

2024

ANNUAL

REPORT



**TRINITY LUTHERAN
CHURCH & SCHOOLS**

**GENEROSITY
LIVED**

PASTOR

SCHOOLS

ADMINISTRATION & COUNCIL

WORSHIP & HOSPITALITY

DISCIPLESHIP & FAITH FORMATION

CARE MINISTRY

SERVICE & JUSTICE



Building Up and joining God's mission as one to nurture, love, and serve all.

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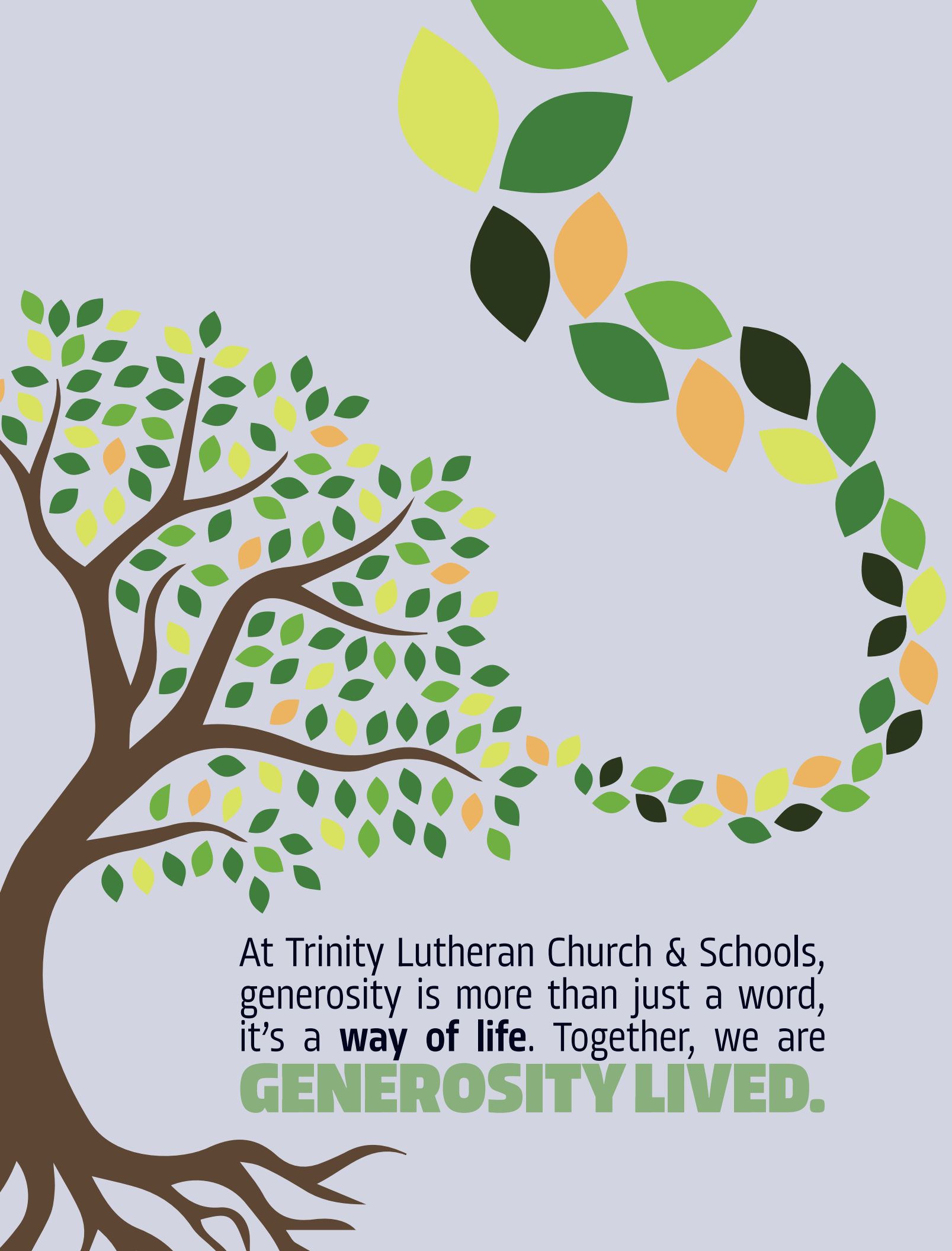
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At Trinity Lutheran Church & Schools,
generosity is more than just a word,
it's a **way of life**. Together, we are
GENEROSITY LIVED.

HECTOR GARFIAS-TOLEDO

Lead
Pastor

Another year has passed. It is unbelievable that we are already in March. But that is the reality of our life's journey. The question prevails, "what is next?!"

In reading the book of the prophet Zechariah, I came across this verse:

"People and their leaders will come from all over to see what's going on. The leaders will confer with one another: 'Shouldn't we try to get in on this? Get in on God's blessings? Pray to God-of-the-Angel-Armies? What's keeping us? Let's go!'" Zechariah 8:21 (MSG)

A brief introduction to the **Book of Prophet Zechariah by the Bible Project** [bibleproject.com/explore/video/zechariah] reminds us that a group of Israelites come, and they have been mourning over the former temple's destruction for nearly 70 years. They ask, "Should we stop grieving? Is God's reign coming soon?"

This generation will see the messianic reign, but only if they pursue **justice and peace** and remain faithful to the covenant. In other words, Zechariah reverses their question and asks, ***"Will you become the kind of people who are ready to receive and participate in God's coming Reign?"***

The overarching message of the book of Zechariah and the verse quoted above speak to the current reality of our society, communities, and this congregation. Zechariah invites us to **look above the chaos and hope for God's Reign to come**, motivating faithfulness in the present moment.

With that in mind, I want to invite you to make a pause to reflect on where we have been during the past year and how we will be the kind of people who are ready to participate in the new ways that the Lord is calling us to pursue and join God's justice, being catalysts of healing and transformation.

Last year was a time when we saw the Spirit moving in and through all of us instilling a vision for possibilities, and



Ash Wednesday with our Preschool students

infusing confidence as we made sacrificial commitments for the generosity campaign and the implementation of the impact model for ministry. Yes! We were reminded that nothing would keep us from responding faithfully to the call to **join God's mission as one to love, nurture, and serve all.**

I have come to believe that we have reached a point in our faith journey, as a congregation, at which we can no longer use the COVID excuse and the idea that we are still fighting it. True, COVID is real and it is still going around, but it cannot keep us from seeing the ways in which God's reign is unfolding and bringing new life.

My last year's report concluded by saying that the sustainability of the ministry will depend on our faithful generosity and our willingness to make disciples. We committed to:

- Invest in people by providing training.
- Invest in creating spaces that promote connections, fellowship, and impactful relationships.
- Accompany each other.
- Accept the reality and importance of losses and support one another with empathy.
- Practice new ways to be the Jesus movement.

All of the above describe a way of life rather than a list of projects or things to do. Therefore, I can say that we will not work to reach a destination, but to embrace a way of life that speaks out loud of what the people of TLCS are committed to be, to become, and to do.

THE REARVIEW MIRROR VISION

As we look back, we need to pause to celebrate and lift up the leadership of the congregation—both elected and non-elected—and the staff members, all of whom have demonstrated a remarkable commitment and inspiring faithfulness.

One of the main focuses of every aspect of the ministry was to instill new normal and natural pathways that lead to a cultural shift. That means that we always asked the question: **“why are we doing it?”** Also, you might have noticed that new/adjusted practices were introduced as a way to live out **TLCS’ values** [tlcs.church/about] and help us to maintain a high level of adaptability, preventing us from clinging to a rigid set of practices that become law and then a traditionalism (*“the dead faith of the living”* as Theologian Miroslav Pelikan would say).

Such adjustments and practices were mostly palpable in the order for the Sunday gathering of the church (Sunday Worship). Some practices that introduced were:

- Shortened bulletins or no bulletins
- Use of QRs
- Liturgical new expansive language
- A rhythm of seasonal worship series
- Visuals on the new screens
- Conveying an authentic welcome and practicing hospitality
- Affirming the full participation of children and families in the church gathering
- Sunday school - Faith formation for children new approach

Also, we lift our voices in thanksgiving to God for all the people who have been participating in the generosity campaign. We are now seeing the fruit of your sacrificial giving and your commitment to steward God’s resources for the sake of ministry.

As I mentioned above, the campaign is not just something that we do to replace a roof. The vision behind the two-

year campaign is to embrace a new way to live out generosity. That is, growing **from giving to a project, to giving from and because**. The ultimate question has to do with how we are part of God’s impact in the community.

During the **(Re)-commitment gathering** [tlcs.church/buildup] last October, we heard the stories of how the generosity campaign has transformed our understanding of **“Generosity Lived.”** The transformation and growth of people was tangible as the testimonies that were shared expressed how the generosity of every participant, and the engagement in the journey, touched lives and moved others to commit and engage with the Generosity Lived campaign.

