
Bank Accounts Totals:	37,777.69	71,419.22	33,641.53	58,636.57	37,777.69
Investments					
1050 Mission Plus	344,067.48	125,744.69	(218,322.79)	125,481.25	344,067.48
1055 Mission Plus - Term Investment	0.00	154,498.10	154,498.10	152,994.84	0.00
1070 ELCA Ministry Growth Fund - Hope Fund	187,736.28	204,523.56	16,787.28	204,523.56	187,736.28
Investments Totals:	531,803.76	484,766.35	(47,037.41)	482,999.65	531,803.76
Other Assets					
1300 Prepaid Expenses	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
1350 MCI Expenses Paid by LNL	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
1340 MCI Advance Mortgage Payment	26,168.00	26,168.00	0.00	26,168.00	26,168.00
Other Assets Totals:	26,168.00	26,168.00	0.00	26,168.00	26,168.00
Fixed Assets					
1510 Organ	24,795.00	24,795.00	0.00	24,795.00	24,795.00
LNL Foundation					
1610 Thrivent Investment Funds - TY9	2,176.92	1,759.50	(417.42)	1,745.01	2,176.92
1620 Thrivent Managed Funds - NSY	419,281.17	465,443.91	46,162.74	445,468.03	419,281.17
LNL Foundation Totals:	421,458.09	467,203.41	45,745.32	447,213.04	421,458.09
Total Assets:	1,042,002.54	1,074,351.98	32,349.44	1,039,812.26	1,042,002.54
Liabilities					
Miscellaneous					
2500 PPP Loan	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
2520 Sabbatical Leave Escrow - S. Spohr	2,312.46	3,312.42	999.96	3,229.09	2,312.46
2530 Sabbatical Leave Escrow - A. Murray	78.14	578.18	500.04	536.51	78.14
2590 Computer Replacement Provision	0.00	2,333.28	2,333.28	2,138.84	0.00
Miscellaneous Totals:	2,390.60	6,223.88	3,833.28	5,904.44	2,390.60
Total Liabilities:	2,390.60	6,223.88	3,833.28	5,904.44	2,390.60
Net Assets					
21 Church Equity	516,219.10	538,932.45	22,713.35	538,932.45	539,943.27
Dedicated Accounts					
Without Donor Restrictions	540,937.27	470,649.90	(70,287.37)	470,538.28	540,937.27
With Donor Restrictions	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Dedicated Accounts Totals:	540,937.27	470,649.90	(70,287.37)	470,538.28	540,937.27
Current Period Changes to Net Assets	0.00	47,326.53	47,326.53	13,217.87	(41,268.60)
Total Net Assets:	1,057,156.37	1,056,908.88	(247.49)	1,022,688.60	1,039,611.94
Total Liabilities & Net Assets:	1,059,546.97	1,063,132.76	3,585.79	1,028,593.04	1,042,002.54

PROPOSED 2024 BUDGET

Projected 2024 Revenue		Actual 2023 Budget
Member Contributions	\$300,000	\$337,652.98
Misc Income – interest, coffee, Thrivent Choice, Missions, & investments, etc.	\$23,000	\$38,153.33
Programs – summer trip fees, CYF fundraising & programming	\$10,000	\$8,270.97
School Lease Revenue	TBD	\$0
TOTAL REVENUE	\$333,000	\$384,111.53
Projected Expenses		Actual 2023 Budget
Staff Salaries (pastors, office staff & music staff)	\$212,800	\$194,426.33
Staff Benefits	\$40,000	\$36,684.10
Insurance (worker's comp/payroll)	\$6,000	\$5,598.49
Sabbatical Leave Escrow	\$2,000	\$1,500.00
Administrative	\$23,000	\$20,834.25
Benevolence (ECLA & Other)	\$30,000	\$33,211.88
Programs	\$15,000	\$16,349.40
Shared Building Costs (38%)	\$77,000	\$73,174.10
Total Expense	\$405,800	\$381,778.55
Total Revenue	\$323,000	\$384,111.53
Net Operating Deficit (Total Revenue – Total Expenses) (\$323,000 - \$405,800)	(\$72,800)	2,332.98

2023 BENEVOLENCE



Our budget designates that 10% of our offering will be distributed outside of our Congregation. More specifically, 6% is designated to the Minneapolis area synod and 4% is gifted to organizations that have been identified as vital partnerships to us in spreading the gospel of justice and love. An additional amount of mission dollars is contributed by Lake Nokomis Lutheran members each year and this is dispersed to our partner organizations as well.

Minneapolis Area Synod: \$19,211.88

LNL's 2023 Other Benevolence Distributions: \$14,000 (4% of total giving)

South Minneapolis Meals on Wheels - \$1,750
Beacon Interfaith Housing Collaborative - \$1,750
Mental Health Connect - \$1,750
Reconciling Works - \$1,750
Cherish All Children - \$1,750
Lake Wapogasset Lutheran Bible Camp (WAPO) - \$1,750
Kubi District of the Lutheran Church of Christ in Nigeria - \$1,750
Minnesota Interfaith Power and Light (new) - \$875
Center for Leadership and Neighborhood Engagement (new) - \$875

Additional Contributions: \$6446.50

Minnehaha Food Shelf Member Contributions - \$5,942.50
Member Contributions for Aster Commons / Beacon Interfaith Housing - \$504.00

2023 Grants from the Hope Lutheran Legacy Fund - \$26,579.79

Minnesota Theodore Roosevelt High School Foundation (Hope Lutheran Scholarship Fund) - \$1,328.99
Lutheran Disaster Response - \$2,126.38
Every Third Saturday - \$1,328.98
Feed My Starving Children - \$2,657.98
Global Health Ministries - \$1,860.59
Minnehaha United Methodist Church (Minnehaha Food Shelf) - \$2,657.98
South Minneapolis Meals on Wheels - \$2,657.98
Twin Cities Habitat for Humanity - \$2,657.98
Nokomis East Neighborhood Association - \$1,328.99
Beacon Interfaith Housing Collaborative - \$2,657.98
Lutheran Partners in Global Ministry - \$2,657.98
Lake Wapogasset Lutheran Bible Camp Inc. - \$2,657.98



LAKE NOKOMIS LUTHERAN FOUNDATION

The Foundation's assets are held in an account at Thrivent Financial. The mix of assets in the Foundation's portfolio is designed to provide moderate to low risk, providing year-round income from the bond portfolio, while allowing the Foundation some market exposure to the equity market.

The beginning balance of the Foundation's assets on January 1, 2023, was approximately \$421,000. The market for stocks was favorable during 2023 and the foundation's overall portfolio gained value. The Foundation's assets on December 31, 2023, were \$467,000. With a withdrawal of \$15,000 during the year to meet the Foundation's grants, the portfolio gained 7.25% in value. To maintain the portfolio's principal, the Foundation limits withdrawals to 4.00% - 4.50% of the beginning portfolio balance each year.

During 2023, the Foundation provided financial awards totaling \$7,000 to individuals who were pursuing degrees in higher education. The following individuals were awarded \$1,000 toward tuition aid:

- Kathleen Grube - Gustavus Adolphus College
- Julia Zaepfel - St. Olaf College
- Owen Kimmes - University of South Dakota
- Neil Grube - Luther College
- Kobe Kimmes - University of Minnesota - Twin Cities
- Sam Karkabi - Augsburg University
- Pastor Innocent Webinumen Anthony - Columbia International University

The Foundation also provided support for:

- A Youth Ministry Internship at Lake Nokomis Lutheran - \$3,000.
- Lutheran Partners in Global Ministry - \$2,500.
- Continuation of a pledge to fund The *Lake Nokomis Lutheran Native American Scholarship* - \$2,500. The RHS grant is in its third year toward a total pledge of \$10,000 over four years. This scholarship is administered through the Roosevelt High School Foundation.

Written by Eric Grube
Lake Nokomis Lutheran Foundation President



LAND ACKNOWLEDGMENT AND BEYOND

During 2023, several members of our congregation were part of a three-church workgroup focused on Indigenous rights and justice: Land Acknowledgment and Beyond. One of the goals of the group was to research and craft a Land Acknowledgment statement for New Branches that could then be considered for adoption by each individual faith community.

Following multiple learning sessions led by each community, the New Branches Board formally adopted the Land Acknowledgment in December. You'll find it on newbranchesmn.org. Our congregation has the opportunity to adopt a Lake Nokomis Lutheran statement at our annual meeting. See the proposed statement and Q&A.

Land Acknowledgment is an important but small step forward in working for Indigenous justice.

During the past year, the three churches offered multiple education efforts, including a powerful presentation on Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls and Relatives (MMIWGR) from Minnesota Senator Mary Kunesh. And this December and January, we're collecting welcome basket supplies for residents moving into Bimosedaa - Beacon's newest deeply-affordable homes developed with the Red Lake Nation.

Looking ahead, the Justice and Mercy workgroup will help coordinate more 'beyond' learning and actions, coordinating with folks in our three-church partnership.

2023 Land Acknowledgment and Beyond representatives: Laurie Zaepfel, Linda Ojeda, Kat Vann.

Proposed Land Acknowledgement for Lake Nokomis Lutheran

We acknowledge that Lake Nokomis Lutheran Church is located on ancestral land of the sovereign Dakota Nation, stolen through dishonest dealings and broken treaties. We honor as truth that this land was, is, and will always be sacred to the Dakota people and integral to their identity and spirituality.

With gratitude for the many ways that we continue to benefit from the wisdom and work of the Dakota people and those with whom they shared this land, we acknowledge the complicity of Christian churches in past and present injustices. These harmful acts range from genocide, ethnic cleansing, forced assimilation, and unjust exile to ongoing practices that oppress and marginalize Indigenous people.