In response to the congregational affirmation to implement the **Impact Model**, we laid out a plan for a ministry project that fosters collaboration among the **Service Core Ministry teams** of the congregation. You can read more in my **monthly reports for December 2023** [tlcs.church/council#docs].

The impact model approach will help us to:

- focus, go deeper, and plan for mid-term and long-term activities.
- avoiding duplication of efforts in the community & competing for resources (people, finances, time, etc.).
- to develop a path for people to join ministries, identify new leaders, and create what I call a “Healthy and Fruitful Leadership” model.
- increase capacity, sustainability of ministries, and decrease the burnout of leaders.

We continued to work on fostering the **unity, consistency, and complementary ministry** between the two sides of the TLCS ministry, that is our **schools and the worshiping community**. The intentional work of our schools’ directors produced tangible fruits in the form of TLCS gaining recognition as a place for families and children. The National Day Out and the Trunk or Treat events showed how intentional collaboration strengthened both sides of the ministry, and the community experienced the fruit of it in the form of relationships, partnerships, and accompaniment.



Dedicating our new playground.

Other achievements were:

- **New playground** for our toddlers. The congregation fully supported the project at the June congregational meeting.
- We are now **implementing the changes to the congregation's constitution**. For instance, the congregational meetings are now held in November and March.
- The building has become a **space for gatherings** for organization, groups, and individuals.
- **Partnerships with organizations** in the community continue to grow.

Here are a few more reason for gratitude and joy:

LEADERSHIP & STAFF

- The staff members have shown a high level of adaptability, resilience, and commitment, especially, during the campaign work.
- Once again I am humbled by the commitment, adaptability, and faithfulness of the elected and unelected leaders of the congregation.

WORSHIP

- Ongoing integration of technology, visuals, and tools that help people engage with the celebration.
- Relevant and meaningful worship series that combine content and sensorial elements.
- New screens that provide sharp images and bright colors making easier for people to participate.
- Inclusion of young worshippers and their parents.

COMMUNICATIONS

- New format of What's Happening.
- Ongoing enhancement of the web page.
- Graphics, designs, and styles that reflect the values of the congregation.

FAITHFUL STEWARDSHIP

The (Re)commitment event confirmed that the gospel of abundance transforms and liberates us from scarcity. The abundance released by members in response to God's grace has made it possible for TLCS to position itself for the next chapter of the Spirit's work as TLCS continues to branch out and bring fruits.

LEARNINGS FROM LAST YEAR

Going back to Zachariah's message, we have learned that we cannot abide in the grief caused by the loss of what we were used to. Month after month, the Spirit reminded us to look above the chaos and hope for God's Reign to be visible, motivating faithfulness in the present moment so that we can move into the new era to be the church.

The campaign and the effort in aligning the core ministries of the church, point to the importance of being ready to receive and participate in God's coming Reign.

THE WINDSHIELD VISION

For the past nine months we focused primarily on the (Re) commitment to the campaign, and the implementation of the impact model. This year will continue to transition in **instilling the normal and natural pathways for generosity and refining the pathways of the congregation to equip and release people for leadership (discipleship).**

In order to shift our patterns we need to **practice**, in many cases **deconstruct the habits** that we have developed. The kind of people that the Lord needs to participate in the reign are **people willing to be transformed and embrace the idea that we are called to never be the same** (“the same” is in reference to patterns that fossilize and eventually prevent us from being adaptable to the new ways of the Spirit).

So the question for us as a congregation is, **“now what?”** God has blessed God’s church, TLCS, with a facility and a new roof, so that this place can continue to be a source of blessing, healing, and transformation for members, participants, friends, and anyone in the community at large. The Invitation is to see that the roof is a metaphor for God’s work that covers all people.

In addition, the **Lynnwood Neighborhood Center** [voaww.org/lnc] will begin construction later this year. We will see hundreds of people on campus, many perhaps seeking connections and community. **What are the new ways that TLCS and Volunteers of America (and maybe other organizations) will partner?** Again all of it requires us to live with open hands, open hearts, and open eyes.

God has Called TLCS to be a witness at one of the busiest corners in the Greater Seattle area, which is going to be even busier. The **Swift Orange Line** [communitytransit.org/swift-orange] will run along 196th St, connecting the Edmonds college with the **Light Rail Transportation Center** [soundtransit.org/system-expansion/lynnwood-link-extension] and the **Lynnwood City Center** [lynnwoodwa.gov/Government/Departments/Development-Business-Services/City-Center] (new housing developments). **What kind of people does God want**

us to be to engage in relevant, meaningful, and transformational ways?

The answer to the question according to the prophet is, **people who pursue justice and peace and remain faithful to the covenant.** As St. Paul said, *“I become a servant to any and all... I entered their world and tried to experience things from their point of view.”* 1 Cor 9:19,21 (MSG) **So how will we be able to do that?** We will focus on ministries, leadership, and generosity, all guided by the congregational values.

MINISTRIES & LEADERSHIP

We will continue the implementation of the impact model to help ministries to focus on outcomes that contribute to the overarching impact of the congregation. These are three principles that will be key:

1. **Leadership** is directly proportional to **discipleship**.
2. **Collaboration & connections** strengthen ministries.
3. **Focus on a few ministries** in order to go deeper.

GENEROSITY LIVED

One of the goals of the Generosity campaign was 100% engagement. That meant that everyone was connected, supported the initiative, prayed, and gave according to their capacity. Generosity will be an ongoing conversation and a **way of life and ministry**. Campaigns, initiatives, and appeals will be based and guided by the mission of the congregation. This year we will begin to distribute 2% of the collected offerings as we committed in the form of **missional generosity** to partners in the community. More will be shared with you during the congregational meeting.

As a congregation we will not wait until something breaks to talk about giving. One of the goals of the campaign was to create **a culture of giving and growth**. Those of us who have financial means are committed to a permanent discernment to give as part of our faithful response to God’s covenant of love with us (grace).

TLCS VALUES LIVED OUT

This is how I believe that the values of the congregation will shape the ministry:

GOD-INSPIRED SERVICE IN OUR COMMUNITY (LOCAL AND GLOBAL)

You have hopefully seen information about the “Gardening for Neighbors” vertical garden project, which will be a new venue to serve the community by growing relationships and vegetables. The impact model has been used to determine the outcomes (see some tentative outcomes & indicators in the chart below) of the pilot project in order to keep on track, measure progress, plan strategies, and make adjustments as we learn. The ultimate goal is connections, healing, and transformation for all who participate.

TEST CASE: “GARDENING WITH NEIGHBORS” COMPONENTS TO CONSIDER IN DEFINING OUTCOMES

The outcomes will work towards the overarching impact of the congregation: To be the catalyst of healing and transformation.

- Impactful relationships
- Identification, cultivation, release of new leaders (Disciple making/leaders developers)
- Sustainability of the initiative (Financial and leadership)
- Term of the initiative (Define duration)
- Congregational buy-in or ownership
- Service Core Ministry teams collaboration and growth

POSSIBLE OUTCOMES

TENTATIVE INDICATORS

Improve and strengthen collaboration

Create spaces to build relationships with neighbors

Strengthen partnerships with community organizations

Make fresh produces available to neighbors

of TLCS members & teams involved
of neighbors participating
% Congregational members fully invested

of people that each person gets to know personally
of people taking leadership roles

of organizations partnering
% of organizations investing along with TLCS

Pounds of produces
% People who move from consumption to production
% People who engage with neighbors
people who experience belonging

INCLUSION OF ALL PEOPLE

As I mentioned last year, inclusion permeates every aspect of ministry. This value will be affirmed and made tangible as TLCS works to update and adopt the Reconciling in Christ (RIC) statement. The purpose is for the statement to expand the meaning in inclusion and for congregations to reaffirm and recommit to live it out in every aspect of ministry.

IMPACTFUL RELATIONSHIPS THAT SUPPORT OUR LIFE’S JOURNEY

Trust grows when people develop impactful relationships. The First Impressions Team will work on re-imagining the ministry and developing pathways to connections with ministries. So far, we do not have a clear path for people to integrate to the current ministries of TLCS.

FAITH-BASED COMMUNAL EXPERIENCE OF WORSHIP AND LEARNING

The worship team will focus on continuing their efforts to integrate theological foundational principles that respond to the need for a relevant experience. Sensorial experience will continue to be central. We will strive to work for gatherings and learning sessions that nurture, heal, challenge, and orient our faith so that every person will leave the gathering with a sense of direction and strength to be the scattered church during the six days of the week.

We may also start exploring additional gatherings of the church including other languages.

MULTI-GENERATIONAL MINISTRY

It is my hope that more of you will take initiative to attend events and activities that involve either younger or older generations. Intentionality is crucial. It begins with our willingness to make it happen. Staff and pastors can do only so much, it falls on each member of the congregation to be bold and willing. Intergenerational activities will continue to be held, especially with our schools. What's keeping us? Let's go!

FINAL REMARKS AND ACTION STEPS

What is keeping us from branching out? What kind of people does God want us to be so that God's reign of reconciliation, beauty, justice, and wholeness may be tangible through TLCS?

We cannot deny that we are **facing an array of challenges** that go from aging of buildings and population, increasing demands for repairs and maintenance, etc. However, there is nothing that can keep the reign of God unfold and roll down like a river. The prophet calls us to not lose sight of the vision that God has put in the heart of TLCS and every person.

The kind of people that God needs are people like you and me. People who **wonder** and also who **wander**. Yet, people who are open to **strive** to be channels

of the life-giving grace of God, and **thrive** by joining God in building up a place for all people from any background to experience healing, be reminded that they belong, and know that we all are always becoming.

I invite you to look carefully at all the blessings that TLCS has received at times of joy, and at times of struggle and dissent (yes, even then).

The ministry of the congregation will have an impact in the lives of every person in and outside. That is why my prayer and hope is that we all will constantly reflect and intentionally listen to one another: deeply, curiously, and humbly. Let's go... Let's be a place that thrives in being a place for all people from any background. A place where people find home and the support for this life's journey.

As we move forward, **we will continue to practice adjusting, reimagining, and letting go** so that nothing will keep us from responding to the changes in the community, i.e. the light rail, changes in demographics, location of the congregation, or anything else.

I want to express my most sincere gratitude to God and to you all for the opportunity to serve with you, and for the care, support, and accompaniment that you have graciously given to the staff and to me.

My prayer is that we will learn to live out the call that we have received to be catalysts of God's reckless never-ending love for all people. It has been a journey, but I am sure that we all have learned to see in each other the face of the Lord.

You will be in prayers, but I want to ask for your prayers asking God to give me the strength, and the will to serve you and serve with you in the love of the Lord Jesus. Thanks be to God for all of you! Let's go!

Your sibling in Christ,



Rev. Hector Garfias-Toledo, Lead Pastor



Communion during worship at Lynndale Park.



Bubbles! During the National Night Out event.



Faith sharing time during the Build Up, Branch Out event in October.



Chapel time for our Preschool students.



Affirmation of Faith for Kasey FH during the Sunday worship gathering.



One of our CDC students lounging in the sandbox.

Families and Friends of Trinity Lutheran Church and Schools:

The year 2023 has been an exciting time of change and growth for the Child Development Center. If you drive by the southeast corner of TLCS' property you will see our **new Infant and Toddler** playground now in use by our youngest worshippers. This revitalization of under utilized space is a blessing that will continue to offer large motor development opportunities and nurture the love of outdoor play for years to come. It is the culmination of the hard work of facilities personnel, Trinity administrators, and Child Development Center staff along with post covid grant money and God's grace that has made this space possible.



Goofy smiles in one of our CDC classrooms.

Our **dedicated staff of 25 serve over 80 families each week** providing quality care for children from 3 months to 5 years and an additional 20 families with school age children in the summer. Child care added an additional full day preschool classroom in May of 2023 and enrollment continues to grow. Trinity offers a safe environment designed for children to explore, learn and grow while parents are engaged in the workforce.

CHILDCARE IS THE WORK THAT HELPS ALL OTHER WORK HAPPEN

We at Trinity make it God's work and are honored to join together in doing it.

We are happy to once again re-introduce to our program some parent engagement activities:

Trunk-or-Treat and **Christmas Craft Night** were very well attended. These gatherings gave an opportunity for CDC families and staff to integrate with PreSchool families and staff, as well as families from our Sunday worshipping community, offering opportunities to strengthen connections between the many facets of Trinity's ministries.

Our **Valentine's Luncheon** for CDC families included a peek for parents into our Chapel time as we will also observe Ash Wednesday at this event. Children 3 years and older participate in Chapel worship every Thursday, The use of child friendly stories, music, drama and prayer is utilized to help convey faith concepts. Children take turns lighting candles (teacher assisted) and extinguishing the flame to help experience some of the traditions of the church. **Faith is developed over a lifetime**, it starts with positive experiences with people of faith showing God's love and care, it matures with developmentally appropriate teachings and observations of expressions of faith as they grow.

Thank you once again for the opportunity to join with you in service for the children of our community.

Nanette Erban, Child Care Director



CDC students take turns putting out the candles during weekly chapel.

JOELLE DUDAK

PRESCHOOL DIRECTOR

Our main focus this year at Trinity Lutheran Preschool was to bring back the life of the Preschool. With the help of my wonderful staff—Kari Dobbs, Lindsay Stark, Natasha Pia Kamakeeaina, Mallory McCollum, Begin Nora and Silvia Sanjuan—I feel like we have succeeded so far.



Our dedicated Preschool staff posing on a field trip to the pumpkin patch.

We have three full classes of 3-, 4- and 5-year-olds and are still getting enrollment for this year! We were able to bring back the **Christmas program** with the help of all the teachers and David Horton, and it was a huge success! The parents were so proud of all the hard work the children put into it and very thankful that we were able to do this. Though we still have much of our year left, we have already hosted a **Christmas Craft night**, had a dentist visit, visited a pumpkin farm, and plan to have the Lynwood K-9 unit, a firefighter and the reptile lady come to visit, as well hold our annual **Spring Sing Concert** and auction (watch for more about that in the coming weeks!)



Preschool students exploring the world.

Throughout this year, we have really focused on our families. **We want all our families to feel welcomed** and that they belong here. We have made our big bulletin board in our hallway our Trinity Family Tree and all our children have a family picture on the wall. This excites the children every time they see not only their families but their friends' families as well. With this, we had a week of learning about different cultures around the world. We asked our families about their culture and where their family was from. In each of our rooms we have a map of the world and marked where the children's families are from. It is fun for the children to see that we are from different places!



Outdoor play and exploration is important to child development.

This past Christmas, Trinity Lutheran Preschool **adopted 18 children from Sandpoint Cottages** to give them a Christmas that they deserve. Our families were very generous and either donated money or items to these families! For each child, we were able to give them a winter jacket, an outfit, socks, a toy, and food. Seeing our families come together to help was amazing! We also **donated our Chapel money** that the children bring each week **to Nourishing Network**, through the Edmonds School District, which provides food for children that are in need.

I feel very blessed that it has been a successful year so far and I can't wait to see what the rest of the school year brings!!

It's the start of a new year and time to reflect on a few of the highlights of the past year from the perspective of the Church Administrator's desk:

BUILDING UP AND BRANCHING OUT

In 2023 we reached the halfway point of our two-year generosity campaign. To celebrate, we hosted a very successful (Re)Commitment Event in October, attended by over 100 members, and seeing several households increase their original commitment, five make new commitments, and over 70 completing a (Re)commitment card.

The fruits of this work are in bloom...

MISSION BUDGET (FORMERLY "GENERAL FUND")

- 13% increase in contribution income in Fiscal Year 2023
- In November, passed a balanced budget for 2024 that includes:
 - Increased Synod giving to 7% of total contribution income
 - Created general benevolence fund equaling 2% of total contribution income
 - Pastors brought up to current Synod Salary Compensation Guidelines
 - Cost of living and targeted salary increases for non-rostered staff

CAPITAL PROJECT

- Received over \$1.2 Million to date
- Roof replacement well underway—anticipated completion in April, 2024
- Siding repair/replacement phase up next—start date TBD



Roof work began in Fall 2023 and is expected to be complete this April.

RECOGNIZING OUR HUMAN RESOURCES

The Personnel Team met on a quarterly basis throughout 2023. Leadership of the team was handed off, per our bylaws, from the TLCS President to Vice-President Clint Buetow (rotates between the two positions).

In addition to bringing both our **pastors' compensation up to Synod recommended levels**, the team conducted a **detailed review** of two other full-time staff members' salaries and recommended increases that were adopted in the FY2024 budget. In total, four full-time and one part-time church staff member's salaries have been reviewed and increased to reflect fair market value over the past two budget cycles.

Salary review work will continue for the remaining church staff members that have not been adjusted in the past two years. Also, work will begin on a comprehensive review of our current Personnel Policies and Procedures that were last updated in 2018.

BRINGING THE LYNNWOOD NEIGHBORHOOD TO TRINITY

Planning (Joint Operating Committee) and development (Steering Committee) work continued throughout 2023 on the **Lynnwood Neighborhood Center (LNC)** project with our partners Volunteers of America of Western Washington (VOAWW). Both teams met nearly monthly to discuss progress on the building and fund-raising fronts. New VOAWW CEO Brian Smith, LNC Project Manager Jim Lorenz, and Development Manager Terry Pollard were tireless advocates for the project throughout the year. It has been a pleasure to partner with them on this exciting addition to our campus.

The work on the new building is currently being re-bid as a condition of federal funding; however, the team at VOAWW remains confident that we will see Phase II of the LNC project begin as soon as April of 2024. The project will take about a year to complete once construction begins. A new Trinity team focused on partnerships with VOAWW and tenants at the LNC will continue to meet throughout the year, as well as the JOC and Steering Committees. A public facing campaign will kick-off when a firm construction start date is set.