We commit to continued learning and truth-telling. And we commit to taking action, led by our Native relatives, that leads to justice for Indigenous people—in our community and beyond.

Questions & Answers – Listening and Learning Session Feedback

Q: Why say that the land was stolen?

A: There is a long, documented history of what amounted to land theft by the federal government—from dishonest dealings designed to ensure that treaties would be signed to refusal to void the treaty and renegotiate when treaty provisions were not honored.

The **Treaties of 1851 signed at Traverse des Sioux and Mendota** are considered to be the most outrageous: Dakota people sold most of their remaining land to the U.S. in exchange for \$3,750,000 (estimated at 12 cents per acre), to be paid over decades. Little of the agreed-upon payment was ever received.

Also, a treaty article allowing Native retention of a 20 mile-wide strip spanning the Minnesota River was unilaterally removed by the U.S. Senate when presented for approval. Fear and threats to withhold rations guaranteed by prior treaties were just two of the tactics employed by colonial negotiators to force Dakota leaders to sign newly presented treaties. Following the U.S.-Dakota War of 1862, a federal law was passed, revoking all treaties between the U.S. and the Dakota.

Learn more about treaty history at the Mni Sota Makoce Honor Tax website:
<https://www.mnhonortax.org/context>

Q: What other Native people shared the land?

A: Anishinaabe (Ojibwe) and Ho-Chunk people shared the land with the Dakota historically. Today, Minnesota is home to the governments of eleven tribal nations, as well as a resilient and robust urban Native American community made up of citizens of tribal nations across the country.

Q: Why use strong language like genocide, ethnic cleansing, and forced assimilation?

A: The Native resources the drafting team consulted said it's important to use direct and appropriate language that doesn't sugarcoat harms done. This is truth-telling that can be difficult to hear.

Genocide: Actions directed toward the Dakota meet the U.N. definition of genocide. Example: In 1862, Governor Alexander Ramsey declared to the Minnesota legislature: “The Sioux Indians of Minnesota must be exterminated or driven forever beyond the borders of the state.”

Ethnic cleansing and unjust exile: Minnesota leaders wanted the Dakota removed permanently from our state—and passed legislation codifying that wish in 1863. Elders, women and children were forced into a concentration camp at Fort Snelling in 1862-63, being made to walk 150 miles. Those that survived the experience then faced expulsion to Nebraska. Native women have also been subjected to involuntary sterilization.

Forced assimilation: Native boarding schools are just one example. Under threat of untenable consequences, children were separated from their families, not allowed to speak their language or practice their culture. Many students were subjected to abuse and violence. The Pipestone Indian School alone operated from 1893-1953, impacting multiple generations—a form of cultural genocide.

Q: What ‘ongoing practices’ is the statement referring to?

A: Examples include disproportionate rates of poverty, homelessness, incarceration and poor health outcomes in the Indigenous population; underfunding of tribal and reservation resource programs; and prioritizing profit and pipelines over Native water and climate concerns. Another marginalizing practice is failure of lawmakers and law enforcement authorities to devote sufficient attention to the issue of Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls and Relatives (MMIWGR).

Q: How are Christian churches said to be complicit in the harms identified?

A: Christian Church complicity dates back to the Doctrine of Discovery, based upon a series of papal bulls issued from Rome. The 1455 papal bull, for example, granted Spain and Portugal the authority to seize lands and subjugate people in Africa and the "New World," as long as people on the lands were not Christian. Many Natives were murdered or enslaved as a result.

A more recent example: U.S. Catholic Church and Protestant denominations operated more than 150 residential boarding schools between the 19th and 20th centuries. The schools continued to operate into the 1970s. These churches put the national goal of assimilation ahead of their responsibilities as Christians.

Q: Should we be more specific about actions we’ll take beyond adopting a land acknowledgment?

A: Think of this statement as a work in progress. It can evolve over time, especially as progress is made on action plans.

The land acknowledgment does **not** replace the need for action by individual faith communities and together as New Branches.

Q: What resources were used to draft the statement?

A: Multiple resources were consulted, including the Minnesota Historical Society, Native Governance Center, Native theologians including Dr. Kelly Sherman-Conroy (Oglala Dakota Nation), and land acknowledgments created by other faith communities and organizations.

New Branches Land Acknowledgment Rollout

Recommendations for how to implement after adoption

Coordinate implementation with New Branches communication committee members, New Branches Event Coordinator and Building Manager, and faith community staff.

1. Share the Land Acknowledgment, Q & A, and implementation plan with faith community members.
2. Add to the New Branches website with adoption date: newbranchesmn.org.
3. Include the Land Acknowledgement in future New Branches printed materials, and digital tools (monitor in The Commons, outdoor corner sign). Consider a shorter version as needed for space, such as *New Branches is located on the ancestral land of the Dakota people*.
4. Read the Land Acknowledgement at the beginning of New Branches public gatherings or events (ex: public open house, outside speaker events).
5. Read the Land Acknowledgement at the beginning of three-church gatherings, worship, or events (ex: Thanksgiving worship, shared meals).