STEWARDING OUR FINANCIAL RESOURCES

We employed the services of Juleen Synder from *Jarvis & Jacobson* to **conduct a review of our financial practices**. After interviewing key folks in our systems, she determined that generally we were doing very well, but had a few recommendations on ways we could improve how we handle our finances.

While we are doing a good job stewarding our funds, the recommendations were also very useful, and we plan on implementing them in 2024. Also on the agenda for this year is to revive the “Audit” Committee, so we can complete ongoing reviews of our processes, and encourage even more accountability in our financial practices.

COLD WEATHER SHELTER MOVING FORWARD

After careful review of our **Cold Weather Shelter (CWS)** ministry, it was determined that it had expanded beyond our ability to provide meaningful operational supervision. Therefore, we engaged in discussions with the CWS Board of Directors over several months to discuss transferring our role as “Fiscal Agent” to another organization.

Our partners on the LNC project, VOAWW, stepped up again and have assumed responsibility for operations and finances of the CWS. The CWS opened as planned in November and provides warm, dry sleeping quarters for our homeless neighbors, hosted at Maple Park Church. VOAWW has significant experience in running similar shelters in other parts of Snohomish County, and this is another way (in addition to the LNC project) they are expanding their work into south county.

CWS Board Members were on hand at and after worship in November to discuss the changes, thank Trinity for its role in the ministry over the years, and meet with folks with questions about how to volunteer and support the CWS.

While TLCS is no longer fiscal agent for the CWS, we remain committed to supporting this critical organization in our community through regular use of our vans and trailers, encouraging our members to continue to volunteer as drivers, overnight hosts, and meal team members, and promoting financial contributions.



Dedicated Tech Team volunteers installing mounting brackets for new sanctuary screens.

To me, generosity is about kindness and selflessness - about looking out for the needs of others and sharing what you have without expecting anything specific in return. While generosity can be measured in terms of money, time, and effort, I believe that it is more than giving something to someone. True generosity involves sacrifice, and it can impact the giver as much as (or even more than) it impacts the receiver. Generosity connects deeply into our faith and values and connects us more deeply with one another.

I feel blessed to work with the Congregation Council, committees, TLCS staff, and the congregation because I regularly see signs of generosity - Generosity Lived. I am grateful to belong to a community that is committed to generosity as a way of life.

Here are just a few examples (from the viewpoint of Council) this past year:

- Starting construction on long-awaited building repairs.
- Installing a new playground for infants and toddlers to better support CDC children and families.
- Installing new video screens in the sanctuary to improve visibility and reduce paper use (also reducing our costs and environmental impact).
- Accompanying Cold Weather Shelter as they discerned and transitioned into a new partnership with Volunteers of America to continue providing vital services in the community in a more stable and sustainable way.
- Securing tax refunds through the Employee Retention Credit program that will fund initiatives to support the long-term viability of TLCS.
- Coming together to learn about primal patterns and how they connect to individual worship preferences.
- Engaging in ongoing, forward-looking conversations about worship and ministry opportunities.
- Leading and supporting (Re)Commitment Sunday which brought the congregation together over a meal

to share stories about how TLCS impacts lives, and which affirmed our commitment to Trinity's vision through remarkable engagement and generosity.

- Completing an independent financial health check which confirmed that we have strong financial processes and controls.
- Developing recommendations to better align staff salaries with current job responsibilities and to provide cost of living adjustments consistent with Synod guidelines. (Thank you, Personnel Committee.)
- Developing a balanced 2024 mission budget which allocates costs to six core TLCS ministries to better illustrate how gifts received support core ministries that impact people's lives.
- Developing a process to decide which local ministries the congregation will support using missional generosity funds (the 2% "increased benevolence" included in the 2024 budget).
- Discerning candidates for open leadership positions and voting members for the Synod Assembly in May. (Thank you, Nominating Committee.)
- Supporting and affirming the ministry of our pastors. (Thank you, Mutual Ministry Committees.)



Prayers written on scraps of fabric hung for a liturgical art installation for RIC Sunday (seen on p. 11).

2023 STATISTICAL REPORT

By design, the Council is dynamic. Every year, we welcome newly-elected members and release those that have completed their terms. In between the bookends of coming and going, as we tend to the routine and strategic business of the congregation, we intentionally seek to instill a culture that fosters trust, collaboration, and shared purpose.

I am deeply grateful to those that accompany, inspire, and challenge me in this work. Please join me in thanking the 2023-24 Congregation Council for their generous giving of time, energy, and wisdom this past year:

- Terry Anderson and Tabatha Cyphers, who complete their two-year terms in June.
- Kirsten Sundberg Lunstrum, who concluded her service late last year, and Brent Johnson, who has since filled that position.
- David Fox, Judy Jacobson, and Bonnie Sheehan, who are midway through their two-year terms and continue to serve.
- Clint Buetow, Jenny Louch, and Vanessa Villavicencio, who have offered to serve second, two-year terms.
- Pr. Hector, Pr. Jenna, and Administrator Don Boelter, who serve on an ongoing basis.

Thank you, dear ones, for the opportunity to “be church” with you here and now, for your remarkable generosity, and for your ongoing encouragement and prayers as TLCS moves forward into God’s future.

Blessing and peace,
Mark

864 BAPTIZED MEMBERS

670 CONFIRMED MEMBERS

479 TOTAL HOUSEHOLDS

170 AVG. WORSHIP ATTEND. (IN-PERSON)

94 AVG. WORSHIP ATTEND. (ONLINE)

17 MEMBERS RECEIVED

12 MEMBER DEATHS

10 AFFIRMATIONS OF BAPTISM

6 BAPTISMS PERFORMED

1 WEDDING PERFORMED

The Lord continues to financially bless Trinity Lutheran Church and Schools. Despite the challenges we are facing as we recover from the impacts of COVID, our church finances are doing well. With God's help we are overcoming reduced attendance, increasing costs, and an aging facility. The generosity of our congregation is inspiring. That generosity combined with available federal programs are allowing us to fund our roof and siding project while successfully managing our 2023 budget. See the charts and tables on the facing page for the full story.

OVERVIEW OF PERFORMANCE

Our donations and other income were not sufficient to cover expenses since the impacts of COVID beginning in 2020. The budget deficit in 2020 and 2021 were covered with Payroll Protection Plan (PPP) funds provided by the federal government. The PPP was a program providing funds to our church and schools to pay a portion of our payroll and other expenses during government imposed COVID restrictions.

In 2022 the shortfall was covered by our savings. In 2023 while building the balanced budget we utilized \$125,000 of the Employee Retention Credit (ERC) funds. The ERC is a program that refunds a portion of the employer tax paid during periods where the church and schools were adversely affected by COVID government mandated restrictions. Our budget performance in 2023 was better than expected. We only used \$94,940 of the ERC Funds.

In 2024 we have budgeted \$120,000 of ERC funds to be used to offset the schools' share of expenses (personnel, facility, and general administration). In future years the schools will contribute to shared expenses based on usage and a percentage of tuition to begin in 2025. This percentage will be calculated each year based on financial performance of TLCS.

2023 YEAR END REPORT

Cash Reserves

- US Bank - \$655,966
- Mission Investment Funds - \$2,553,029
- Total - \$2,908,995

Mortgage Balance - \$1,445,367

Dedicated Funds - \$1,243,387

- Capital Funds - \$1,113,525

Uncommitted funds available for emergent issues such as budget, repairs, and capital improvement expenses that exceed donations and other income - \$1,219,208.

SCHOOL PERFORMANCE

CDC

- 2023 Income - \$1,138,525
- 2023 Expenses - \$1,291,334 includes \$113,560 for new playground and equipment improvements.
- Cash Reserves (Dedicated) - \$286,296 (\$5050)

Preschool

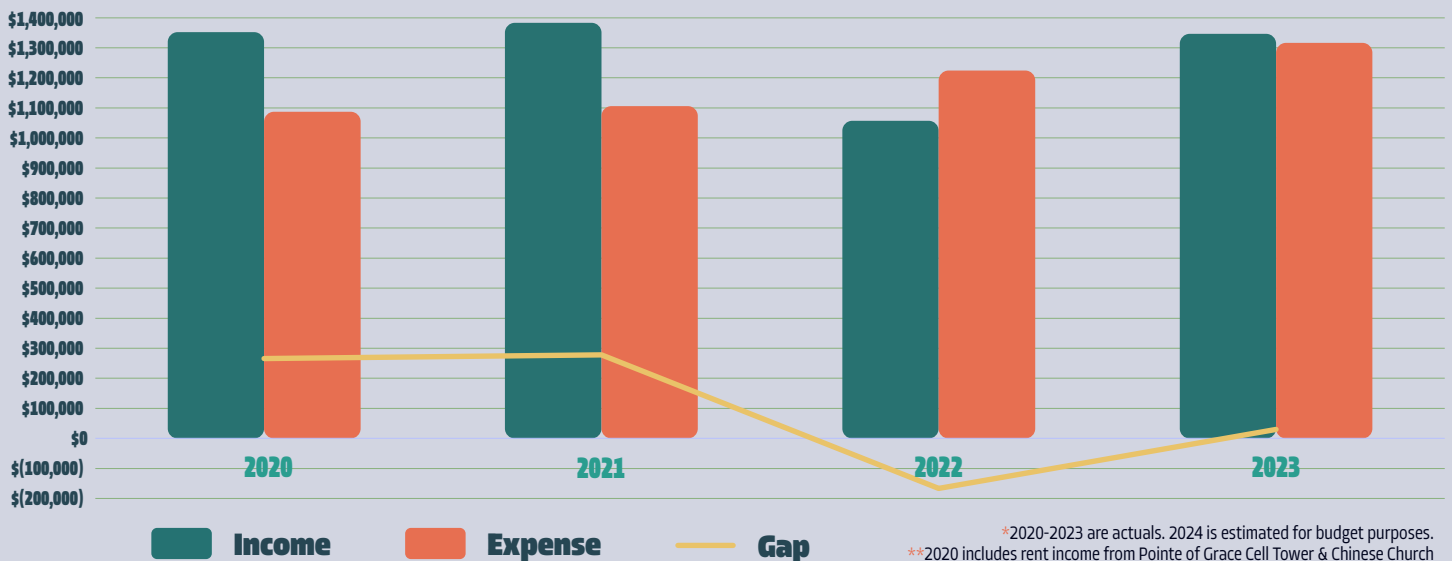
- 2023 Income - \$305,614
- 2023 Expenses - \$243,622
- Cash Reserves (Dedicated) - \$103,450 (\$55)

CHURCH INCOME

	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024*
CONTRIBUTIONS	\$1,052,329	\$1,043,562	\$1,035,325	\$1,169,396	\$1,255,842
FACILITY USE**	\$9,685	\$525	\$18,367	\$26,419	\$40,000
MISCELLANEOUS***	\$290,128	\$339,142	\$3,732	\$150,553	\$145,000
TOTAL	\$1,352,351	\$1,383,284	\$1,057,424	\$1,346,368	\$1,440,842

CHURCH EXPENSE

	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024*
MISSION SUPPORT (TO SYNOD)	\$46,976	\$62,614	\$62,205	\$81,840	\$113,026
PERSONNEL	\$709,794	\$663,683	\$735,935	\$807,065	\$859,811
MORTGAGE	\$98,196	\$98,196	\$98,196	\$98,196	\$98,196
FAITH FORMATION	\$1,529	\$1,522	\$2,849	\$2,856	\$4,500
EVANGELISM MINISTRY	\$1,497	\$1,197	\$1,350	\$1,021	\$1,400
FACILITY MINISTRY	\$131,207	\$140,812	\$178,227	\$176,127	\$195,250
CONGREGATIONAL LIFE	\$1,168	\$671	\$369	\$1,565	\$3,850
MANAGEMENT	\$85,833	\$124,849	\$122,609	\$127,198	\$139,850
SOCIAL CONCERNS	\$279	\$--	\$294	\$49	\$750
WORSHIP	\$6,166	\$7,502	\$15,397	\$15,088	\$17,100
WAY STUDENT MINISTRIES	\$4,033	\$4,432	\$6,726	\$5,323	\$6,900
TOTAL	\$1,086,678	\$1,105,478	\$1,224,157	\$1,316,328	\$1,440,632



*2020-2023 are actuals. 2024 is estimated for budget purposes.
 **2020 includes rent income from Pointe of Grace Cell Tower & Chinese Church
 ***2020 & 2021 include PPP Funds; 2023 & 2024 include ERC Funds

2024 FINANCES

In Paul's second letter to the Corinthians, he speaks of sowing generously.

“Remember this: Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows generously will also reap generously. Each man should give what he has decided in his heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. And God is able to make all grace abound to you so that in all things at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work.”

(2 Corinthians 9:6-8 NIV)

Trinity Lutheran Church and Schools embraces this spirit of generosity as we move forward into 2024. A major step forward was to focus our finances on our **six core ministries**. These Core Ministries were identified to ensure that the missions supported by the church align to our values and are sustainable. It is through these ministries that Trinity can reach out to the local and global communities as well as our congregational needs. Below is a breakdown of our approved 2024 budget into these core ministries.

We have begun 2024 with an approved budget. In addition to supporting our six core ministries we have added a

“Mission Giving” fund (2% of church donations) to provide much needed support to charities that align with our values. As is our practice in the past, we will track our income and expenses every month. We will make appropriate adjustments during the year to meet the need of our ministries while complying with the budget. Any major issues will be communicated with the congregation.

CONCLUSION

As we enter the second year of our Generosity campaign, it is important that we remain focused on the sustainability of our core missions. We are called to make disciples of Christ. We all need to get involved. Many of us have been able to increase our financial support beyond the Biblical tithe, but some of us can give no more. However, I encourage everyone to find a mission that calls you to support with your God given gifts of talent and time. Invite your friends, neighbors, and family to join you. Our local and global communities need support. Helping others is an excellent way for us to express the love of Christ to our neighbors in this community. It is the best way I know to reach others, bring them into our Christian family, and grow our church. It is a joy to serve.

God Bless You All. Respectfully submitted by,
David Fox, Council Treasurer

2024 CORE MINISTRIES

- Worship & Hospitality** (\$615,237)
- Schools*** (\$242,442)
- Discipleship & Faith Formation** (\$233,920)
- Service & Justice** (\$187,791)
- Outreach & Community Engagement** (\$79,328)
- Care Ministry** (\$75,015)

*Does not include Schools' operating expenses or teacher/director pay, but rather their shares of facility & administration costs.

NOMINATING COMMITTEE

CHRISTINE HOWARD &
LIN RUSSELL, CO-CHAIRS

Using Christ inspired service as a guiding value, we endeavored to be **inclusive** in our nominations, to be **respectful to all candidates** we contacted, and to **support** both committee members in their work and those we nominated for **life's journey in our faith-based community**.

This year the Nominating Committee used the excellent manual produced and revised by previous Nominating Committees to guide us in searching for new candidates to take over positions of leadership in the Council, Endowment Committee, Nominating Committee and Synod Assembly coming up in May. This resource document aided us by providing templates for timelines, agendas and "how to" forms that helped us contact potential candidates.

We accomplished our goal this year of filling all of the needed positions on the 4 committees.

To do this we first **identified skill sets** needed for each of the committees and also investigated what **strengths and gifts** candidates might need to have to strengthen their success and service. Many hands (or heads) made light work in this area as we brainstormed lists of members with specific gifts and talents. **Pastor Hector was invaluable** in keeping track of our work on a master spreadsheet and our committee greatly enjoyed the comradery and idea sharing of each member. The theme of Generosity Lived was evident as our group met weekly and learned to depend on one another's talents. This was definitely a collaboration of minds as we met over the months and found wonderful candidates to aid in leading our church committees. Also the identification of skills benefited our ability to recommend and strengthen the work of the committees we were finding new leaders for.

Our group members did experience the power of good group dynamics as we listened to one another and voiced both agreements and disagreements over potential candidates. We were generous and open-minded to all brainstormed ideas and as time passed our weekly meetings became a meeting of friends, not just a meeting.

The growing of Trinity Lutheran Church ministry is directly related to the work the Nominating Committee did as we found wonderful strong and caring members to serve in leadership roles in the coming year. We are humbled by the generosity of the many people who said "yes" to our offers of service. Indeed the people below are living generously as they have committed to working together to make Trinity all that it can be.

COUNCIL NOMINEES

- Mark Bergquist, *Member*
- Clint Buetow, *2nd term Vice President*
- Mary Denny, *Member*
- Jenny Louch, *2nd term Secretary*
- Mark Reay, *Member*
- Vancesa Villavicencio, *2nd term member*

ENDOWMENT COMMITTEE NOMINEES

- Inger Hamburg
- Lin Russell

NOMINATING COMMITTEE NOMINEES

- Irene Austvold
- Carl Setzer
- Sharon Hofferber
- Patty Wilder
- Teresa Judd
- Jude Vaders

SYNOD ASSEMBLY VOTING MEMBERS

Meeting to be held May 18, 2024

- Kasey Fleiger-Holmes, *youth member*
- Van Hutton
- Ruth Lee
- Maria Lunder, *young adult member*
- Bill Rankin
- Emily Wickham
- EdnaMae Olufson Smith, *alternate*