Considerations for individual faith communities

Each faith community could decide to adapt the New Branches Land Acknowledgement to reference their faith community only and reflect any language preferences—via their own decision-making process and timeline.

Here are some options and questions to consider:

- Add the faith community-specific Land Acknowledgement to their website.
- Include all or a portion in worship aids, print materials, and e-communications.
- Plan how often to read the Land Acknowledgement in worship/liturgy: Every week? Specific Sundays? More frequently as it's introduced?
- Read at faith community gatherings/events (ex: annual meetings, programs).

Beyond the Land Acknowledgment

Planning continues for ongoing education and future action opportunities, as described in the Land Acknowledgment.

LEADERSHIP

Thank you to all who have served this year in leadership positions:

Lake Nokomis Church Council:

Kathryn Selin – President, Lori Mueller – Vice President, Jason Buck – Treasurer, John Becker – Secretary
William Awe, Tom Dowzak, Rachel Klenke, Jerry Winzig

New Branches Board Representatives:

Sarah Borgerding, Eric Grube, Ginny Rudloff

Our community offers many thanks to **Lori Mueller** and **Ginny Rudloff** who now have completed their terms in these leadership positions. We are grateful for their commitment of time, energy, and the great care they have shown for our community. *The church council will appoint an additional New Branches board member to a three-year term at the February meeting.*

Lake Nokomis Lutheran 2024 Council Candidates



Rachel Klenke joined Lake Nokomis Lutheran in 2021 after Hope Lutheran closed their doors at the end of 2020. Upon joining LNL she was asked to join the council and is finishing up her first term. Aside from council, she has helped with Sunday School on occasion. Growing up at Hope, Rachel was involved in the choirs and youth program. She also served on the church council, helped with Sunday School, joined the staff as the Children, Youth and Family person for a brief time, helped with the disbursement of Hopes finances upon selling and more. Rachel is married to BJ and has two boys – Dylan (age 4) and Ethan (age 4 months). Rachel has completed one 3 year term and is eligible and willing to serve a second term.

Jerry Winzig – Jerry joined LNL in 2008 and came from Epiphany Lutheran when they closed. He served 2 terms on the Council about 10 years ago and is a past Council President and Treasurer. Jerry is on the Justice and Mercy Task Force and helps teach Sunday School. Jerry is widowed (Judy Burgett Winzig) and has 3 adult children (Peter, Betsy, and Tom) and 3 grandchildren. Jerry has completed one 3 year term and is eligible and willing to serve a second term.



Colin Scott – Colin and his wife, Lindsey, joined LNL in early 2021 after purchasing a home in the East Nokomis community. Colin grew up in the ELCA church in Madison, WI. A foundation of Colin's faith is going from a camper to summer part-time and then full-time staff at Covenant Point in the U.P. of Michigan, a camp associated with the Covenant church. Colin has been actively involved as a member of the church community and is looking forward to the opportunity to contribute further. Colin has a background in finance from the UMN, and Colin and Lindsey love to stay active skiing, biking, camping, and traveling

Steven Schou is a retired ELCA pastor who served in the Western North Dakota Synod for 33 years. He retired in 2014 and he and his wife Kathleen moved to Minneapolis to be closer to family. They visited LNL their first Sunday in their new home and got stuck here, never getting around to visiting any other congregations. They have two sons and four grandchildren.





JUSTICE MERCY

What does it mean to 'take justice and mercy to heart?'

Beginning in June, a workgroup formed to dig into this priority of our congregation's strategic plan: Grounded in the gospel command to 'do justice,' create a more inclusive, equitable community. Take action inside our church and out in the world by prioritizing our abundant people and financial resources to make an impact.

We started big, brainstorming a long list of past and potential issues and partner organizations. Next we created a framework to help us prioritize our efforts, keep our focus on equity and inclusion, and provide a range of opportunities for people to connect with. Structured interviews with a short list of potential partners gave us the information needed to identify five key partnerships for 2024, and a process for tracking our impact annually. We also made benevolence recommendations to the Church Council that aligned with our priorities.

See our 2024 plan for details. Next up: the workgroup is mapping out an annual plan for education and action. Anyone is invited to join us in this important, meaningful work.

At the end of most of our planning meetings, we shared a one-word evaluation with each other. In those early conversations, words like 'confused' and 'overwhelmed' were common. In December, we shared words like 'hopeful,' 'excited,' and 'focused.' That's progress to build on!

2023 Justice and Mercy workgroup members: Bonnie Lindstrom, Jerry Winzig, Linda Ojeda, Gloria Karbo, Deb Christensen, Maggie O'Groske, Peg Ihinger, Ginny Rudloff, Kami Hopkins, Jenny Dowzak, Ruth Patzloff, Kat Vann, Pastor Sara Spohr

JUSTICE & MERCY PLANNING TEAM RECOMMENDATIONS FOR 2024

“Take justice and mercy to heart” is one of this congregation’s key priorities.

Our strategic plan includes this direction:

- Grounded in the gospel command to “do justice,” create a more inclusive, equitable community. Take action inside our church and out in the world by prioritizing our abundant people and financial resources to make an impact.

What could that look like?

- **Enough Mercy** to work for Basic Needs: Housing, Hunger, Health (people and planet)
- **Enough Justice** to fight for Human Dignity: Equity – BIPOC Justice (Racial Justice and Indigenous Rights), Inclusion, Education
- **Enough Humility** to walk with a Gracious Spirit. We make an impact through: Education and awareness, Direct service, Advocacy and organizing, Financial support and movement toward meaningful reparations

RECOMMENDED JUSTICE & MERCY PARTNERS FOR 2024

South Minneapolis Meals on Wheels:

Serving South Minneapolis residents who cannot shop for groceries and have difficulty putting together a healthy meal for themselves.

- Opportunities for volunteering, leadership

Minnehaha Food Shelf:

Fighting food insecurity in our Minneapolis neighborhood.

- Opportunities for volunteering, item collections, leadership

Beacon Interfaith Housing Collaborative

A collaborative of congregations united in action to create homes and advance equitable housing.

- Opportunities for advocacy, training, item collections

Minnesota Interfaith Power and Light (new)

Working in partnership with faith and spiritual communities to build transformative power and bring the lights of people’s unique gifts to addressing the climate crisis.

- Opportunities for advocacy, training

Center for Leadership and Neighborhood Engagement (new)

Mobilizing congregations and nonprofit leaders as powerful neighborhood-based agents for positive social change.

Focused on racial equity and justice.

- Opportunities for advocacy, coaching/training

IMPORTANT RESOURCES FOR THE WORK AND WELL-BEING OF OUR CONGREGATION

- Mental Health Connect
- Reconciling Works
- Cherish All Children
- Lake Wapogasset Lutheran Bible Camp (WAPC)

OPPORTUNITIES TO EXPLORE FOR OCCASIONAL OR FUTURE ENGAGEMENT

- Kubi District of the Lutheran Church of Christ in Nigeria
- Liberia (Pr. Arthur)
- Nokomis East Neighborhood Association (NENA)
- Keewaydin Elementary School
- Lutheran Social Services (LSS)

ENCOURAGE INDIVIDUAL ENGAGEMENT WITHIN THE CONGREGATION.

- Lutheran Partners in Global Ministry

Written by Kat Vann
Justice and Mercy Team



PRAYING HANDS

This is the new name for The Prayer Chain. The pray-ers and I voted for Praying Hands, since we are no longer calling groups of people to pass on call concerns.

In 2023, we prayed for 86 people. Some were to help someone get through a short-term situation - surgery, worry. Others have long term situations, life time health problems or struggles that we ask God to give them strength and to guide them. In order to pray specifically, we update our pray-ers. I email the people on our list for updates, new concerns or prayers of thanks for resolution to pass on, again through email. If you are on our list, please email or talk to me about your update. This is really helpful to those praying.

Currently, we have 21 faithful people praying most days of the week. If you would like to join this group, please let me know. My email address is always in the bulletin or catch me at church.

If you want to request prayers, use the same email or talk to me personally. We do have some parameters to follow. First, these are confidential prayers. We only share among ourselves or with permission from those for whom we are praying or their immediate family. That brings me to the other parameter: we need permission from the actual recipient of the prayers or their immediate family before they go on our list. We do this because there have been situations when a caring friend requested prayers, but the person for whom we were praying wanted the situation to remain private. So, if you are requesting prayers for someone other than your immediate family, please get permission.

I want to thank these 21 faithful pray-ers for sharing their time and hearts with those in need. You are messengers of God's love. Thank you.

Written by Kathy Schou
Praying Hands Coordinator



BISHOP ANN SVENNUNGSSEN

MINNEAPOLIS AREA SYNOD OF THE ELCA

Grace, peace, and hope through our Savior, Jesus Christ.

Day by day ... they ate their food with glad and generous hearts, praising God and having the good will of all the people. – Acts 2:46-47

In May, we meet for our 2024 Synod Assembly under the theme “With Glad and Generous Hearts.” The phrase describes the early church as they gathered on Pentecost. It is also an appropriate description of the past year of our life and ministry together.