ENDOWMENT COMMITTEE

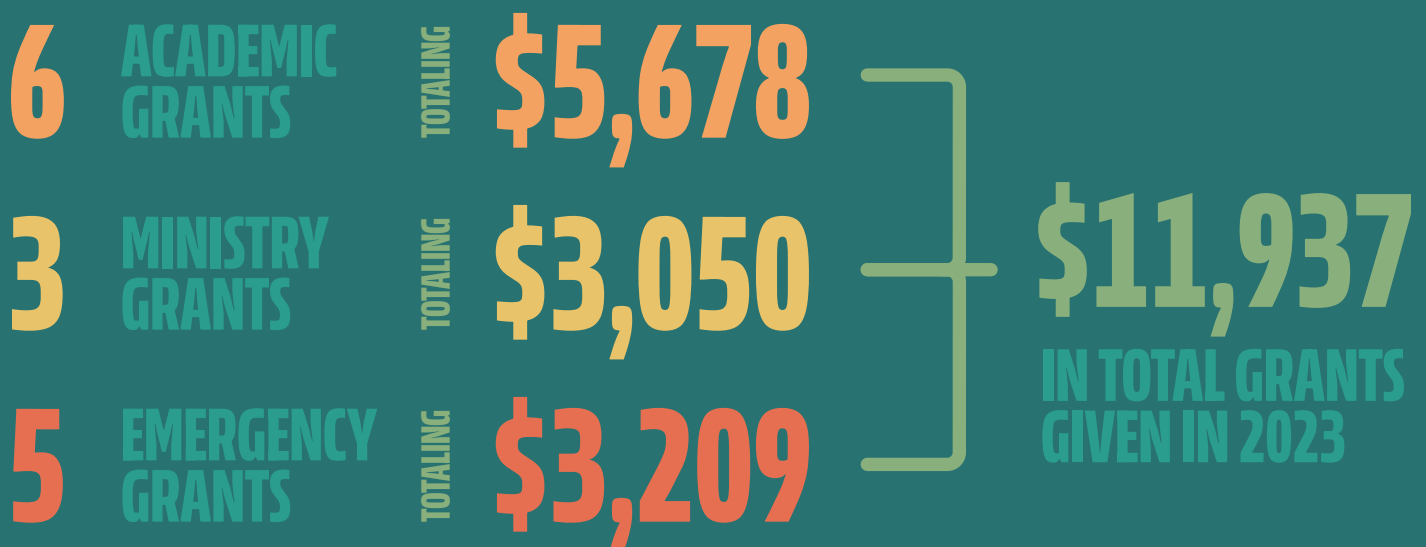
The Trinity Lutheran Church & Schools Endowment Committee gathers regularly to support members of our local community by providing grants for education, grants for ministry and grants for emergency assistance. During 2023 we regularly took advantage of our ability to meet by Zoom and still have meaningful conversations at convenient times. We sought to communicate more effectively at our meetings by directing applications to one email account for requests, which were then automatically distributed to all members of the committee for review (thank you Josh!). We also **expanded our communication efforts** to directly reach out to groups within TLCS that might be interested in applying for a grant.

During 2023, we noted that we struggled to find time to discuss a number of requests we received from all over the world for many different and exciting purposes and ministries, but did not have the ability to review all requests and determine if we could support the application for funds. Inger Hamburg responds directly to applicants on behalf of the Committee and in many cases it was increasingly difficult for her to decide if all requests should be submitted to the Committee for review. We discussed creating a clear statement to respond to such requests and com-

municate our commitment to local community interests. Julie Buetow wrote a clear and kind response that we now use to send a timely response to such requests, including information about our mission and **our focus on local community applications and established charity organizations**, with a preference given to ELCA missions.

We are grateful for the pivotal role of past members of the Committee, two of whom currently serve as consultants to the Endowment Committee, Lin Russell and Mike Schultz, as well as the kind assistance of the staff of Trinity. In 2023 we were able to **provide educational grants to six students** and to distribute emergency and ministry grants. We provided ministry funds to Children of the Nations, a ministry that serves orphaned children in Malawi and works to provide solar electricity so that the children can study in the evening. The ministry is based in Silverdale, Washington. We were able to assist community members struggling with bills for utilities, medical care and housing.

Many thanks to the community of TLCS! We are grateful for the opportunity to serve on the Endowment Committee. *Members: Julie Buetow, Inger Hamburg, Lynn Hinnenkamp, Jayne Meyer and Claudia LaFollette.*



The Music and Worship Ministry at Trinity Lutheran Church and Schools is committed to creating multisensory opportunities for all people to experience God in relationship with others.

See, I will do a new thing.

It will begin happening now.

Will you not know about it?

***I will even make a road in the wilderness
and rivers in the desert.***

The Prophet Isaiah 43:19, New Life Version

This past year in the Music and Worship Ministry at TLCS has been incredibly rewarding. I'm **overwhelmed with gratitude for everyone who contributes** – the volunteers, musicians, worship leaders, and, of course, all of you, the worshippers. You've genuinely embodied the saying, *"Never underestimate the power of showing up,"* and your presence has been invaluable.

I've been so impressed by the growing number of volunteers, worship leaders, and musicians at TLCS. Each Sunday, as **many as fifty people are involved** in welcoming worshippers, leading music and liturgy, singing, playing instruments, reading scripture, and more. It's truly remarkable, and I'm incredibly thankful to Kelly Apling and others who handle all the coordination and scheduling.

Through our **multisensory worship series**, we've been expanding how we connect with the Divine. Last year's Lenten series, *"Entering the Passion of Jesus,"* used character tableaus and monologues to draw us deeper into Holy Week. We explored visual art, spoken word, and our imaginations, allowing us to delve into the profound stories of our faith.

In September, we embarked on a four-week series called *"Quest: Travel as a Spiritual Act,"* inspired and accompanied by Rick Steve's beautifully curated book, *Travel As A Political Act*. This adventurous journey explored different ways to "travel" and learn about other cultures and religions, even if we can't physically go anywhere. The focus wasn't on the destination but on expanding our horizons and challenging our preconceived notions, a vital part of

our faith journey. We learned that the "traveler's mindset" often begins at home.

During Advent, we reflected on how the season often revolves around finding the perfect gift while neglecting the greatest gift of all – our presence. We were challenged to be a gift ourselves, offering our time and care to loved ones, communities, and those in need. This message resonated deeply, reminding us of the season's true meaning. And let us not forget the marvelous and delightful gifts of Hope, Peace, Joy, and Love that graced us with their presence during the Young Worshipers' Message!

I'm also thrilled to join the recently revived **Reconciling in Christ team**. Using my internship skills with Reconciling Works, I'm helping guide this team as they continue the vital work of radical inclusivity, which this church embraced nearly three decades ago. The team will strive to make our worship more welcoming and representative of God's diverse creation, ensuring that "all are welcome" truly means all, including naming our LGBTQIA+ and Black, Indigenous, and other People of Color siblings in Christ.

As we move forward, **I encourage you to get involved!** If you've ever considered joining the choir, playing handbells, leading worship with your musical gifts, or serving as a building host, greeter, communion server, scripture reader, acolyte, or worship team member – please do! **We thrive on collaboration**, and your contributions would be greatly valued as we continue on this enriching faith journey together.

The pandemic certainly shook things up but also allowed us to learn and grow as a church. **We're becoming, belonging, and building towards more inclusivity, openness, and embracing diverse faith journeys.** I look forward to sharing my musical gifts through concerts and collaborations, participating in joint worship events with other congregations, and using my upcoming graduation from Luther Seminary to develop new worship experiences that continue to challenge, expand, and deepen our faith understanding.

Thank you again, and cheers to the future!

Yours in Christ, David Horton *Minister of Music & Worship*

ARTISTS AT THE ORGAN

2023-24 SEASON

Trinity's Artists at the Organ presented two concerts this past season. On April 30, 2023, we presented **Aaron David Miller** to a very enthusiastic audience of about 100 people. Dr. Miller is an extraordinarily talented organist, improviser and composer, who just happened to have put his fingers on organ keys for the first time at the age of 5 here at Trinity Lutheran Church, while his father, Pastor David Miller was doing his pastoral internship. Aaron's program included works of Bach, Mendelssohn and others, and an improvised three movement symphony for Eastertide, based on three different Lutheran Chorales. In October we presented **Stephen Price**, newly named Inaugural Paul B. Fritts Faculty Fellow and artist-in-residence at the University of Washington, to an equally enthusiastic audience. It was wonderful to be able to introduce him to the community in this way, a way in which we show hospitality.

Our season will end with a recital by the wonderfully talented **Dr. Craig Cramer** on April 7, 2024. He was supposed to play for our 25th anniversary recital, which sadly had to be canceled because of COVID, and again a year ago, which had to be canceled due to weather, but we sincerely hope that the April concert will take place. I know many folks who are really looking forward to this event.



From left to right: Marti Pasi, Penny Lorenz, Aaron David Miller.

OUR MISSION

Through the "Artists at the Organ Series," we have been able to be a welcoming, embracing community to so many. We are always looking for new ways to be invitational and gracious!

The musicians who have played in concert here are well-known, professional artists, who have come from as far away as France and Germany. When we experience the power and the beauty of music, we realize how spiritually uplifting and nourishing it can be. Music feeds us. The Creator has blessed us with so many gifts...gifts for **building us up, creating a sense of belonging, and ultimately becoming the people of God**. Included in the gifts given us, music continues to offer us a way to **worship together, to learn together** and to **peacefully and lovingly live together**. The universality of music is evident in the powerful ministry of "Trinity Artists at the Organ." Together, we are lifted and **supported** by the **bond** that music brings to **life's journey**. Luther saw music as God's great gift to mankind.