In 2023, our hearts were gladdened by:

- Your congregation, along with the other 136 congregations in our synod, faithfully proclaiming the Gospel of Jesus Christ in Word and Sacrament, nurturing community, and loving neighbors and neighborhoods.
- The privilege of accompanying congregations in 72 Call Processes; presiding at 14 Ordinations and 30 Installations; and walking with 34 people preparing to become pastors or deacons.
- 142 lay leaders and 28 clergy from 31 congregations learning to be church in the 21st century through our Faith Practices and Neighboring Practices intensive learning communities.
- 6,500 people receiving our weekly enews. (Sign up at mpls-synod.org/sign-up to feel more connected.)
- 100s of rostered and lay leaders involved in synod sponsored peer groups, conferences, and retreats.
- 100s of leaders from synod congregations helping pass the state’s “100% Clean Energy By 2040” and “Restore The Vote” legislation that advance both climate justice and racial justice.
- 100s of leaders faithfully serving as Deans, on Synod Council, and Candidacy, Audit, Program Committees.
- 15 gifted and devoted synod staff members: 10 funded by Mission Support from you and other congregations, and 5 funded by Lilly Endowment and other external grants.

We praise God for the congregational generosity that makes all this happen. At the same time, we recognize that mission support from congregations has declined 16% over the past 10 years, resulting in a reduction in synod staff hours. Especially as we prepare to elect a new bishop this spring, we invite you to consider strengthening your support for the future of the synod’s work.

Conference Assemblies are just around the corner: Saturday, February 10, 9:30 a.m. – Noon. Of particular importance will be conference nominations for bishop as well as for voting members to the ELCA Churchwide Assembly, July 28 – August 2, 2025. We encourage congregations to send the same voting members to both the Conference and Synod Assemblies.

As we look at declining mission support or grieve the closing of a congregation, we can become discouraged. In such moments, I encourage you to listen to a remarkable conversation from our 2023 Synod Assembly. Our keynote speaker, the Rev. Otis Moss III, was asked: “what do you say to those who think the church is dying?” Filled with courage and hope, Moss responded, “the church is not dying, it is being born, refashioned, and remade. The early church was an alternative community. Today we use the metrics of the market to evaluate the church – buildings, budgets, numbers. But, the early church looked at impact: were people hearing the good news of Jesus who lived and died for our salvation? Was suffering being relieved? Were people being welcomed and healed?” (mpls-synod.org/our-synod/synod-assembly-2/2023-synod-assembly-archives 4:57:27 of the second day)

Rev. Moss reminds us that we are called to be alternative communities. What might it take to measure our churches by impact? The work of synod leadership is to support the 137 communities and the thousands of leaders who are making an impactful difference in the 21st century: sharing the good news of Jesus, extending radical welcome into beloved community, engaging their neighborhoods in love with justice.

I am filled with both gratitude and sadness as I write this, my final annual report to congregations. I have loved serving as your bishop and am profoundly grateful for this calling. We pray for the year ahead, trusting in the goodness and faithfulness of our God, made known in Jesus Christ.

Bishop Ann Svennungsen

SOUTH MINNEAPOLIS



January 8, 2024

South Minneapolis Meals On Wheels Letter To Member Churches

To the member churches of South Minneapolis Meals On Wheels:

This letter begins with gratitude for volunteers, congregations, staff, individual donors, and Metro Meals On Wheels. Working together, we have all made it possible to serve our neighbors 17,183 healthy meals at their homes in 2023. (For comparison, we delivered 17,308 in 2021 and 15,146 in 2022) Meal recipients were our neighbors who are elderly, have a disability or are unable (either temporarily or long-term) to prepare meals. The majority of meals were delivered hot, daily, Monday-Friday with additional meals for weekends. In addition we delivered frozen meals to a limited amount of clients. These meals are delivered following safety protocols to keep our clients and volunteers safe from Covid-19 transmission.

Financially, we were blessed to receive additional funds through Metro Meals On Wheels. Metro was also able to provide funds for clients this year through "The Wellness program" which helps fund meals for those who are not able to pay themselves. These funds enabled SMMOW to focus on its mission with less pressure to raise fund or to raise our prices in 2023.

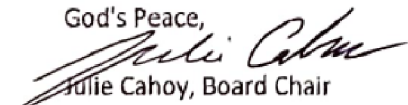
SMMOW began as a joint ministry project of area churches, with the first meals delivered in January 1973 (2023 was our 50th year) on china plates and with real silverware. That ministry continues to meet today's needs, through the 501(c)(3) incorporated charity formed and supported by the member churches.

SMMOW's meal ministry is delivered, managed, and supported by volunteers who come principally from its member churches and who are bolstered by others from the wider community. Volunteer drivers are the heart of SMMOW. They come from member churches and deliver meals with a smile and kind connection. Drivers are encouraged, scheduled and supported by volunteer coordinators from member churches. Volunteers from the churches serve on the managing board of SMMOW and its committees. Church members individually donate to support SMMOW financially. Going forward, our greatest single need is for volunteers to participate in this ministry.

Member churches not only support SMMOW by encouraging their parishioners, each member church has committed to make an annual contribution to provide SMMOW with a stable source of basic funding. As we begin 2024, we ask each church to be aware that, SMMOW depends upon your faithful contributions to sustain the ministry.

We are grateful to everyone who aided the accomplishment of the work done in 2023. We look forward to continuing service in 2024. Challenges and possibilities include continuing to follow Covid 19 guidelines, ensuring meal quality, re-energizing our member churches and church members for this ministry, seeking new member churches/organizations, volunteers and keeping our prices down for our clients.

God's Peace,


Julie Cahoy, Board Chair
For the SMMOW Board



Lake Wapogasset
LUTHERAN BIBLE CAMP, INC.



Camp Wapo



Ox Lake



**Wilderness
Canoe Base**

715.268.8434
lakewapo.org

Congregational Report 2023

Thank you for being a Partner Congregation! We are grateful and inspired by the work and support of so many congregations who've continued to partner with camp so that thousands of people each year can experience fellowship in community and come to know Jesus at Camp Wapo, Ox Lake, and Wilderness Canoe Base. We are grateful for a year filled with campers and retreat guests, for our donors, prayer warriors, and YOU - our partner congregations.

Summer 2023 This summer we welcomed nearly 4000 campers and families to Camp Wapo, Ox Lake and Wilderness Canoe Base, including 90 guided canoe trips into the BWCAW. This year's summer staff was excellent. They were required to be flexible, resilient, and filled some important leadership roles. They rose to that challenge full of energy, grace and servant hearts. We are always looking for young adults to work at camp so if you know someone who would be perfect, please send them our way! It's the perfect resume builder for any future career path.

Strategic Plan Initiative We continue to work on Strategic Initiative focusing on three main Strategic areas: Identity, Inclusivity, and Generosity/Engagement. In 2023, a task force of talented theologians and pastors created a theology framework document that will serve as guardrails for the good of our campers/guests and overall ministry. The Diversity, Equity, Accessibility, Inclusion (DEAI) committee has been created and secured funding for a DEAI assessment to happen in 2024. A development audit has been completed highlighting strengths and areas of growth. We continue the work on comprehensive site plans that will help us provide meaningful and transformative outdoor ministry experiences for all.

Welcome! At Wilderness Canoe Base we welcomed **Stephanie Carpenter**, Wilderness Canoe Base Director, **Megan Meyer**, Food & Hospitality, Spencer Garness, Property, and Sarah Garness, Office. Their previous WCB experience and a deep love and understanding for the ministry has resulted in a seamless leadership transition.

At Wapo we welcomed **Eric Golberg**, Director of Administration, **Mari Shumaker**, Wapo Program Director, **Joe Mara**, Maintenance, and **Nick Meziere**, Hospitality and Guest Services. Starting January 1, 2024 **Joel Abenth** will begin serving as the Director of Donor Engagement. With his vast experience working with donors and outdoor ministry, he is ready to work with congregations, individuals and families who wish to support camp in all sorts of ways. Please reach out to him if you want to learn more about opportunities to support camp (joela@campwapo.org).

Retreats and Events in 2023 Retreats at Wapo and Wilderness are definitely building back to capacity. Reach out to Ryan (ryanb@campwapo.org) to schedule your retreat at Wapo or Wilderness. We celebrated 75 years of ministry at Camp Wapo on Aug 6th with a bluegrass worship and celebration lunch. We welcomed over 400 people for our Memorial Day Pancake Extravaganza. We had our 21st year of the Wapo Golf Tournament, and hosted over 1200 guests and volunteers in Advent with 8 performances of the 34th annual Christmas Dinner Theater "For the Love of Christmas Lefse".

Mission Support Fund This year we had 2 matching gift challenges to inspire new donors. One generous friend of camp offered a \$50,000 summer giving challenge and Wilderness Canoe Base received a \$20,000 gift match for GiveMN's Give to the Max day. Our donors rose to the challenge, responding with \$70,000 in gifts. Overall, we also had a tremendous response to our Mission Support Fund appeal to support operating and camper scholarships, raising well over \$500,000. Every gift has a life changing impact on thousands of lives each year.

Our theme for 2024 is "Always" Hebrews 13:8 "Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today and forever" and 1Thessalonians 5:16-18 "Rejoice always, pray continually, give thanks in all circumstances." In a world marked by constant change, this theme serves as a powerful reminder of the unchanging nature of God's love. With our campers, we will discover how to live out this promise in a camp experience and at home.

We look ahead with eager anticipation and a sure sense of hope. See you at camp in 2024!

Lake Nokomis 2023 Annual Meeting Minutes

Call to Order

Following an opening prayer by Pastor Sara Spohr the 2023 annual meeting of Lake Nokomis Lutheran (LNL) Church was called to order on Sunday, January 31, 2023 at 12:25 pm. Kathryn Selin, Council President, opened and presided over the meeting. John Becker, Council Secretary, recorded the minutes of the meeting.

Establish a Quorum

At the start of the meeting, there were over 50 members in attendance, live and via Zoom, establishing a quorum.

Approval of Agenda

MOTION: The congregation of Lake Nokomis Lutheran Church accepts the agenda for the 2023 Annual Congregational Meeting.