Luther called music a "noble, wholesome, and joyful creation. It is a true gift of God"

We show **hospitality** to the greater community through our concerts, which continue to be extremely popular and draw people to our church from near and far, people who experience God's presence in our church through music, with an average attendance of about 100 or more.

Our organ recital committee is dedicated to this ministry and outreach to our community, as we have been for 29 years. We are totally **self-sustaining**, with income received from concert attendees, gifts, and memorial gifts to our Organ Recital Fund. We are extremely grateful to Martin Pasi who regularly maintains and tunes the organ for us. Unfortunately for us, he moved this past summer to St. John's Abbey in Minnesota to open a new organ building workshop, and school, where he will pass on his talents to the next generation of organ builders. But we will miss his presence among us.

ADDITIONAL THOUGHTS

- Our team weathered the several months of Covid's restrictions!! The artists were patient and honored our need to postpone and to reschedule concerts. Usually, we get together yearly and have a meal and talk about the season; thanks to Karen, we still got together, but had to gather differently, adhering to Covid's guidelines. This was all part of how we weathered Covid's restrictions!
- Remembering 25+ years of organ recitals and looking forward to future concerts...this hope in the future helped sustain our team. This was a team and individual way of feeling gratitude for all that has been, and then looking forward to what will be... together.
- This fall, our TLCS Social Club was intentional in planning an event that included dinner at a local restaurant, followed by an invitation for TLCS members to attend the first concert of the season. Those who attended expressed how much they enjoyed the event!

- Surrounded by hospitality, and covered with gratitude, we continue to experience the power of generosity. The magnificent beauty of our Pasi organ, the talent of our artists, and the sense of being together to experience such amazing music, has proven to be transformative for all in attendance. Our budget for Artists at the Organ is dependent on the generous donations of individuals; the cost of the tickets for concerts does not cover our expenses. We have continued to keep our admission fees low, in order to be affordable for all people.
- We imagine a future where we will continue to share the beauty of music, featuring our Pasi organ, within our TLCS community, the local and larger community, in a spirit of love, welcoming and joining together in the presence of music, performed by gifted artists, we will continue to grow individually, and our ministry will become deeper and broader. Music unites!

We look forward to celebrating our 30th anniversary season beginning in the fall of this year.

Submitted by Penny Lorenz, Chair; Judy Schleusner; and Karen Bruck



Communion during the Sunday Worship Gathering.



Commissioning of two new Stephen Ministers.



Begin Nora (right), Erica Fiebig (center), and David Horton performing tango music at a special recital in November.



Young Worshippers in the Prayground during the Sunday Worship Gathering.

We continue to learn how to do faith formation in a post-pandemic world. Last fall, we adopted a new model for **Sunday School**, after families requested that it take place during, instead of before, Sunday worship. Children now leave worship following the Young Worshipper's Message on the 1st and 3rd Sundays for about 30 minutes, returning in time for communion. We do not have enough teaching teams to do weekly Sunday school, but have seen attendance grow from an average of 8 kids last year to about 13 kids each time with about 20 possibles.



Participants enjoying the water at one of our Summer Family Night events.

This fall, we didn't have any 7th graders start the Affirmation of Faith so we modified **ZOE** (middle school youth) to a once a month class for the 8th graders, and have included them in **NET** (high school youth) with the high schoolers on Sunday evenings. This worked well with the bright group of 8th graders we have. NET has seen growth also this fall with some new faces beyond the 8th graders. We did have a couple of NET adults step down from leadership this fall, but still have four committed adults there each week.

The **4th Soil Parenting Project** began this last summer and we will be participating with Vibrant Faith Ministries for the next three years. This year's focus is on **building connections between parents**. We have performed two surveys, held a dinner, and 4 monthly online gather-



Trunk or Treat was a huge success!

ings, and one in person gathering with the teens. Slowly, connections are being made. The real challenge is navigating the many commitments families have that stretch their time and energy. We are offering this year a few classes/gatherings for parents to encourage relationships and growing the number of resources parents will have to choose from.

Lastly, we hope to gather families this spring for an **Earth Day event**, and this summer we'll offer a couple of family nights, as well as the **Trinity Family Camp Out** at Luth-erwood in July.

I would like to thank all the volunteers that serve on the Children & Family Ministries Team, the NET adults, the 4th Soil Team and the adults who facilitate adult faith formation classes on Sundays and Wednesdays.



A stroll on the beach at the WAY High School Winter Retreat. The theme was "Ears to Hear, Eyes to See Jesus"

CARE MINISTRY

STEPHEN MINISTRY

Stephen Ministry (SM) has been a part of the ministry at Trinity for **34 years**. Throughout the year, SM at TLCS continues to provide ministry to multiple care receivers, both within and outside of the congregation. Currently, there are 15 commissioned SMs within the congregation.

In the summer of 2023, **two new Stephen ministers** (see photo on p. 25) **along with two new Pastoral Care ministers were commissioned**, having completed fifty hours of training. These newly commissioned ministers work to build up God's mission to nurture, love and serve all. Training and commissioning new SMs strengthens the ministry of TLC and offers support to the Pastoral care team.

Stephen Ministry mandates that SMs attend twice monthly supervision meetings in order to participate in the program. The supervision meetings have been successfully conducted in a hybrid schedule throughout the last year. Many of the SMs meet in person while the remainder join via Zoom.

Continuing Education (CE) remains an integral part of SM as well. Stephen ministry was able to schedule many CE sessions throughout the past year, again using the hybrid format.

SM joyfully welcomed a newly trained Stephen Leader who completed many hours of online training at the end of 2023 and was commissioned in February 2024.

SM works with other ministries within the congregation by **offering support** for any stated needs via assignment of a SM. SM provides information to the entire congregation through the availability of the blue card within the pews that allows people to self identify for any needed assistance. SM collaborates with other congregations in the local area to conduct and train new SMs within our own and their own congregations. Additionally, our trained SMs have provided assistance to many outside of our congregation.

SMs met with care receivers via phone calls, zoom sessions, cards, texts and letters. Many SMs returned to in person

meetings during the year. Regardless of meeting venue, commitment by the SM cadre to provide care does not falter.

Looking ahead, **Stephen Ministry is excited to recruit new candidates for training**, beginning in early 2025. It is the vision of the SM team to recruit, add and train new SM candidates. To broaden the depth of the SM team, Stephen Leadership continues to seek new continuing education topics and opportunities to strengthen and support the cadre of SMs at TLC.

Submitted by Sheri Kasen-Kessler

PASTORAL CARE MINISTRY

The principle of compassionate love and grace reflects the very heart of Jesus' ministry and serves as the foundation of pastoral care. **Pastoral Care Ministers are a vital part of the pastoral care team at Trinity**, engaging and caring for people and meeting them in their struggles, doubts and vulnerabilities.

Pastoral Care Ministers follow up with each prayer request to our community, make hospital, care facility and home-bound visits, celebrate communion and serve our Neighbors in Need on Saturday morning. Our Pastoral Care Ministers have been trained as Stephen Ministers. They have also had many hours of additional training to engage them in a journey of self-discovery of their personal and pastoral identity and to provide an opportunity to develop and refine pastoral skills under supervision.

The Pastoral Care Ministers meet monthly for mutual support, on-going supervision and continuing education. We trained and commissioned two new Pastoral Care Ministers this year but there is a need for additional Pastoral Care Ministers and **we invite you to prayerfully consider serving in this one-on-one caring ministry**. We pray to God to continue to empower us for our task. Help us all to be both willing servants and thankful recipients of pastoral care.

Submitted by Liz Gimmestad

SERVICE & JUSTICE

ALL FOR PEACE

“All for Peace” is an ecumenical ministry of Christians and Muslims in the Lynnwood/Edmonds/Mukilteo area who share a mutual hope for greater understanding and unity in a divided and fearful world. We gather monthly for conversations that build mutual trust between our traditions and cultures and inspires hope for our common future. We gather our neighboring communities of Christians and Muslims to eat, play, pray and work together on projects that improve our mutual neighborhoods and communities. We sponsor and host events and lectures that invite neighboring communities to engage in deeper learning, understanding and connection. We trust that God is present in our work as we offer belonging to each other, shared building up of our communities to become a people of God where we all belong. We invite all to join us in prayer and dialogue to honor our differences and seek ways to stand together to show love truly does cast out fear.

Submitted by Liz Gimmestad



Hard at work preparing the foundation.

ESPERANZA MISSION TRIPS

Celebrating 25 years of partnership between Trinity Lutheran Church and Schools and Esperanza International!

Together we are Building.

Building relationships, building community, building an awareness and an understanding of the world that we share and as a result building dignified, safe homes.

Together we are Belonging.

Belonging to a community greater than ourselves. Belonging to each other, to those we know and those we don't yet know and belonging to a community in another part of our world.

Together we are Becoming.

Becoming better global citizens through education, experience with open hearts and open minds. Becoming community by building and strengthening relationships with each other and with our neighbors in Mexico.

We continue to discover that transformation is experienced not only by the families whose homes are being built, but also by those of us who are working with them. In 2023 we joyfully shared this experience with 6 people, new to the experience.

We have discovered differences in cultures and learned to love those differences while creating cross border relationships. We have seen the face of Jesus smiling at us as we look into the face of the people we serve alongside. We have discovered one way that we can be the hands of God in a world of need.

We hope to expand our community with each and every mission trip, sharing the joy of giving and serving with everyone. We have been and continue to be blessed by the experience with Esperanza.

Submitted by Deb Johnson

LIVING WATER

The Living Water ministry has been busy in 2023. With the grace of God, our congregation, in partnership with Edmonds Lutheran Church received donations of \$13,445.

Living Water has given \$29,000 toward water projects this year. This supports families in dire need of clean water for drinking, sanitation, and cleaning.

The projects we supported this year were:

- Haiti to dig an irrigation system to allow food to be grown.
- Maher, India for a borehole well to be dug.

- ELCA Disaster Response for earthquake relief in Syria and Turkey.
- Karnali Province, Nepal for a Piped System Tap Stand.
- Camoapa, Nicaragua for a new well.
- La Puebla, Honduras for a new well.

Through your generous support the families receiving the gift of clean water have been able to have dignity, health, and life.

We usually meet monthly on the second Monday at 6 pm. All are welcome to join us in our mission: “Living Water intentionally seeks to enable communities worldwide with safe and reliable uses of water.”

Submitted by Judy Jacobson, Living Water chair

LIVING WATER GRANTS, 2003-2023

Many of the markers on the map below represent multiple grants over many years to the same location, organization, or region. All told, the Living Water Ministry—as a result of your generosity lived out over a decade—has given over \$1,000,000 to support water and water-adjacent projects both locally and globally.



NEIGHBORS IN NEED

Neighbors in Need's mission is to serve all people by providing basic **support services, encouragement, and unconditional acceptance within a safe, caring environment**. This program extends God's love through neighborly compassion and respect to anyone facing life's challenges, while inspiring all to continue in our shared quest for wholeness.

The NIN ministry at TLCS consists of Saturday Morning with the Neighborhood Youth Alliance (currently suspended), the Emergency Cold Weather Shelter and the Toy Shop of South Snohomish County.

We continue to be a **primary support to our un-housed and low-income friends and neighbors** in Lynnwood, Edmonds, and Mountlake Terrace. Each Saturday morning, 25-30 rotating volunteers from several of our partners hand out 60-70 bags of non-perishable food and Trader Joe sandwiches and salads provided by the Edmonds Food Bank and the Advocates Recovery Services (f/k/a The Hand Up Project); fresh fruit, string cheese, and hardboiled eggs provided by the Edmonds Unitarian Congregation; and shoes and clothing provided by Trinity and our neighbors. And, since September 2022, we returned to serving indoor hot breakfast burritos and coffee, and occasionally scrambled eggs or biscuits-n-gravy with all the trimmings, with the help from friends at TLCS, Holy Rosary, Gloria Dei Lutheran Church, Edmonds Unitarian Congregation, and The Nest Mission. You may follow us at nintrinity.org.

At least once per month **street medicine doctors and nurses from MercyWatch** continue to provide flu, hepatitis and shingles vaccines, as well as health checks, care for wounds, follow up with Neighbors who are receiving medical care, and especially to listen to our Neighbors health worries, and the mobile dental van continues to provide bi-monthly services.

The Toy Shop again provided Christmas gifts to 495 children from over 150 families with donations from Toys for Tots, the Edmonds Unitarian Congregation and TLCS families and neighbors, which were distributed with the help from volunteers from the Lynnwood, Ed-



Volunteers preparing to hand out Christmas gift bags to our Neighbors.

monds, and MLT Food Banks, the Lynnwood LDS Church, TLCS and Unitarian members and friends.

Through the Jean Kim Foundation, **we continue to provide support to the Lynnwood Hygiene Station** (showers and bathrooms), and **The Village** (short-term housing at the Good Shepherd Baptist Church for LEAD program participants), and through the Nest Mission, emergency housing in local motels. NiN has also provided Advocates Recovery Services with back packs loaded with hygiene products for their homeless outreach program that provides detox and sobriety services. None of this could have occurred without the generous contributions we received from TLCS members and friends, holiday concerts, Gloria Dei Lutheran Church, St. Hilda St. Patrick Episcopal Church, Holy Rosary Catholic Church, and the North Sound Church.

SOME NIN CELEBRATIONS FROM THIS PAST YEAR:

- **“I never left Saturday breakfast feeling defeated”.** This comment from mid-60's Curt. He had experienced 40 years of addiction, desperately wanted to be clean, but repeatedly relapsing. He tells us that the respectful friendship that he experienced at Neighbors in Need helped him to respect himself. He has been healthy for two years now. He is housed and full-time employed as a peer counselor.
- **“I'm okay!!”** This from the constantly angry and impatient James. Although steadily employed, he could never successfully navigate “the system”. He lived in his vehicle which was repeatedly towed. The NiN resources volunteers put hours into walking him

through state government websites. Together they documented his ownership of his vehicle and his ownership of a piece of land. Now he is safely and legally parked on his own property. Since he no longer pays repeated towing fees, he is able to save with enough money to pay deposits for an apartment. James describes himself as a new man.

- **“I’m healthy today!”** Mitch was weeping when he entered NiN for the first time. He asked for a pastor. After praying with him, he was calm enough to tell us that he was ill and certain that he was dying. Mercy Watch was with us on that first day. The nurse accompanied him to emergency. The diagnosis was a severe allergic reaction. One week later, he was a new man. The dental van was with us that morning. They extracted two teeth and prescribed antibiotics. He was feeling so much better that he was giddy. We no longer see Mitch. He is in housing and working full time.

We are so thankful for this opportunity to help our less fortunate Neighbors for it has provided us not only with a way to build relationships with them, but also with our many volunteers and service partners. Every Saturday we’re also thankful to be able to safely serve indoor breakfast again, as this ministry is as important to our neighbors as it is to our volunteers.

A WEEK IN THE LIFE...

Saturday morning is only possible because of a lot of effort during the entire week. Below are just a few of the mid-week gifts of time:

Monday

- John visits the Edmond’s Food Bank for stable foods to give to our Neighbors. We wouldn’t be open if it weren’t for the generosity of Edmond’s Food Bank.

Wednesday

- Chuck sorts the donations collected from the Edmond’s Food Bank in preparation for distribution from the pantry on Saturday morning.

Thursday

- Jude visits Franz bakery outlet to pick up donated bread, muffins, bagels and sweet rolls. Our Neighbors love them.
- Thursday (and sometimes on Friday as well) Peggy and Sue are downstairs in room 6 to sort, size, and organize clothing donations so that our Saturday morning clothing bank can be an orderly experience.

Friday

- John heads to Costco to purchase any additional foods that we may need to offer our Neighbors some nutrition.

Saturday

- We open at 7am with hot coffee and a very large background crew of Alan, David, and several Neighbors set up 9 tables and 54 chairs where our Neighbors can enjoy coffee, burritos and companionship. They also set up at least 8 long tables for the food bank, 4 long tables and 15 chairs to form our clothing bank, and finally 2 tables and 4 chairs for our resources.
- Jude, Chris, Kyo, John, Chris and Chuck set up the food bank area for efficient distribution to our Neighbors. This same group, plus Jeff and willing volunteers from our breakfast teams, fill at least 70 grocery bags to be handed to Neighbors.
- Rick, Peggy, Sue and Ellie serve as fashion advisors for the clothing bank. This a serious gift of genuine care.
- Sue, Mark and Tom listen to concerns and advise access to resources for our Neighbors. They offer hope.
- And 3 hours later it all gets put away and clean-up begins. It’s a busy and very meaningful ministry.

Respectfully submitted,

NiN Leadership: Joan Jolly, John Boone, Chris Frizzell, Sarah Merrihew-Fox, Lila Robinson, and Chuck Hoffman.

VALUES

**CHRIST-INSPIRED
SERVICE IN OUR
COMMUNITY, BOTH
LOCAL & GLOBAL**

**INCLUSION
OF ALL
PEOPLE**

**IMPACTFUL RELATION-
SHIPS WITH ONE ANOTHER
THAT PROVIDE SUPPORT
FOR LIFE'S JOURNEY**

**FAITH-BASED COM-
MUNAL EXPERIENCE
OF WORSHIPING AND
LEARNING TOGETHER**

**MULTI-GENERATIONAL MIN-
ISTRY RELEVANT TO ALL AGES
AND PROMOTING RELATION-
SHIPS ACROSS GENERATIONS**