- MOVED: Gini Rudloff
- VOTE: Approved

Approval of 2022 Meeting Minutes

Minutes from the January 21, 2022, Annual Meeting were provided to members for review and approval.

MOTION: The congregation accepts the meeting minutes from the 2022 Annual Congregational Meeting.

- MOVED: Barb Tauferner
- VOTE: Approved

State of Congregation Report

Kathryn Selin, Council President

Kathryn highlighted the following activities for 2022:

- There have been many changes over the past year, and yet you are all still with us. These changes included:
 - Moving into our newly renovated sanctuary on Christmas of 2021 and getting acquainted with our new space and our new friends at Spirit and Living Table.
 - Many opportunities to interact with and collaborate with the other two churches now sharing the New Branches building.
 - Changes in staff, including the departures of Deacon Erica Larson, choir director Jodi Gustafson, and the addition of Pastor Arthur Murray as Director for Children, Youth and Families.
 - The addition of new members.
- Through all of these changes, our core values and traditions continue to shine brighter than ever. We continue to:
 - Support the Minnehaha Food Shelf.
 - Visit our homebound members.
 - Advocate for housing and social justice.
 - Pastor Sara and others provide communion services monthly with members and nonmembers alike at Nokomis Square Cooperative.

She concluded by thanking each of our members for trusting her and the Council to continue to move this community forward, for being a member of this community in whatever capacity you are able, and for your continued commitment to making sure that there is enough for everyone.

Sara Spohr, Pastor

Pastor Sara referred members to her written report, then added special thanks to:

- Kathryn Selin for leading us as Council President.
- Andy Peterson, Mark Patzloff and Diana Grundeen, who are going off the Council this year for their faithful leadership as Council members.
- Our staff, Jesse Johnson, Barb Tauferner, and Pastor Arthur, as well as Kat Vann, for their service to this church.

Sara noted that we have much to celebrate including renewed relationships, new faces and a new energy among us. She noted three challenges in front of us:

- The absence of a school in our education wing and the resulting need to reduce our reliance on those funds.
- Disconnected members who are giving but not participating and doing some intentional outreach to them.
- Justice and outreach efforts and who we can be in our city and our world.

She concluded by expressing her excitement to be our pastor and the energy that is being generated in this place. She is also grateful to be serving with this leadership and staff.

MCI Board Report

Sarah Borgerding presented an update on the Multi-Church Initiative (MCI). She is currently president of the MCI Board. She started with a quick reorientation of what New Branches is and how it is structured.

- A legal entity that owns the building, comprised of a Board of Directors made up from each of our three congregations.
- Each congregation has three members that the congregations elect, plus a faith leader from each. LNL members on the board are Eric Grube, Gini Rudloff, Sarah Borgerding and Pastor Sara Spohr.
- We now have enough policies and procedures in place that the board can look forward to what is next to be accomplished.

Review of 2022 Finances and Approval of 2023 Budget

Church Treasurer, Jerry Winzig, provided an overview of 2022 financial results and the proposed 2023 budget. A motion was then made to approve the 2023 budget.

MOTION: The congregation of Lake Nokomis Lutheran Church hereby approves the proposed budget for 2023.

- MOVED: Robbie Becker
- SECOND: Gloria Karbo
- Discussion:
 - Jerry clarified that reserve funds are coming from the congregation's reserves, not LNL Foundation reserves.
 - Jerry also clarified that the budget includes money for musicians.
 - A member wondered if there was a thought to asking members of the Nokomis community what ways our school space might be used. Sarah Borgerding noted that we have hired a broker to help us look at all possible uses for the building. It is important for all three congregations to have revenue generated from the space.
 - It was asked if we have had deficit budgets in previous years that we have been able to make up. Jerry noted that we have previously had budget deficits that were made up by income from the school. With no school currently in the space, we do not have that luxury. If we were to get a school in the space during the year, that would help with the deficit.
 - VOTE: Approved

Elect Leadership

MOTION: The congregation of Lake Nokomis Lutheran Church hereby appoints the following members to the Church Council:

- Jason Buck
- Tom Dowzak
- MOVED: Church Council
- VOTE: Approved
- Ending their terms on the Council are Diana Grundeen, Andy Peterson and Mark Patzloff. The Council and congregation thank you for your service!
- Members of the 2023 Council are:
 - William Awe
 - John Becker
 - Jason Buck
 - Tom Dowzak
 - Rachel Klenke
 - Lori Mueller
 - Kathryn Selin
 - Jerry Winzig
 - Pastor Sara Spohr
 - Pastor Arthur Murray

Publication of Council Meeting Summaries

MOTION: A summary of the monthly Council Minutes be shared in the LNL eNews by the end of the month in which the meeting takes place.

- MOVED: Linda Ojeda
- SECONDED: Gloria Karbo
- VOTE: Approved

Adjournment

MOTION: To adjourn the meeting.

- MOVED: Robin Huiras
- SECOND: Kat Vann
- VOTE: Approved

The meeting was adjourned at 12:56 pm.

